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Doctoral Dissertation
Doctoral Program in Urban and Regional Development (34th Cycle)

Participatory dynamics and public values in World Heritage sites:

The case of the World Heritage serial site *Arab-Norman Palermo and the
Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and the Monreale* (Italy).

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Declaration

I hereby declare that, the contents and organization of this dissertation constitute my own original work and does not compromise in any way the rights of third parties, including those relating to the security of personal data.

Francesca Taormina
Turin, June 25, 2022

* This dissertation is presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for **Ph.D. degree** in the Graduate School of Politecnico di Torino (ScuDo).



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Acknowledgment

This thesis would have not been possible without the support of many colleagues, professors, friends, and family members. First, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Sara Bonini Baraldi who patiently guided me along this PhD journey. Her openness to dialogue, inspiring discussions and useful advice allows me to advance the research and to work independently.

A further special thanks goes to my co-supervisor Prof. Andrea Longhi, for assisting me on the hard times of directing the research along a clearer path and for the opportunity of approaching the interesting research field of religious heritage.

I am also very grateful to Prof. Ana Pereira Roders and Prof. Paolo Ferri for their availability as reviewers of this dissertation. A deep appreciation also goes to Prof. Daniela Ciaffi, Prof. Azedine Beschaouch and the Researcher Eleonora Giovane di Girasole for expressing their interest to be part of the final PhD Commission.

My gratitude goes to all respondents in the local contexts of Palermo, Monreale and Cefalù (Italy), who generously participated and made this research possible.

I have been incredibly lucky to meet extraordinary PhD colleagues along the way. I am particularly grateful to Carlotta, Cecilia, Giuditta, Sara and Viola for their technical advice and emotional support throughout these intense years.

I finally wish to thank my family, all my lifelong friends, my partner Manfredi and my dear Prof. Lorella Pellegrino for their support and encouragement over the years.



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Summary

This thesis investigates the issue of participatory dynamics and public values in the UNESCO World Heritage (WH) serial site *Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* (Italy), with a specific focus on Palermo urban context. The notion of public values is closely related to participatory dynamics. Moreover, it refers to the wide range of benefits that the participation of citizens in public sector decisions may bring to society at large.

Considering the concept of ‘heritage’ as an evolving social construct, this thesis explores the intertwined and fragmented facets of participatory processes applied both during the creation and development of WH sites. The research stems from a divergence between WH policies and practices. To be more specific, WH Operational Guidelines and related UNESCO policies, increasingly emphasize public participation in WH sites' decision making, considering it a precondition of inclusive and sustainable development. Instead WH case studies highlight the challenge in making decisional arenas more accessible to civil society. From this, the growing relevance of participatory enhancement initiatives in influencing decisions emerges.

To address this divergence, this research reflects upon relevant study fields, considering political and social sciences and discussing the theme of heritage. From this multidisciplinary framework the *Heritage Participation Matrix* is conceived, allowing to reconstruct the unfolding of participatory processes within three different units of analysis of the World Heritage (WH) serial site *Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* (Italy): the WH site governance, the *Cassaro Alto* and *Danisinni* districts in the historic city center of Palermo.

The exhaustive case study investigation proves that, although the governance of WH sites may lack in participation, created spaces for participation uncover a vibrant scene. In these spaces, public values are continuously recreated through participatory interactions between representatives of civil society, local institutions, and additional stakeholders.

Through a qualitative micro-level analysis of participatory processes before and after the WH nomination, this thesis yields diverse empirical findings and insights for future research.

Firstly, the investigation argues that participation in WH sites' governance unfolds as a gradual process, whereby both participatory mechanisms and generated public values vary mutually.

Secondly the research calls for a *polycentric participatory governance* structure of WH sites. This type of structure is endowed with multiple decisional units, which gather several representatives of civil society with a fair degree of decisional autonomy. A shared interest in contributing to the care and development of WH site brings together unit members, consequently facilitating the achievement



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and implementation of common decisions. Decisional units may vary over time and work synergistically under a central coordination.

Thirdly, the research delves into the spatial nature of participation, elaborating the concept of *WH relational buffer zones*. The existing literature depicts WH buffer zones as mere technical areas with the role of preserving WH sites through the establishment of fixed boundaries. Also, the WH relational buffer zones are conceived as social spaces, generated by the articulated participatory processes related to WH sites. The proximity of Buffer zones to WH sites makes them the ideal sites to study participatory dynamics.

By thoroughly exploring the WH serial site of *Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale*, this research encourages a greater engagement of heritage scholars in the analysis of participatory mechanisms concerning WH sites. This would help deconstruct the idealistic perception of public participation in WH decisions. At the same time, further investigations may provide pragmatic suggestions for policy makers on how to strengthen participation in WH sites' governance, in order to benefit society as a whole.



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List of Abbreviations

A.S.TE.S. Sicilia: Sustainable Territorial Development Association

ICCROM: International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property

ICOMOS: International Council on Monuments and Sites

OGs: Operational Guidelines

OS: Operational Structure

OUV: Outstanding Universal Value

PGTU: General Urban Traffic Plan

PVM: Public Value Model

RDCHSi: Regional Department of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian identity

SC: Steering Committee

SWHF: Sicily World Heritage Foundation

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WH: World Heritage

Arab-Norman WH site: Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and the Monreale



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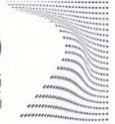


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Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how WH sites' participatory processes unfold, considering both WH sites' governance and enhancement initiatives as spaces for participation.

More specifically, the investigation tackles the category of WH serial site in urban contexts focusing on the *World Heritage (WH) serial site in the Arab-Norman area of Palermo, the Cefalù and the Monreale Cathedrals* as case study (Italy). The main objective is to disclose how participatory processes contribute to shape a multifaceted WH site as a common good, by generating a series of transitory public values that convey societal interests, aspirations and collisions.

- *The research context*

Since its adoption by the UNESCO General Conference in 1972 until the celebration of the current 50th anniversary, *the Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (henceforth WH Convention or Convention) (UNESCO, 1972) has grown in popularity and appeal (M. Albert et al., 2022).

Today, 1.154 properties are registered in the WH List and 194 States¹ have ratified the WH Convention. Moreover, local interests in obtaining the WH status are multifaceted. They are not limited to the protection of WH heritage properties and their Outstanding Universal Values (OUV). More accurately, they mostly address the opportunity to increase the attractiveness of a WH site and elucidate its context to visitors (Bourdeau et al., 2017; M. Di Giovine, 2017). Also, it disseminates novel practices for territorial sustainable development following the UN 2030 Agenda (Labadi, 2017; Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2011b; Rosetti et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2015b; United Nations, 2006).

As explained in the 2015 Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective (UNESCO, 2015b), the WH Convention serves a key role in the challenging and complex process to recognise cultural heritage as a driver for sustainable development. In fact, over the years, the WH Committee, its Secretariat, and, in general the UNESCO General Conference, strived to integrate “sustainable development principles within the WH process” (Labadi 2017, p. 49), overcoming the dichotomy between heritage preservation and development threats.

This trajectory towards sustainability, accentuates the local and territorial dimension of WH heritage designation (Pettenati, 2019) and gives more and more centrality to the issue of participation in WH sites' governance and management (Badia et al., 2012; Dormaels, 2016a; Ercole, 2017).

¹ Retrieved information from: UNESCO statics on State Parties: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/stat/> Accessed 7/01/2022.



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The resulting changes are heading in two main directions: ontological and procedural. Notwithstanding that a WH nomination is a State Party prerogative (Brumann, 2014; Meskell & Brumann, 2015) a well-balanced contribution to development occurs when the WH convention is significant to authorities, individuals, and groups at the grassroots level (Labadi, 2017), such as citizens, residents, and third-sector organizations who become active players instead of passive holders.

The “opening-up” to circumscribed communities (Di Giovine 2017, p.94) expands the ontological nature of WH sites according to a human-centric perspective (Wells & Stiefel, 2018) and raises a wider question in regards of the public values (Clark, 2019; Jones, 2017; Oliver, 2017) WH sites may hold for society at large and how these values would configure WH sites as cultural commons (Bertacchini et al., 2012; Cerreta & Giovine di Girasole, 2020; Lekakis, 2020)

Scholars in public administration studies provide multiple definitions of public value and values (Benington, 2011; Bozeman, 2007; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Moore, 1995). Although they may offer differing opinions, they still agree on a few common features. For instance, they commonly consider that public value emerges from a “broadly inclusive dialogue [...] with community members from multiple sectors” (Bryson et al. 2014, p.447) and not from exclusive actions of governments who can play different roles: “sometimes steering, sometimes rowing, sometimes partnering and sometimes staying out of the way” (Bryson et al. 2014, p.447). According to a pluralist interpretation, the public value universe (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) can include a variety of values that active citizenship can add to the public realm in the effort to achieve what they consider *good* for society. As stated by Benington (2011), public values can emerge in many contextual guises such as social and cultural (i.e., contributions to social capital, social cohesion, cultural identity, community well-being, etc.), political (i.e., contributions to democratic dialogue, active public participation, etc.), economic (i.e., contributions to economic development, employment, etc.) and ecological (i.e., contributions to public “bad” reduction like pollution, global warming, etc.) (Benington 2011b, p.12).

Drawing on such a pluralistic approach, inquiring public values of WH properties comprises understanding how a *common heritage of humanity*² dialogue with the surrounding local values (social, cultural, environmental, economics, etc.) and adapt to changes over time (Labadi, 2015).

Concerning the relationship between WH sites universal and local values some authors have raised some concerns. For instance, after extensive ethnographic research on the Palestinian situation, De Cesari claims that the WH convention fails in its ambition of globally representing local cultural diversities (De Cesari, 2010). More Specifically, De Cesari argues that the WH nomination

² According to the Oxford Bibliographies the “common heritage of mankind, sometimes also called the common heritage of humankind or humanity [...] represents the notion that certain global commons or elements regarded as beneficial to humanity as a whole should not be unilaterally exploited by individual states or their nationals, nor by corporations or other entities, but rather should be exploited under some sort of international arrangement or regime for the benefit of mankind as a whole.” Retrieved information from: <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199796953/obo-9780199796953-0109.xml> Accessed 13/03/2020.



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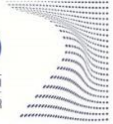


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consolidates alliances between intergovernmental agencies, nation-states, and authorized experts (Smith, 2006). These entities impose their vision over local realities often suffocating them, subsequently leaving cultural spaces under the weight of high bureaucracy (De Cesari 2010, p. 317). Moreover, in her thorough book about WH and urban design, Khirfan notes that the OUV elaboration is an expert's prerogative and the criteria on which it is based fails to capture the complexity of historic towns. Through an in-depth exploration of place-making dynamics in Aleppo (Syria), Al-Salt (Jordan) and Acre (Israel) cities, Khirfan argues that public engagement in the WH-making process “alleviates the global-local tension by balancing the global and the local values and needs” (Khirfan 2017, p. 117).

The procedural shift concerns the strengthening of participation in decision-making processes, ideally during the three stages of a WH sites' making (M. A. Di Giovine, 2009): the nomination, the drawing of the management plan, and its consequent implementation (Ercole, 2017). The issue of public participation in WH Convention ruling texts is not new. In the Operational Guidelines (OG), the concept's evolution is quite evident. Whilst the 1995 text merely states that participation is essential to the nomination process, the 2019 text refers to fair participatory governance structures in which a broad public collaborates to develop balanced management strategies (UNESCO 2019b, paragraph 117).

The aspiration towards a more democratized governance of WH sites also emerges from other initiatives linked to the WH program. Indeed, Di Giovine (2017) states that “to understand the WH Program's gradual “opening up” [...] it is opportune to examine some of the major initiatives in the Program as a whole, which go beyond the promulgation of conventions” (Di Giovine 2017, p.94). Based on this consideration, it is worth noting that the theme of participation in decisional processes gains relevance in several initiatives that UNESCO is promoting to align its programs towards the UN 17 sustainable development goals (United Nations, 2015), by covering two main functions. On the one hand, participation is considered a means for reaching sustainable decisions in a sense of fairness and inclusiveness (UNESCO, 2015b). On the other hand, it is seen as the outcome of how culture, including the WH Convention, can contribute to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2019a). This dual aspect of participation (as a *tool for* and as an *outcome of* sustainable approaches) is quite apparent in two recent UNESCO reports. In the report on *Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda* (UNESCO, 2019a), participatory processes are seen as means to engage civil society in the formulation of cultural initiatives as well as policies. Specifically, for the WH program, “community involvement in the decision-making process” is mentioned as one of the indicators to assess participatory forms of management and governance. Rather, the UNESCO report on Culture for the 2030 agenda (UNESCO, 2018) highlights people's inclusion and participation as one of the five key contributions (people, planet, prosperity, peace, partnership) culture can make to sustainable development.



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The mainstream popularity of the participatory governance debate in WH sites has drawn the attention of the academic world to the subject, with a prevalence of studies on natural WH sites, rural areas, and villages in the field of conservation and tourism planning (Della Lucia & Franch, 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Svets & Sande, 2016).

In addition, a strand of critical studies stresses the discrepancy between policy content and real practices. Some scholars highlight the risk of “cosmetic” use of participation in WH heritage practices, its failure to ensure “the initial promise of fairness and democracy” (Cortés-Vázquez et al. 2017, p.1) and sometimes its elitist nature which might lead to new centralized power structures instead of promoting new forms of collective responsibilities (Brumann, 2014; González et al., 2018). According to these heritage critical theories, the WH program is intended as a global regime (Bendix, 2013) that strengthens neoliberal attitudes through the promotion of participatory practices: “governments often expect communities to reinvent themselves as not only good heritage citizens but, even better, as heritage entrepreneurs”(Meskell 2019, p.4).

- *The research gap and questions*

Far less attention has been paid to the mechanisms (Bobbio, 2004, 2010) through which WH sites’ participatory processes occur in the urban context (Dormaels, 2016a; Li et al., 2020d) and how they might vary throughout the different moments of a WH site’s making (M. A. Di Giovine, 2009). The way in which these processes are, intertwined with existing urban administration strategies has also been insufficiently explored, blurring how local institutions, civil society, and further players interact and generate mutable spaces for collaborations or further grounds of contestation (Cornwall, 2002, 2008a).

On top of these gaps, the contributions from the existing literature lack a holistic analytical approach to focus on how WH sites’ participatory processes are locally constructed (Khirfan, 2017; Li et al., 2020c) and correlated with raised public values (Clark, 2019; Jones, 2017; Oliver, 2017). Shedding a light on public values could provide further insight on how, and whether, participatory processes (at policy, planning level and for the implementation of single initiatives) democratize WH sites ‘making and generate a shared responsibility with the local actors. Contributing to fill this research gap is highly topical considering the UNESCO interest in affirming culture (including WH sites) as global public good, as stated in the recent historic *Declaration for Culture* (Declaration for Culture, 2022) released after the MODIACULT summit 2022 (Mexico):

[...] We, the Ministers of Culture, meeting in Mexico at a critical juncture for the world at large, we commit to a reinforced multilateralism, that recognises culture as a global public good with an intrinsic value to enable and drive sustainable development [...] We call on the UN Secretary General to firmly anchor culture as a global public good, and to integrate it as a specific goal in its own right in the development agenda beyond 2030 and, to this end, we ask the Director-General of UNESCO to launch a broad consultation involving Member States, civil society, academia and the



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private sector on the multidimensional impact of culture in our societies as a global public good [...] (Declaration for Culture 2022, p.7).

This thesis contributes to filling this gap by analysing the WH serial *site Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and the Monreale* (Italy).

It addresses the following main research questions that correlate both mentioned ontological and procedural shifts:

1. How is participation enacted in WH sites' governance, at the local level?
2. What is the relation between participation in decision-making and enhancement initiatives of a WH site?
3. How do public values and participatory processes relate? How do public values vary as the adopted participatory mechanisms vary?

The three raised questions encompass a series of sub-questions which sharpen the research boundaries. The four sub-questions are:

Through which mechanisms is participation enacted?

Does participation in the governance of WH sites occur only in authorized arenas or also in created spaces by civil society?

Do participatory approaches vary depending on the life stages of a WH site, from nomination design to further development?

Which conditions foster or discourage, participatory governance approaches?

- o *The research contribution and objectives*

The formulated questions aim to achieve three main objectives, both related to:

1. The advancement of a theoretical debate on WH sites' governance, participation, and public values.
2. The proposal of a holistic analytical approach, based on the Heritage Participation Matrix;
3. The formulation of new insights for policy makers on the WH convention.

These three objectives guide the processes of the interpretation of the findings.

The first goal relates to the first research question and aims to explore the issue of participation within WH sites' governance structure, at the local level.

When referring to governance within the framework of the WH convention, the focus is often turned towards the mechanism that regulates the WH regime at a global level (Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015; Wolfrum, Dann, & Goldmann, 2010).

Subsequently, this interest led the research to focus on the power relations between the General Assembly of State Parties, WH Committee, Advisory bodies (Chechi, 2018; Schmitt, 2009, 2015), and the risk of political manipulation of the WH List (Meskell, 2013).



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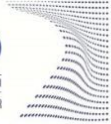


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Interestingly, few investigations focus on the governance structures created at a local level for the management of a WH sites and upon how they can include forms of public participation (Ercole, 2017; Li et al., 2020c), which are often closely intertwined with strategies of territorial development (Pettenati, 2019). Today, the openness of the WH convention towards sustainable development has led to an increase and diversification of actors involved in the WH site's activities. Such stakeholders can join WH sites governance at multiple levels, generating increasingly articulated arrangements (UNESCO, 2015b).

Furthermore, the functioning of WH sites governance is becoming ever more compelling since the increasement of the sites over larger territories, including transboundary sites, regional and national serial sites, and cultural landscapes (Adie & Amore, 2020; Pettenati, 2019; Wang, 2019).

However, political influences and the need for administrative agreements between several territorial entities (and not only) may complicate the operationalization and functioning of WH sites's governance.

The desk research explored in this thesis seeks a more thorough understanding of power relations within the WH site's governance by inspecting its multiscalar relations (Smith 2009; 2015): starting from the global WH mechanism, moving to the national sovereignty filter (Wang, 2019) up to local administrative settings. Main interest is to how, and whether, public participation occurs at every stage of decision-making.

The second goal aims to elucidate how WH sites 'participatory processes unfold, taking into account both participation in decision-making and enhancement initiatives of a WH site, as stated in the second research question.

By inquiring the relation between participation in decision making and enhancement initiatives, this section strives to highlight mechanisms that articulate WH sites' participatory processes (Bobbio, 2007; Fung, 2006; Wilcox, 1994) and correlated public values (Bozeman, 2007; Clark, 2016).

In response to this purpose, the analysis tackles both institutional arenas and existing places where WH sites' participatory processes develop. This analytical choice is related to a notion of "created spaces" for participation by civil society (Cornwall, 2002; Cornwall, 2008). Actions taken in these spaces (both abstract and existing) may indirectly influence the outcome of public decisions. As an example, in urban spaces participatory initiatives usually develop across "concentric niches of urban space" (Ciaffi e Mela 2006, p.101)³ which can range from the most private dimension (i.e the house), passing through the local medium-scale (i.e the neighborhood) up to the wider area (i.e the whole city).

The effective attachment of individuals to urban spaces is a precondition that distinguishes such participatory processes from "pure decision-making procedures" (Ciaffi e Mela 2006, p.101).

Besides embracing an urban environment, this research conceives heritage (ontological positioning) as an evolutionary process generated by long-term interactions and performances

³ Translated from italian to english.



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between individuals and spaces (Crouch, 2010; Graham et al., 2016; Harvey, 2001; Waterton & Watson, 2015).

Hence, a comprehensive analysis of participation in WH site's governance cannot neglect “created spaces” for participation by solely considering invited ones (Piber et al., 2017).

The third goal aspires to grasp the issue of WH public values (Clark, 2014, 2016; Clark & Lennox, 2019; Díaz-Andreu, 2017) in relation to previous and current participatory processes. Among the extensive debate about heritage values (de la Torre, 2013; de la Torre et al., 2017; ICOMOS, 2013), which resulted in the flourishing of countless typologies and assessment methods (Avrami & Mason, 2019; Throsby, 2012), the debate on public values remains rather neglected.

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to advance the debate on heritage public values with a specific focus on WH sites that could bring further complexity due to the attribution of the Outstanding Universal Value. This goal is pursued by combining the two theoretical perspectives on heritage public values developed so far. Together, these perspectives create a new lens, which will allow to accurately analyse both invited and created spaces for participation in WH sites governance. On one side this conceptual merging extrapolates the three dimensions elaborated in Moore's model (*intrinsic*, *instrumental*, and *institutional*) as they are capacious enough to accommodate multiple values arising from participatory processes without fixing *a priori* specific categories that might influence values' detection. On the other side, this thesis explores the three dimensions from the standpoints of different players who take part in a participatory process, instead of observing it from the perspectives of the managing officials or initiators.

- *Introducing the case study*

In order to answer the three research questions and accomplish its goals, this dissertation draws on a multidisciplinary theoretical framework. Furthermore, it thoroughly explores **the case of the WH Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale serial site (Italy)**, particularly focusing on Palermo's urban context through a qualitative “embedded units case study” approach (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Yin, 2003), that contains more than one sub-unit of analysis.

This case acts as a representative of a WH serial nomination. A serial nomination entails two or more disconnected areas that might extend across regional, trans-regional, and transnational boundaries (Haspel, 2013). Generally, governance structures for WH serial sites present a high level of organisational and operational complexity (Wang, 2019), which, influence the participatory processes. This is mainly due to a wide geographical extension, the encompassing of diverse legal frameworks, and the incorporation of heterogeneous ownerships and management systems related to multiple heritage properties. Out of a total of 58 WH sites in Italy, only 13 are serial sites of various extents and nature. The serial site of Palermo brings together nine buildings, six of which are monumental catholic churches and cathedrals, considered a sophisticated expression of multicultural “Western-Islamic-Byzantine syncretism” (Andaloro et al., 2018). In addition, it covers



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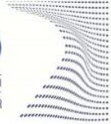


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three different municipalities (Palermo, Cefalù, and Monreale) with a prevalent concentration of buildings in the city of Palermo (seven out of nine).

- *Thesis outline*

This thesis unfolds in **six chapters**, structured into three main sections. Following this introduction, the first section gathers the theoretical and methodological chapters; the second section contains three chapters concerning empirical findings; the third and final session consists of comparative discussions and a conclusive remark chapter.

The arrangement of the three empirical chapters reflects the dichotomy between invited spaces and created spaces for participation (Cornwall, 2002). In particular, chapter three thoroughly analyzes the official governance structure of the WH serial site. In such circumstances, managing officials hold the power to invite people in participating to decision making. Chapters four and five look at two different urban neighborhoods in Palermo: *Cassaro Alto* and *Danisinni* which all surround a WH property. Here, different segments of civil society take a leading position to create their space to participate in the creation and appreciation of the WH serial site. The content of these four chapters has been arranged into flowing narratives of events and processes that occurred before and after the WH nomination.

Chapter 1 illustrates the multidisciplinary literature review used to place the empirical investigation.

The chapter is divided into three sub-sessions. The first introduces the global-local mechanism ruling the WH convention (Schmitt, 2009, 2015) explaining how the concept of participation in WH sites governance has evolved through main ruling texts (UNESCO, 1996, 1997, 2019b, 2021b), policies and recommendations addressing the Sustainable development discourse (UNESCO, 2015b, 2019a).

Bearing in mind the definition of *regimes* as “social institutions that influence the behaviour of states” within an issue area (Levy, Young, & Zürn, 1995), the WH regime, since its foundation in 1972 by the UNESCO General Conference, may be portrayed as a formal global arena which guides State Parties in the creation and preservation of cultural and natural WH sites of OUV, under agreed standards (Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015; Wolfrum et al., 2010). The WH regime exerts its influence on State Parties through tools of persuasive and soft power, such as listing and delisting mechanisms, conferring to each state the autonomy of any administrative traditions (Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015).

This flexibility, reinforced by the principle of state-sovereignty within the WH convention, may determine a two-fold effect: the heterogeneity of local governance structures responsible of managing the WH site, and the reliance of the WH regime’s success on the achievement of protection and sustainable development objectives for WH sites, from local strategies. Following, a



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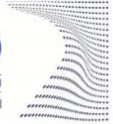


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paragraph (desk research) describing the Italian regulations on the management of WH sites, illustrating the juridical and operative forms of WH serial site governance structures, being the investigated subject.

The second session unpacks the paradigm of *participatory governance*, mainly looking at its political-science (Fischer, 2012; Heinelt, 2010; Moini, 2012) debate and observing some considerations in urban studies (Ciaffi e Mela, 2006).

The text expresses how it is still challenging to find a clear meaning of *participatory governance*, and determine its solid definition, both in theory and practice. Whilst the term *governance*, in its generic connotation, turns a shift from a centralized State-regulated steering of society to a decentralization of power among a plurality of actors (Peters & Pierre, 1998), the adjective *participatory* contrasts this attitude, emphasising on the need to enforce citizen engagement into decisional processes. In fact, the concept of *participatory governance* relies on various principles, such as “fairer distribution of political power and resources”, and on various methods from the “establishment of new partnerships to greater accountability” (Fischer 2012, p.2). The term may also follow different patterns, from top-down actions of policymakers to bottom-up processes by civil society (Gustafson & Hertting, 2017). In the field of heritage study, *participation* is also considered a crucial precondition for good and fair forms of governance for both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Li et al., 2020a). The Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005) in the European context already affirmed the importance to interpret cultural heritage as a socially constructed common good, and to consider the active participation of civil society at all levels of decision-making a pillar for heritage democratization process.

Finally, the third session explores the concept of heritage public values. It discusses two main perspectives (Clark, 2016; Clark & Lennox, 2019; Díaz-Andreu, 2017), which both consider the opening of the heritage to a broader public a positive attitude, yet they converge on the principle that heritage public values should be tied to people’s rights of exerting “individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage” (Council of Europe 2005, Article I).

The former perspective takes on cultural organizations' management perspective (such as museums, cultural foundations, etc.). In order to be funded, organizations must demonstrate how culture can contribute to society's well-being, legitimising their role. This way, they may receive funding from governments or funding bodies who “frequently caricature heritage as a backward-looking” (Clark 2016, p. 92). In this regard, the heritage public values serves to highlight societal benefits generated by the cultural organization that tends to “adopt new practices of public engagement” (Lennox 2016, p.90).

Drawing from the public value model proposed by Moore (1995), heritage public values originate from the interaction of three main dimensions: *intrinsic* (personal meanings attributed by people to cultural heritage), *instrumental* (benefits for a community or society at large), and *institutional* (creating positive vibes between a cultural organization and the public).



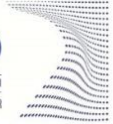
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The second thread considers heritage public values from a wider audience perspective (Jones, 2017; Olivier, 2017) to understand how public participation may contribute to identify heritage as a common good (Council of Europe, 2005). Subsequently, heritage public values emerge as intangible and transitory entities embedded in the social sphere (i.e., symbolic meaning such as memory attachment, sense of identity, affection, etc.) and remain challenging to detect.

Chapter 2 introduces the *Heritage Participation Matrix* elaborated as theoretical framework and used as analytical tool during the empiric research.

The chapter describes the construction and function of the Heritage Participation Matrix, used to triangulate data. The matrix is conceived as an operational tool to collect qualitative data of first and second order and reassemble scattered steps into a unified participatory process. The three main dimensions of participatory decisional arenas (who, how, and what influence) (Fung, 2006) (Annex 2) are combined through the matrix with that of the heritage public values (intrinsic, institutional, and instrumental) previously illustrated in the theoretical framework (Clark and Lennox, 2019).

For the purpose of this research, the matrix has been used to process qualitative information tied to both WH governance structures and urban spatial dynamics. This strategy of processing information allowed to aggregate heterogeneous data into fluent narratives, making them suitable for further discussion. The main limitation of the matrix method was the retrieval of detailed information regarding past participatory practices which respondents did not recall. These shortcomings were accomplished by processing information from local magazines and press conferences. The matrix played a central role in the composition of the following empirical chapters.

Chapter 3 focuses on methodology and explains the choice to focus upon the WH serial site *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* (Italy) by employing an embedded-units case study approach, whilst also explaining the construction of inductive research design (going back and forth from theory to the case).

In addition, it also illustrates qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews, field observations, etc.) collected material (official documents, online magazine press reviews, municipal resolutions, etc.) and the interview coding method.

Chapter 4 introduces the finding section. It describes (in short) the nine properties of the WH case *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site, providing further information concerning the legal and administrative system.

Subsequently, a detailed analysis of how participation has unfolded within the governance structure of the site is provided. From this analysis it emerges that, prior to the nomination, political and institutional actors had already started to collaborate in 1995. In 2015 (only four months prior to the WH nomination) owners and managing authorities, under the request of the ICCROM



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Advisory Body, signed a protocol of understanding, formalizing a permanent Steering Committee (SC). The chapter carefully analyses the SC decisional activities. This study reveals how the occurring of inner tensions, prevented the SC from expanding the decisional arenas to a broader public. This entanglement led towards the adoption of alternative means to boost participation: co-working with schools and young students; organizing free access joint events and enhancing communication channels.

Chapter 5 introduces the discussion on created spaces for participation, starting from the case of the Cassaro Alto neighborhood. *Cassaro Alto* is one of the main urban axes that spans the whole city center of Palermo and connects several monuments included in the WH serial site.

Before the WH nomination, district's participation was triggered by a contrast between the Municipality of Palermo, part of the SC, and some residents and traders operating in the *Cassaro Alto* area. Here, the Municipality attempted to gain consensus from the local community to create a new pedestrian area that could improve the monument's preservation from vehicular pollution, before the WH Committee ruled on the nomination outcome (Andaloro et al., 2018).

In this case, participatory mechanisms significantly evolved during the process: from conflicting town meetings between public administrators and citizens to discuss alternative pedestrianization solutions, to the spontaneous creation of a cultural association (called *Cassaro Alto*) that currently still actively involves almost all the traders of the areas (historical bookstores, tobacco shops, bars, etc.). Initially, the traders perceived the association as a formal vehicle to gain greater credibility in front of the Municipality when claiming their interests. In recent times, the association has turned into a tool of cooperation for the traders themselves and of collaboration with local authorities to revitalize the cultural interest of the historical road, especially in light of the obtained WH status. The cultural initiative *La Via Dei Librai* organized by the association along the pedestrian axis in occasion of UNESCO's World book day celebrates its fifth edition this year and is evidence of an established alliance between the *Cassaro Alto* association, non-profit entities, and the Municipality. The event is a form of active citizen participation that has grown in terms of public attendance, organizational structure, and networking of public and private partners. The *Via dei Librai* retrieves a piece of historical memory and contemporary value of *Cassaro Alto* not considered by the OUV.

Chapter 6 looks at the *Danisini* district.

This historical neighborhood of Palermo connects two iconic monuments included within the WH serial site: the *Royal Palace* and the *Zisa Castle*. *Danisinni* is included in the WH management plan with the purpose of developing a sustainable touristic route complementary to the WH itinerary. Despite its historical relevance starting from its Arab domination, the district still suffers from socio-economic marginalization due to a long-lasting institutional void that led to the dismantling of essential services, and to increasing isolation from its surroundings (Giubilaro & Lotta, 2018). The



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same void caused a significant development of grassroots activism nestled in the *Danisinni* community, grouping third sector actors, a religious garrison, and some residents. Before the nomination participation was triggered by an act of exclusion, the district was not considered in the drafting of the management plan, as it was almost absent from the collective urban and institutional imaginary.

After the nomination, the main objective was to materialize the route to the *Zisa* Castle. In the first phase, the participation developed under the form of co-governance between institutional actors, the *Danisinni* community, and the Academy of Fine Arts (the main outcome is the *Rambla Papireto* Project). In a second stage, as a divergence of perspectives emerged, the *Danisinni* Community was led to assert their vision for the neighborhood and interrupt the realisation of the WH rout. This stance came through a participatory project funded by Airbnb (*Progetto in Transito*). Today, the *Zisa* Castle is still severely affected by its isolation and the surrounding neighborhood (*Zisa* district) never received any of the expected interventions regardless of the universal recognition.

Chapter 7 delves into discussions of the thesis to advance the debate on participatory governance of WH sites in several directions.

Based on the three main research questions, this chapter provides a novel interpretation of participation in WH sites governance through the elaboration of three gradual stages: *inception*, *formalisation* and *openness*. Two further conceptual breakthroughs stem from the focus on the relationship between the three sub-units of analysis. These concepts are the *polycentric participatory governance* and the *relational buffer zones* of WH sites. Both affirm the conception of a WH sites' participatory governance as a system diffused across the surrounding area of a WH site, with decision-making units circumscribed to specific areas of interest and variable over time.

In conclusion, this thesis provides valuable insights both on the theoretical and methodological domains as well as some suggestions for WH policy makers.

The concluding chapter, **Chapter 8**, reviews the main findings, contributions and limitations of the research, by providing suggestions for a future research agenda.



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Chapter 1

Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

How do public participation and WH sites' governance locally intersect? What is the purpose of promoting participation in the WH sites' governance?

Could creating values for society be considered one of the main purposes of fostering participation in WH sites' governance?

Bearing these questions in mind, this chapter develops a multidisciplinary literature review to set the boundaries of the research. It adopts a processual perspective that conceives heritage as a social and evolving construct and investigating how participatory processes develop and mutate through the formalisation and development of a WH site.

The chapter consists of three parts. The first section introduces the concept of participation in the WH Convention. Drawing on regime theories, it starts by explaining the global mechanism ruling the WH Convention and its link with the WH sites' local governance. The chapter proceeds with the exploration of the concept of participation in the governance of WH sites in both policy documents and recent case studies to identify the main implementing challenges and to build the progressive analytical approach.

The second section unpacks the principles and mechanisms of participatory governance, delving into the main definitions, purposes, critiques, and spatial dimensions..

The third part focuses on the relation between participatory processes and public values, combining public administration with heritage studies.



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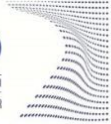


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The chapter extrapolates several theoretical concepts from different disciplines (i.e., political and social science, public administration, and heritage studies) and re-elaborates them into coherent guidance for the empirical investigation. The core conceptualization of heritage as social and dynamic construction binds these multidisciplinary arguments together.

PART 1

1.2. The World Heritage Convention: a global-local nexus

The WH Convention program and its main purpose of ensuring international protection of cultural and natural heritage (UNESCO, 1972, Article, 4) pervade the academic debate (Brumann, 2014; Frey et al., 2013; Jokilehto, 2011; Meskell, 2013; Meskell & Brumann, 2015; Turtinen, 2000).

Contributions are varied, embracing critical reflections on the imbalance of represented countries in the WH List (Frey et al., 2013), the risk of political and economic manipulation of the UNESCO WH decision-making process (Bertacchini et al., 2017), the growing role of NGOs and private enterprises in the implementation of the WH convention (Chechi, 2018), the Eurocentric approach underpinning the heritage conservation ethos of the WH Convention (De Cesari, 2010) and the universalism of the OUV (Labadi, 2007).

The main purpose of this paragraph is to illustrate how the global governance mechanism established by the WH convention is linked to governance structures for the management of WH sites.

Turtinen (2000), in his seminal paper about the transnational mechanism behind the WH convention, already stressed the dichotomy between global and local governance. The author defines the WH nomination as a “global grammar for local contexts” (Turtinen, 2000, p. 12).

The expression highlights how the standardized procedure for establishing a WH site is set up at the global level of the WH program – mainly through the OGs – and materialised by the State Parties to the WH convention and a cluster of actors who hold specific competences to carry out a WH nomination at the local site level:

[...] “The crystallisation of World Heritage is a process of standardisation, but one that is more clearly transnational in character, and one that demands precise rules of procedure, defined and generalised notions and categories, as well as clearly identified actors with specific responsibilities and roles to play [...]” (Turtinen, 2000, p.13).

Later research focuses mostly on the mechanism of global governance. Specifically, studies grounded in the regime theory analyse, in greater detail, power relations between the General Assembly of State Parties, the WH Committee, and Advisory bodies (Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015; Wolfrum et al., 2010). The notion of the regime as a “precursor of global governance



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conceptualization” (Stokke, 1997, p. 28), attempted to re-position the debate on international politics from idealism to realism, querying effects and constraints produced on state behavior (Haggard & Simmons, 1987). Drawing on the definition of regimes as “social institutions that influence the behavior of states” within an issue area (Levy et al., 1995), this research interprets the WH one as a formal global arena that guides State Parties to the WH Convention in creating and preserving WH sites, under the agreed international standards (Ferrucci, 2012). Since its implementation in 1972 by the UNESCO General Conference, the WH convention establishes a worldwide regime concerning the construction and protection of the natural and cultural heritage of *Outstanding Universal Value* (Bendix, 2013; Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015).

The two governing bodies dominating the WH global arena are the General Assembly of State Parties to the WH Convention and the WH Committee. The General Assembly gathers representatives of all States – today 194 countries – that ratify the WH Convention. It assembles every two years, mainly to elect the 21 State members of the WH Committee. Each State manages a national Tentative List, as a provisional inventory of cultural, natural, and mixed sites to be considered for a potential WH nomination. A year prior to the submission of a WH nomination, States are required to send their Tentative List to the WH Centre (UNESCO, 2021b). Established in 1992, the WH Centre is the administrative branch of the WH Committee, acting as an extension of a previous Secretariat (Figure 1). Its role employs organising the annual meeting of the WH Committee and its Bureau, providing international assistance to State Parties to prepare a WH nomination (upon request), and responsible of spreading awareness in regards of the WH Convention trough capacity building actions (Schmitt, 2015). Each nomination dossier submitted to the WH center is then evaluated by two main Advisory Bodies – namely the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - which verify if conservation, governance, and management standards referred to the WH OGs comply, also through site inspections. Expert’s recommendations are transmitted to WH Committee, which meets once a year. It is responsible to monitor the implementation of the WH Convention and managing the WH Fund. Mostly importantly it decides whether a nominated heritage site should be inscribed or not on the WH List (Schmitt 2015).

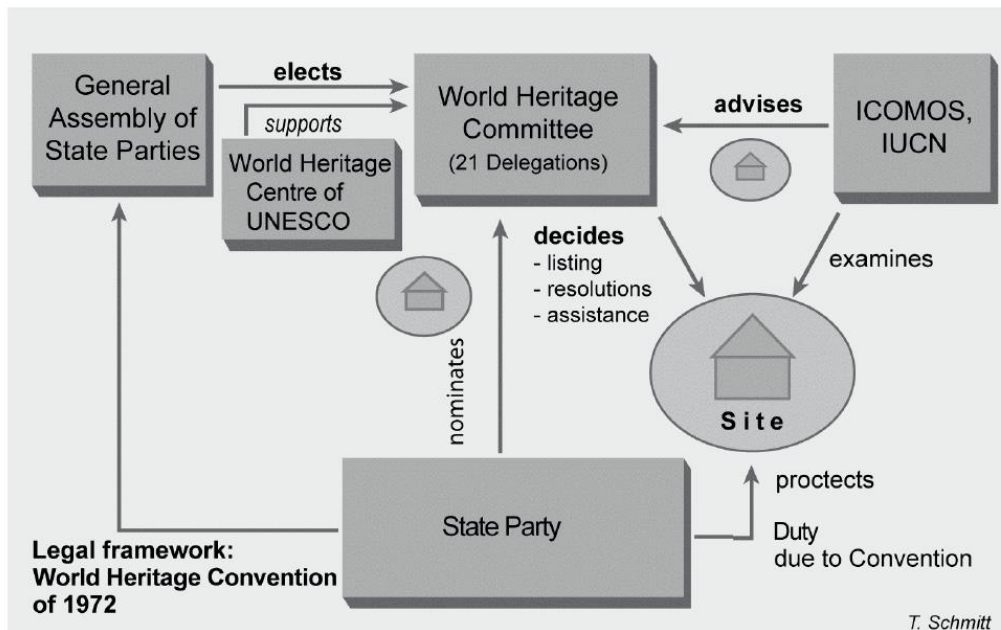


Figure 1 The global functioning mechanism of the WH regime. Image Source: Schmitt 2015, p. 13.

Both Ferrucci (2012) and Schmitt (2015) define the WH regime as weak, based upon tools of soft and persuasive power and multi-lateral cooperation among State Parties. Although the WH committee gives the final word on the acceptance, rejection, or deferral of a heritage site into the WH List - sometimes overriding the technical recommendations of the Advisory Bodies (Meskell & Brumann, 2015) - it has no means of imposing sanctions when State Parties do not properly follow the procedure for the WH nomination or do not adequately preserve a WH site's OUV. In fact, it only retains the soft tool of moving a WH site from the WH List to the Danger List or in extreme cases, to even delist the sites (UNESCO 2019b, p. 32, paragraph 116), and getting states to fulfil their tasks (Ferrucci, 2012, p. 21).

Another factor that further weakens the formal power of the WH Committee and decreases the distance between the WH convention global arena and local governance of a WH site is the *state sovereignty* principle, enshrined in Articles 4 and 6 of the WH Convention:

“ Each State Party to this Convention recognizes that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation, and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage referred to in Articles 1 and 2 and situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State. It will do all it can to this end, to the utmost of its resources and, where appropriate, with any international assistance and co-operation financial, artistic, scientific, and technical, which it may be able to obtain (UNSECO, 1972, Article 4);

[...] Whilst fully respecting the sovereignty of the States on whose territory the cultural and natural heritage [...] the States Parties to this Convention recognize that such heritage constitutes a



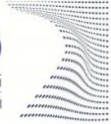
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world heritage for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate” (UNESCO, 1972, Article 6).

Both articles show how the WH Committee does not “govern from the top right down to the bottom” (Schmitt, 2015, p. 26). Instead, it relies on State Parties’ actions and cooperation, as the principle of *state sovereignty* affirms. The latter allows State Parties to adapt international regulations established by the WH regime to national socio-political contexts, depending on the sites’ nature and administrative traditions (Schmitt, 2015). Furthermore, State Parties are crucial mediators between multi-scalar relations that distinguish the WH regime (Wang, 2019; Wolfrum et al., 2010, p. 753). They select heritage sites from the national Tentative List to compete for the WH nomination and can decentralize responsibilities concerning the protection and enhancement of WH sites to other *entities* acting at the territorial level of the WH site (Coombe & Weiss, 2015, pp. 43-49). The need to decentralise certain functions to peripheral institutions and actors stems from the standardised procedure to implement the WH Convention (UNESCO, 2019b). As explained in the OGs – which are annually revised – the drafting of the nomination dossier by State Parties represents the core step of this procedure (UNESCO 2019b, pp. 46-48, paragraph 168). It is articulated in six sections⁴, which, in order to successfully develop, require a full collaboration between local authorities, multidisciplinary experts, and civil society and the sharing of technical knowledge (Pettenati, 2019).

For instance, the first and third sections dealing with the identification of the nominated property (or properties) and the justification for the inscription, clearly show how the duty of creating and preserving a WH site is “in the hands of local, regional and national authorities” (Schmitt, 2015, p. 25). The first section requires the selection of the geographical extension of the nominated property, clearly setting Buffer Zones’ boundaries (BZ) (UNESCO 2019b, p. 30, paragraphs 103-107). BZs act as geographical and legal devices to better preserve the values of the nominated property, especially its OUV:

“[...] A buffer zone is meant to ensure effective protection of the nominated property through complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property [...]” (Martin & Piatti, 2009, p. 46).

The extension of the BZs areas is discretionary and serves to integrate the nominated site with its surrounding territory (Pettenati, 2019). Managing bodies, property owners, authorities and local experts determine the BZ buffer zones' arrangement under the supervision of State Parties (UNESCO

⁴ The WH nomination format is articulated in six main sections, that are: the identification of the nominated property; description of the nominated property; justification for the inscription; state of conservation and factors affecting the nominated property; protection and management; key indicators for measuring the state of conservation. Retrieved information from: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/nominations/> Accessed, 16/04/2022.



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2019b, p. 30, paragraphs 103-107). Pettenati identifies five possible typologies of zoning⁵ and stresses how such perimeters define territorial configurations with different management modes and legal frameworks.

The third section concerns the core of the nomination dossier and also requires a multilateral and multidisciplinary contribution from institutions, experts, and civil society (Ferrucci, 2012).

It contains the OUV explication, integrity, and authenticity statements of the nominated site, following the line of the WH OGs (UNESCO 2019b, p. 100). The section also includes a summary of the site's management and protection system, which is further defined in more detail in the fifth session (UNESCO 2019b, p. 104). The OUV is outlined abiding by 10 criteria⁶ established by the WH Committee. In the justification for inscription, each State should indicate how the property meets the selected criteria through an in-depth description of the property's relevant features (UNESCO 2019b, p. 100).

The drafting of these sections builds on the convergence of heterogeneous knowledge regarding the nominated property and collaboration among multiple actors, mainly experts, local institutions, and property owners (Laposi, 2020; Leask & Fyall, 2006). The commitment does not cease with the nomination, instead it progresses through the mandatory management plan – since 2005 - requiring stable forms of coordination between all the involved actors in order to preserve the WH site, its OUV and to implement an integrated enhancement strategy with the surrounding context, in the long term (UNESCO, 2005b).

While critical heritage studies embracing the *authorised heritage discourse* (Smith, 2006) have stressed how the WH convention, due to its rigid rules, technical language, and political influences has globally affirmed an elitist concept of heritage in the hands of experts and politicians (Bertacchin et al. 2017; De Cesari, 2010; Frey et al. 2013; Labadi, 2007),-other studies focus on how such expertise and power relationships are embedded in the local governance of WH sites (at the site level) and how they encompass wider participation (Badia et al., 2012; Laposi, 2020; Ripp &

⁵ Referring to a WH site's *core zones*, the author identifies five perimeter typologies: *punctual sites* which are limited to the monument and surrounding areas; *areal sites* which extend to the point of comprising a large portion of the surrounding territory considered a Unesco site (from historic centres to cultural and natural landscapes); *linear sites* with a specific linear configuration (railway, river landscape, etc.) crossing different territorial contexts; *serial punctual sites* consisting of two or more reduced core zones usually coinciding with a monument; *serial areal sites* consisting of two or more core zones spread over wide areas (Pettenati, 2019, pp. 63-66).

⁶ Until 2004, the OUV of WH sites was defined through six criteria. After the OG's revision, the number of criteria increased to ten. The ten criteria are: (i) being a masterpiece of human creative genius; (ii) embodying a relevant interchange of human values, in time and space; (iii) being a unique or rare witness of a cultural civilization still alive or disappeared; (iv) being an outstanding architectural ensemble, building or landscape to read the evolution of human history; (v) being an outstanding example of human interactions with the environment (traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use); (vi) being a tangible evidence of living traditions and events; (vii) containing supernatural phenomena or exceptional natural beauty; (viii) being an outstanding example of earth's history evolution, including geological and geomorphic transformations; (ix) being an outstanding example of ongoing ecological and biological processes; (x) hosting significant habitats for biological diversity conservation. Retrieved information from: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/> Accessed, 16/04/2022.



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Rodwell, 2018; Schmitt, 2015). To this purpose, this thesis firstly looks at how the concept of governance and participation evolves in official WH OGs, and on akin UNESCO agendas, recommendations, and workshops: Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage (UNESCO, 2015b), UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape (UNESCO, 2011b), Culture 2030 (UNESCO, 2018). Subsequently, it scrutinizes practices and dilemmas emerging from the academic literature.

1.2.1. Participation and governance in the WH Operational guidelines.

“Governance is certainly one of the key issues for the management of WH sites: it involves a large number of different stakeholders with the aim to create synergy between them and to manage the complexity of actions to be developed in multiple areas” (Heritage Research Lab & University of Florence 2019, p. 89).

On the occasion of the last 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2021, in Fuzhou, China), the 4th WH site Managers Forum (WHSMF) tackles the issue of WH sites’ governance⁷. Recalling the WH OGs’ text on the importance of setting up “equitable governance arrangements” (UNESCO, 2021, paragraph 117), WH sites’ managers from all over the world agree that the ever-changing challenges of managing a WH site – varying from climate changes to the achievement of sustainability standards – require more inclusive governance structures, recognizing that the “active consultation and involvement of right-holders, local communities and stakeholders are essential in the management of WH properties” (UNESCO 2021a, p. 1). Also, they acknowledge the difficulty of smoothly aligning the perspectives of all engaged entities at the WH site level and consequently achieving meaningful decisional structures. As a way forward, participants aspire to adaptive, inclusive, and transparent governance structures and ask for “holistic guidance and practical tools [...] to be adopted at all WH properties” (UNESCO 2021a, p. 3).

The recent meeting between WH site managers brings back to the fore two related themes: the issue of governance and participation. Both subjects are not novel in the official documents⁸ for the implementation of the WH convention which rarely provides information on methodologies to trigger systematic engagement of local people in decision making.

In the 1972 WH convention text, the authority of the *international community*, which underpins involved global bodies (WH Committee, Advisory Bodies, etc.), is predominant (Khirfan, 2017). Fairclough (2020) sees how the *international community* “imagined” to stress its detachment from grassroots communities engaged in heritage care:

“The UNESCO WH Convention does speak of collective assistance and protection, but its collectivity arises from an imagined ‘international community’ rather than from any form of

⁷ Retrieved information from: <https://whc.unesco.org/fr/actualites/2309> Accessed 16/04/2021.

⁸ The OGs texts, from 1977 to 2021, are accessible at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/> Accessed 16/04/2021.



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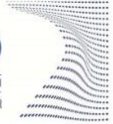


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community operating at a more familiarly human level, for example at local or national scale, or through communities of place, interest or heritage” (Fairclough 2020, p. viii).

The local dimension of participation is solely confined to Article 5 of the convention. It is conceived through a hierarchical understanding of power, whereby State Parties decide how to integrate WH sites’ functions into community life (UNESCO, 1972).

A greater contribution to define the boundaries of participation in WH sites governance stems from the WH OGs (Díaz-Andreu, 2017).

In 1995, the reviewed version of the WH OGs marked a first step forward, by stating that “participation of local people in the nomination process is essential to make them feel a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the site” (UNESCO1996, p. 5, article B.14), deleting the caveat that participation “should not prejudice future decision-making by Committee” (UNESCO 1994, p.8, Article B14) However, the OG’s text does not provided further details about how to implement such *sharing of responsibility* and whether it implies local people’s participation in decisions (Kirfan 2017, p. 101).

A breakthrough was finally achieved with the 2005 amendments.

The new OG version explicitly incorporates public participation with WH sites’ management (UNESCO 2005, P.24, paragraph II.F.108), stating that “each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which should specify how the outstanding universal value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means” (UNESCO, 2005, paragraph 108).

Furthermore, the term *participation* was becoming increasingly widespread. Indeed, it is expected at every stage of a WH site’s construction and development. State Parties “are encouraged to ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other interested parties and partners in the identification, nomination, and protection of World Heritage properties” (UNESCO 2005, p. 3, paragraph I.C.12), even during the drafting of the Tentative List (UNESCO, 2005, paragraph 64).

Participation is also considered an output of enhancement strategies concerning a WH site. As a result, States Parties are called upon to “develop educational activities related to WH with, wherever possible, the participation of schools, universities, museums and other local and national educational authorities” (UNESCO 2005, p. 57, paragraph VI.B.220). Throughout the text, the term *public* encompasses diverse subjects: individuals, stakeholders, local and national population, young generations, governmental, non-governmental, and private organizations (UNESCO 2005, p. 10, paragraph I.H.40), schools, universities, museums, and property owners (UNESCO 2005, p. 10, paragraph I.H.40) who have an interest in preserving a WH property (UNESCO 2005, p. 57, paragraph VI.C.220). The following OGs editions (UNESCO, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017) leave unvaried room for the theme of participation.



Only the 2019 OG edition took a step forward (UNESCO, 2019b), combining the notion of *participation* with that of *governance* for the first time. To further clarify, paragraph 117 asserts that State Parties should implement effective management activities for a WH property “in close collaboration with property managers, the agency with management authority and other partners, local communities and indigenous people, right-holders and stakeholders in property management, by developing appropriate, equitable governance arrangements, collaborative management systems, and regress mechanisms” (UNESCO 2019, p.32, paragraph II.F.117). The concept of participation is enriched by the adjectives gender-balanced (UNESCO 2019, p. 10, paragraph I.C.12), effective, inclusive (UNESCO 2019, p.34, paragraph III.A.123), and equitable (UNESCO 2019, p.33, paragraph II.F.119). The latest OG edition (2021) better integrates participation into the WH procedure. Section five of the nomination format (UNESCO 2021b, p.110) - about the protection and management of the nominated property – adds some implementation steps to facilitate participatory approaches. Such extra steps concern the stakeholder’s identification and provide greater clarity in the category analysis, distinguishing the categories of “land ownership – State, Provincial, private, community, traditional, customary and non-governmental ownership [...] inhabitants living within the nominated property and any buffer zone(s) [...], indigenous people” (UNESCO 2021b, p. 111). Participation in the nomination process must be demonstrated through the implementation of widespread and accessible communication campaigns, public consultations and hearings (UNESCO 2021b, p.34, paragraph IIIA.123) and “collaboration with stakeholders and right-holders in the management of the nominated property” (UNESCO 2021b, p.32, paragraph 117). **Table 1** summarises how participation and governance concepts change in the OGs published from 1995 to 2021 and provides the interpretation elaborated in this thesis.

Table 1 The concept of participation and governance in WH OGs editions.

Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention	Reference to participation and governance	Interpretation
1996 edition	“Participation of local people in the nomination process is essential to make them feel a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the site” (UNESCO1996, p. 5, article B.14)	1. Lacking specific information regarding the strategy to implement such ‘sharing of responsibility’ and whether it includes the participation of locals in determining decisions.
2005 edition	“[...] Each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which should specify how the outstanding universal value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means [...]” (UNESCO 2005, P.24, paragraph II.F.108).	1. Participation as a compulsory requirement for State Parties to elaborate a WH management plan; 2. Participation is seen both as a means to achieve a management plan agreed among multiple actors and as an output of planned enhancement activities;



	<p>State Parties “are encouraged to ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other interested parties and partners in the identification, nomination, and protection of World Heritage properties” (UNESCO 2005, p. 3, paragraph I.C.12);</p> <p>“[...] develop educational activities related to WH with, wherever possible, the participation of schools, universities, museums, and other local and national educational authorities” (UNESCO 2005, p. 57, paragraph VI.B.220).</p>	<p>3. Growing subjects to be engaged in participation: individuals, stakeholders, local and national population, young generations, governmental, non-governmental, and private organizations, schools, universities, museums, and property owners who have an interest in preserving a WH property.</p>
From 2008 to 2017 editions	Unchanged text	-
2019 edition	<p>“In close collaboration with property managers, the agency with management authority and other partners, local communities and indigenous people, right-holders and stakeholders in property management, by developing appropriate, equitable governance arrangements, collaborative management systems, and regress mechanisms” (UNESCO 2019, p.32, paragraph II.F.117).</p>	<p>1. Combining the notion of participation with that of governance;</p> <p>2. Characterising participation: gender-balanced, effective, inclusive and equitable;</p>
2021 edition	<p>“States Parties should do so in close collaboration with property managers, the agency with management authority and other partners, local communities and indigenous peoples, rights-holders and stakeholders in property management, by developing, when appropriate, equitable governance arrangements, collaborative management systems and redress mechanisms.” (UNESCO 2021b, p.32, paragraph 117);</p> <p>“States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the widest possible participation of stakeholders and shall demonstrate, [...] making the nominations publicly available in appropriate languages and public consultations and hearings” (UNESCO 2021b, p.34, paragraph 123).</p>	<p>1. Additional information about stakeholders’ categories to be involved in participatory processes;</p> <p>2. First mentioning to participatory mechanisms, such as public consultations, hearings.</p>

Source: own elaboration



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1.2.2. Participation and governance in WH-related policies and recommendations

The WH program's orientation towards sustainable development (Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2011; Rosetti et al., 2022; UNESCO, 2015b; Wiktor-Mach, 2020) evokes greater relevance to the themes of *governance* and *participation*. Adopted by the United Nations in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015) combines the contribution of several global programs for planet protection in 17 interrelated goals for sustainable development (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015). After several advocacy campaigns⁹ led by European and international organizations, the contribution of cultural heritage to sustainable development has been formally recognized under the SDG 11 *to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable*¹⁰. Accordingly, WH sites become pivotal in demonstrating how heritage may contribute to further SDG implementation (ICOMOS, 2021; UNESCO, 2018).

Even so, Labadi acknowledges that “WH as a tool for sustainable development has almost become a slogan” (Labadi 2017, p. 1) and it is asserted not without contradictions. In one hand, as Article 4 of the WH Convention (1972) affirms the duty to protect heritage for future generations, it anticipates the concept of intergenerational equity at the heart of the most common sustainable development definition¹¹ (United Nations, 1987). Although on the other hand, the same WH Convention text advises against rapid forms of urban and tourist development as potential threats to heritage site preservation (UNESCO, 1972).

Over the years the WH Committee and its Secretariat took some efforts to overcome the opposition between preservation and development and to integrate “sustainable development principles within the WH process” (Labadi 2017, p. 49). Most notably the 2015 *Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage* adopted by the 20th General Assembly of State Parties to the WH Convention, guides institutions and practitioners to strengthen the contribution of WH sites in sustainable development fields, without overlooking the WH convention's main purpose to preserve the OUV (UNESCO, 2015b).

⁹ Some advocacy campaigns are available at: http://culture2030goal.net/?page_id=243 Accessed 16/04/2022.

¹⁰ Within the SDG 11, the target 11.4 aims at strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage. Retrieved information from: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/sustainable-development-goal-11-4>, accessed 16/04/2022.

¹¹ The Brundtland Report adopted in 1987 by the World Commission on Economic Development states that sustainable development occurs when “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations, 1987, Paragraph 27).



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According to the policy document, adopting a sustainable development approach in the implementation of the WH Convention requires that “States Parties should review and reinforce governance frameworks within management systems of WH properties in order to achieve the appropriate balance, integration and harmonization between the protection of OUV and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives” (UNESCO 2015b, p.3, paragraph II.9). Reinforcing governance arrangements entails triggering the “full respect and participation of all stakeholders and right holders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, the setting up of effective inter-institutional coordination mechanisms” (UNESCO 2015b, p.3, paragraph II.9). The policy text strengthens the link between governance and participation, describing the latter as a core element of the social development dimension (UNESCO 2015b, p. 6 paragraph III.17). Indeed, it is essential to develop human-rights-based management approaches to the WH properties (UNESCO 2015b, p. 6 paragraph III.20), inclusive and equitable decision-making arrangements (UNESCO 2015b, p. 6 paragraph III.21).

Further insights arise from other UNESCO programs related to the WH Convention. *The recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)*, adopted by the UNESCO’s General Conference in 2011 (UNESCO, 2011b), integrates conservative approaches for the built environment with broader strategies of urban development, to enhance heritage values and cultural diversity of different contexts (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012; Rey-Pérez & Pereira Roders, 2020). The WH convention recognises the HUL program as a valuable tool for reconciling the preservation of WH sites’ OUV in urban contexts and sustainable development necessities of cities (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012). Civic engagement is referred to as one of the HUL implementation tools: it allows to develop participation in decision-making and is defined as “an integral part of urban governance dynamics, to facilitate intercultural dialogue [...] mediation and negotiation between groups with conflicting interests” (UNESCO 2011c, p. 4). The report of the second consultation on the HUL implementations by Member States (UNESCO, 2019c) points out four different models of stakeholder participation: open to the public, elected members, by invitation only, and accredited NGOs (UNESCO 2019c p. 19). The involvement of neighborhood councils in decision-making is mentioned as a further mechanism to foster participatory processes and community engagement in the HUL implementation (UNESCO 2019b, pp. 18-19). However, the report does not elaborate on the models of stakeholder participation in detail. Instead, it overall states that community participation is still limited and “more tools and methodologies are necessary for the systematic engagement of local communities in decision-making processes” (UNESCO 2019c, p. 27). The authors Rey-Pérez and Pereira Roders (2020) advance a similar observation concerning the issue of participation in the HUL approach. Following a systematic review of 140 peer-reviewed publications about the HUL– between 2008 and 2019 – they reveal that the non-active community participation in decision-making is perceived as one of the main critical factors



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Finally, the recent UNESCO report on *Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda*, mentions participation as one of the four transversal thematic dimensions of sustainability (UNESCO, 2019a).

It refers to “the capacity of culture to stimulate effective engagement of local communities in public life” (UNESCO 2019a, p. 27) and can cover a wide range of forms. Of course, in conformity with the 16.7 SDG’s Target, the *Culture 2030* text defines participatory processes as “opportunities open to civil society to participate in the formulation and implementation of cultural activities as well as policies, measures, and programs that concern them, both nationally and at the regional/municipal/local level” (UNESCO 2019a, p. 46). In regards of WH sites, “community involvement in the decision-making process” and “formalized framework for community participation” within the WH Management Plan are mentioned as indicators of participatory management and governance systems (UNESCO 2019a, p.92).

Even though policies emphasize the role of participation in WH site management, they do not inquire how participatory practices tied to WH sites may reshape interactions among local institutions, civil society, and further players, generating mutable spaces for collaborations or further grounds of contestation within local socio-economic and political systems (Khirfan, 2017; Li et al., 2020a, 2020c). The risk is to accentuate a *cosmetic* use of participation in WH heritage procedures, to idealize its effects while underestimating potential failures in ensuring democratization of decisional power and promoting the sharing of responsibilities (Cortés-Vázquez et al., 2017; González et al., 2018). **Table 2** summarises the concept of participation and governance in WH-related policies and recommendations.

Table 2 The concept of participation and governance in WH-related policies and recommendations

World Heritage related policies and recommendations	Reference to participation and governance	Interpretation
2015 Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage	“[...] States Parties should review and reinforce governance frameworks within management systems of WH properties in order to achieve the appropriate balance, integration, and harmonization between the protection of OUV and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives” ; “[...] full respect and participation of all stakeholders and right holders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, the setting up of effective inter-institutional coordination mechanisms” (UNESCO 2015b, p.3, paragraph II.9).	1. Participation and governance as a core element to develop a sustainable management of WH sites; 2. Reference to the actors to be involved; No reference on participation mechanisms.



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<p>2011 The recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</p>	<p>Participation in decision-making and is defined as “an integral part of urban governance dynamics, to facilitate intercultural dialogue [...] mediation and negotiation between groups with conflicting interests” (UNESCO 2011b, p. 4);</p>	<p>1. Civic participation is referred as one of the HUL implementation tools; 2. The HUL report (2019) points out four different models of stakeholder participation: open to the public, elected members, by invitation only, and accredited NGOs and stresses the lack of participatory methodologies.</p>
<p>2019 Thematic Indicators for Culture in the 2030 Agenda</p>	<p>Participatory processes as “opportunities open to civil society to participate in the formulation and implementation of cultural activities as well as policies, measures, and programs that concern them, both nationally and at the regional/municipal/local level” (UNESCO 2019a, p. 46)</p>	<p>1. Participation in WH sites’ decision making is considered as one of the four transversal thematic dimensions of sustainability and indicators of participatory management systems.</p>

Source: own elaboration

1.2.3. Participation and governance in WH case studies

Beyond UNESCO policy documents, the academic literature (Badia et al., 2012; Donato & Lohrasbi, 2017; Dormaels, 2016; Ercole, 2017; Li et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c) provides greater attention to the issue of participation and governance in WH sites, by depicting a broad, fragmented, and sometimes controversial scenario.

The first issue concerns the unclear terminology when referring to WH governance and participation. Often, the expressions *participatory governance* and *management* are used without a clear distinction. In the case of the WH Old Québec in Canada, Dormaels (2016) focuses on the “participatory management” of the site. Most of his empirical analysis relates to the consensus-building mechanism (named the Roundtable) set up by the municipal authorities to engage citizens in decision-making. The author sheds light on several determinants that might influence multi-stakeholder collaboration in WH decisional structures, including political will, participants’ representativeness, mechanism’s credibility in meeting participants’ expectations (Dormaels, 2016, p. 28). However, he only mentions a few aspects of heritage management (Lusiani et al., 2015) - such as the issue of resource allocation – by stating the difference between *participatory management* and *governance* misleading. Fortunately, greater clarity is presented in the case of the WH Takht-e Soleyman archaeological site in Iran. In this regard, Donato and Lohrasbi (2017) more clearly define their position on participatory governance concept. The authors correlate the concept of participatory governance to a shift of the local communities’ role in the WH site’s decisional mechanisms. Drawing on common theory (Ostrom, 1990), they state that in participatory governance, citizens change from “formerly helpless and ineffective beneficiaries of decisions taken by the government” to “active participants and collaborators working toward the achievement of common outcomes” (Donato & Lohrasbi 2017, p. 130). In consequence, they specify that participatory governance can take on



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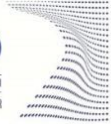


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diverse forms of interactions between public and private actors and how it requires rules among decision-makers. Instead, participatory management mainly refers to the achievement of shared outcomes through collective decisions. Looking at the Takht-e Soleyman WH site as a cultural rural landscape, the authors focus on the sustainable development objectives (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012), by mentioning the improvement of social services and infrastructure, resource management, strengthening of social capital, etc. (Donato & Lohrasbi 2017, p. 130). Moreover, they agree that both participatory governance and management of the WH cultural landscape are built at the crossroad of two factors: the recognition of local cultural values and local people's contribution (Donato & Lohrasbi 2017, p. 133).

The topics of participation and governance in WH sites are also addressed through a more varied terminology, such as *community participation* (Landorf, 2009a; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017), *community-based approach* (Greer, 2010), *participatory initiatives* (M. Di Giovine, 2017).. In this regard, a recent and extensive contribution comes from the analysis of Chinese WH properties (36 WH sites, both rural and urban) (Li et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c). By assessing 36 different sites from UNESCO documents, the authors convene that community participation in WH management consists of four main dimensions, and participation in WH decision making is part of them. In China, it occurs through a systematic process of power decentralization from the Chinese central government to local state institutions (such as the Residents Committee or street offices) in charge of supporting residents' participation in WH site decisions (Verdini, 2015). A closer look at the WH old town of Lijiang in China (Li et al., 2020a, 2020c) reveals that a state-centralized approach is still dominant and hinders residents' effective participation in strengthening the social and cultural capital of the city. In particular, the authors refer to a "tokenistic manner of community participation in Chinese urban heritage management" (Li et al. 2020a, p. 2). Indeed, although residents participate in formal multi-level negotiations, following administrative procedure requirements, their needs are rarely included in the final policy or activity plan. Local elites and community-based organisations, that convey residents' intentions in governmental meetings – named *tingzenghui* – mainly serve the willingness of government authorities (both local and central) who select them (Li et al. 2020a, p. 5). Thus, while political leaders have sufficient authority to exert exclusive decisional power, the role of civil society in shaping a participatory process and "building horizontal alliances between citizens and heterogeneous community organizations" (Li et al. 2020a, p. 10) is quite limited. Governmental meetings and consultations involving residents and the local community, result in an opposite effect than expected, despite the regular implementation. In reality, residents are not interested in being engaged in the government-initiated participatory process for the WH old town of Lijiang.

In the European context, the project *PaticiPat - heritage and social participation: methodological proposal and critical review* analyses participation as an instrument of heritage governance in about nine heritage sites between Spain and Portugal (González et al. 2018, p. 311). Some include WH sites such as the *Santiago de Compostela* route (González et al., 2018). The authors denounce an instrumental use of participation by political elites to legitimize neoliberal choices and



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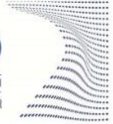


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strengthen hegemonic power structures, preventing citizens (and other participants) to express their ideas and creating further social barriers around heritage. Specifically, they identify three factors that make participation a “smokescreen for the restructuring of traditional political affinities in local contexts” (González et al. 2018, p. 32).

The first limit concerns the lack of a participatory culture among local political parties. They create *ad hoc* civil associations to be included in the governance structures, creating apparent forms of participation. The result is the reinforcement of existing political stances, rather than introducing novel and detached perspectives. The second problem involves the selection mechanisms for the associations' representatives. These mechanisms are, in fact, based upon pre-existing top-down power relations and associations' delegates, which tend to comply with political requirements rather than represent the civil society's will. Finally, the third problem is a result of the material restrictions implicating a lack of sufficient budgets, administrative bureaucracy, and time constraints that prevent an adequate deployment of participatory processes.

The literature reviewed until now highlights a discrepancy between policy and practices. While the WH Convention (1972), the OGS (UNESCO 1996, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019a) and other UNESCO policies (UNESCO 2011b, 2015b, 2019a) recommend participation of civil society (intended in a broad sense including local communities, indigenous people, stakeholders, etc.) in WH site decisional arenas, the analysis of practices highlights an acute struggle in ensuring it due to a lack of participatory tools, knowledge, and appropriate resources. Moreover, the case of China in general, and more specifically of the WH historical town of Lijiang, shows that, the attempt of governmental authorities to implement participatory mechanisms does not always boost civil society's will to participate in decisional processes, since this attempt is politically dominated and far from meeting participants' expectations.

In addition, the literature shows how participation in decisions concerning the construction and development of WH sites can occur through several initiatives that succeed in establishing a deeper value connection with a wider public, from citizens to remote area communities (Badia et al., 2012; Ercole, 2017; Perricone & Gal Ramella, 2021).

When referring to participatory initiatives, reference is made to the conceptualization elaborated by Piber in the framework of a series of studies aimed at understanding the management of participatory initiatives in the cultural sector (defined as participatory cultural initiatives) (Piber 2017; Piber et al. 2019; Biondi et al., 2020).

“A participatory cultural initiatives (PCI) highlights the subjective relevance of individual contributions and strengthens the feeling of being socially connected among each other” (Piber et al. 2019, p.1);

“In a cultural setting, a participatory approach allows citizens to engage in cultural initiatives as co-designers [...], co-implementers [...], or as initiators [...] Participatory initiatives involve a



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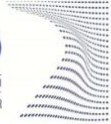


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plurality of actors and aim at a variety of objectives, thus these projects are usually complex” (Biondi et al. 2020, p. 1-2).

Such aspects emerge from the analysis of several Italian WH sites. Ercole (2017) in reviewing the concepts of *governance*, *participation*, and *inclusion* in WH sites’ management plans in Italy, stresses that citizen participation in decisions often takes place through “non-institutional approaches, focusing on informal participation” (Ercole 2017, p. 186).

Among the several examples provided by the author, Ercole principally refers to the realisation of the *Mantova and Sabbioneta Heritage Centre* for the homonymous WH cities. Between 2014 and 2017 the center hosted a series of free initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness on the WH sites’ values, the approach to heritage preservation, and triggering new relationships between citizens and active associations. He also mentions *Listening Marathons* as a reference of participatory initiatives to successfully include citizens’ perspectives in the updating of the management plan for the WH historic centre of Florence. During these initiatives, citizens, administrations, and stakeholders met in thematic tables to discuss the main obstacles to overcome in managing Florence’s historic centre, aiming to propose innovative solutions to update the WH management plan. Finally, the case of the WH Dolomites natural site clearly demonstrates the link between participatory initiatives and WH site governance.

The author reflects upon the *Dolomiti 40* event organised by the Dolomites UNESCO Foundation in 2015. Through the organisation of 11 thematic tables - following the *world café* participatory technique - the Foundation investigated how inhabitants and local stakeholders should imagine the Dolomites in 2040 in regards of tourism, development, conservation of preserved natural areas, and the building of new partnerships. Combined with an intensive research programme, this strategy accomplished the harmonisation of a governance system for the WH site, which extends over a vast area (231 thousand hectares, divided between 5 provinces (*Trento, Bolzano, Belluno, Pordenone, and Udine*)). Today the governance system consists of 5 functional networks, one for each province. The networks are related to the topics covered during the thematic tables: geological heritage, sustainable tourism, development and mobility, training and research, and conservation of protected areas. Each network can work independently as well as collaborate, under the coordination of the *Dolomites UNESCO Foundation*.

Correspondingly in Italy, the most recent practices for updating WH management plans follow participatory approaches are now emerging. This is notable in the case of the February 2022 WH monumental complex at Caserta, including the 18th-Century Royal Palace, the Park, the Aqueduct of *Vanvitelli*, and the *San Leucio* complex, launched a survey to gather collective perspectives on the current value and future enhancement of the WH complex¹². The target audience for the survey was quite heterogeneous: visitors, associations, businesses in the area, museum staff, and citizens of

¹² Retrieved information from: <https://www.rivistasiti.it/la-reggia-di-caserta-lancia-un-sondaggio-per-lelaborazione-del-piano-di-gestione-unesco/> Accessed 15/07/2021



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Caserta. Another example arises from the management committee of the WH serial site *Longobards in Italy*. Places of the power (568 – 774 A.D.) which, due to the outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, promoted a virtual hackathon to initiate a shared updating of the WH management plan. The WH serial site consists of seven monuments spreading over 5 different regions from the north to the south of Italy. The non-profit Association *Italia Longobardorum* manages the WH site. The association gathers all the municipalities hosting each monument (Benevento, Brescia, Campello sul Clitunno, Castelseprio, Gornate Olona, Cividale del Friuli, Monte Sant'Angelo, Spoleto), involving a large number of members to enhance and promote the WH serial site. Through a dedicated online platform, the association organised fifteen themed virtual meetings¹³ (*Hackaton longobardo*) open to the public interested in defining the new WH management plan. The platform remains a permanent channel for updates on the projects' implementation and networking activities (Perricone & Gal Ramella, 2021).

A further good practice concerns the WH site of *Genoa: the new streets and the system of the Palazzi dei Rolli*. The site comprises of a system of 42 Renaissance and Baroque palaces along the new streets of Genoa's urban centre. The 2020 - 2024 management plan delivers the development of several participatory initiatives to collectively identify new site's values following the HUL approach. It also addresses the improvement of the WH site governance¹⁴. The inclusion of the *Rolli della Repubblica Genovese Association* into the memorandum of understanding (2021) represents one of the main real variations towards a more inclusive site governance¹⁵. Moreover, the plan proposes two possible solutions for a renewed site's governance, both based on a preliminary stakeholders' consultation (during the audit phase). The first model concerns integrated management through a third party, which may cover different legal statutes (consortium, association, or a foundation). The second one entails management entrusted to a single entity among the Memorandum of Understanding signatories, as site representatives.

Beyond WH management plans, Badia and Donato (2012) emphasise the relationship between enhancement activities, participation, and governance of WH sites. More specifically, they define the notion of WH sites' enhancement as the set of long-term, synergic, and interdisciplinary initiatives that strengthen heritage knowledge and values for local communities (Badia et al. 2012, p. 10). In contrast with conservative processes which are centered on specialised knowledge, the enhancement ones draw on civil society contributions. They are suitable to raise citizens' awareness about WH sites' values (social, economic, etc.) and consequently in increasing their willingness to participate in both planning and implementation. Moreover, the authors also select the paradigm of public governance to investigate upon such a relationship. In this situation, public governance is intended as the establishment of a diffusing network between public administrators and social players.

¹³ Retrieved information from: <https://www.italialongobardi.it/eventi-hackaton-v2/> Accessed 15/07/2021

¹⁴ Retrieved information from: <https://www.rolliestradenuove.it/piano-di-gestione/> Accessed 15/07/2021.

¹⁵ Retrieved information from: <https://www.rolliestradenuove.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/PROTOCOLLO-D-INTESA-UNESCO-completo-di-firme.pdf> Accessed 15/07/2022.



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Administrations are open to the external environment and play a (soft) coordinating role to reach shared decisions with society. The authors further explain that public governance logic well fits the management of the WH sites where governance should guarantee a balance of interests among the several institutional and societal involved actors. They specifically focus on three cases in the Italian context: the WH sites *Sacri Monti* in Piedmont and Lombardy regions, *the City of Vicenza* and *Palladio's villas* in Veneto, and the *city of Modena* in Lombardy. Empirical evidence highlights several challenges in putting public governance logic into practice.

Above all, the case of the *Sacri Monti* reveals how establishing effective coordination between the large number of managing entities involved in the WH candidature hinders decision-making opening towards third parties. In this case, the managing entities include the Regions of Piedmont and Lombardy, the Regional Directions for Culture and Landscape, municipal administrations, managing entities (such as park authorities) and religious bodies. The governance structure consists of four main bodies: a permanent conference that brings together representatives of all the managing entities (representative body); a permanent secretariat at the Piedmont Region with the function of coordinating and planning both preservation and enhancement activities (operational body); a working group that acts on a delegation to implement programs' contents (executive body); and finally, a permanent study and documentation centre with research tasks (operational body). Although the governance structure is positively evaluated for the overall management of the WH serial site, the divergent interests between the two involved regions hindered the operability of the permanent conference and delayed its opening to civil society representatives.

The WH *city of Vicenza and the Palladio's villas* case highlights the challenges of “intrinsic bureaucratic rigidity” (Badia et al. 2012, p. 13) of local administrations whose formal procedures slow the process of finalising shared decisions and do not support inter-organisational collaboration (Costumato, 2021) among local authorities and private owners. Consisting of 23 historical palaces in Vicenza and 24 villas in the surrounding area, the WH serial site governance involves more than twenty municipalities and territorial provinces in the Veneto region (*Vicenza, Treviso, Padua and Venice*). General coordination of the WH site management is carried on by a dedicated UNESCO office established in 2003 within the Municipality of Vicenza (at the Urban Planning Department). Furthermore, a steering committee, which was established in 2005 to draw up the WH management plan, gathers representatives of local administrations from the various provinces, the Ministry of Culture, territorial *Soprintendenze*, and some private owners. The committee consists of an undefined number of operational groups that support its decisional process and involve further actors such as the Dioceses of Vicenza and the Andrea Palladio International Centre for Architectural Studies. The main limitation of such a governance structure is the unbalanced relationship between public and private actors. Additionally, the administrative and regulatory constraints affecting the villas, and the high maintenance costs, discourage private parties in triggering enhancement initiatives.



Finally, the WH *city of Modena* provides an example of "direct management in economy" (Badia et al. 2012, p. 14). Such formula implies the adoption of streamlined governance whereby WH property owners are responsible for the protection and enhancement of the WH site. The site consists of three monumental properties: the Civic Tower and Piazza Grande owned by the Municipality of Modena and the Cathedral owned by the Metropolitan Chapter of the Church. The Municipality of Modena has been recognised as the coordinating body for managing the site. On the occasion of the first WH management plan update (2012-2015), the site's governance was provided with both a steering and technical committee to define new strategic objectives. The steering committee gathers representatives of other provinces (i.e., *Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici e per il Paesaggio* in Bologna, Parma, Piacenza and Reggio Emilia) and regional bodies from Emilia-Romagna (i.e., *Direzione Regionale per i Beni Culturali e Paesaggistici* in Emilia-Romagna). According to the authors, on the one hand, the linearity of the outlined governance meets the site's management and enhancement needs effectively (Badia et al. 2012, p. 15). On the other hand, it differs from the theorised public governance model since it is not very oriented towards external participation. As the Municipality of Modena plays a central role, it prioritises the initiatives for the city and its community, leaving aside other actors who might be interested in participating. A step forward in terms of participation and openness occurred through the second WH management plan update (2018-2020). This process allowed the integration of the participation and accessibility plan (Badia et al. 2012, p. 102), leading to the engagement of further actors especially in educational initiatives, moving towards more participative management of the WH site. **Table 3** summarises the main weaknesses and strengths of participation and governance, emerging from the analysed WH sites.

Table 3 Main weaknesses and strengths of participation and governance

World Heritage case studies	Participation and governance
WEAKNESSES	
WH old town of Lijiang (China)	A dominant state-centralized approach hinders residents' effective participation.
The WH Santiago de Compostela route (Spain)	Instrumental use of participation by political elites to legitimize neoliberal choices and strengthen hegemonic power structures.
WH sites Sacri Monti in Piedmont and Lombardy regions (Italy)	Divergent interests between the two involved regions hinders the operability of the permanent conference and delayed its opening to civil society representatives.
WH city of Vicenza and the Palladio's villas (Italy)	The bureaucratic rigidity of local administrations does not support inter-organisational collaboration among local authorities and private owners.
WH city of Modena (Italy)	The linearity of the outlined governance meets the site's management needs but it is not very oriented towards external relations.
STRENGTHS	



Mantova and Sabbioneta WH cities (Italy)	<u>Mantova and Sabbioneta Heritage Centre</u> as center for free initiatives aimed at increasing public awareness on the WH sites' values.
WH historic centre of Florence (Italy)	<u>Listening Marathons</u> as a reference of participatory initiatives to successfully include citizens' perspectives in the updating of the management plan.
WH Dolomites natural site (Italy)	<u>World café</u> participatory technique to investigate local stakeholders' perspectives about the Dolomites touristic and cultural development in 2040.
WH monumental complex at Caserta (Italy)	<u>Survey</u> to gather collective perspectives on the current value and future enhancement of the WH complex.
WH serial site Longobards in Italy. Places of the power (Italy)	<u>Virtual hackathon</u> to initiate a shared updating of the WH management plan.
WH site of Genoa: the new streets and the system of the Palazzi dei Rolli (Italy)	Inclusion of the <u>Rolli della Repubblica Genovese Association</u> into the memorandum of understanding (2019) as a main step towards a more inclusive site governance.

Source: own elaboration.

1.2.4. Lessons learned and positionality

Both WH convention, related policy and recommendations (see paragraph 1.2.2.), and analysed case studies highlight (see paragraph 1.2.3.) some challenges in combining governance and participation in the management of WH sites.

The first complexity factor lies in the increasing geographical extension of WH sites and consequently in the definition of suitable governance structures for incorporating the interests of multiple institutions and ownership entities that are involved in the process. Such enlargement has been consolidated over time. During the first twenty years of the WH convention implementation, WH heritage sites' selection occurred following three categories: natural, cultural, and mixed sites (both natural and cultural) (Pettenati, 2019). The three categories build on properties' tangible monumentality, ruling out several heritage sites - often non-European ones - that are expressions of a living popular culture (Pettenati 2019, p. 77). The need to obtain a more balanced and inclusive WH list – through the *Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List* in 1994 – and the influences from other UNESCO conventions related to the intangible values and cultural diversity - specifically the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) and the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression* (UNESCO, 2005a) lead to a broadening of WH site typologies that emphasise the value of interactions between humans and the environment (rather than the monumental aspect), cultural coexistences and they further combine monuments, groups of monuments and sites into a single legacy.

Thus, the categories of cultural landscapes, thematic routes, roads, and canals become more and more prevalent in the WH list (Pettenati, 2019). Such new categories (especially cultural



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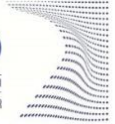


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landscapes and routes) often develop as serial and transnational sites¹⁶ that connect not geographically contiguous areas but still convey common cultural values. They vary from prevalent historical cities (i.e., Old Québec, old town of Lijian, Florence city centre, Genoa and the Rolli system, Vicenza and the Palladio villas etc.) to archaeological sites incorporated into cultural landscapes (i.e., Takht-e Soleyman), trans-municipal and trans-regional natural and historical routes (i.e., *Santiago de Compostela* route, *Dolomiti* system, Longobards in Italy etc.). Therefore, the more extended a WH site may be, the more governance structures are articulated (Schmedt, 2022; Wang, 2019).

In such regards, the case of the WH Silk Road (not mentioned in the previous paragraph) is emblematic. Inscribed into the WH List in 2014, the *Silk Roads: the routes network of Chang'an – Tianshan Corridor* is a transnational 5000 km corridor that spans three different states – China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan – and includes 33 sites. Due to its vast scale – from the Mediterranean to Asian regions – the process of inscription into the WH List lasted for ten years going through a heated and long negotiation among involved countries (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, etc.), the UNESCO and Advisory Bodies (Wang 2019, p.7). The long process leads to a multi-layered coordinating system. An intergovernmental coordinating committee on the serial site consisting of “one policy maker and one expert or academic representing each of the twelve State Parties” (Vileikis, 2015) seeks to ensure a widespread state of preservation and development for the entire transnational site. A Secretariat of the ICOMOS center in Xi'an supports the committee activities. Each Silk Roads corridor is managed by a transnational advisory committee, stipulated through a memorandum of understanding between different nominated State Parties. Lastly, action plans are implemented by regional, municipal, and sites authorities, third sector actors (NGOs, associations etc.) and local people (Vileikis, 2015). The emerging challenge is to implement a functional and balanced inter-institutional collaboration as well as flexibility for a broad participation in decisions. The concept of public interinstitutional collaboration refers to “formal or informal interaction between formally autonomous institutions of equal status or those at different levels of government that collaborate to reach one or several policy goals” (Costumato 2021, p. 6). Institutions collaborate to reach a shared goal and the effectiveness of inter institutional interactions is determined by several factors such as trust, power sharing, management strategies, leadership, and formalisation (Costumato, 2021). From this perspective, participation of third actors in WH sites' governance depend upon the degree of inter-institutional collaboration among all public authorities who lead the WH nomination, as outlined in the WH OG. Often, the number of involved public bodies grows as the WH sites' size increases (Pettenati, 2019; Wang, 2019).

¹⁶ Today the WH List counts a total of 1154 sites, out of which 160 are serial sites, 179 cultural landscapes, 27 transboundary sites. Information have been retrieved from the WH List official database, using respectively serial, cultural landscape, transboundary as keywords for search, ordered by year. Database available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/> Accessed 18/04/2022.



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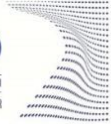


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A second complexity factor consists in combining bureaucratic constraints and political intent embedded in public procedures with the heterogeneous needs and interests of private subjects (i.e., owners, citizens, members of a community, etc.) who are interested in participating to the management of a WH site. The WH *city of Vicenza and the Palladio's villas* case stresses such conflict (Badia et al., 2012). In fact, administrative obligations set by the Municipality of Vicenza prevented some private owners' from actively participating in enhancement initiatives for the WH villas. In most of the analysed cases, public state bodies – both centralised and decentralised – play a core role in WH sites' governance. As a result, WH decision-making arenas focus on the pursuit of building administrative rules with the risk of turning participation into a mere formality, even though it is regularly employed in decision-making arenas, as occurred in the WH old town of Lijiang in China (Li et al., 2020c). A similar remark can be derived from the European project *ParticipiPat* (González et al., 2018), which highlights the risk of political manipulation of participatory governance since subjects representing civil society are created *ad hoc* by the political parties in power (González et al., 2018).

The third challenge in combining governance and participation is related to the divergence of interests between the public bodies involved in the WH site management. The WH serial site *Sacri Monti* reveals how the gap in interests between the two regions – Piedmont and Lombardy – affects the operativeness of the permanent conference body whose purpose was to gather civil society representatives and facilitate their participation in decision-making (Badia et al., 2012).

The examined cases also highlight the growing centrality of participatory initiatives in determining decisions for WH sites' preservation and development.

In concept, the thesis acknowledges the difference between participatory governance and participatory initiatives, embracing Sani's statement extracted from her essay on museums in the European context):

" Participatory governance [...] is a process whereby some power is transferred, and new management models are adopted, so that responsibility becomes shared, and decisions are made not so much by individuals as by communities. In other words, participatory governance can be defined as a shared responsibility in the decision-making process. In the field of cultural heritage, it is not easy to find examples of true participatory governance. Unless participation is considered a core organizational value, participatory initiatives - even the most prominent ones - are often reduced to sporadic activities and are rarely integrated into the institutional fabric of the cultural organization" (Sani 2016, p.10).

Based on this definition, participatory initiatives gather different approaches aimed at triggering civil society's contribution to WH site enhancement and development "on the side of traditional channels for public participation" (Karlsson 2012, p.795). Among the most common participatory initiatives in the analysed WH sites, enhancement activities are likely to promote



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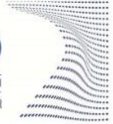


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participatory approaches, as they create robust and spontaneous value connections between civil society (in the broadest sense) and WH sites rather than on predominantly expert and technical know-how. Considering the previously investigated Italian context, the cases of the *Mantova and Sabbioneta* heritage centre, the listening marathons for the historical centre of Florence, the *Dolomiti 40* event (Ercole, 2017), the exploratory survey for the monumental complex in Caserta, and the digital hackathon for the WH serial site the *Longboards in Italy* (Perricone & Gal Ramella, 2021), reveal a growing trend in the use of participatory initiatives to achieve shared decisions among a wider public and to raise awareness on the WH management plan as an inclusive long-term planning tool. Such practices are implemented in specific phases of the process of the WH site's making (M. A. Di Giovine, 2009) has the drafting and updating stages of management plans. Specifically within the Italian setting, they receive dedicated funds due to the 77/2006 law (Italian National Law 77/2006). Unlike participatory initiatives, the notion of *participation* in WH sites' governance relates to the capacity of institutional frameworks appointed to manage a WH site, to open decision-making arenas to civil society representatives. In fact, participatory governance entails sharing the decision-making power among institutional and non-institutional actors. In many cases - such as the *Dolomiti Foundation*, the *Rolli della Repubblica Genovese* and the *Italia Longobardorum* associations – third bodies are specifically established. These bodies are responsible of collecting a wide range of civic members beyond representatives of public administrations and politicians. This novel approach is considered a transition towards a participatory form of governance in WH sites. However, the cases have also revealed defects in this strategy, including geographical extension, bureaucratic constrains and a contrasting diversion of interests. Often this hinders full development and dissemination of participatory governance in the management of WH sites.

In this framework, the investigation aims to trigger novel reflections, inquiring as participatory governance is hardly achieved in the governance of cultural heritage while participatory initiatives are proliferating, is it possible to envision new relational patterns between the two

Indeed, while the willingness to move the WH convention towards participatory governance of WH sites emerges, there is little focus on the purpose of *participation* in WH sites. In addition, it is also difficult to accurately define the relationship between participatory initiatives and governance in achieving common goals. In this regard, an enlightening cue comes from the European Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005), notably the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005). The Convention is a pivotal text for the democratisation of European cultural heritage and one part (out of five) is dedicated to "shared responsibility for cultural heritage and public participation"(Council of Europe 2005, p. 5). The goal of public participation towards heritage governance and management is to enable "each heritage community" (Council of Europe 2005, p. 5) to advance as the leading player in shaping ideals, principles, and values that constitute and actualise heritage as commons. Transposing this concept to the analysis of the WH program, is it consequently admissible to question how both participatory governance and initiatives together contribute to shaping a WH site's value to society?



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In support of the raised question, some recent papers stressed how participation in the heritage field can take on various forms and can, directly and indirectly, influence WH sites' governance. In a study concerning heritage, sustainability, and participation (Rosetti et al., 2022;) (Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022), the authors distinguish between forms and roles of participation in addressing sustainable development. Through the analysis of several official documents (including international conventions, declarations, guidelines, policy documents, and resolutions) the authors agree that participation can act as a right, enabler, and driver to sustainable development through six different forms: information, consultation, intervention, partnership, decision, and generic forms (Rosetti et al. 2022, p. 6). To support and clarify the purpose of this paragraph's discussion, the specific terms '*decision*' and '*intervention*' forms are described in detail.

The *decision* form refers to participation in the decision-making process “which ideally should be reached by agreement or consensus among all stakeholders” (Rosetti et al. 2022, p. 6). It is therefore the form of participation closer to WH sites' governance, despite being the one less referred to in the documents. The *intervention* form is related more to participatory initiatives, defined as “action that may be supplemented by transmitting comments and suggestions, which may be or not be considered in decision-making” (Rosetti et al. 2022, p. 6). Active participation is the most promoted form in the reviewed documents. This paper uncovers a trend comprising with that emerging from the previous case studies. Although participation in governance (decisional form) is highly recommended, it is hard to achieve due to the power dynamics, administrative constraints, and political manipulation behind decision-making processes in WH sites. Rather, participatory initiatives, being less exposed to such conditionings and facilitating participants' free expression, are increasingly diffused. Also, critical heritage studies stress how participatory governance models for heritage management can take on various forms. Cortés-Vázquez et al. (2017) report, from other sources, several forms such as “public or community-based archaeology, participatory research projects, and citizen engagement in heritage” (Cortés-Vázquez et al. 2017, p.15).

In the same article, the authors warn of the risk of a cosmetic and rhetorical use of the concept of participatory governance. They remark how participatory governance approaches adopted in three different UNESCO sites - Cabo de Gata UNESCO geopark, the Altamira cave, and the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba WH sites (Spain) - revived previous disputes among some actors rather than leading to collaboration and good governance practices. Finally, the authors address the need of developing novel analytical approaches to heritage governance and participation, to understand “what participation does to the entire heritagization process and to the people involved in participatory governance strategies within a certain heritage regime” (Cortés-Vázquez et al. 2017, p. 15) and to overcome the sterile opposition between *good* and *bad* participation.

The following research aims to take the analytical perspective beyond the WH sites' making process (Ercole, 2017; Pettenati, 2019; Di Giovine, 2009), consisting of three main stages as explained in the OGs. The first step, which occurs during the drafting of the nomination dossier, is to identify



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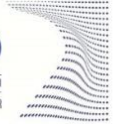


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the WH site. The second comprises of the elaboration of the WH site management plan. Finally, the third step consists of implementing the planned activities in the WH management plan and of unplanned events occurring in the surroundings of a WH site. Although this analysis is limited to the participation in decision-making arenas, it also extends to participatory initiatives (i.e., projects, activities, etc.) alongside the three mentioned stages. The main challenge, which is also the innovative feature of the research, is to understand whether organisational mechanisms behind participatory initiatives should open further decisional participatory spaces and how they should influence each other. The answer to the query “what participation does to the heritagization and to the people” (Cortés-Vázquez et al. 2017, p. 15) is explored considering the values of WH sites which have been generated by society. In developing this approach, the notions of participatory process, governance, and initiatives become sharper.

The second part of the theoretical framework expands upon the theories and paradigms about participatory governance and participation in the political, social science and heritage debate, extrapolating significant concepts to strengthen the author’s perspective. The third section finally addresses the issue of heritage values in general, and it explores public values as a novel element to interpret the relationship between participatory governance and initiatives in WH sites.

PART 2

1.3. Conceptualising participatory governance

“Participation in governance involves the range of formal and informal ways in which member of a political community make their values, interests, and policy preferences known” (Bevir 2007, 659)

Despite the vastness of meticulous literature emerging, establishing an exact definition of *participatory governance* is still challenging (Bevir, 2007; Fischer, 2006, 2012; Fung & Wright, 2001; Gustafson & Hertting, 2017; Heinelt, 2002). As highlighted in Bevir’s definition, the expression itself hybridizes the two terms *governance* and *participation*. Whether the term *governance*, in its generic connotation, turns a shift from centralized steering of society by the State to a decentralization of power among a plurality of actors (Peters & Pierre, 1998), the adjective *participatory* emphasizes the need of boosting citizen engagement into decisional processes (Moini, 2012).

In his seminal book on the critical theory of participation, Moini explains that the overlapping of the two concepts is a result of the chronological diffusion and from the sharing of the concept of “inclusion of economic actors and civil society in the construction of public decisions” (Moini, 2012, p. 62).

- *The concept of governance*



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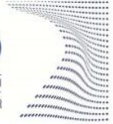


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Between the 1980s and 1990s, traditional state-centered forms of governing society underwent significant changes. Expressly western countries experienced a relevant process of decentralisation which implied a weakening of the central role of the state in governing, in favor of private entities and voluntary sector involvement. The notion of governance in political science refers only to the new approaches of steering society, marking a sharp transition from hierarchical to multi-actor forms of governing (Bevir, 2002; Pierre & Peters, 2020; Rhodes, 1996). Dictated by the actions of USA and UK, this process has been labelled as the “hollowing out of the state” (Rhodes 2007, p. 22), entailing a re-allocation of the state functions to several actors (state and non-state actors) and a shift of decision-making and implementation power from the central state to lower levels of public authorities:

“[...]The hollowing out of the state means simply that the growth of governance reduced the ability of the core executive to act effectively, making it less reliant on a command operating code and more reliant on diplomacy [...]” (Rhodes 2007, p. 22).

These changes on the traditional forms of governing led to the initiation of diverse conceptualizations of governance, depending on the adopted perspectives (Sørensen & Torfing, 2016). Almost all the theories aim to describe new patterns of governing, doubting the role of national governments as crucial players in the establishment of public policy, to the extent of affirming the radical notion of “governance without government” (Pierre & Peters, 2020; Rhodes, 1996; Rosenau, 1995).

- *The concept of participation*

The concept of participation has a long-standing history, and it takes on various meanings depending on context and period (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006; Brodie et al., 2009). Although tackling an exhaustive examination of the concept is not a purpose of this thesis, it is deemed worthwhile to provide an overview of the topic and to reiterate the connection with the heritage domain.

Over recent years, participation has developed alongside the “the changing relationship between citizens and state” (Brodie et al., 2009, p. 34).

In the in 1970s participation was a means for civil society to claim the right of taking part in the processes of social and economic regulation carried out by the state. Generally, it was instigated from below, by cohesive social groups as an effort against decision-makers, without applying to any formal structure (Moini, 2012, pp. 18-19). A strong opposition between citizens and public decision-makers was perceived as the pivot of a *participatory society* (Pateman, 1970), with the objective of overthrowing a political system that considered participation an irrelevant means for democracy. Noticeably in the 1990s, participation aimed to fill the democratic deficits in governance (Jessop, 1998; Pierre & Peters, 2020). Governance models were increasingly market oriented and failed in finding solutions to collective and public issues, suffering from “serious problems of governability, accountability, legitimacy, efficiency and democracy of public choices” (Moini, 2012:68). In this



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context, participation was conceived as a solution to such problems, allowing to guarantee a fairer, more inclusive, and efficient decision-making process to tackle local public issues.

The conflictual and ideological connotations of participatory actions in the 1970s gave way to a new attitude of collaboration between civil society and institutions (Ansell, 2012; Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012; Kooiman, 1999; Kooiman et al., 2008; Torfing et al., 2012). Participatory practices were often promoted by the political actors rather than being initiated from below.

Typically, they were arranged following technical strategies based upon experts' action - such as facilitators, animators, etc. - to ensure the engagement of both bodies and organised social groups in public decisions (Moini, 2012). These conditions allowed the paradigm of participatory governance to emerge in the academic debate touching several public spheres (local development, social policies, environment protection etc.) and generating multiple definitions (Torfing et al., 2012).

From this moment onwards, participation stood as a main pillar for good governance:

“Participation by both men and women is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives” (UNESCAP, 2000).

The concept is being rooted in a pluralism of meanings (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006) and for this reason it does not hold a clear-cut definition. Ciaffi and Mela (2006) relate such pluralism to two main factors: *pluralism of practices* and *pluralism of paradigms*, resulting in the acceptance or rejection of participation (Ciaffi & Mela 2006, pp. 24-25).

Brodie et al. (2009), in their extensive literature review on participation, recommend a three-fold classification of participation based on its main purposes:

1. *Public participation* adopts an institutional perspective and emphasizes the engagement of individuals and communities in “decision-making processes within existing political structures” (p. 14);
2. *Social participation* refers “to collective activities” which people volunteer in improve their everyday lives (i.e., cultural, social associationism) and which “may have little to do with state or institutions and processes of governance” (Brodie et al. 2009, p. 15);
3. *Individual participation* comprises 'individuals' actions which allow to “reflect the kind of society they may wish to create and live in” (i.e., support charity, embracing environmental causes etc.) (p.15).

The differences between the three forms of participation are not always sharp. They often overlap, confirming “the blurred boundaries” (Brodie et al. 2009, p.15) of participation and consequently highlighting the importance of looking in depth at the *who*, *what* and *how* of participatory initiatives, “not in isolation but in the wider context” (Brodie et al. 2009, p.16) where such initiatives unfold.

A similar picture emerges from heritage studies. A recent systematic literature review (Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022) on participation in the field of cultural heritage, stresses a body of knowledge with



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an unclear definition of *participation* in terms of who are its involved actors and challenges. By analysing a list of 92 papers, the authors extrapolate four clusters to define participation: by dimension (i.e., stand-alone participation, social and political), by actors (i.e., citizen, community etc.), by approach (i.e., collaborative, voluntary) and by temporal or spatial context (i.e., daily). The academic analysis shows that, the predominant definition of participation is by dimension, although it is controversial in distinguishing whether “political participation is a form of social participation” or not (Stiti & Ben Rajeb 2022, p. 319). As a result, the authors elaborate a more open definition of *participation*, seeing it as an interactive process characterized by *dimension, actors, approach* and *context*:

“We define participation as the broad term that includes all the participatory approaches with different levels of (non)inclusivity of different actors.” (Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022, p. 320).

Such far-reaching conception fulfils the purposes of this thesis, striving to unpack how participation (Cornwall, 2008b) in both enhancement initiatives and governance of WH sites is formalized in terms of actors, interactions and approaches. Both the social and political dimensions of participation (Brodie et al. 2009) are taken into consideration: the political extent (or *public*) looks at the engagement of people in WH sites’ decision-making processes (see Chapter 4), while the social dimension deals with people’s actions aiming to enhance a WH site and building’s new societal meanings.

1.3.1. Key definitions

In the field of political science, Fisher (Fischer, 2006, 2012; Fisher, 2010) introduced one of the clear-cut definitions of participatory governance:

“Participatory governance is a variant or subset of governance theory that puts emphasis on democratic engagement, in particular through deliberative practices [...] governance, as such, tends to refer to a new space for decision – making, but does not, in and of itself, indicate the kinds of politics that take place within them [...]” (Fisher 2010, p. 2).

According to the definition, participatory governance represents a valid response to the democratic deficit of representative political systems. This system expands the range of action of citizens who, other than voting for political representatives, can be directly involved in solving social problems, in the delivery of public services and in more equitable forms of economic and social development (Fisher 2010, p. 3). The author also stresses how participatory governance is grounded on specific principles and methods. As core principles, Fisher mentions a fairer distribution of political power and resources, a decentralization of decisional processes, more robust accountability, and transparency of governance systems (Fisher, 2010:3). As methods, he refers to building capacity



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to endow people with both the competence and the will to engage and to improve public service delivery in several fields (education, health care, environmental protection, etc.). The notions *deliberative citizens jury* and *consensus conferences* are also referred to as two crucial methods for allowing citizens to deliberate on public policy issues.

The efficiency of deliberative methods has been tested especially in developing countries. In fact, further achievements of participatory governance are tied to the realm of local development. In the report on *Participatory Governance and the Millennium Development Goal* (United Nations, 2006) published by the Department of Economics and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Osmani refers to participation as a guarantee for good governance, specifically at local levels of government (United Nations 2006, p. 1). The official elucidates how the spread of participatory governance in the development sphere can enable local people's right to freedom (Amartya, 2002), where freedom is intended both as a means and as a valuable outcome of participatory processes. For instance, while people aspire to achieve a life free from "hunger, disease, illiteracy and so on" (Osmani, 2006:3), they also claim the freedom to actively participate to the process towards such achievements as a crucial right. The practices of public budgeting in Porto Alegre (Brazil) and people's development planning in Kerala (India) are referred to in the literature as the most progressive practices of participatory governance in developing settings (Fisher, 2012; Moini, 2012; United Nations, 2006).

In the first case, the inhabitants of Porto Alegre (a city of 1.3 million inhabitants) succeeded in achieving an accountable and bottom-up public budgetary system through deliberative citizens' assembly, after a long tradition of clientelist politics. In the case of Kerala, district planning councils, mainly belonging to village settlements, received a large amount of the state budget to formulate and implement differentiated development plans, based on specific needs.

Remaining in the framework of development projects, Gaventa (2002) advances six proposals to critically cover the complex connection between grassroots participation, at the local level, and state-level governance. The author derives six propositions that serve both to typify and discuss the concept of participatory governance. The proposals portray participatory processes as a means of healing relations between "ordinary people and institutions" (Gaventa 2002, p. 29) further confirming the need to work simultaneously on two sides: institutional governance, and civil society participation. On the one hand, institutions should seek to counteract the inadequacy and rigidity of administrative bureaucracy in fostering participatory processes by strengthening the "accountability and responsiveness" of the institutional design (institutional change). On the other hand, new forms of citizen participation that can give a voice to underrepresented people (including underprivileged people for development projects) and influence final policies (Gaventa 2002, p. 30) should be strengthened. Concerning voices, the author emphasises the sensitive issue of citizen representation in local decision-making processes. Gaventa questions how local governance can encompass different forms of citizenships without neglecting social, gender and political issues (Gaventa 2002, p. 32),



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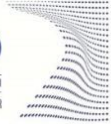


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also stressing the risk that, disregarding such diversity could hinder the hoped-for effects of participation and reinforce an institutional status quo.

Turning to the field of public administration, Gustafson and Hertting (2016) argue that motivation behind participation may influence both the quality and nature of participatory governance whose implementation requires a deliberate sharing of responsibility by both public authorities and civil society representatives (Gustafson & Hertting, 2017, p. 2). Based on such assumptions, the authors provide three notions of participatory governance. The first two concepts consider participatory governance as a means for renewing declining democratic practices, following two different logics. According to an “interest-based logic”, participatory arenas are spaces where participants claim self or collective interests through a weak confrontation, to push political reforms towards specific requirements. Instead, a “deliberative and integrative” logic gives participatory governance a space to construct common thinking for shared solutions rather than a mere opportunity to pursue personal interests.

The third notion of participatory governance follows a more “administrative or functional” logic, oriented more towards problem-solving. The main objective of participatory processes is the mobilisation of individuals – such as residents, civil servants, or other local stakeholders – who hold the appropriate expertise for the issue at hand. Thus, people participate for pragmatic reasons: they believe their skills may contribute to solving collective problems.

Finally, Fung and Wright (2001) characterize participatory governance according to institutional design rather than participants’ motivations. By analyzing several participatory processes - from neighborhood councils in Chicago (United States) to the above-mentioned cases of Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Kerala (India) - the authors extrapolate three political principles that distinguish the *empowered participatory governance* (Fung and Wright, 2001) intended as a reform of democratic institutions to “deepen the ways in which ordinary people can effectively participate in and influence policies that directly affect their lives” (Fung and Wright 2001, p. 7). The first principle deals with *pragmatism*. Participatory governance structures are created to solve real issues such as management of public budgets, planning of urban spaces, care of the environment, etc. and aim to provide public services for social groups that are usually excluded from such services.

The second principle refers to *bottom-up participation*. In addition to experts’ support, empowered participatory governance relies on the contribution of ordinary people who, through direct participation in decision-making processes, “increase accountability and reduce the length of the chain of agency that accompanies political parties and their bureaucratic apparatus” (Fung and Wright 2001, p.18). *Deliberation* is the third and final distinctive principle of empowered participatory governance. To further explain, *deliberation* implies that collective decisions are taken following a reasoning and discussion process among the participants. The participants may agree towards a shared consensus or generate conflicts due to opposing perspectives. In case of a protracted dispute, they



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should vote for a common reasonable decision, constructive towards the whole group and not only for self-interests.

The authors further identify three forms of institutional configurations to implement the agreed principles. The first option consists in devolving part of the political and administrative power of the state to local units for the implementation of conceivable solutions.

The second configuration refers to coordinated devolutionary models employed by central authorities. Fung and Wright emphasize how local units are often isolated when solving complex problems. Coordination enables a connection with some central offices that through expedients such as distribution of resources, and support in problem-solving can improve local democratic deliberation (Fung and Wright 2001, p. 2).

The third and final configuration includes reforms of the centralised state power. Unlike activist movements that succeed in influencing state objectives through external mobilisations, empowered participatory governance reforms radically transform state power mechanisms into “permanently mobilized deliberative-democratic, grassroots forms” (Fung and Wright 2001, p. 23).

Focusing on the relationships between participatory governance and initiatives through which a WH sites’ making (Di Giovine, 2009) is articulated, this thesis is grounded on a socio-political approach towards participatory governance (Fischer, 2012; Kooiman, 1999), since it provides a closer look at the “lengthening chains of interactions” (Kooiman 1999, p. 73) among the involved actors and inquires how and whether such chains are institutionalized. In addition, the concept of socio-political governance encompasses possible multi-scalar correlations and for this reason, it is suitable for tackling the global-local (introduced in part 1) nexus in WH’s sites governance. The research addresses both relationships between “ordinary people and institutions” (Gaventa 2002, p. 29) considering results both achieved through participatory process according to a pragmatist perspective (Gustafson & Hertting, 2017) and principles and conditions enabling participation. Concerning the field of WH studies, one the research contributions is to develop an innovative analytical approach to reconstruct the chain of participatory interactions, often treated disjointedly and fragmentarily.

Hence, participatory governance is intended as a “performative” process (Turnhout et al., 2010) where various and parallel stages of contestation, negotiation, and coordination among political institutions, the private sector, and societal actors represent the core of democratic decision-making, to which participation aspires. As addressed in the next paragraph on power relations, participation in governance can occur at different scales of intensity depending on the distribution of responsibilities among various actors. It can range from low levels of participation where manipulation by overriding players prevails the maximum expression of citizens’ control (Arnstein, 1969).



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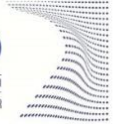


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1.3.2. Redistribution of power

The issue of power redistribution is crucial as well as controversial for characterizing participatory governance. As Osmani (2006) observed, participatory governance should aim to mitigate power asymmetries between governing elites who retain full decision-making power in running modern societies and members of civil society, such as citizens, residents, local communities, etc., who undergo decisions without having much say in the decision-making. It can serve to diminishing social gaps, as an example, between rich and poor people (especially in developing contexts) and to promote collaboration between experts and non-experts on participation. However, Fisher points out the risk of manipulation and co-optation of participatory processes (Fisher 2006, 2010, 2012) that can confirm or exacerbate power gaps rather than mitigating them. Through the analysis of the so-called *participatory poverty assessment technique* developed by the World Bank, the author reports the instrumentalization of local development projects by the World Bank, which encouraged the participation of some groups rather than others (co-optation) to support own agendas in global development programs (manipulation).

The distinction between a manipulated and a real participatory process is not so apparent. Thus, related studies have developed a range of scales to discern various levels of participation (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1997; Wilcox, 1994) based on the detained and exerted power employed by the involved actors. Arnstein's ladders of participation (1969) are amongst the most well-known. By analysing some examples from three federal social programs in the United States, the author derives eight different rungs of citizen participation to policy processes, ordered in a scale, from manipulation to citizen control, following a normative and hierarchical approach: from the lower to the fully participatory process (Figure 2).

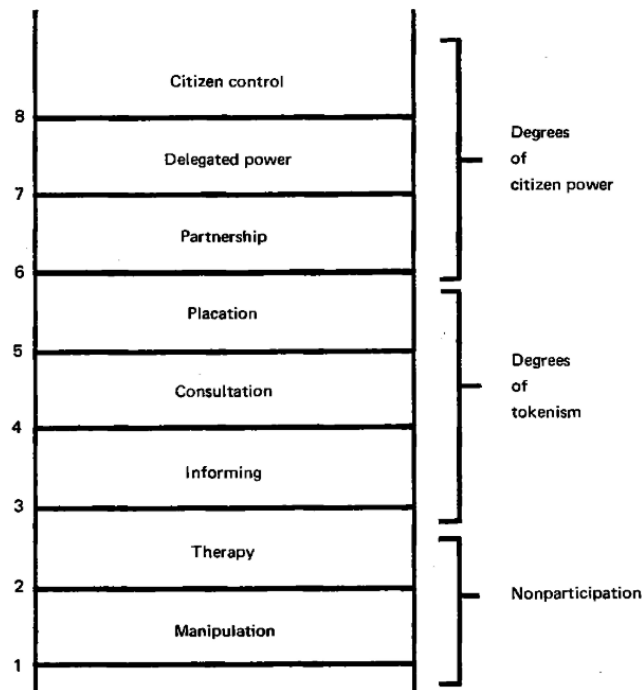


Figure 2 Arnstein's ladders of citizen participation. Image source: Arnstein 1969, p. 217

The first two steps, manipulation and therapy, belong to the *non-participation* ladder as the real interest is not citizens' empowerment, rather to demonstrate that powerholders are inclined to citizenry's care and education. The third, fourth and fifth rungs, respectively information, consultation, and placation, fall within the *tokenism* ladder, where citizens can both "hear and be heard" (Arnstein 1969, p. 217). The *information* level includes all participatory practices in which powerholders encourage citizens' awareness of their own rights and responsibilities through one-way communication means, such as media, websites, pamphlets etc. *Consultation* takes a small step towards full participation. Alongside being informed, citizens can express their opinions through public meetings, surveys etc. However, there is no certainty that these ideas are truly integrated into final decisions. Through *placation*, citizens start impacting more on final decisions, actively participating in planning processes or being represented in decisional committees. However, powerholders preserve the prerogative to judge the "legitimacy or feasibility" of citizens' advice, confirming tokenism (Arnstein 1969, p. 220). Finally, the last three rungs embrace the realm of *citizens' participation*. With *partnership*, citizens gain the power to negotiate a trade-off with officials. Through *delegated power*, they acquire full decision-making power on specific issues. In the eighth and final rung of *citizen control*, people fully independently govern – from policy to management - a project or an institution without powerholders' intermediation.

Following Arnstein's theorization, studies on participation in decision-making keep on adopting a normative approach, generating further classifications from different perspectives and in different fields (Pretty, 1995; White, 1997).



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In his guide to effective participation, Wilcox (1994) reworks Arnstein's ladders and classifies participation among three dimensions: levels of participation, stages of the process and actors' stances.

The author subsequently reduces the participation ladders from eight to five: *information*, *consultation*, *deciding together*, *acting together*, and *supporting independent community interests*. *Information* and *consultation* ladders do not differ from Arnstein's. The action of *deciding together* comprises of a collective debate that aims to achieve the best decision among several proposals; while *acting together* also covers the implementation of decisions, through agreements or partnerships between the involved actors. Finally, through the *support to independent community initiatives*, powerholders support individuals in the accomplishment of their goals.

Wilcox's innovation, compared to Arnstein's work, is the introduction of two substantial interpretive distinctions.

Firstly, the different ranks of participation do not *a priori* imply that one is better than the other. On the contrary, each level can be appropriated depending on the circumstances. As the author states, each participatory ladder is a "matter of horses for courses" (Wilcox 1994, p. 8). Such an approach appropriately supports the focus of this dissertation to understand *how* participation is constructed in relation to WH sites' governance, moving beyond a clear distinction between *good and bad* participatory governance. Coherently with recent research in the heritage field (Della Lucia & Franch, 2017; Li et al., 2020a; Rosetti et al., 2022; Simakole et al., 2019), the thesis does not necessarily attribute a negative connotation to lower levels of participation, such as consultation or information, as well as it does not merely interpret the relationship between low and high levels of participation hierarchically. Instead, it analyses each form of participation questioning its value contributions - or obstructions - to the WH site, to the involved actors and the socio-economic context in which they operate.

Secondly, Wilcox argues in support of participation as a four-stage process. The first stage is the *initiation*, during which the necessity to undertake participatory paths is perceived. Formerly, the *preparation* phase sets the scene to initiate a participatory process (i.e., taking first contacts, selecting an approach, etc.). The *participation* stage subsequently executes the agreed participatory strategies. Finally, the *continuation* phase entails different implications depending on the level of participation employed – i.e., consultation, establishing partnerships etc. Each participant (politicians, officials, activists, residents, local groups, etc.) decides to hold a stance concerning both participatory ladders and phases, determining the development of the overall participatory process (Figure 3). Such processual perspective accurately harmonises with the position adopted in the thesis: conceiving participation in both WH sites' governance and enhancement initiatives as a social construction that is developed throughout the three heritagization stages of a WH site: *nomination dossier*, *drafting and implementation of the management plan*.

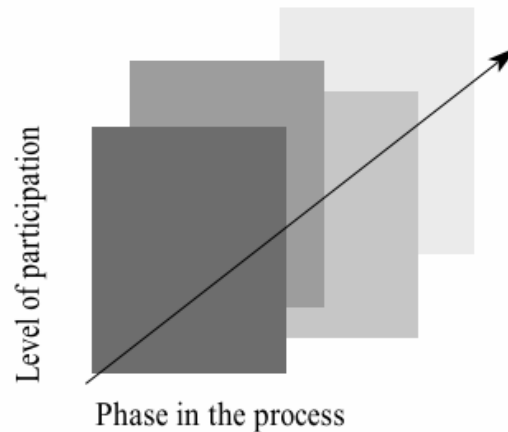


Figure 3 Level of participation changing at different stages of a process. Image *source*: Wilcox 1994, p.9

1.3.3. Purposes

What are the main purposes of participatory governance?

The reviewed literature provides many insights in such regards. Firstly, participatory forms of governance aim to strengthen social interactions in decision making, as a guarantee for broader societal advantages (Heinelt, 2010). Heinelt clusters such benefits into *normative* and *functional* grounds. According to the *normative* perspective, participatory governance guarantees people's right to influence public decisions, to produce better results and to incentive a collaborative attitude among society members. Referring to the *functional* sphere, participatory governance could improve the quality of decisional processes, fostering reasoned and pluralistic debates and making participants more aware of and confident in long-term changes, which might involve uneasy decisions in the present (Heinelt 2010, p. 9). Furthermore, the author defines participatory governance as a means to handle frequent governance failures, as it facilitates the collective achievement of defined objectives "by reinforcing motivation and mobilizing capacities for self-reflection, self-regulation, and self-correction" (Heinelt 2010, p. 99, referring to Jessop 2002, p. 55).

Beyond the normative and functional benefits, participatory governance aims to also strengthen the principles and values of democratic action. Fisher refers to citizen empowerment and capacity building, especially of marginalized members of society, a fairer distribution of political power, greater transparency in information exchange, system accountability and inter-institutional dialogue (Fisher 2012, p. 418). Heinelt discusses how participatory governance might improve the democratic imprint of governance structures, by enforcing the quality of deliberation through collective consultations among participants as equals, extending the openness of decisional arenas and strengthening the link between political decisions and public goals as well as transparency and accountability (Heinelt 2010, p. 10).

The three purposes of participatory governance (normative, functional, and value) prove that the contributions of individuals – intended as citizens, local communities, residents etc. - are crucial



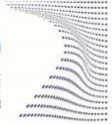
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for ruling society in a more equitable and efficient way over the long term and in overcoming institutional failures. They take up some of Ostrom's principles on governing common finite resources (Ostrom, 1990) and, in doing so, they relate to the discourse of cultural heritage as a common good and its added value (Council of Europe, 2005).

With reference to the stewardship of natural resources, Ostrom argues that local users, acting together, could find more adequate solutions than those provided by the state (Mansbridge, 2014). Through their deep knowledge of local contexts, they are more likely to preserve common resources in the long term. The author opposes a cooperative societal paradigm to a widespread individualistic one, which negatively portrays the collective management of common goods, since it leads to forms of personal exploitation (Hardin, 1968). Instead, Ostrom approves local people's rights to "design their own institution" (Ostrom 1990, p. 101) to flexibly access and use common resources by setting the rules and provides several successful examples worldwide. The academic deduces 8 principles¹⁷ for the community to sustainably govern the commons, excluding the government or private entities. However, her intention is not to erase the State's role. Through the eighth principles and the analysed cases, Ostrom suggests to interconnect local governance with higher state structures, to ensure a more stable and functional decision making at the local level. The author describes local governance structures for commons as "nested tiers" between higher (state level) and lower (community level) scales. The State's function is to ensure a longer duration of multilevel governance arrangements. It can provide neutral information, decline a solution when agreements between parties are prone to failure, facilitate negotiation processes through technical assistance and supervise the implementation stage of locally taken decisions (Mansbridge, 2014).

A further key in Ostrom's commons theory is that of polycentrism through which community-based governance develop. Ostrom defines polycentric systems as the "organization of small, medium and large-scale democratic units that each may exercise considerable independence to make and enforce circumscribed scope of authority for a specific geographical area" (Ostrom 2001, p. 2, referring to Stephan et al. 2019, p. 7)

Polycentricity refers to complex forms of governance made of multiple decisional centres (Carlisle & Gruby 2019, p. 928). The latter are nested at several jurisdictional scales (i.e., local, state, national etc.). They work autonomously under an overarching system of rules that favour the achievement of emerging outcomes (Pahl-Wostl & Knieper 2014, p. 140). Yet at the same time they are interdependent both collaborating, competing, or conflicting to find tailored and flexible solutions. Polycentric governance systems can incorporate entities of various nature, from "private associations supported by states to associations of individuals supported only by their own institutions of informal

¹⁷ Ostrom postulates eight principles for communities to manage the commons: clear group boundaries; congruence between benefits and costs; users had procedures for making own rules; regular monitoring of users and resource conditions; graduated sanctions; conflict resolution mechanisms; minimal recognition of rights by government; nested enterprises. Retrieved information from: <https://serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu/managing-commons-eight-principles-self-govern> Accessed 20/06/2021.

reciprocity” and the state supports the efficient functioning of such arrangements by “providing the legitimate coercion that enforces their contracts” (Mansbridge 2014, p. 10).

When applying these perspectives and knowledge to the previously considered subject of heritage, it is found that one of the main aims of participatory governance is to strengthen the acknowledgement of cultural heritage as a common good (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020; Iaione et al., 2022; Lekakis, 2020). This implies that, regardless of the ownership and administrative and legal systems, cultural heritage expresses values that belong to the whole community, as well as community actions and empowerment, overall contributing to shaping and evolving such values.

Most of reflections about the “common” nature of heritage has been constructed around the Faro Convention and the European heritage (Council of Europe, 2005; Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020; Morini, 2021), by promoting a cross-cutting people-centered approach to heritage management. Cerreta and Giovane di Girasole (2020) state that interpreting cultural heritage as “cultural commons” requires the interaction of several components (Figure 4). They stem from “collaborative and cooperative processes” that “involve community as a whole (civil, private society, associations, public institutions, research bodies) [...] in the different phases of the process: that is, from the recognition of the cultural good to the definition and sharing of rules, objectives and values [...]” (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole 2020, p. 22). As a result, recognizing cultural commons opens new perspectives on the contribution of cultural heritage to social values.

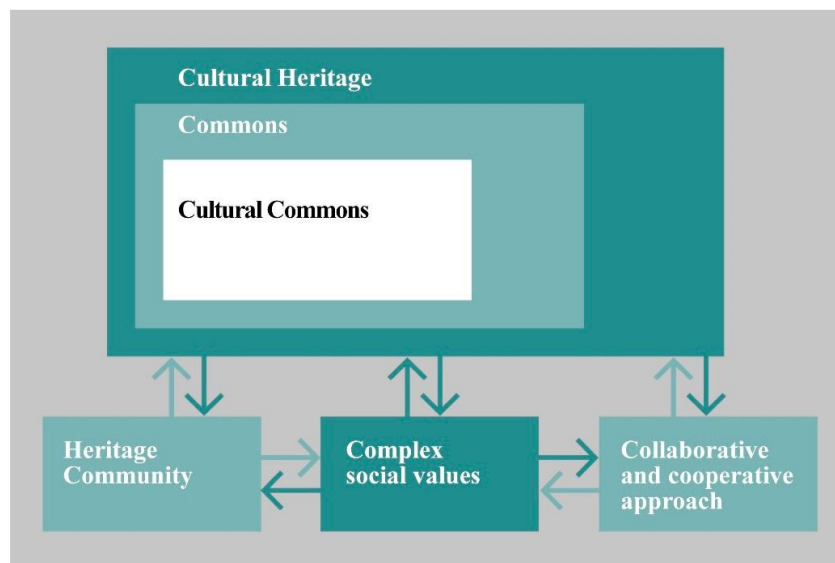


Figure 4 Components defining cultural commons. Image source: Cerrata & Giovane di Girasole 2020, p.4

Adopting an economic perspective, Bertacchini et al. (2012) define cultural commons as “cultures expressed and shared by a community [...] defined along three main dimensions: culture,



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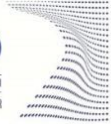


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space and community [...] the three dimensions can be combined to define the space of all the possible states of cultural commons” (Bertacchini et al., 2012)

More recently in an extensive book about the Greek context, Lekakis stresses othrt three core constituents of heritage as commons:

“the resources at hand; the communities in charge and the regulatory frames to sustain this management system” (Lekakis, p. 3)

To the people-centered interpretation of cultural heritage stated in Faro Convention and interpreted as a significant move toward a commons’ approach, the book opposes the globalizing approach of the World Heritage Convention, by affirming:

“ The UNESCO World Heritage Convention [...] even undermines the idea of commons altogether [...] While in theory the Convention asks signatory states to inventories all their heritage, the Convention and its operationalization focuses in practice [...] on selected ‘World Heritage’ sites [...] This fosters exclusivity on several fronts [...] it also privileges a mainly or wholly ‘global’ scale of value which can be far removed from any concept of commons” (Fairclough, 2020, p. viii).

Further aim of this research is to understand WH sites through participatory dynamics contribute, or not, to strengthen the conception of heritage as commons and what are the main challenges that eventually hinder this path.

1.3.4. Critiques

Despite the enchanting promise of fairer decisional structures and social benefits (equality, inclusion, collaboration etc.), participatory governance can hide controversial deceptions. In their seminal book *Participation: a new tyranny?* Cook and Kothary (2001) deconstruct the fashionable rhetoric of participatory governance as a remedy to inequalities in development contexts. By gathering contributions from various experts and practitioners, the authors refer to participatory development practices as preconditions for new power regimes that sharpen existing social inequalities. They define participation as a new tyranny, whereby supranational organisations manipulate local communities’ consensus to implement neoliberal programs, under the veil of fostering public participation and inclusion. The concept of participatory practices as tyrannies is adopted in further disciplines. In the field of urban studies, Richardson et al. define tyrannies as “ways of thinking that developed in response to an identified issue, but which fail to live up to their initial promise” (Richardson et al. 2019, p. 2).

The authors derive three forms of tyrannies. The “tyranny of authenticity” in unelected representation, is caused by the failure of participatory governance to connect decision-making arenas with “lived experience”. Often participants are invited as representatives of a “wider constituency”



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(Richardson et al. 2019, p. 5), to avoid to only involve political parties, and for their membership to specific groups. However, their selection based on a pre-existing power position over societal actors (instead than on a large-scale election) might turn participatory arenas into a privileged venue to claim the interests of specific groups, with the risk to raise “unacceptable levels of conflict, stalemate and suboptimal policies” rather than achieving the long-promised convergence between civil society and governance structures (Richardson et al. 2019, p. 5).

The second form is the “tyranny of leadership”. Participatory forms of governance should favour a distribution and sharing of leadership among participants. However, the authors warn a deep gap between such principle and real experiences. Due to an overconcern on procedural conditions to achieve adaptive and shared leadership, participants risk losing sight of negative repercussions such as the slowing down or postponement of decisions. The tyranny of leadership could ignite an endless and frustrating processes, “leaving participants wishing for some judicial application of strategic coercion” (Richardson et al. 2019, p. 9).

Finally, the “tyranny of bottom-up” considers such approaches towards participatory governance better alternatives to top-down governance. This tyranny confirms how the failing strategies of institutional elites in managing urban contexts can be replaced by the informal actions of civil society. Governing from below appears to be more effective to mobilise massive civil participation using more attractive “popular spaces” than formal arenas. The problem of bottom-up tyranny is the “essentialisation of features of governance” (Richardson et al. 2019, p. 11). This means that it leads to the association of the institutional logics and procedural features, such as set of actors, typology of spaces, that characterise bottom-up approaches with the “effective delivery of specific governance functions, such as the protection of minority voices in decision-making processes” (Richardson et al. 2019, p. 11). Thus, the main intention is to clearly distinguish *good* bottom-up from *bad* top-down practices, rather than critically debate how the two different strategies may or may not, deliver different societal outputs.

To conclude, participation in governance “is not a cookbook” (Richardson et al. 2019, p.14). Participatory processes are imperfect. Adaption and reflexivity are among the most important conditions for its development and growth. These elements are set upon trade-offs between procedural features and achieved outcomes for specific contexts, avoiding the search for a perfect recipe and the sharp demarcation between *good and bad* practices.

In accordance with the authors’ suggestions, this research strives to emphasise the relation between participatory institutional procedures, logics and produced outcomes, in the specific context of WH sites intended as common goods.

1.4. The spatial nature of participation

“The act of participating can be seen as bringing spaces to life as well as carving out new spaces and creating new social forms with their own momentum and impetus” (Cornwall 2002, p. 2).



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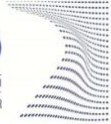


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Space is a relevant component to grasp how institutional, political, and social dimensions intertwine in WH participatory governance (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006; Cornwall, 2002, 2008b). In this thesis, the choice to include the spatial component aims to embrace a more “phenomenological” interpretation of heritage (Dormael, 2011, 2016; Harvey, 2001). Such a perspective considers heritage as a social construct (Harvey, 2001), whereby cohesive communities, diverse social groups, or single individuals convey several connotations to a site, an object, or a practice and therefore, they contribute to both creating and transforming heritage meanings and values (Waterton & Watson, 2013, 2015). This vision implies the penetrating of two realms: materiality and abstract. The material one refers to the tangible and figurative components that represent heritage in the common imaginary: the space of a historical building, an archaeological site, traditional dances and rituals, a museum collection etc. The abstract one refers to the human and political relationships that shape multifaceted heritage identities: the space of subjective representations (Crouch, 2010), contestations for political and ideological disputes (De Cesari, 2010, 2020; Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996), the assertion of national pride and identity (Smith, 2006), commodification for economic interests (Bourdeau et al., 2017; De Ascaniis et al., 2018). The entanglement of such social relations depicts heritage as a heterogeneous entity where diverse layers of social interactions overlap. As Lefebvre declared, heritage can be seen as a “flaky mille-feuille pastry than of the homogenous and isotropic space of classical (Euclidean/Cartesian) mathematics” (Lefebvre 1991, p. 86).

Participatory governance emphasizes the duality between heritage *concrete and abstract* spaces where social interactions develop.

In her seminal working paper on how to situate participation in development contexts, Cornwall (2002) employs the concept of space to differentiate abstract and physical connotations of participatory processes as follows:

“[...] Spaces for participation can be thought, then, in abstract terms as the ways in which opportunities for engagement might be conceived or perceived, and more concretely, in terms of the actual sites that are entered and animated by citizens” (Cornwall, 2002, p. 2, referring to Lefebvre, 1991).

Considering the increasing relevance of participation in governance as a tool to improve the quality of democratic decision-making systems, the author calls for broader explorations of micro-dynamics that feature participatory processes. Cornwall in fact highlights how participation carves diverse interaction spaces between state and civil society and expresses the need to thoroughly investigate its nature, focusing on how contextual factors such as “variation in constitutional and legal frameworks, the forms and style of political and civil activity, and histories of engagement with external actors” (Cornwall 2022, p.1) determine such variety.

Spaces for participation result from the convergence of abstract ideals (Habermas et al., 1974), social relations (Lefebvre, 1991) and power issues (Foucault, 1982) across space. Thus, the author grounds her research on pivotal social theories.



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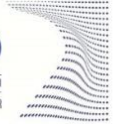


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Firstly, Cornwall establishes a relationship between participatory spaces and the public sphere theorized by Habermas (1974). Habermas defines the public sphere as a societal domain where public opinion is moulded. Moreover, Habermas believes the public sphere is open to the whole citizenry to freely discuss issues of general interest without being subject to a state bureaucracy. The public sphere emerges through discussions, spontaneous assemblies and final outcomes are conveyed by the public media. It differs from the political public sphere in which debates “deal with the objects connected to the activity of state” (Habermas, 1974:49). The independent development of a public sphere from state actions is considered a precondition to undertake participatory processes that do not legitimate the political power. Cornwall associates some of the Habermasian public sphere’s principles – such as capacity for openness, engagement of the public-at-large – with participatory methods’ aspirations of improving and opening public decision-making spaces in development contexts. For these reasons, the author calls for a closer look at both the nature and inner interactions of participatory public spaces, “that is, what the public sphere comes to represent as well as how it is constituted” (Cornwall 2002, p.5).

Then referring to Lefebvre’s (1991) conceptualization of social space, Cornwall stresses the urgency to *situate* participatory processes in the specific sites where they unfold, rather than treating participatory methodologies in general. Lefebvre defines each social space as “the outcome of a sequence and set of operations” (Lefebvre 1991, p. 73). According to the philosopher, it consists of both a wide range of objects (that determine its tangible peculiarities) and social relationships. Indeed, it is continuously reproduced by human actions, both in the past and in the present, ideological and knowledge factors:

“ [...] Is space a social relationship? Certainly - but one which is inherent to property relationships (especially the ownership of the earth, of land) and also closely bound up with the forces of production (which impose a form on that earth or land); here we see the polyvalence of social space, its 'reality' at once formal and material “(Lefebvre 1991, p.85).

As they are the result of relational flows, social spaces are not isolated. On the contrary, they interpenetrate and superimpose on each other.

When observing the participatory processes through this lens, Cornwall highlights that spaces for participation – including the communities that inhabit them - are continuously reshaped by evolving social relations. Such spaces influence each other: “what happens in one impinges on what happens in others” (Cornwall 2002, p.7).

This interdependence exists between *invited* and *created* spaces for participation and underpins the empirical analysis of this research. In contexts of development, **invited spaces** are intended as opportunities that governmental or non-governmental entities give to civil society members for participating in the resolution or renewal of shared issues (Cornwall, 2002; 2008). They develop alongside “claimed and shaped spaces by a range of other actors” (Cornwall 2002, p.7), through formal thematic fora or consultation over policy (Cornwall, 2000, p.76).



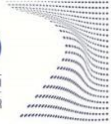
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Created spaces for participation are autonomously designed by citizens for themselves and can occur through enhancement initiatives, public assemblies, and user groups (Cornwall, 2002; 2008). They take place alongside “unofficial spaces and the spaces of everyday life” (Cornwall 2002, p.7) and require people’s critical awareness of the importance to include excluded voices in decision-making and strengthening “political capabilities for democratic engagement” (Cornwall 2000, p.77). Only through such consciousness people can create their own spaces to influence development strategies.

To finalize the analysis of participation as a spatial practice, the author reflects on how the dimension of power held by the initiators and representatives in a participatory process can influence both the production of space and the outcomes of the process. In doing so, Cornwall refers to Foucault’s conceptualization of power relations (Foucault, 2013). In his theorization of power, Foucault states that power does not exist *per se*. Instead, it comes into being as "a mode of action upon the actions of others" (Foucault 2013, p.790). Hence, power relations are articulated according to two main conditions. Firstly, the individual over whom the power is exercised – “the other” – is recognized as a person who can act. Then, it is necessary to be aware that power relationships can trigger a wide scenario of reactions and results (Foucault 1974, p.789), due to their interconnection: “certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions” (Foucault 1974, p.791), shaping concrete social structures. Boundaries of such actions are defined by dialogues that specify what is feasible and in a given social space (Cornwall 2022, p.8). By bringing power relations’ perspective into the analysis of participation, Cornwall reaches a twofold consideration. The economist also affirms that spaces for participation are shaped through power relations in which investigation is necessary to uncover the “political ambiguities of participation”. This entails delving into who, why and how spaces for participation are created and used, accounting for a variety of possible situations. Hence, it might perhaps occur that a powerful initiator of a participatory process meaningfully restricts the influence that invited citizens can exert on a decision, with the risk of invalidating the potential of participatory processes: to strengthen alternative approaches rather than persisting in already-dominant attitudes. Most likely, the purpose pursued by some participatory spaces can be reversed by people invited to participate, who expand their agency to satisfy their interests.

Drawing from the three theoretical perspectives, Cornwall derives four clusters to analyse the dynamics of spaces for participation in development contexts. The first two clusters include spaces *within* the state. While “regularized relations” embrace spaces where people are invited by public authorities to participate in the improvement of the state’s performance in different areas, “fleeting formations” refer to provisional spaces supported by entities which are external to the states (such as non-governmental organizations) to open collective deliberations over specific issues – such as policies or service delivery – and then close. Fleeting formations can leverage on both innovative participatory methods, such as citizens’ juries or deliberative polling – or standard ones, such as public consultation, workshops etc. (Cornwall 2002, p.19).



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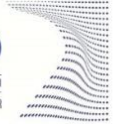


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The other two clusters embrace spaces for participation *outside* or *without* the state. The “alternative interfaces” are those spaces created by citizens who strive to influence public decisions by mobilizing their dissent. They propose alternative institutionalized spaces to government functions. Generally, people chose to be part of such entities because they share the group’s mission. Unfortunately, this approach may lead to making these spaces exclusive, as they may open only to individuals who hold a specific identity. Finally, the “movements and moments” is the hardest cluster to define as it does not achieve a stable and regularized form. Spaces in this cluster - also known as “spaces of appearance” - offer people the possibility to protest and resist state decisions. This cluster may include popular protests, subversive communication campaigns and “any expression of voice outside the structured spaces of invited participation or the regularized institutions of civil society” (Cornwall 2002, p.22).

Clusters *without* and *outside* the state are not completely separated from those within. They “come to exist as residual to those of the state” (Cornwall 2002, p.24) and occur simultaneously as opposing spaces to build alternatives to formal state decisions. To further clarify, the author refers to the example of the participatory meetings organised by the Zapatista social movement in Mexico. The Zapatista movement aims to build alternative forms of governance or civic associations who, independently from formal governance structures, strive to trigger activism and knowledge awareness for specific interest groups.

The critical issue lies in the understanding of whether the widespread adoption of *invited* spaces for participation really generates innovative collaborations between civil society and governmental bodies. It may exploit the rhetoric of participation to further legitimize the political agenda, prompting marginal groups to organize alternative spaces or set up new tactics to turn “consultation spaces into new deliberative opportunities” (Cornwall 2002, p.24).

In this research it is suitable to adopt a spatial perspective to understand how participation, in both governance and enhancement initiatives during a WH’s site heritagization process may or not contribute to strengthening WH site’s values for society and its perception as a common good.

The contribution is both theoretical and pragmatic.

From a theoretical point of view, the concept of social space elaborated by Lefebvre would help to identify the relationships that participatory processes generate in the spatial context of a WH site and to investigate how such relationships interpenetrate each other and evolve during the entire heritagization process of a WH site. Identifying participatory processes as a set of relational flows situated in circumscribed spaces would, in turn, help to tackle the stated gap concerning the interrelation between participatory governance and initiatives in a WH site. Moreover, the spatial perspective combined with the institutional design analysis of participatory processes facilitates the development of a micro-level approach poorly addressed in heritage studies in general, and in WH studies specifically. A micro-level analysis would allow to “understand which forms of participation work in which kinds of spaces” (Cornwall 2002, p.28) to make the heritagization process of a WH site more open, inclusive, and effective. Subsequently, the concept of power relations grounded on



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the assumption that “certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions” (Foucault 2013, p.791) recalls the need of deepening the aforementioned interrelations reflecting on how powerful actors can determine certain spaces for participation rather than others.

From a pragmatic perspective, embracing the distinction between *invited* and *created* spaces has enabled the identification of two layers of analysis for participatory practices in the field.

The *invited* spaces embody regularised, and long-lasting spaces for participation connected to the state action. In the context of a WH site, they correspond to opportunities for participation *within* or coming *from* the governance structures leading a WH site. The latter gather public authorities and entities who hold “heritage agencies “(De Cesari, 2020).

The *created* spaces refer to weakly regulated, and sometimes ephemeral spaces for participation connected to spontaneous communities’ initiatives. Hence, WH sites may include unstructured participatory initiatives that are triggered from the bottom by interest groups who want to change non-shared decisions or simply wish to collaborate to enhance the WH sites. Researching both spaces in detail would allow to detect actors and dynamics of increasingly “distributed and disassembled forms of heritage governance” (De Cesari 2020, p.14). In her reflective paper concerning the transformation of the state role in determining heritage policies, De Cesari develops this concept through a critical comparison between Italy and Palestine, two contexts which may appear at odds given political and geographical diversity. The anthropologist argues that neoliberal politics affect governance of cultural heritage in both countries, leading to a gradual withdrawal of the state in heritage management and an increasing responsibility of non-governmental and civil society for heritage. This approach of withdrawal performed by the state, supported by policy discourses on participation, citizen involvement and development, leads to a blurred “regovernmentalization of cultural heritage” (De Cesari 2020, p.15 referring to Bennet, 1995), where state functions are distributed across broader actors at different scales. Likewise, the investigation of the relationships between *invited* and *created* space for participation at the smaller scale of a WH site might contribute to detecting potential forms of disaggregated governance, where participation is continuously negotiated through the involvement of non-state actors who may integrate (or replace) what lies within the jurisdiction of public authorities.

A further element when analyzing participation as a spatial practice concerns the representation of the *local* scale. Moini’s book on the critical theory of participation (2012), provides an insightful paragraph on this topic. Grounding on Giddens’ structuration theory, the author highlights how the notion of *local* refers to the “contextuality of social interactions” (Moini 2012, p. 53) which takes place during participatory processes. This theory covers a twofold nature. On the one hand, the local dimension takes on the contours of a well-defined context with pre-existing features that allow social interactions of participatory processes. On the other hand, it is intended as “spatial scale of actions” (Moini 2012, p. 59) continually redefined by social interactions and placed within broader tran-scalar dynamics. As an example, the author highlights how participatory practices developed at the urban level might serve to reconfigure political and economical relations within a



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city to facilitate the rooting of external global strategies, behind the apparent aim of democratizing public decisions.

Furthermore, the local scale of participatory processes can be multi-layered. In an extensive section on the concept of participation in European urban contexts, Ciaffi and Mela (2006) elaborate a space-participation model to understand which urban spaces may stimulate participatory processes. The model articulates the local dimension in "concentric ecological niches", which expands from the quasi-individual scale towards the broader public (Ciaffi & Mela 2006, p. 101) and puts individuals at the heart of the model.

The innermost niche is the private sphere, which refers to the home environment seen from a collective (and not individual) perspective. The authors focus upon *housing*-themed participatory initiatives, which aim to physically rehabilitate dwellings (including common spaces such as gardens, blocks of flats, etc.), generating a social return from investment for the inhabitants. Such interventions are fostered not only by single-family members, but by homogeneous groups of people such as households, neighbors, or residents of a district. The projects take inspiration from active European initiatives such as the *Compagnos bâtisseurs* in France or the Agro-farmers' garden project in Germany (Ciaffi e Mela 2006, p.106).

The following niche moves from private towards public spaces, on two levels. The first one includes the public spaces closest to private households (such as neighborhood streets, squares, parks etc.). Inhabitants, who feel a sense of belonging to such areas due to proximity, are motivated to engage in participatory processes, often aimed at tackling specific needs (such as educational services, functional planning of unused public spaces etc.). The second level contains wider and more distant spaces, even virtual ones. Within this sub-niche, the criteria to encourage people's engagement in the participatory process comprises the sharing of a common interest, rather than proximity. The purpose is not to satisfy a need, but, rather, a desire, often shared by both urban administrators and communities to create new services or to revitalize the standard conditions. This approach implies the adoption of co-planning methods between authorities and communities, management arrangements based on civic associations. Thus, the spatial scale of action widens compared to proximity public areas, moving towards the third and outermost niche: from the local to the supra-local.

The supra-local encompasses an "infinite range of spaces perceived by the individual as unfamiliar and unknown" (Ciaffi and Mela 2006, p.115). Its role consists in gathering those participatory initiatives that aim to innovate local contexts through broader collaborations between neighboring districts, cities in the same region, cities within a single nation, also up to involving several nations.

In the framework of this thesis, the *local* dimension of participatory processes is meant to be context-based and interactive. The contextual side covers the peculiarities of a WH site that may influence the deployment of participatory processes, such as the typology of properties, its ownership strategy, the regulatory framework (both legal and administrative) to which the WH site is subjected



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and its social environment. The interactive feature refers to the relational flows constituting the social space shaped by participatory processes that occur in a WH site's territorial context, under the international regulatory administration of the WH Convention (1972).

Finally, the research adopts a multi-layered approach to explore the *local* sphere, as suggested by the concentric spatial niche model (Ciaffi e Mela, 2006). The main objective is to widen the range of analysis from the core space of a WH site to broader surroundings concerned with participatory processes, in order to facilitate the reconstruction of any disassembled (De Cesari, 2020) and polycentric (Ostrom, 1990) participatory governance, otherwise undetected.

PART 3

How and why is participation in WH governance related to *public values*? Based on a strand of public administration studies, the third part of this theoretical framework aims to clarify the relationship between governance, participation, and *public values* and to illustrate the importance of advancing such debate in the heritage studies, as it is poorly addressed.

1.5. The concepts of public value and values

The debate on public value can be considered a distinctive “theory of public management” (Albert & Passmore 2008, p.7). After the era of the New Public Management which aimed to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration's action (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), the subsequent emerging approach (which has not been labelled) shifted the focus on a wide range of democratic values that are to be respected by public administrators in order to fully accomplish their role (Bryson et al., 2014).

To successfully address societal challenges, this new approach is grounded upon the following four pillars: relevance of public values and values, governments' role as guardian of public values, belief in the potential of public management for the improvement of social services, and in the usefulness of participatory forms of governance in solving collecting problems (Bryson et al. 2014, p.445). Scholars who endorse this approach converge on the idea that public value is generated by “broadly inclusive dialogue [...] with community members from multiple sectors” (Bryson et al. 2014, p.447) rather than from exclusive actions of governments. By abiding to principles of participatory and polycentric governance previously elaborated (Ostrom, 1990, 1998, 2001), they focus on how involving citizens in decision-making can contribute to applying what is valued by the public and bringing value to public services in society.

Beyond disagreements, scholars diverge on interpreting *public value* (Moore, 1995) and *public values* (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

Moore's study on the creation of public value (1995) is pivotal in addressing the public managers' perspectives. The author tackles the challenges that governments face in contemporary society in order to meet citizen's expectations, to cope with unstable political dynamics and to



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understand what products are valuable to society. In line with the shareholder approach in the private sector, Moore argues that “Public resources should be used to create value for the “public” (Grüb & Martin 2020, p.340). Although he does not provide a specific definition of public value, his conceptualization mostly refers to the ability of governments and public enterprises to generate value through the delivery of useful and effective services, regulations, and other measures addressed towards the common well-being. In order to support public leaders in releasing public value, Moore elaborates a *strategic triangle* based upon legitimacy and support, operational capacity, and public value.

This model proves how certain strategies can create public value when they are supported by citizens (democratic legitimacy) and governments (authorizing environment). Hence, these strategies can rely on governments’ operational capacity to pursue their goal. The three elements strengthen each other: when public value is generated, both operational capacity, legitimacy and support become more solid.

By referring to public value as the overall outcome that governments strive for, Moore deviates from those theories that advocate a pluralistic interpretation of *public values* that might embrace individual stances and principles to which civil society aspires.

Through the elaboration of the “public value universe”, Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007) epitomise such a pluralistic approach, stating that: “public values are not exclusive province of government” (Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, p.374). In fact, they establish public obligations also for non-governmental players, rooted in “society, in individuals and groups, and not just in government” (Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, p.374). Public values are defined as those values “providing normative consensus about (a) the rights, benefits, and prerogatives to which citizens should (and should not) be entitled; (b) the obligations of citizens to society, the state, and one another; and (c) the principles on which governments and policies should be based” (Bozeman 2007, p.132).

The public value universe can encompass a variety of values that active citizenship can add to the public realm in the effort to achieve what they consider good for society. Public values emerge in many contextual guises such as social and cultural, political, economic, and ecological (Benington 2011b, p.12). To navigate the broad universe of unresolved public values, the authors inquiry relational nexuses and extrapolate seven macro-categories based on the associations between public values and society, politicians, public administrations, and the external environment. The first cluster gathers all values related to the public sector’s contribution to society as common goods, appropriate protection, sustainability, and concern for future generations (Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, pp.359-363). The second group includes the values generated when society’s interests are turned into public decisions. Most of these values relate to democracy, collective decisions, and citizens’ participation in local governance. The remaining four clusters focus on public administration and the public values generated by the relations with the outside world (politicians, environment, and citizens) and the inner relationships between public employees and departments. Such values range from political loyalty to the openness and responsiveness of public administration in listening and addressing public demands,



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to professional enthusiasm and commitment, to a set of organisational values (such as reliability, stability, and a propensity for innovation) and an inclination towards internal collaboration (Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, pp. 364-369).

The thesis embraces the pluralistic approach of public values, as the aim is to detect how participatory processes related to a WH site might generate public values from the different perspectives of involved actors, from public authorities to individuals. Therefore, it is crucial to include the public values' subjective side, especially to explore the *invited spaces* for participation, allowing to track down any diffused forms of participatory governance (De Cesari, 2020).

A further remark concerns the public values' function related to participatory governance. This research contemplates a potential triple function (Nabatchi, 2012). Indeed, public values may refer to governance outcomes, if intended as an appraisal of what government produces “on behalf of the public” (Nabatchi 2012, p.699). They might serve both as a criteria to investigate how (and if) participatory design supports public participation in decisions. In addition, they can subsume the principles to which public administrators should adhere to meet societal requirements (Nabatchi, 2012).

Before delving into the public value of heritage, the author provides an overview on the extensive literature about heritage values in general.

1.6. Heritage values: from conservation focus to society

The identification and assessment of heritage values is a long-standing procedure and mainly derives from studies on heritage conservation. In his seminal essay ‘The Modern Cult of Monuments: its character and origin’, Riegl (1903) renews the heritage restoration theory (Ahmer, 2020), focusing on the recognition values (Ahmer, 2020). According to the author, the understanding of monuments' commemorative value in its three different guises (intentional, unintentional, and age values¹⁸) underpins the appropriateness of conservation treatments. The echo of Riegl's values asserted in the elaboration of both the Athens Charter (ICOMOS, 1931) and the Venice Charter (ICOMOS, 1964). The philosophy followed by both charters confirms the centrality of aesthetic heritage and the historic values in addressing conservation and it subsequently promotes an expert-cantered approach (Smith, 2006), dominating the European scene.

The next step in the advancement of heritage value theory, consists in *integrating heritage values with conservation planning*, in order to understand how to prioritize interventions and mobilize resources. This perspective permeates the debate as “value-based management” (Clark, 2014; de la Torre, 2013; de la Torre et al., 2017). Furthermore, it seeks to demonstrate that heritage values' detection is not a mere expert's prerogative, grounded only on specialized knowledge in conservation

¹⁸“Both intentional and unintentional monuments are characterized by commemorative value, and in both instances we are interested in their original, uncorrupted appearance as they emerged from the hands of their maker and to which we seek by whatever means to restore them. In the case of the intentional monument, its commemorative value has been determined by the makers, while we have defined the value of the unintentional ones” (Riegl 1903, p. 3).



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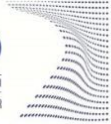


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(what Smith later theorizes as the “authorized heritage discourse”) (2006). Above all, it acknowledges how heritage values may multiply depending on involved actors. For this reason, they are attributed and never intrinsic; mutable depending on society and time; incommensurable as there is no common measurement system; conflicting with each other, forcing conservative intervention to protect some over others (De La Torre 2013, pp.159-161). Building on these assumptions, the value-based management approach suggests that every decision in conservation planning should be based on a holistic recognition of values assigned to a cultural resource. The overview and understanding of all heritage values is defined as a *statement of significance*:

“Significance has been used to mean the overall importance of a site, determined through an analysis of the totality of the values attributed to it. Significance also reflects the importance a place has with respect to one or several of its values, and in relation to other comparable sites” (de la Torre et al. 2017, p.5).

1.6.1. Heritage values and society

This approach gives space to the subjective and relativistic nature of heritage values (Rudolff, 2006), emphasizing the social aim of heritage hitherto undervalued. To further explain, it implies eliciting how actors from contemporary society value heritage and why (The Getty Conservation Institute, 2002), while also capturing the ontological dimensions of values. According to Lennox (2016), the ontological dimension of heritage values refers to the personal connections that people naturally forge with heritage, in terms of emotions, thoughts, memories etc.

In this regard, the *Burra Charter* (ICOMOS, 2013) was a pivotal example worldwide, weakening the dominant philosophy of the Venice Charter (1964). Drafted by ICOMOS Australia in 1979, the Burra Charter’s main purpose was to empower the position of Aboriginal communities in the management of archaeological sites in Australia, following a broader process of Aboriginal rights legal recognition, which began in the late 1960s (Díaz-Andreu, 2017). After the third revision in 1999, the concept of *cultural significance*¹⁹ was broadened in terms of *value*, *space* and *time* (Waterton et al., 2006). Indeed, the sphere of tangible values –aesthetic and historic – widened towards the intangible, incorporating spiritual values, personal associations, and meanings (ICOMOS 2013, Article 1.2). The spatial view of heritage also expanded: beyond the physical materiality of the *fabric* (ICOMOS 2013, Article 1.3), it now also embraces the notion of *place*. Heritage *place* is defined as a fluid ecosystem of *elements*, *objects and views* spread across a variable geographical extent²⁰ and built upon a “range of values for different individuals and groups” (ICOMOS 2013, Article 1.3).

¹⁹ “Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual values for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embedded in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects” (ICOMOS 2013, Article 1.2).

²⁰ Place has a broad scope and includes natural and cultural features. Place can be large or small: for example, a memorial, a tree, an individual building or group of buildings, the location of an historical event, an urban area or town, a cultural landscape etc. (Explanatory Notes, ICOMOS 2013, Article 1).



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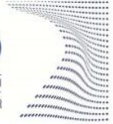


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Finally, the dimension of *time* is embodied in the constant use of the word *change*, emphasising on the transformative nature of heritage values rather than the static and immutable imprint, predominant so far.

This shift towards the social legacy of heritage triggered an intellectual breakthrough in the perception of the aim of heritage values, extending the focus beyond the niche of conservation (Clark, 2014). A statement of significance does not underlie just a conservation plan to support decisions and justify correlated actions. More importantly, it plays a key role also in explaining how heritage generates values in the form of benefits (economic, social or environmental) for a broader society (Clark and Lennox, 2019).

1.6.2. The flourishing of heritage values typologies

In heritage practice, the interpretation of *values* widely varies depending on professional perspective, interest at stake, and personal attachment (Avrami & Mason, 2019). The juxtaposition between *use and non-use values* of heritage (Throsby, 2012), suggests how the term ‘*value*’ can even hold opposite meanings. *Use-values* frame heritage sites as a private good that delivers a range of services to consumers. These services meet market demand and generate economic benefits. On the contrary, *non-use values* frame heritage sites as a public good that yields non-market benefits such as *existence values* (individuals value heritage regardless of offer consumption), *option value* (individuals are willing to guarantee the possibility of consuming heritage services in the future), and *bequest values* (people wish to transmit heritage to future generations) (Throsby 2012, pp. 52 – 53).

This interpretative flexibility leads to the flourishing of value typologies in international charters and academic debate. In a recent critical discussion on value-based approaches to heritage conservation, Fredheim, and Khalaf (2016) provide an overview of published value typologies for cultural heritage, starting from Riegl's²¹ seminal work in 1982 and ending with an ICOMOS New Zealand²² publication in 2010. The authors identify more than fifty different typologies (Fredheim & Khalaf 2016, pp. 3-4) and discuss on whether the wide range of heritage value categories highlights “that any attempt to categorise all values is determined to fail” (Fredheim & Khalaf 2016, p. 7).

1.7. Heritage public values

Delving into the concept of heritage public value implies navigating a blurred terrain marked by two certainties: the awareness that heritage covers a broad public interest, and the notion that, whatever

²¹ Riegl, A. (1982), *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin*. Translated and edited by K. Foster and D. Ghirardo. *Oppositions* 25 (autumn): 21-51.

²² ICOMOS New Zealand Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value (2010). Retrieved information from: https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Charters/ICOMOS_NZ_Charter_2010_FINAL_11_Oct_2010.pdf Accessed 13/05/2020.



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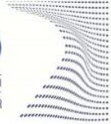


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the ownership system (Clark, 2016) its main purpose is always to serve society (Díaz-Andreu, 2017; Holtorf, 2011).

In the cultural context of the UK, Blaug et al. (2006) previously called attention to the complexity of defining the meaning of heritage public value, stating that:

“Public value is a tricky concept. There are many meanings of public, and still more of value” (Blaug et al. 2006, p.23). In line with the education and public sectors, the authors define heritage public value as the responsiveness of cultural organisations or heritage policy makers to refine and address public needs and preferences.

Overall, heritage studies partially tackle the issue of heritage public values (Clark & Lennox, 2019; Clark 2016; Díaz-Andreu 2017). This literature review detects two distinct approaches, which both agree that heritage public values are constantly reshaped by two-way interactions between policy makers and the public, in a mutual learning relationship.

The first strand brings forward the *public value paradigm* for heritage management (Clark & Lennox, 2019). The paradigm assumes that heritage management is set towards the creation of societal benefits and that it takes on the perspective of cultural organizations’ managers. The last two are required to demonstrate how culture can contribute to the well-being and growth of society, aiming to legitimise their role and receive funding from governments who “frequently caricature heritage as a backward-looking” (Clark 2016, p. 29).

From this perspective, heritage public values are mostly associated to the benefits that cultural organizations generate for the public, also taking into consideration the “ontological connections” (Lennox 2016, p.91) between individuals and what they value as heritage. Indeed, in line with the notion of cultural significance, the *public value paradigm* recognizes the subjective values that connect communities to their heritage, striving to incorporate them into management processes. The main challenge is to communicate public values to all stakeholders who manage and administer a heritage site. For this purpose, Clark, and Lennox (2019) elaborate the **Public Value Model (PVM)**, whose features will be illustrated in the Chapter 2 to develop the Heritage Participation Matrix. The PVM draws on the previous model elaborated by Holden and Hewison (Holden & Hewison, 2006), to capture the value of investments in heritage accomplished by the Heritage Lottery Fund in the UK.

The second approach shifts the focus from the creation of public values from a cultural organization to the issue of how to detect public values that are relevant to people (Jones, 2017; Olivier, 2017). More specifically, it stems from a common belief that direct public participation is required to strengthen heritage recognition as a common good to be cared for collectively (Council of Europe, 2005). The main challenge for heritage professionals is to understand what people appreciate about heritage, and how to integrate expressed needs and aspirations into public agendas (Oliver, 2017). Hence, public values are mainly related to participatory processes for the management of heritage and associated with participants’ perceptions and interests, rather than with benefits created by cultural organizations. Interestingly, they contribute to shaping the participatory processes’ *public sphere*, intended as the “democratic space” where public values arise and change through the



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process (Benington 2011b, p.31). This understanding of public values originates very closely to that of heritage social value, as “collective attachment to place that embodies meanings and values that are important to a community or communities” (Jones 2017, p.22) and as such, it results in a hardly detectable entity, often intangible, transient, variable and embedded in social interactions (i.e., symbolic meaning such as memory attachment, sense of identity, affection, etc.) (Jones 2017).

By adopting a pluralist approach to the interpretation of public values (Jørgensen & Bozeman 2007, p.364-369), this thesis aims to expand the knowledge of the relationship between public values and participatory processes concerning WH sites. Public values arise from the unfolding of participatory processes directly and indirectly related to a WH site. Therefore, they may transcend the physical boundaries of WH properties. This research particularly aims to unpack how such values fluctuate as participatory processes and mechanisms change.

1.8. Conclusion

In recent years, the WH Convention (1972) and correlated UNESCO agenda on heritage (UNESCO, 2003; 2005a; 2015b; 2019a) have stressed the relevance of enabling civil society participation in WH sites’ governance to ensure a path towards sustainability (Rosetti et al. 2022; UNESCO, 2015a, 2019a). In this perspective, several WH sites worldwide – from historical cities/sites/city centers to cultural itineraries and landscapes – have implemented various initiatives to engage civil society representatives in WH sites’ management decisions (Badia et al., 2012; Dormaels, 2016; Ercole, 2017), reinforcing the global-local nexus between the regime steering the WH Convention and WH sites’ local governance (Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015).

The first section of this chapter identifies a sharp discrepancy between guidelines, policy discourses, and practices. While official documents recommend the achievement of institutionalized forms of community participation in WH sites’ governance (UNESCO 1996, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019a), several challenges in reaching full participation arise from a thorough case-study analysis. These challenges may include increasing geographical extension, (Pettenati, 2019; Wang, 2019) correlated inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021), bureaucratic constraints, and political willingness (Badia et al., 2012). However, the literature review reveals a proliferation of participatory enhancement initiatives (Badia et al., 2012; Ercole, 2017; Perricone & Gal Ramella, 2021) as well as a gap in questioning its potential contribution in terms of raised public values and eventually towards conceiving WH sites as commons.

As meticulously explained in the third part of this chapter, public administration studies consider the creation of public values (Bozeman, 2007; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Nabatchi, 2012) accordingly as an outcome and a series of principles that guide participatory governance. Drawing on such insights, this chapter confirms the importance of realising how both participation in governance and enhancement initiatives may support WH sites’ public values, profiling them as cultural commons (Bertacchini et al., 2012; Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020) belonging to society, regardless of the ownership.



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While recognizing the difference between participatory governance and initiatives, the research advances a novel processual perspective. Such perspective adapts pivotal insights on participatory governance from political and social sciences (definitions, redistribution of power, purposes, and main critiques) heritage studies. Participatory governance and initiatives are seen as complementary stages of the WH sites' making process (Di Giovine, 2009), articulated in three main moments: nomination phase, drafting, and implementation of the WH management plan. The processual perspective looks at the relationships between the two participatory sides, which are rarely considered, to understand how they may reshape public values across the WH sites' making process.

This approach relies on a socio-political and performative interpretation of participatory governance (Turnhout et al., 2010), intended as a chain of social interactions that can interweave phases of contestation and collaboration. To reconstruct this chain, the chapter points out the importance of combining both the spatial and institutional design analysis of participatory processes. In particular, a spatial perspective implies exploring both the invited and the created spaces of participation (Cornwall, 2002) from a twofold angle: the abstract space generated by social relations and the physical space where participatory processes unfold.

In conclusion, this chapter aims both to robustly comprehend the research gap, and to identify the key elements required to innovate the perception of participation in WH sites governance. It also serves to clarify some key concepts underpinning the whole research, summarized as follows:

1. *Participation* is intended as an umbrella term, including all participatory approaches, inside and outside the institutional fabric, with different level of engagement of different actors to preserve and enhance WH sites (Brodie et al., 2009; Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022)
2. *Participatory initiatives* gather set of activities and projects aimed at building diverse and shared social meanings of a WH site, through co-design or co-implementation (Biondi et al., 2020; Piber et al., 2019);
3. *Participatory governance*: shared decision-making structures among institutional and non-institutional actors for managing a WH site (Sani, 2015);
4. *Public values* are seen as plural values that convey principles and benefits generated from both participatory governance and initiatives (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

To overcome the uncritical consideration of participation as a marker for good and bad governance., a novel approach will be elaborated in the application of the Heritage Participation Matrix described in the next chapter.



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Chapter 2

The Heritage Participation Matrix

2.1 Introduction

The complexity of factors within participatory governance and participation in social and political science debate (see Chapter 1) have been rarely addressed in WH studies (Li et al., 2020a, 2020c), creating a gap in knowledge of how participatory processes develop and for what purposes.

To facilitate filling this gap, this chapter elaborates a theoretical framework, embodied in the *Heritage Participation Matrix* (HPM).

The matrix combines Fung's categories (2006) of institutional design (participants, communication modes and authority and power) expressed in *who*, *how* and *what influence*, with three macro-categories of public heritage values (Clark and Lennox, 2019).

The main function of the matrix is to understand how values may vary as the actors and mechanisms in participatory processes change. It serves as a tool to holistically trace the evolution of participatory processes (before and after WH designation) by identifying phases and effects (in terms of public values) that would otherwise remain undetected.

The HPM also supports data triangulation to enable the reconstruction of fragmented participatory practice (Moini, 2012) tied to a WH site's making process, cross-referencing both information from interviews, local press reviews, project reports, and council resolutions.

The chapter is structured in six paragraphs providing a detailed explanation of the central theories, rationales, structure, benchmarking frameworks and main limitations



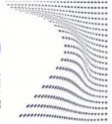
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2.2 Theoretical concepts behind the HPM.

In order to reconstruct the heterogeneous and under-explored patterns that participatory governance may bring into the context of WH sites, the HPM connects two main elements: (i) dimensions that draw up participative decision-making arenas (Fung, 2006), (ii) evolving heritage public values stemming from participatory practices (Díaz-Andreu, 2017; Fredheim & Khalaf, 2016; Jones, 2017) tied to the construction and development of a WH site.

The first element refers to the institutional design of participatory process (Bobbio, 2019; Cornwall, 2008; Fung, 2006; Uittenbroek et al., 2019) in order to shed light on one of the main research gaps: understanding how participation occurs in WH site governance and through which mechanisms. In a recent paper about how to arrange effective public participation, Bobbio (2019) states how “designing public participation processes [...] has become a widespread concern for both practitioners and academics” (Bobbio 2019, p. 43). However, design evaluation of participatory processes is barely addressed in WH studies and the HPM strives to introduce an analytical tool for fostering micro-level analysis of participatory processes.

The second dimension of public values (Clark & Lennox, 2019; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) relates more to the social side of participation, aspiring to elucidate the purpose of participatory processes for WH sites in relation to several actors’ perspectives. As public values convey knowledge on how public participation in decision-making strengthens decisions’ results for society, when applied in WH sites they also stress how participation in decisions contributes to the perception of WH sites as commons, meaning to adopt “a community-based approach which distributes responsibilities and powers including local community” (Iaione et al. 2022, p.6).

The same authors Iaione et al. (2022) state that heritage commons “result from social processes and institutional design which bring together different types of institutions [...] but are rich of contrasts and hyperregulated” (Iaione et al. 2022, p. 6). The HPM combines these two cores, (institutional design and social side of public values) in an effort to delve into the issue of WH sites participatory processes and gather both contrasts and potentialities.

A theoretical discussion on the components of institutional design and public values included in the HPM will follow.

2.2.1 Institutional design

The institutional design through which such practices unfold is another key factor for participatory governance, allowing it to generate more democratic decisions. The institutional design refers to the way in which a participatory process is organised and subsequently implemented (Fung, 2006; Fung & Wright, 2001; Uittenbroek et al., 2019). Focusing on the multiple “range of institutional possibilities” (Fung 2006, p. 66) which enable participation in decision-making serves both to



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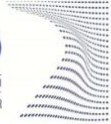


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mapping the characteristics of contemporary participatory processes and understanding whether they realistically underpin democratic values (such as legitimacy, justice, transparency, etc.) (Fung, 2006) or remain overly elusive. Aiming to unpack participatory processes' design, several authors emphasise the common dimensions that shape the design: *who*, *what*, and *how* (Cornwall, 2008; Fung, 2006; Uittenbroek et al., 2019).

In the field of local development studies, **Cornwall** (2008) stresses how the question who participates? in decision-making processes leads to reveal people who are excluded, who choose not to participate and to elicit the paradox of participants' selection.

On one hand, a thoroughly participatory process should engage participants in all stages of a project - from planning to implementation - and, to do so, it would require the selection of specific interest groups as participants, with the risk of overly constricting the process. On the other hand, participatory processes open to a wide public hardly succeed to achieve fully participative decisions. On the contrary, they often stand at the information or consultation level, remaining too shallow. According to the author, "a deep and wide participatory process" might be theorised as ideal, but it is almost unfeasible in practice (Cornwall 2008, p. 276).

In practice, it is more reasonable to discuss a trade-off (optimum participation) between the degree of openness and engagement in a participatory process:

"It is not uncommon to read in reports, or hear in policy statements, that there has been, or should be, full participation and participation by all stakeholders. [...] A 'deep' and 'wide' participatory process might be the ideal, in abstract, but in practice it can prove either virtually impossible to achieve or so cumbersome and time-consuming that everyone begins to lose interest" (Cornwall 2008, p. 276).

The same author confirms the importance of disclosing what people participate in, to unpack the value of participatory processes in community development. Once more, it is more convincing that diverse targets of participants are engaged in specific stages of project-planning (consultation, implementation, monitoring etc.), rather than claiming that all stakeholders should actively participate in the entire process.

Similarly, **Uittenbroek** et al. develops a conceptual framework to analyse the institutional design of participatory decisional processes concerning the planning of climate change measures. The design of participation stems from the intersection of three variables: who, when and how to participate. The first dimension – who participates – relates to the equal representation of actors' interests. Conscious that involving a general public could strengthen the democratic capacity and legitimacy of decisional processes, the authors point out the challenge (and consequent risk of failure) in equally representing all voices due to the required costs and extensive time. The side effects of a full inclusion can be counterbalanced by a complete and equal representation of actors' interests in decisional processes (Uittenbroek et al., 2019). The second sphere – when to participate – refers to



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the multiple stages when actors can influence decision-making (such as policy making, implementation, evaluation, and maintenance). Finally, the third realm – how to participate – deals with the level of influence that participants can exert on decisions, depending on the implemented participatory practice (such as public hearings, survey, focus groups, etc.).

One of the most exhaustive analytical models for looking at the institutional design of participatory decisional arenas is the democracy cube developed by **Fung** (2006). Democracy cube's dimensions have been used to develop the Heritage Participation Matrix (see Chapter 2) – and for this reason are illustrated in detail.

Fung turns the three domains of participants (who), communication and decision modes (how) and authority and power (what) into the axes of a three-dimensional space, in which to deploy a wide range of institutional mechanisms for public participation. Each dimension addresses a crucial question to understand both potentials and limits of participatory governance.

Specifically, the participant's domain questions the actors who are eligible to participate and how they are selected. It consists of eight participants' rungs that range from the most inclusive – the general public – to the most exclusive selection mechanisms – the expert administrators:

- The general public (or diffuse public sphere) grounds on a Habermasian perspective. The public sphere is a social space where all citizens can discuss issues of public concern, influencing the general opinion. According to Habermas, the public sphere comes into being with a specific phase of bourgeois society and is forged in the content of every public conversation and conveyed by the mass media, including the radio, television, newspaper, etc. (Habermas et al., 1974);
- the following step is self-selection. Self-selection always refers to open mechanisms (such as public meetings), whereby participants represent a self-selected sample of a wider audience, without the guarantee of being the most illustrative subset;
- alternatively, targeted recruitment mechanisms aim to involve individuals that are less interested in participating and may not be represented in decisions. The engagement can be achieved through different strategies, such as tailored communication campaigns or targeting public meetings towards issues of specific interest. The following five rungs increase the level of selection;
- through random selection, participants are randomly chosen from a larger public, in order to better ensure “deliberative representativeness”. The author mentions citizens juries or planning cells as examples of participation strategies based on such mechanism;
- the fifth method engages lay stakeholders who represent volunteers or unpaid citizens with an interest in specific public issues, related for instance to school and community organizations. Although they are involved in open meetings on behalf of other actors who stand for the same cause, they do not actively participate;
- the sixth mechanism brings together professional stakeholders. They are usually paid representatives with specific expertise in technical subjects and negotiation techniques;



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- the last two categories refer to “individuals who occupy positions in the state” (Fung 2006, 68). Elected representatives are politicians voted by the population to represent their interests, while expert public administrators represent technical staff often selected through professional civil service.

The sphere of communication and decision modes explores how participants interact and finalise decisions. Fung illustrates six of the most widespread methods of participatory governance, starting from the most moderate moving towards the most intense. Such methods differ from each other based on participants’ behavior and negotiation ability:

- the first category comprises of (crowded) public hearings where participants listen as spectators. In these circumstances, the broader public does not express any opinion on the discussed subjects. In reality, it is scarcely informed about the ongoing processes;
- the second and third way of interacting share similarities. In both situations, participants express their preferences in front of politicians and experts who often direct public committees;
- in addition, the third method of developing preferences implies a real-time elaboration of realistic proposals, delivering learning materials to participants to guide them on how to refine their perspective. The last three arrangements provide participants with greater negotiation power;
- through the aggregate and bargain mechanism, participants become fully aware of their requests and are able to negotiate with steering authorities until their requirements are implemented;
- the deliberate and negotiate mode occurs when participants build their proposals during decision-making sessions, both individually and as a group. By exchanging their views and intentions, they interact developing proposals and deliberating on a common solution;
- finally, the technical expertise mechanism, encompasses decisional processes among officials and professionals, such as “planners, regulators, social workers, teachers and principals, police officers and the like” (Fung 2006, p. 69) bearing technical know-how to solve specific problems. While the first three mechanisms of interaction commonly do not aspire to integrate participants’ perspectives into a joint final decision, the last three strive to achieve a collective choice.

Finally, the realm of authority and power enquires the level of influence that participant’s discussions and proposals may have on final public actions, decisions, or policies. It specifically investigates upon the question “what is the connection between participants’ conclusions and opinions on one hand and public policy and action on the other?” (Fung 2006, p. 66). The author identifies five different forms of institutionalized influence, that range from the least to the most intense authority:

- the first mechanism includes the participatory venues where participants are willing to gain personal benefits rather than only influence a collective public action. As appointed by Fung, this method known as ‘individual education’ is usually constructed through the least intense modes of interactions (i.e., listening as spectator, express preferences, and develop preferences);



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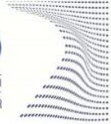


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- the second one leverages on indirect forms of communicative influence on the “state or its agents” through external mobilization of public opinion;
- formerly, the advice and consult mechanism occurs when public officials accept suggestions from participants to participatory forums, while maintaining their decisional authority;
- the last two participatory mechanisms, respectively co-govern and direct authority, imply forms of “direct power” by participants. Co-govern entails a shared power between officials and participants (citizens) who act in a sort of co-governing partnership for public decisions;
- whilst direct authority occurs when participants exert direct control over public decisions. Even though it may represent the most intense form of participation’s power, this does not imply that it is the most appropriate form of management of public decisions in any circumstance.

In suggesting this tool, Fung intends to overcome one of the major limitations of the participation ladder developed by Arnstein (Arnstein, 1969). While recognizing its universal validity, Fung criticizes the merging of “the empirical scale that describes the level of influence individuals have over some collective decision with normative approval” (Fung 2006, p. 67). In contrast to this, he acknowledges that, while in some circumstances a high degree of citizen direct authority is required to ensure more consensus-based decisions, in others it may be more appropriate to simply stand at the consultation level.

Referring to Fung’s democracy cube, Bobbio (2019) notices that its three-dimensional nature allows to analyse different arrangements such as “public hearings, deliberative polls, participatory budgets [...] no longer ordered from below to above in a ladder-like scheme, but are scattered throughout the cube’s space, each of them fostering some values” (Bobbio 2019, pp. 45-46).

The focus on the mechanisms and the overcoming of a normative approval, make Fung’s analytical approach consistent with the proposed research aim. Shedding light on (parallel) mechanisms of contestation, negotiation, and coordination among political institutions, private sector, and societal actors is necessary to overcome a static opposition between good and bad, inclusive and exclusive participatory processes. It notably contributes to deconstructing the rhetorical discourse whereby participation of civil society in decisions ensures good governance of a WH site (hereafter WH site), as well as the assumption that community exclusion from official decisional arenas negatively affects WH site governance. Yet, a thorough investigation of who, how and what level of influence participants exert, enlightens the performative nature (Jessop, 2002; Turnhout et al., 2010) of participatory governance that is poorly considered in the local settings of WH sites:

“Self-reflexive and participatory forms of governance are performative – [...] they [...] become a self-reflexive means of coping with the failures, contradictions, dilemmas, and paradoxes that are an inevitable feature of life. In this sense, participatory governance is a crucial means of defining the objectives as well as objects of governance as well as of facilitating the co-realisation of these



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objectives by reinforcing motivation and mobilizing capacities for self-reflection, self-regulation, and self-correction” (Jessop 2002, p. 55 retrieved from Heinelt 2010, pp. 17-18).

For all the above reasons, the dimensions of Fung's democratic cube have been employed in this thesis to build the Heritage Participation matrix (see Chapter 2), in order to deeply explore the WH site s' participatory processes, both in governance and enhancement initiatives.

2.2.2 Selected public values dimensions

The HPM implements the three dimensions of the PVM (Clark & Lennox, 2019)(see paragraph 1.6.) for heritage and elaborates them from the perspective of multiple actors who take part in a participatory process, rather than only from a cultural organization perspective.

In the PVM model, Holden and Hewison merge heritage value's peculiarities with Moore's view of public value to understand how a cultural organization can generate value for the public.

The PVM gathers potential heritage benefits within three sets of values: intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional.

- The **intrinsic sphere** collects meanings associated to heritage, and it supports the shaping of heritage place significance (knowledge, bequest, identity values etc.);
- The **instrumental one** refers to the benefits achieved for sustainability (social, economic etc.) following investments in heritage;
- Finally, the **institutional dimension** comprises the way cultural institutions and officials relate to civil society when delivering a heritage-related service for the public (i.e., mutual trust, transparency etc.);

Furthermore, if a cultural organization is willing to adopt the public value framework for heritage, it would earn the opportunity to strengthen relations “within its authorising environment” (Clark & Lennox 2019, p.7). According to the authors, such environment consists of key stakeholders that a cultural organisation relies upon. Stakeholders can be grouped into four categories: *elected state members*, who authorize cultural organisations to act (politicians); *heritage professional groups* (peers); *further collaborative entities* - such as NGOs - or private companies (partners); and finally, all those *for whom a heritage service is intended* such as visitors, citizens, schools etc. (public).

Grounding on this robust basis, the HPM strives to expand the typology of public values already included in each cluster by referring to the “public values universe” that Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007) elaborated to grasp public administrations' actions. Some of these values, - especially those that explore the relationship between public administrations, citizens and the external environment - are well suited to analyse the evolutionary dynamics of participatory processes concerning a WH site and hitherto rarely observed at the micro level of the process.



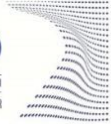
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Also, it serves to qualitatively recognize and fix values that are hard to detect due to their fluid and evanescent nature (Jones, 2017).

2.3 Rationale behind the Heritage Participation Matrix

The notion of the *Heritage Participation Matrix* aims to grasp participatory processes tied to (local) governance of WH sites. To enable this goal, the matrix correlates the mechanisms behind participatory processes with public values resulting from the actor's interactions. Such correlation allows to regroup fragmented and multiple arenas of a participatory process, according to a logic of continuity.

The logic derives from a dialectic understanding of heritage, intended as an ever-evolving social construct reshaped through human activities.

Concerning participatory governance mechanisms, the matrix draws on three dimensions of Fung's (Fung, 2006) *democracy cube* (Figure 5) (see Chapter 1) to grasp both invited and created spaces of participation in contemporary governance and to understand participatory arenas' mechanisms. More specifically, the author identifies participants, studies the way they interact (communication and decision modes), and their public influence (authority and power) on final actions as the axes of three-dimensional space, in order to deploy a wide range of participatory mechanisms and figure out the “range of institutional possibilities for public participation” (Fung, 2006, p.1). By combining the three dimensions, the author seeks to develop an analytical model to critically assess participatory mechanisms of contemporary decision-making arenas, based on the circumstances in which they are implemented. By proposing this tool, Fung intends to overcome one of the major limitations of the participation ladder developed by Arnstein (1969) (see Chapter 1). While recognizing the universal validity of Arnstein's rungs, the author criticizes the merging of “the empirical scale that describes the level of influence individuals have over some collective decision with normative approval” (Fung 2006, p. 67). Instead, he acknowledges that, while in some contexts a high degree of citizen power (Arnstein's citizen control rung) is required to ensure more consensus based decisions, in others, simply standing at the consultation level may be more appropriate.

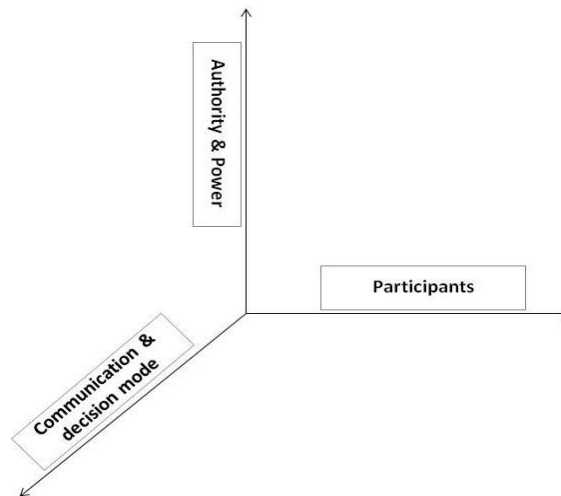


Figure 5 The three dimensions of the democracy cube. Image *Source*: Re-adapted from Fung, 2006.

The three dimensions address some questions that the author considers crucial in understanding the “potential and limits” of participatory mechanisms in governance. These questions are:

“Who is eligible to participate, and how do individuals become participants? [...] How do they communicate and make a decision? [...] What is the connection between their conclusions and opinions on one hand and public policy and action on the other?” (Fung, 2001, p. 66).

In concerns of the dialectic interpretation of heritage, the matrix is linked to foundations introduced by critical heritage scholars from the 80s onwards. These scholars aimed to shift the investigation focus from heritage materiality to heritage ontology, questioning human relations and politics that continuously transform heritage meanings and identities (Waterton & Watson, 2015).

This critical turn proves the multifaceted notion of heritage as a long-term social construction (Harvey, 2001, 2015b), as a subjective representation that can be performed differently (Crouch, 2010), a contested place for political disputes (De Cesari, 2010, 2020; Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996) or a commodified resource for economic interests. From this theoretical strand, the matrix extracts the core theory of heritage as an evolving social construct and brings it to reality/accomplishes it by correlating actors who participate in the World Heritage making process, their decisions, actions, and produced social values. An input to the concept design derives from the *Heritage Cycle* elaborated by the English Heritage²³ organization in 2005. This model defines a strategy which allows to incorporate past heritage into the future development of society (May, 2020; Thurley, 2005). ‘The Heritage Cycle’ places public participation at the core of a flow of actions, consisting in understanding, valuing, caring, and enjoying/appreciating heritage (Figure 6). The rationale behind

²³ The English Heritage is a charity aimed at preserving historic buildings, monuments and sites in England. Retrieved information from: <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/> Accessed 12/05/2020.

the cycle considers public awareness of heritage (by understanding) as a core requirement to appreciate its cross-cutting values (by valuing) and to take conscious decisions towards its care (by caring).

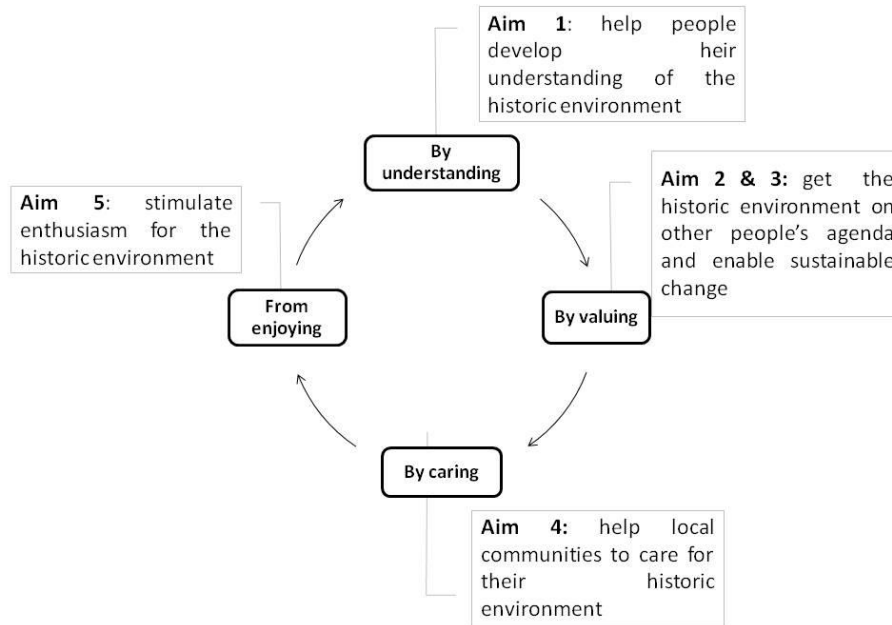


Figure 6 The Heritage Cycle and its main goals. Image *Source*: re-adapted from the English Heritage Strategy 2005 – 2010.

Although the cycle conveys the idea of approaching heritage as a continuous transformative process in present society (Holtorf, 2011), it treats the relationship between heritage and participation in an overly simplistic and positive way discarding any possibility of objection and disinterest in participating (Fredheim & Khalaf, 2016). Indeed, it depicts public participation as a sort of panacea for heritage endangerment and rhetoric to make the proposed strategy more compelling in the eyes of the government (May, 2020).

In order to overcome this limit, the Heritage Participation Matrix re-elaborates the dialectic view of heritage embodied by the cycle through the three dimensions, unfolding participatory governance mechanisms (Fung, 2006). Combining these two aspects within a single analytical framework allows to detect potential conflicts and divergences of interest amongst participants and accordingly to critically understand how public participation can contribute to transforming heritage meanings for the current society (Piber et al., 2019).

Hence, the proposed framework strives to advance a micro-scale approach to the analysis of participatory processes in WH sites. The hitherto uncommon micro-scale approach to WH sites' study could reveal, with greater clarity, how participatory processes can vary within a single site, how



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participatory mechanisms unfold in both invited and created spaces and how they are related to the public values of a WH site (all gaps highlighted in the literature review).

2.4 Describing the Heritage Participation Matrix

The Heritage Participation Matrix combines three core elements to investigate participatory processes: spaces for participation (invited and created), participatory mechanisms (institutional design) and public values (institutional, intrinsic, and instrumental) (Table 4).

Consistent with the examined theory, the matrix differentiates invited and created **spaces for participation** (Cornwall, 2008b). Both spaces may refer to heterogeneous participatory arenas, ranging from community projects, informal civic initiatives, public meetings, and concertation tables etc.

Concerning the **institutional design**, the matrix leverages the three categories of Fung's democracy cube (2006): participants, communication and decision modes, and authority and power. Each axis consists of several components – previously described in Chapter 1 – which have been adopted in the framework of this research to both identify and describe participatory mechanisms detected in the field or reconstructed through interviews and document analysis (Figure 9).

The three categories have been respectively simplified in the matrix (Table 4) with the headings *who*, *how* and *what*, recalling the common denominators of participation institutional design (Carnwall, 2008; Uittenbroek et al., 2019). Each heading is declined with its own sub-categories, thoroughly explained in Chapter 1 and listed in the matrix model (Table 4).

In regards of **public values**, the matrix follows the same rationale of interview coding: they ground on the intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional spheres developed by Clark and Lennox (2020). Beyond the three dimensions, this cell does not specify value categories ex-ante to avoid influencing the interpretation of research results and to avoid an overly simplistic representation of heritage public values, which are often determined by multi-level negotiations (Belfiore, 2020). More precisely, public values have been gradually extrapolated from respondent's statements (see Annexes 1, 2, and 3) and interpreted in relation to actors' social local context and the theorising of public values universe by Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007). Once the analysis is completed, the emerging typologies of values are inserted into the matrix.

The cross-analysis of both components in specific spaces and time allows to reconfigure multiple and parallel stages of a participatory process (Table 4).



Table 4 The Heritage Participation Matrix

<i>Participatory Process (i): Stage I, II, III etc.</i>				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
1. Invited spaces for participation 2. Created spaces for participation (Cornwell, 2008; Bobbio, 2004)	1. Diffuse Public Sphere 2. Open, Self-Selection 3. Open, Targeted Recruiting 4. Random Selection 5. Lay Stakeholders 6. Professional Stakeholders 7. Elected Representatives 8. Expert Administrators (Fung, 2006)	1. Deploy Technique and expertise 2. Deliberate and Negotiate 3. Aggregate and Bargain 4. Develop Preferences 5. Express Preferences 6. Listen as Spectator (Fung, 2006)	1. Direct Authority 2. Co-Governance 3. Advise and Consult 4. Communicative Influence 5. Personal Benefits (Fung, 2006)	1. Institutional sphere 2. Instrumental sphere 3. Intrinsic sphere (Clark, 2016; Clark and Lennox, 2019)
'''	'''	'''	'''	'''

Source: own elaboration

2.5 Benchmarking

The HPM shares features comprising existing frameworks (Svels, 2017; Veldpaus, 2015) in the literature, elaborated to attain the multidimensional nature of heritage (Crouch, 2010; Harvey, 2001, 2015a; Waterton & Watson, 2015), participation (Bobbio, 2019; Brodie et al., 2009; Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022) and governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Kooiman et al., 2008; Moini, 2012; Torfing et al., 2012). Such commonality strengthens the HPM and serves to better explain the HPM’s contribution in advancing WH studies.

The first framework has been developed to systematically scrutinise how the concept of cultural heritage management evolved in international guidelines and charters adopted by organizations such as UNESCO, ICOMOS etc. (Veldpaus, 2015). It also covers how such concept influenced subnational heritage policy. Grounding on previous approaches (Landorf, 2009), the author identifies four common denominators to investigate seven international documents²⁴ through the same lenses. The identified denominators query heritage nature (*what*), reasons for valuing

²⁴ These documents are: the Venice Charter, 1960; WH Convention, 1972; Washington Charter, 1980; the BURRA Charter, 1990; the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003; the Valletta Principles, 2011; the Historic Urban Landscape, 2011.



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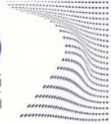


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heritage (*why*), the process of heritage management (*how*) and the actors involved (*who*) (Veldpaus 2015, pp. 62 -69).

After deriving a precise taxonomy for each denominator, the author adopts it to build a policy analysis tool applied by means of three prearranged workshops in Amsterdam, “to understand how subnational policies are composed in relation to supranational recommendations” (Veldpaus 2015, p.99).

By correlating the four denominators, the author detects a “growth in complexity” of the heritage concept through the analysed documents (Veldpaus 2015, p. 70). Heritage conveys values that stem from interactions between the *object* and societal actors. Both these values and the people engaged vary, attesting both the importance and the challenge of integrating participation into heritage management. As the author states, “participation by no means necessarily produces consensus [...] dealing with all those stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities, and the variety of outcomes and approaches, remains a challenge” (Veldpaus 2015, p.71).

The HPM hooks into the ‘participation’ challenge. It is founded upon similar denominators of Veldpaus’ framework, but holds a different meaning. Firstly, participating actors (*who*) identified not only based on typology (i.e., citizens, inhabitants, local/national authorities etc.) but also according to selection methods (i.e., self-selection, targeted recruiting etc.) and the role they play during a participatory process (i.e., professional stakeholders, expert administrators, etc.).

Secondly, the heritage value dimension overlaps but also differs. Veldpaus’ framework emphasises heritage values as the main motivations behind the choice to preserve it (*why*). The HPM looks beyond, focusing on how heritage values change during participatory processes in the specific domain of public values. Thirdly, the *what* and *how* components of Veldpaus’ framework change purpose in the HPM. The latter uses the *what* to investigate the influence participants exert on final decisions rather than heritage nature and the *how* to identify actors’ interactions mechanisms rather than management orientations. Both frameworks are based upon a common understanding of heritage as an evolving process, striving to introduce a systematic analytic approach which is not aimed at evaluating policy effectiveness or appropriateness of participatory processes. Rather, both tools grasp the composition of subnational policy on one side, and the participatory processes on the other. Contrarily, the HPM is mainly conceived to analyse occurred participatory practices rather than policy documents, aiming to build a systematic classification of participatory processes for WH sites, starting from a contextual analysis. The use of some dimensions previously academically discussed, serves as a key and reproducible reference for breaking down heritage participatory processes.

The second comparative framework delves into public participation and WH sites, closer to the HPM purposes. This analytical tool has been developed as part of a doctoral research regarding WH sites governance, public participation and tourism development (Svels, 2017).

After an extensive theoretical investigation on the complexity (and necessity) of unpacking the concept of public participation, Svels proposes a tool to evaluate public participation in the WH



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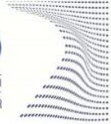


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Kvarken Archipelago (Finalnd and Sweden). The tool involves four fields, resuming the key elements to identify 'good and fair' public participation:

- 1. Participatory factors**, including transparency in selecting participants, representativeness of individuals interested or affected by decisions, resources at disposal etc.;
- 2. Planning and development processes**, referring to collaborative process design, good communication and procedural fairness (rules, trust of authorities, commitment etc.);
- 3. Decision-making**, particularly in transparency, inclusiveness and fairness;
- 4. Learning and capacity building**, refers mostly to the effects of public participation such as the enhancement of participants' social learning, building of capacity among communities of interests etc. (Svels, 2017 p. 35).

Although the HPM might seem more akin to the tool elaborated by Svels (2017) for the common field of investigation, (public participation and WH sites) they deeply differ in rationale.

This discrepancy is not due to the absence of the *what, how, who and why* (values) dimensions in Svels' tool. In fact, some of them are implicitly included in the four fields of the tool to gather public participation. For instance, the planning and development dimension relates to specific mechanisms, designing a participatory process (*how*) as well as the participatory factors domain considers the issue of participants and their representativeness (*who*), whereas values are spread across several fields (as trust, commitment, collaboration etc.). However, each field abounds with factors that might hardly cope in empirical research all at once due to their complex nature. When analysing the WH Kvarken Archipelago to evaluate public participation, the author focuses on one area, that of decision-making, and its three main features – transparency, fairness and inclusiveness -, leaving the other three fields of analysis aside. In this respect, the HPM seeks to suggest an inverse logic. Indeed, the HPM focuses specifically on institutional design, delving into it at the micro level, in order to understand how WH sites participatory processes are organised and their contributions in terms of public values. The HPM has been conceived as a handling tool containing essential and guiding elements – extrapolated from the literature – to be characterised with data from field's observations and documents in order to overly influence the researcher's gaze with pre-determined categories. Moreover, the main purpose for which both tools have been designed appears opposite. Svels' tool strives to evaluate the level of public participation within the WH Kvarken Archipelago during the pre and post-designation phase. This results in classifying public participation in decision making as poor, fair and good. Based on Lockwood (2010) principles of 'good governance' (Svels 2017, p.99). Instead, the HPM has been developed not to evaluate the quality of public participation (good, fair or poor) in a scale. The main aim is to encourage a systematic analysis of how participatory processes develop in WH sites, understanding the adopted mechanisms. The two frameworks share a process-oriented approach to investigate how public participation evolves during the main stages of WH sites' making (Di Givone..): pre and post designation.

Hence, the benchmarking with the two frameworks (Svels, 2017; Veldpaus, 2015) not only strengthens the structure of the HPM, showing how it is based on previously tested common



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denominators. It also better elucidates how the HPM adoption may advance the debate on participation in WH sites on several fronts:

1. Setting a systematic classification of participatory mechanisms adopted in WH sites' making processes;
2. Understanding how participatory processes are organised and how they may evolve in WH sites' making processes;
3. Proposing innovative concepts, by interweaving empirical data on participatory processes in WH sites and already elaborated theoretical notions (institutional design; public values).

2.6 Main function and limitations

The HPM is conceived as a multi-functional analytical tool. More specifically, it serves to systematise, and interconnect fragmented and seemingly unrelated data.

Following a time-space rationale, the HPM (Table 4) enables to thoroughly analyse heterogeneous participatory practices, ranging from broader projects pursued by public authorities to spontaneous initiatives triggered by local communities. In the context of this research, the participatory dimension is seen as the interface between these two sides of WH sites' governance: "disaggregated" (De Cesari 2020, p.21) and *structured* modes (Ripp & Rodwell, 2018; Schmitt, 2009), exploring both invited spaces and created spaces of participation (Cornwall, 2008b).

It also allows to correlate public values and participatory mechanisms, participation in governance and enhancement initiatives. Its main function is to reconstruct the heterogeneous and under-explored patterns that participatory governance may take in the context of WH sites and holistically trace the evolution of participatory processes.

The matrix is conceived as an operational tool to collect qualitative data of first and second order and reassemble scattered steps into a unified participatory process, which would otherwise remain undetected. This strategy of processing qualitative information allowed to accumulate heterogeneous data in fluent narratives (Creswell, 2007), suitable for further discussions.

Such narratives link mutable public values to different stages of participatory processes, preserving the temporal distinction between *before* and *after* the WH nomination already adopted in the interviews' coding system (see Chapter 3). This temporal repartition allowed for a longitudinal reconstruction of participatory processes, which appeared fragmented and unilinear during the field data collection.

While the HPM can be widely used for all WH sites (regardless of typology and extensions), there are some limitations too. The selected components of participatory institutional design (Fung, 2006) articulating the three dimensions *who*, *how* and *what* could not unequivocally cover the range of possible participatory mechanisms, participants and power relations. Correspondingly the three dimensions of public values could not embrace all detected values from real practices. Such limitation suggests considering a flexible use of the HPM matrix, considering for example that some



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participatory mechanisms (*how*) could develop according to mixed approaches among those displayed in the HPM, as well as for participants (*who*). Moreover, a future testing of the HPM in a wider range of WH sites could entail an expansion of the targeted factors featuring participatory process institutional design, since this topic has been addressed by several authors (Bobbio, 2019; Cornwall, 2008; Uittenbroek et al., 2019). This led to the, the selection of Fung's analytical model, as it offered a more comprehensive and detailed explanation of institutional design components, amongst the reviewed sources.

The further limitation of the HPM is related to its empirical use, tackling the challenge to retrieve detailed information about past participatory practices that respondents did not recall. Such shortcomings can partly be overcome by extrapolating information from local magazines and press conferences.

2.7 Conclusions

The HPM is a multifunctional analytical tool elaborated to understand main features and evolution participatory processes during WH sites' making. Based on akin analytical tools, the HPM introduces a pioneering systematic approach in the investigation of WH sites' participatory processes. It strives to advance the debate on several issues: classification of participatory mechanisms adopted in WH sites' making, recognising the participatory process dynamics and the elaboration of advanced concepts.

By merging the two theoretical dimensions of institutional design and public values, both extrapolated from the reviewed literature, the HPM allows a micro-level analysis of participatory processes, configuring fragmented mechanisms and displaying how public values may vary as such mechanisms change. As an innovative analytical tool, the matrix can be applied to analyse further WH cases (and tested on other heritage-making processes), consequently expanding the range of data to compare and refine the tool's constraints.

The HPM has been used to develop the empirical narratives of this research (see Chapters 4,5 and 6), providing a longitudinal reconstruction (before and after the WH nomination) of participatory initiatives that would otherwise remain unexplored.



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Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology adopted to develop the research. As the thesis is grounded on a qualitative design, it follows a social constructivist perspective, “relying as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied” (Creswell, 2009, p. 9). This method allows to grasp interactions between individuals in a specific context, also making room for subjective interpretations of collected data. For this reason, it applies to the main research objectives: understanding power relations that shape participatory governance in the context of WH sites and interpreting flowing heritage public values from participants' perceptions and actions. The choice of adopting an embedded case study strategy (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Gustafsson, 2017; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003), focusing on the WH serial site *Arab –Norman Palermo and the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale* (Italy), combined with multiple qualitative methods to collect data (Stake, 1995), allows to investigate on both “invited spaces” and “created” for participation (Cornwall, 2008b), facilitating the inference of broader generalizations.

A coding system was adopted to extrapolate heritage public values from interviews more easily. The system is built upon the three dimensions of the heritage public value model (Clark, 2014, 2016; Clark & Lennox, 2019): intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section describes the research approach and design that led me to focus on the *WH Arab –Norman Palermo and the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site as a case study, tracing the non-linear trajectory for this choice. In the first part of the text, the units of analysis are specified, introducing a relational comparative approach (Ward,



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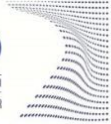


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2010) as concerns dynamics in two different urban districts. The second section engages with the data collection phase through qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews, documents, and field observation).

The third and final section deals with data analysis. Here, both the adopted interview coding system and the construction of the Heritage Participation Matrix are explained. The latter has been conceived as an analytical tool to facilitate data triangulation and interpretation. The paragraphs describe the rationale behind it, its main components, the purpose of use and the main limitations.

3.2 Research methodology: a qualitative and constructivist approach

This thesis is based on a qualitative and constructivist approach (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Flick, 2009; Maxwell, 2012). The constructivist approach offers a mutable rather than objective interpretation of reality. It defines the world as a social construction made of human interactions. When implemented in a participatory process, it allows to involve multiple participants' views of a specific situation. The researcher's task is to "make sense (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world" (Creswell, 2007, pp. 20-21). The design's construction is intended as a "reflexive process" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 24, retrieved from Maxwell 2012 p. 214) which can benefit from a wide repertoire of methods (such as interviews and field observations, etc.) to detect and interpret complex social relations.

The social constructivism worldview echoes a qualitative research approach (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Flick, 2009; Maxwell, 2012) which would provide an extended repertoire of appropriate methods, (such as interviews and field observations, etc.) to detect and interpret complex social relations. The logic behind the qualitative approach is more flexible (Maxwell 2009), meaning that the design's construction is intended as a "reflexive process operating through every stage of a project" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 24, retrieved from Maxwell 2012 p. 214). Together, the constructivist and qualitative approach serves research purposes for three main reasons.

Firstly, it allows the unpacking of the spatial-social relations underpinning participation in WH sites' governance. Moreover, it also facilitates the detection of multiple actors' perspectives and interests in a specific context (Maravilla & Grayman, 2020). This focus is consistent with the processual perspective adopted in this thesis (see Chapter 1), considering participatory governance as a performative and self-reflexive process (Jessop, 2002; Turnhout et al., 2010). The process comprises of various stages of contestation, negotiation, and collaboration that may occur fragmentarily, and consequently, may require to be reconstructed to understand how participatory governance contributes to "defining the objectives as well as objects of governance as well as of facilitating the co-realization of these objectives by reinforcing motivation and mobilizing capacities for self-reflection, self-regulation, and self-correction" (Jessop, 2002 p.55, retrieved from Heinelt, 2010, pp. 17-18).

Secondly, due to its flexibility, it is a suitable approach to analyse highly context-dependent and situated practices such as participatory ones (see Chapter 1) and deconstructing the rhetoric



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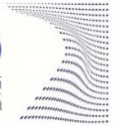


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discourse whereby participation is a prerequisite for good governance. In such regards, Cornwall suggests that a key modality to analyse participatory initiatives is to do “clarity through specificity” which entails understanding, as accurately as possible, participants’ opinions and interests (Cornwall, 2008, p. 272).

Thirdly, it is aligned with the phenomenological perspective of heritage (Dormael, 2016; Harvey, 2001; Waterton & Watson, 2015) that underpins this thesis. This perspective contemplates heritage as the result of actions undertaken by different social groups. It is intended as a “social construction” whereby people convey different interests and values, producing collective meanings.

The constructivist stance also forges the empirical work, providing room for the researcher to redefine research questions and to reshape the research design while selecting a case study approach (Yin, 2003)

3.3 Case study research

Combined with the strong context-dependence and social complexity of the research argument (Yin, 2003), the adopted social constructivist approach led to the selection of a specific case study methodology (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Gustafsson, 2017; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003).

According to Yin, a case study is an “empirical inquiry” particularly appropriate to investigate phenomena within their real-life context” (Yin 2003, p. 13), resulting in a suitable tool to investigate how participation in WH sites governance is socially constructed. Being a “comprehensive research strategy”, a case study approach provides the researcher with multiple methods and sources to gather and interpret data (Yin 2003, p. 14). The possibility to triangulate information from multiple sources and perspectives meticulously unfolds the analysis of actors’ interactions within and around local WH governance, and subsequently contributes to enhancing the validity of the study.

One of the most challenging stages to conduct case study research is to define specific boundaries for a purposeful sample (Creswell 2007, p. 76). Setting up a criteria-based rationale to decide between a single or multiple case study designs may be a tough procedure for the researcher (Yin 2003; Creswell 2007, 2009). In the context of this research, the identification of selection criteria was further complicated by the outbreak of the pandemic. During the first PhD year and the beginning of the second, the research would have involved a comparative analysis of multiple case studies. The mobility limitations forced by the pandemic regime did not allow for the exploration of further international WH sites and required a downscaling and reorganization of the entire research.

Among various designs provided by a qualitative methodology (Creswell, 2007, 2009), this thesis follows a single case with an embedded units approach (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Yin, 2003).

An in-depth case study analysis allows to “richly describe the existence of a phenomenon” (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007, p.27). The embedded unit's design observes “subunits situated within a larger case” and allows to develop multiple analytical layers: “within the subunits separately (within-case analysis); between the different subunits (between case analysis) or across all of the subunits (cross-case analysis)” (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p.550).



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In this research, the embedded unit's approach serves a twofold purpose. Firstly, it allows to cover the double nature of participation in WH sites governance: both invited and created. The invited one refers to governance structures in which officials encourage people to participate (Cornwall, 2008b). Generally, they are formalised through institutional design rules (Fung, 2006). The created ones relate to *created spaces* for participation which are promoted through grassroots initiatives driven by civil society (Cornwall, 2008b), which are usually rooted in urban spaces (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006).

Secondly, it would enable the understanding of the processual nature of participation in both governance and enhancement initiatives of WH sites (see part 1, Chapter 1), by developing a micro-level analytical approach that thoroughly examines *who, how* and *what influence* determine a participatory process.

Moreover, the embedded unit's approach gives the advantage of shedding better light on the case and derives some generalizations by comparing the units (Yin, 2003).

Following this logic, the WH *Arab- Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site (Italy) has been selected as a larger case.

The case has been chosen based upon a diverse range of criteria, grounded on a triple basic interest: considering WH site categories in the Italian context, with a complex governance structure (see part 1 chapter 1) and pertaining to urban contexts. The category of serial sites was taken into account because it is less explored in the literature compared to historic cities and cultural landscapes. A WH serial nomination entails two or more unconnected areas that might extend across regional, trans-regional, and transnational boundaries (Haspel, 2013). Governance structures for WH serial sites present a higher level of organizational and operational complexity (Wang, 2019), which might influence participatory processes and are less investigated than WH historic cities in the existing literature.

The selected WH serial site extends over three different municipalities (Palermo, Cefalù, and Monreale) of the same region. Among the Italian serial sites,²⁵ the WH *Arab- Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site has been selected due to its most recent inscription in the WH List and its marked urban character. The inscription in 2015 coincides with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Policy for WH sites by UNESCO, which gives greater centrality to the topic of participation in the governance of WH sites (see part 1 of Chapter 1). The focus is on the urban character, as out of nine WH properties, seven are located in different districts of Palermo city (see Chapter 3) (Barone, 2021; Garofalo, 2018). Furthermore, it addresses the three

²⁵ This thesis considers only Italian WH serial sites: the Early Cristian Monuments of Ravenna (1996); the residence of the Royal House of Savoy (1997); The Late Baroque Towns of the Val di Noto (South-Eastern Sicily) (2002); *Sacri monti* of Piedmont and Lombardy (2008); Longobards in Italy. Places of the Power (569-774 A.D.) (2011); Arab- Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale (2015). In 2021 the Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles serial site has been added to the WH List. As this last site was named during the last stage of data processing, it was not considered in the context of this thesis. Retrieved information from: <https://www.unesco.it/> Accessed 16/04/2022.

main challenges highlighted by the literature, (see Chapter 1, Part 1) trying to hinder participation in WH sites' decisions: geographical extension, bureaucratic constraints, and divergence of interests. Therefore, its investigation can lead to innovative answers to the issue.

Beyond the aforementioned geographical extension, the selected site embodies the complexity of conciliating the bureaucratic constraints of the public apparatus with private interests in a single governance structure. It is characterized by a heterogeneous ownership and management system where public, private, and religious entities frequently vary depending on the property (see Chapter 3).

Finally, the divergence of interests between actors with stewardship may concern the reconciliation of religious functions and the accessibility of an increasing tourist flow. Out of the nine buildings, six are active religious centers belonging to three different Dioceses – respectively of *Palermo*, *Cefalù* and *Monreale* – and include several religious orders – *Eparchy of Piana degli Albanesi*, *Ordine Equestre del Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme*.

3.4. Research design

The inductive approach has directed the entire research design in a non-linear pattern. The entire process, starting from the identification of the research gap, until the interpretation of the collected data, consisted of four macro-phases. To identify the sub-units of analysis, the research draws on an inductive rationale (Creswell 2007, p. 39). This entails going “back and forth” between the theory, the research gap, and the empirical work, refocusing the main research questions from time to time. This approach has defined the sub-units across four phases (Figure 7).

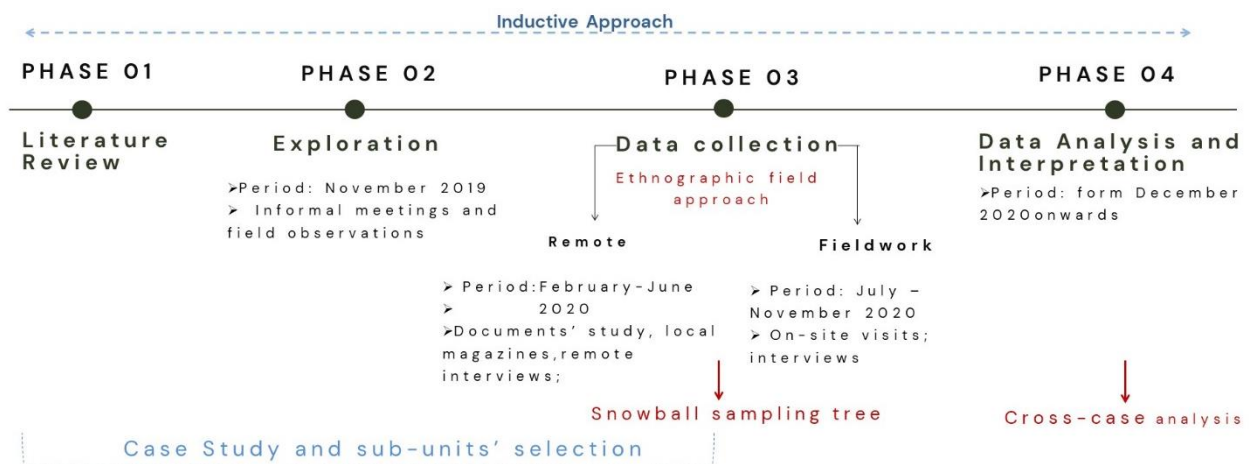


Figure 7 The four phases through which the research has been developed. Image *Source*: own elaboration.



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Phase 1 dealt with the extensive literature review (previously explained in chapter 1) which, at the intersection of three different disciplines (heritage studies, political and social science), set the boundaries of the research. The review also provided the foundations to formulate the research questions (see the thesis introduction), that have been refined in phases 1 and 2, by going ‘back and forth’ from theory to practice.

Phase 2 referred to an exploratory stage of research that was held in November 2019 and consisted in a series of informal meetings and field observations to outline the case study boundaries and establish the first contacts with apical actors. It laid the foundations for the case study selection.

Phase 3 focused on data collection following two strategies: remote and fieldwork. Initially, a first triangulation of collected information from documents, online sources and remote interviews was undertaken, resulting in a rough draft of the case sub-units. Successively, information gaps concerning both the WH site’s governance, and the identified sub-units facilitated the management of the fieldwork, which covers most of this phase.

The remote stage took place from February to June 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic. It comprised of a detailed in-depth study of official documents, online local magazines, and remote interviews with a range of actors identified through the snowball technique (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Noy, 2008) (see next paragraph about the empirical material). Through this stage, four case sub-units of analysis were established:

1. The WH site’s governance structure and correlated participatory initiatives.
2. The *Cassaro Alto* district
3. The *Danisinni* district
4. The *Ballarò* district

The four sub-units address both the institutional and spatial nature of participatory strategies, consistently with the theoretical framework (see Chapter 1, part 2). In particular, the governance structure (first subunit) deals with the core institutional framework governing the WH site in question. This subunit also includes a series of participatory initiatives envisaged by the governance’s OS to strengthen civil society participation in decisions regarding the enhancement of the WH site in question.

The *Cassaro Alto*, *Danisinni* and *Ballarò* districts (second, third and fourth sub-units) concern the relationship between participatory processes and urban spaces. The selection was based upon an initial correlation between the interviewed actors and their action space. A further observation established a link between these spaces and some areas of the WH buffer zones. This match supported setting the boundaries of each neighborhood as a guide for the fieldwork.

The fieldwork, held from July to November 2020, carried out targeted visits to each monument of the WH serial site (see Chapter 3), additional interviews, guided tours of selected districts, participation in related initiatives, and the collection of information material. In addition, the fieldwork included an early exploration of the three districts and several meetings with the SC’s



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members. Subsequently, an order to continue districts' investigation was arranged, starting with those counting a greater number of direct and indirect references in the snowball three (Figure 8) and thus demonstrating a deeper connection to the WH serial site and greater representativeness. Following this approach, the investigation focused on the *Cassaro Alto* and *Danisinni* neighborhoods. The references (both direct and indirect) to *Ballarò* district as well as to other areas of the WH buffer zones including the municipalities of Cefalù and Monreale were weak and would have required a larger sample of actors to be interviewed. For this reason, they were not considered in the framework of this research. This limit of the research leaves room to further investigations on a larger sample.

○ *The ethnographic approach*

The fieldwork follows an ethnographic approach (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2019). Although its duration was limited to a four-month period (from an initial much more extended plan) due to pandemic restrictions, the researcher sought to leverage it to thoroughly complete the process. In order to do so, the researcher sought to: observe each monument in the WH serial site in relation to its surrounding urban context; visit each neighborhood of the emerging subunits through the guidance of local activists involved in participatory processes; interview institutional actors in their workplaces and attend some ongoing participatory initiatives. Following an ethnographic approach, the researcher was immersed in the local context of the WH site, “watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions [...] collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which he or she is concerned” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1195, p. 2). Moreover, drawing on some pillars of ethnographic methodology provides further advantages to the investigation development. Firstly, it allows the researcher to work in a flexible way using multi-information sources to investigate and follow how the complexity of social relations unfold. In fact, ethnographic studies do not need an “extensive pre-fieldwork design” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1195, p. 24). Instead, they assume that the researcher can switch the course of the investigation in line with research objectives. Multi-layered data sources relate to a range of methods – adopted in this research – such as field observations, formal and informal meetings, and semi-structured interviews that allow the researcher to verify the reliability of his/her interpretation of the investigated phenomena. Thereby, information underpinning a new theoretical assumption or empirical interpretation can be confirmed by several sources. This point will be further discussed in the next paragraph concerning the collected and analysed empirical material.

Secondly, an ethnographical approach acknowledges the “reflexive character of social research” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1195, p.14). This entails acknowledging the researcher as part of the investigation he/she carries out and focusing on how his/her position may affect the interpretation of reality and research findings, rather than striving to eradicate his/her effects (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1195, p. 17) The conclusion to be drawn is that the final deductions, in this thesis, are determined by the way the researcher interprets participatory dynamics and their development according to the social context. Addressing a universal program such as the UNESCO



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WH, cross-examining multiple sub-units, and developing an analytic matrix – the Heritage Participation Matrix (illustrated in the final session of this chapter) that can be used to look at further case studies in diverse contexts, are accomplishments which facilitate the generalization of results and dampen subjectivity throughout the whole investigation.

o *The snowball technique*

The snowball technique (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Kaplan et al., 1987; Noy, 2008) is widespread for qualitative sociological studies to yield “a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others” (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981 p. 141).

It has been often used for the investigation of sensitive arguments (such as drug cases, mental illness, etc.) to detect specific populations (i.e., students, tourists, worker classes, etc.) and reveal their positions on certain matters through in-depth interviews (Noy, 2008). The most exercised technique is based on a repetitive procedure whereby “informants refer the researcher to other informants, who are contacted by the researcher and then refer her or him to yet other informants, and so on” (Noy, 2008, p. 330). Following, the researcher may decide which informants to contact and how by determining to what degree informants influence the research development (Noy, 2008, p. 332). As Noy points out, the snowballing sampling technique is not neutral. Rather, the interactions between the researcher and the informants affect the quality of collected information through in-depth interviewing. The more informants perceive the research encounter as trustworthy and comfortable, the more the researcher will get the opportunity to gain further referrals to extend the sample and good quality information (Noy, 2008).

In the framework of this thesis, the snowball sampling technique helped to detect a range of participatory initiatives through which public values of the WH *Arab- Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site evolved. Both at ease, the participatory mechanisms of each initiative (intra-organizational analysis), and the connections between initiatives (inter-organizational analysis) were reconstructed by identifying the main engaged actors and systematizing the information they provided through semi-structured interviews. As the snowball technique suggests, most respondents were asked to recommend further players who could provide additional information on the same or similar initiatives. When informants provided generic information on the potential referral, the researcher sought alternative channels (such as official emails, websites, social networks, etc.) to elicit further details and establish the first connection. When an initiative was of particular relevance for research purposes and required more in-depth investigation, further contacts were extrapolated from the interviews’ content. Figure 8 shows the snowball sampling tree which were elaborated at the end of the fieldwork during Phase 3.

The sampling tree illustrates the “course of the sampling process” (Noy, 2008 p. 332). As it represents a dynamic procedure, the sampling conveys information about (i) the number of referents provided by each informant, (ii) referents’ representativeness, and (iii) dates of interviews. Additionally, it includes all referents who expressed interest in the research topic and decided to



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collaborate. Indeed, some of the provided contacts did not reply or couldn't participate, delaying the process. Some informants were filtered by the researcher because their field of action was unsuited to the context of the WH site in question. The informants from which the sampling procedure started are placed on the zero level of the tree. Their selection followed the distinction between *invited* and *created* spaces of participation (see Part 2 of Chapter 1) (Cornwall, 2008b).

Thus, both the SWHF and the religious representative of the *Diocesi of Monreale* were extrapolated from the WH management plan being part of the WH site's governance. Undeniably, the identification of the players populating the created spaces of participation was more challenging. The sampling procedure took off with a local tourist guide who was a researcher's earlier contact and had experience in working in the context of the Arab-Norman WH site. The sampling tree design assisted in visualizing the progressive delineation of the three case sub-units, two of which are districts of Palermo city.

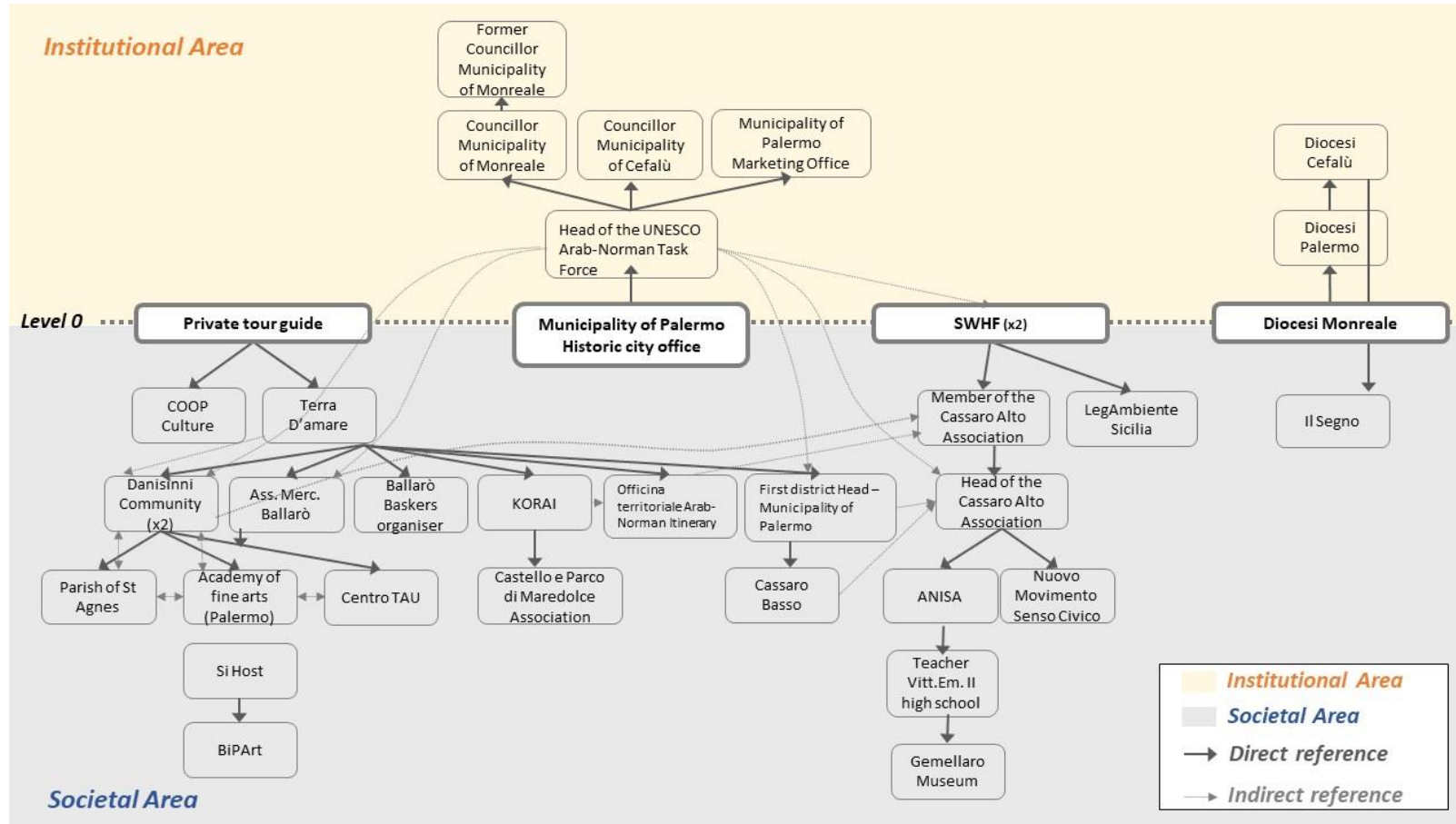


Figure 8 Snowball sampling tree. Image Source: own elaboration.



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Finally, **phase 4** concerned data analysis and interpretation. It entailed finalizing interview transcripts and coding, analyzing the SC minutes of meetings, improving the Heritage Participation Matrix and triangulating the data inside it, and establishing the cross-case subunits analysis. While the interview coding system and the matrix construction are thoroughly illustrated in the following paragraphs, the salient features of the cross-case analysis (underpinning Chapter 6 content) are reported now. Khan and VaWynsberge (2008) define cross-case analysis as “a research method that facilitates the comparison of commonalities and difference in the events, activities, and processes that are the units of analyses in case studies” (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008, p.1). The authors stress the potential of cross-case analysis in allowing the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the relationships between the units of analysis of one or more case studies and develop new theories or concepts. Among the multiple cross-case analysis techniques (Khan & VanWynsberghe, 2008), this research readapts the before-after design (George & Bennet, 2005) to look at the relationships among sub-units and conveys the derived information through a narrative model (Goldstone, 1997).

The before-after design is adopted for each of the three sub-units of analysis, following the time scale of a WH site’s nomination procedure (UNESCO, 2019b). The two temporal blocks refer to the WH heritagization process (see Chapter 1). The *before* block includes both the identification of the WH site until the nomination dossier and the drafting of the WH management plan. The *after* one refers to the implementation of the planning activities in the WH management plan, specifically those with a participatory nature. The breakdown of each sub-units into two main chronological areas allows the researcher to longitudinally reconstruct very fragmented participatory processes, whose information was drawn from several sources (interviews, social budgets of public administrations, local newspapers, etc.). The narrative model has been built on the observation of two common variables in all sub-units: public values (Clark & Lennox, 2019; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) and participatory mechanisms (Fung, 2006). The reference, for both variables, to pre-established categories from the academic literature enables generalizations from the sub-units comparison, looking at similarities and differences between the three. Results from this approach are gathered in Chapter 6 of this thesis.



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3.5 Collected data

The ethnographic approach partially adopted in this thesis yielded qualitative empirical material from multiple sources mostly related to the case study and correlated sub-units. Parts of this material already existed (such as official documents, minutes of meetings, etc.) while an additional part is being constructed through the interactions between the researcher and the investigated reality (Yin, 2003). This part includes semi-structured and coded interviews, informal meetings, and field observations. Figure 9 displays the main collected evidence, specifying used methods and purposes. The following paragraphs will provide more details concerning interviews, document analysis, and field observations.



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Main Collected Data

Methods	Collected data	Purpose of use
1. Semi-structured interviews & informal meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖TOT. (34) divided into: ❖Interviews with officials (9) ❖Interviews with Cassaro Alto actors (6) ❖Interviews with Danisinni actors (7) ❖Interviews with third sector local actors (11) <p>Note: 3 written interviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖Informal meetings with officials (3) ❖Informal meetings third sector local actors (3) <p>Main official documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖WH nomination dossier; ❖WH management plan; ❖WH SC Minutes of meetings from 2015 to 2020 (15); ❖WH TC Minutes of meetings (4); ❖WH Activity Plan and Report from 2017 to 2020; ❖On-line balance sheet of the SWF from 2015. ❖On-line social balance sheet - Municipality of Palermo from 2015 ❖Deliberazioni comunali ❖Project reports (Via dei Librai; Rambla Papireto; In-Transito) ❖Regional Assembly reports 	<p>Gather data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WH site's governance structure functioning & organisation, - Interactions among institutional players - Organisation and implementation of participatory initiatives - Perceived public value <p>Further data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WH site making process -SC decision-making - Participatory strategy developed before and after the WH nomination, - Invested resources - Organisation and implementation of participatory initiatives
2. Document's analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ WH nomination dossier; ❖ WH management plan; ❖ WH SC Minutes of meetings from 2015 to 2020 (15); ❖ WH TC Minutes of meetings (4); ❖ WH Activity Plan and Report from 2017 to 2020; ❖ On-line balance sheet of the SWF from 2015. ❖ On-line social balance sheet - Municipality of Palermo from 2015 ❖ Deliberazioni comunali ❖ Project reports (Via dei Librai; Rambla Papireto; In-Transito) ❖ Regional Assembly reports 	<p>Further data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WH site making process -SC decision-making - Participatory strategy developed before and after the WH nomination, - Invested resources - Organisation and implementation of participatory initiatives
3. Non-Participant Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Visits to all WH properties (+ 2 in Category B) ❖ In depth visits to the 3 urban districts in Palermo ❖ Attendance of the <i>Via dei Librai</i> event ❖ Attendance of the <i>Mobile Social Kitchen</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop personal insights about socio-spatial relations between each monuments and surrounding space;
4. Survey of on-line local magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Several articles (+30) from local on-line magazines: La Repubblica Palermo; Palermo Today; Balarm; Meridionenews; Qds.it; Giornale di Sicilia ❖ Contribution on official websites (Palermo Arabo-Normanna; Danisinni Community; Cassaro Alto association; Via dei Librai). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconstructing fragmented participatory initiatives in the three urban districts.

Figure 9 Main collected data, methods, and purpose of use. Image *Source*: own elaboration



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3.5.1 Coding interviews

Whereas open-ended interviews provide prosperous insights for the researcher to formulate new theoretical assumptions from empirical evidence, extrapolating punctual information and identifying macro arguments can be challenging due to unstructured and occasional vague narration (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002). In this case, the development of a coding system may support the researcher in drawing out the collected data into robust answers to his/her research questions (Campbell et al., 2013). Hence, coding is a crucial part of the analysis process. If the system comprises a hierarchy of several codes, it may require a long elaboration period during which researchers work dialectically in teams to build a reliable system based on well-defined units of text analysis (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002). However coding schemes can also be developed by a single researcher following a more straightforward rationale and inductive approach. This means that the researcher approaches the coding “without any pre-given coding scheme [...] this researcher works alone, immersed herself in the transcripts, searched for common themes across transcripts, and created word processing files that she called buckets (i.e., codes) for each theme that emerged inductively” (Campbell et al., 2013, p. 311).

Being one single person’s work in a limited time frame, this thesis follows an inductive approach. The conceptualisation of the coding scheme is based on two main common themes across transcripts: narrative reconstruction of participatory processes and public values dimensions. Both themes are used as superordinate tiers of codes (Aberbach & Rockman, 2002).

The tier of narrative reconstruction includes transcript sections necessary to reconstruct the evolution of participatory processes and to add details omitted in the official documents. Public values dimensions were harder to elicit. As discussed in Chapter 1, this thesis aims to explore the subjective side of WH public values that are related to participants’ perceptions, taking on a transitory and mutable nature that is problematic to be detected and grasped. To guide the detection of the public values universe (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) from actors’ statements, the coding system envisages a second tier of codes drawn from the literature. The second tier consists of three dimensions adopted by Clark and Lennox (2019) in the heritage PVM (see Chapter,1): intrinsic, instrumental, and institutional. To define the content of each sub-code, this thesis draws on both the public values’ categories elaborated by (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) in public administration studies (see Chapter 1) and those developed in the heritage field (Clark, 2016).

Overall, questioning heritage public values entails exploring actors’ relationships beyond heritage buildings’ materiality. Following De Cesari’s expression, it implies performing an “anthropology of governance” (De Cesari 2020, p. 203) related to processes of WH heritage making. Hence, this involves detecting the disaggregate modes (De Cesari, 2020) through which grassroots



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communities, non-profit and private players increasingly may influence heritage enhancement processes. The main questions enquired to address public values issues were the following:

- What did the achievement of the WH status mean to you?
- How did you contribute to the construction and development of the WH site?
- What feelings, benefits or limitations did you perceive (during and after the WH candidacy)?

To convey a longitudinal perspective to the events' reconstruction and to develop a clear and fluent narrative scheme that would facilitate case subunits cross-analysis (see Chapter 6), the coding system has been segmented into *before and after* the WH nomination (see paragraph 2.4). Finally, to fully explain the coding system, it is worth referring to the textual units of analysis, through which each code has been developed. Following Campbell et al. (2013) unitization strategy, different lengths of text, from short sentences to longer paragraphs, have been used to describe each code. As displayed in annexes 1,2,3 the coding system has been applied to the three units of analysis of the case study. All sentences and paragraphs extrapolated from transcripts have been translated from Italian to English, to foster understanding and distribution of collected data.

3.5.2 Documents analysis and field observations

The knowledge gained from semi-structured interviews has been combined with information extrapolated from documents' analysis. As displayed in

Figure 9, most of the documents are related to the WH serial site. Specifically, the WH nomination dossier, the WH management plan and the meeting minutes, both of the SC and TC, have been provided by the SWHF.

Unlike the interviews, the analysis of official documents did not require the adoption of a coding system. Rather, the documents were inspected several times for different research purposes. One of the initial aims was exploratory, namely understanding the nature and history of the WH serial site. Subsequently, documents were re-read through the macro-themes related to participatory mechanisms, already adopted for interviewing. Specifically, the WH nomination dossier provided crucial data to establish the long inter-institutional interactions between political, institutional, and managerial actors that work for the WH candidacy and the formalisation of a governance structure. The meeting minutes (of both SC and TC) allowed an in-depth understanding of decisional dynamics in three macro areas: spatial, institutional, and economic. In addition, they reveal the degree of openness of decisional arenas to further participants. These sources were particularly useful during the pandemic period, which did not allow participant observations since the live meetings were suddenly suspended. Finally, the WH management plan was mainly analysed to detect the planned participatory initiative and to verify its implementation through interviews, local press, social media,



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project reports, and websites. A further group of documents gathers administrative and legal texts (i.e., municipal ordinances, regional laws, budgets) and project reports used to link the WH serial site with the local context. All extracted information has been instrumental in articulating the thesis narrative before and after the WH nomination (see Chapters 3,4 and 5) and in triangulating the main findings.

Field observations have been conducted to acquire deeper knowledge of the context where the actors operate (Clifford et al., 2010). Due to the limited time available for the fieldwork, observations produce complementary research material. However, they have been of crucial importance for deepening the spatial nature in WH in terms of participation in WH serial site decisions. Spatial observations underlie the elaboration of one of the central findings in this thesis, namely the conceptualisation of *relational WH Buffer Zones* (see Chapter 6). Studies have been carried out under different modalities. Firstly, inspections have been undertaken in each property within the WH serial site and in some of the monuments included in the list B of the WH management plan (for the future expansion of the WH serial site), such as the *Castello di Maredolce* and the *Cuba Palace*. Most of these visits have been carried out independently. Others have been fully or partially guided by representatives of civic associations or entities that manage the heritage sites, as in the case of the Royal Palace and *Castello di Maredolce*. Secondly, observations included some guided visits to the neighbourhood within WH buffer zones of Palermo city. Specifically, four historical districts have been explored (*Cassaro Alto, Danisinni, Zisa and Ballarò*). On this occasion, some of the interviewees led informal visits of about 1-2 hours, showing some spatial transformations – directly and indirectly – triggered by participatory initiatives related to the WH serial site and connecting the researcher with other local players. Due to a series of annotations, the research developed personal insights regarding socio-spatial relations between the WH properties and the surrounding urban space.

Finally, further observations were conducted by participating in two public events:

- The *Via dei Librai* 2020 edition, *La città Internazionale*, in *Cassaro Alto* district (September 5 and 6, 2020);
- The opening event of the mobile social kitchen project in *Danisinni* (September 4, 2020).

Both initiatives have been mapped in detail and included in the narrative reconstruction of WH participatory process (see Chapters 4 and 5).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter illustrates the construction of the research design based on qualitative methodology. Both the peculiarity of the research topic and the need to remodulate the field approach due to



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pandemic restrictions led to the selection of an embedded case study approach with a cross-analysis among three units.

The broader case is the WH *Arab- Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site and three sub-units are the WH site's governance structure and two urban districts of the city of Palermo (*Cassaro Alto* and *Danisinni district*).

The research design has been structured into 4 main phases, ranging from literature reviews for the identification of the research gap to the analysis of collected data, both on the field and remotely, through semi-structured interviews and observations, and document analyses.



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Chapter 4

The World Heritage serial site Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale

4.1 Introduction

The chapter unpacks the governance structure of the WH serial site *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale*, questioning how and whether it incorporates participation. The analysis adopts a longitudinal approach to understand how complex relationships between institutional actors, managing entities and property owners have contributed, or not, to determine a participatory environment.

The chapter is articulated in 3 main parts.

The first section provides the reader with a core context knowledge. After the main features of the WH serial site are introduced, focusing on its management system, geographical extension, and the legal and administrative framework, the interactions between institutional actors are reconstructed since the first attempt to include the historic centre of Palermo in the national Tentative list, in 1996 (0). Also, it includes a digression concerning the historic centre of Palermo (from the 60s onwards), to better understand the following chapters.

The second session analyses the participatory processes prior to WH nomination. It starts by explaining the drafting of the WH management plan and culminates in the formalisation of a steering committee supported by an operational structure.



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Finally, the third part follows the evolution of the participatory process after the WH nomination. Some effects from the early involvement of organized groups are analyzed, with a focus on the operating mechanism of the SC and some educational and creative projects. This section elucidates how the weakening of the inter-institutional collaboration between the concerned authorities inhibits the build-up of a participatory governance for the WH site. Notwithstanding the whole process – from before to after – generates some public values, manifested mainly in the new relationships between local administrations and some involved citizens and some tangible improvements to the urban spaces surrounding some of the buildings included in the WH serial site.

4.2 Setting the context: the WH serial site Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale

During the 39th WH Committee held in Bonn (Germany) in 2015, *the Arab-Norman serial site of Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* (Italy) has been inscribed on the WH List (Andaloro et al. 2018a, p. 352).

The serial site consists of nine heritage properties (Figure 10) that cover a total area of 6.235 ha across three different Sicilian municipalities: *Palermo*, *Cefalù*, and *Monreale*:

- Five of these buildings still serve crucial religious purposes today. More specifically, they include three outstanding Catholic cathedrals (Cathedral of Palermo; Cathedral of Cefalù and Cathedral of Monreale), the mixed ritual catholic-orthodox *Santa Maria dell’Ammiraglio* Church and the adjacent *San Cataldo* Church.
- two buildings which symbolise civil power: the Royal Palace with the inner *Palatina* Chapel and the *Zisa* Castle.
- two additional buildings: the deconsecrated *San Giovanni degli Eremiti* Church, and the engineering masterpiece of the *Ammiraglio* Bridge.

Both religious and civil buildings are icons of the Arab-Norman art in Sicily. Historically, the Arab-Norman syncretism dates back to the Norman domination that occurred between the 11th and 12th centuries in Sicily and in other southern Italian regions. It refers to a specific political and cultural condition, whereby Normans' foresight to assimilate, rather than repress, traits and abilities of pre-existing Islamic, Byzantine and Latin cultures and to encourage inter-cultural exchange. The artistic-architectural language is one of several facets of this multicultural synergy and the term *Arab* stresses how the Islamic influence was prominent in Sicily (Andaloro et al., 2018, pp. 156-166)

The OUV of the serial site is articulated through the criteria (ii) and (iv) that highlight both aspects of the Arab Norman syncretism: the uniqueness of the architectural style and interchange of human values and know-how. Specifically, the two criteria state that:



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“[...] Criterion (ii): exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design ”; criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history [...]” (ICOMOS, 2015, pp. 235-244).



Figure 10 Overview of the monuments included in the serial World Heritage serial site Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale. Source: Own images.



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Finally, the integrity and authenticity principles lead to the selection of the nine monuments. As referred in the WH management plan, the Arab-Norman syncretism would concern other 13 heritage buildings²⁶, in Palermo province. Such monuments have been temporarily excluded from the official route since they still do not meet appropriate conservation and access conditions (Andaloro et al., 2018, pp. 49-50).

○ *Managing and ownership system*

The heritage properties included in the WH serial sites show a very fragmented management and ownership system, in which administrative responsibilities are scattered mainly among regional and religious authorities. **Table 5** summarizes authorities and entities involved in managing each monument in the WH serial site.

Specifically, the Royal Palace is an Italian state-owned property that has been transferred to the Sicilian regional government. Nevertheless, the Palatine chapel located inside the Royal Palace is instead property of the *Fondo edifici per il culto* (F.E.C.)²⁷ of the Ministry of Interior. The *Federico II* foundation²⁸, a public law body, manages the use of both buildings, covering both the ticketing service and the organization of exhibitions and events.

The three Cathedrals are owned by three different dioceses based on its territorial location: Dioceses of Palermo, Cefalù and Monreale. In the cases of the cathedral of Monreale and Cefalù, the cloisters have a different ownership. In fact, they belong respectively to the Sicilian Region for the former and to the *Capitolo dei Canonici* for the latter. The managing bodies vary for all three sites.

²⁶ The 13 heritage buildings are divided into categories A and B. Category A includes 5 properties with prominent Arab-Norman features. However, such properties need both conservation work and management interventions to be usable. Category B refers to 8 monuments that preserve a few traces of the Arab-Norman style but hold a considerable historical value (Andaloro et al., 2018a, pp. 49-50).

²⁷ The *Fondo Edifici per il culto*, is a legal entity represented by the Italian Minister of Interior. It was established to administer the heritage inherited by the State in the second half of the 19th century, following the suppression of some ecclesiastical bodies. The Fund's mission is to preserve and enhance heritage properties. Retrieved information from: <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/ministero/dipartimenti/dipartimento-liberta-civili-e-limmigrazione/patrimonio-fondo-edifici-culto#:~:text=Il%20Fondo%20edifici%20di%20culto,italiano%20sopresse%20alcuni%20enti%20ecclesiastici>, Accessed 5/05/2022.

²⁸ The *Federico II* Foundation was established on 9 December 1996 by Sicilian regional law n.44. It is a public body committed in the social, scientific, cultural and artistic fields. Retrieved information from: <https://www.federicosecondo.org/statuto/> Accessed 5/05/2022.



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The *Fabbriceria*²⁹ della *Cattedrale* manages entrances and visits to the monumental area of the Cathedral of Palermo, which includes roofs, royal tombs, the treasury, and the Crypt of the Benefactors. Entrance to the main basilica is free.

The Cathedral of Monreale has a dual management system. Since 2017, the Sicilian Region outsources the cloister visits' management to the *Coop Culture* cooperative. Today due to an agreement with the Dioceses of Monreale, the cooperative handles integrated visits to the Cloister and to the Cathedral monumental complex, which includes the *Roano* Chapel, its terraces, some exhibition halls, and the Diocesan Museum. At the same time, the Entity for the religious and worship activities of the Monreale Archdioceses manages the separated entrances to each component of the Cathedral monumental complex. The entrance to the Cathedral's main body is free for individual visitors (excluding group visits).

Table 5 Ownership and management system for the nine monuments included in the WH serial site.
Source: adapted from Andaloro et al, p. 108.

MONUMENTS	OWNERSHIP	MANAGEMENT
1. Royal Palace and <i>Palatina</i> Chapel	Royal Palace: State property of the Sicilian region Palatina Chapel: <i>Fondo Edifici per il Culto</i> (F.E.C), Ministry of Interior	Federico II Foundation
2. Cathedral of Palermo	Dioceses of Palermo	Fabbriceria della Cattedrale
3. Cathedral of Monreale	Cathedral: Dioceses of Monreale Cloister: Sicilian regional state agency	<i>Coopculture</i> cooperative and the Entity for the religious and worship activities of the Monreale Archdioceses
4. Cathedral of Cefalù	Cathedral: Dioceses of Cefalù Cloister: <i>Capitolo dei Canonici</i>	Cathedral: Dioceses of Cefalù and il <i>Segno</i> social cooperative
5. San Cataldo Church	Dioceses of Palermo	<i>Ordine equestre del Santo Sepolcro di Gerusalemme</i>
6. Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio Church	<i>Fondo Edifici per il Culto</i> (F.E.C), Ministry of Interior	Eparchy of Piana degli Albanesi
7. San Giovanni degli Eremiti Church	State property of the Sicilian region	State property of the Sicilian region

²⁹ The *Fabbriceria* is an ancient institution set up to construct worship buildings and administer its heritage. Specifically, the great Cathedrals. Retrieved information from: [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.statoechiase.it/images/uploads/articoli_pdf/Consorti.M_La_natura.pdf?pdf=1](https://www.statoechiase.it/images/uploads/articoli_pdf/Consorti.M_La_natura.pdf?pdf=1) Accessed 5/05/2022.



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8. Zisa Palace	State property of the Sicilian region	State property of the Sicilian region and <i>Coop Culture</i>
9. Ammiraglio Bridge	State property of the Sicilian region	State property of the Sicilian region

Source: reworked Table from the WH management plan (Andaloro et al., 2018, p. 108).

The cathedral of Cefalù is administered by the Dioceses of Cefalù, which since 2020 has created the social cooperative *il Segno*³⁰, to implement a new visiting route known as *Itinerarium Pulchritudinis*. The established itinerary opens additional areas to the public: the towers, the sacristy, the mosaics (which may now be viewed from up close), the capitular hall, the *Salone Sansoni*, the Bishop's Chapel and the Cloisters. Also in this case the access to the Cathedral's main body is free. The two remaining churches of the serial site, namely *San Cataldo* and *Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio* introduce additional managing bodies. The first is still owned by the Diocese of Palermo and is managed by the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem³¹.

The second is a F.E.C property, managed by the Eparchy of *Piana degli Albanesi*³² since it still welcomes Orthodox rituals. For both churches the entrance is charged (except during religious celebrations). Finally, the Sicilian Region owns and manages the access to the last three monuments of the WH serial site: the deconsecrated church of *San Giovanni degli Eremiti*, the *Zisa* castle and the *Ammiraglio* bridge. The *Zisa* castle is the only enterprise with a ticketing and booking service managed by the cooperative *Coop Culture*³³. The protection of all the heritage properties in the serial site is supervised by the *Soprintendenza* for Cultural and Environmental Heritage of Palermo, whose role is further addressed in the paragraph concerning the legal and administrative system. The heterogeneity of the involved actors raises the question of how to guarantee an adequate form of coordination to manage the site.

- *Geographical extension and site boundaries*

³⁰ Il *Sogno* is a social cooperative founded on 17 February 2020 to diversify and manage visitor routes within the Cathedral of Cefalù. Retrieved information from: <https://duomocefalù.it/chi-siamo/> Accessed 5/05/2022.

³¹ The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is “a lay institution placed under the protection of the Holy See. Its main aim is to strengthen among its members the practice of Christian life, to sustain and aid the charitable, cultural and social works”. Retrieved information from: <http://www.oessh.va/content/ordineequestresantosepolcro/en/chi-siamo.html> Accessed 5/05/2022.

³² Founded in 1937 by the Holy See, the *Eparchy of Piana degli Albanesi* includes the faithful who belonged to the parish of *S. Nicolò dei Greci alla Martorana* in Palermo. The Eparchy focuses on spreading knowledge of the Orthodox East in Italy and of the Catholic Church to the East. Retrieved information from: <https://www.eparchiapiana.org/eparchia>, Accessed 5/05/2022.

³³ *Coop Culture* is a social cooperative that operates in the cultural sector in Italy, to offer innovative solutions to enhance cultural heritage and trigger territorial social cohesion. Retrieved information from: <https://corporate.coopculture.it/it/coop-culture/chi-siamo/> Accessed 5/05/2022.



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In order to guarantee an adequate protection to the WH properties and its surroundings and to comply with the UNESCO OGs procedure, the authorities working on the WH nomination dossier establish a two-level system buffer zone for the serial property. As the ICOMOS report states in the section on site's geographical extension and site boundaries,

“[...] the level I buffer zones are delimited to preserve the visual, structural, and functional integrity of the components of the property and of their immediate context. Each of the nine components of the nominated serial property has a Level I buffer zone. The Level II buffer zones take in a wider area, based on the nominated property's town-planning, historical-cultural, and landscape relationships, as well as the boundaries of existing protection at the territorial level. *Zisa* Palace and Admiral's Bridge do not have Level II buffer zones. The proposed Level II buffer zone boundary for five of the Palermo components (excluding *Zisa* Palace and Admiral's Bridge) generally follows the city's historic centre boundary as defined by the Detailed Executive Plan for the Historical Centre of Palermo within the General Regulatory Plan. The Cefalú Cathedral component is within that municipality's historic centre, defined by a General Regulatory Plan and subject to a Detailed Executive Plan. Its Level II buffer zone follows the Areas of Archaeological Interest designated under the Code of the Cultural and Landscape Heritage [...]” (ICOMOS, 2015, pp. 235-244).

Figure 11 illustrates the double buffer zone system for the WH properties in the city of Palermo, according to the relevance of these areas to the research analysis (Chapter 4, 5, and 6). Furthermore, the Cefalú and Monreale buffer zone maps are accessible in both the WH nomination dossier (Andaloro et al., 2018a, pp. 18-19) and management plan (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 50-51).



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Since 1975, the Sicilian Region holds exclusive competences³⁴ on matters related to the protection of territorial cultural heritage (R.D.L. 455/46, Article 14). Such legal framework resulted in the creation of a network of single superintendencies³⁵ (*soprintendenze uniche*) (Sgarlata, 2016) operating as regional technical-administrative bodies for the protection of cultural and natural heritage in Sicily, on a provincial scale (nine provinces, including Palermo). Such capillary system is coordinated by the Regional Department of Cultural Assets and Sicilian Identity which is one of the specific technical bodies that constitute the bureaucratic apparatus of the Sicilian region.

Since Sicily is a special statute region, the regional department of cultural assets and Sicilian identity holds exclusive legislative competency regarding the preservation of works of art, museums, libraries, archaeological sites, etc. and exercises it through the Regional Department of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian identity (RDCHSi). The department is structured in central and peripheral intermediate structures. The superintendence for cultural and environmental heritage of Palermo holds preservation competences for the WH serial site, including both the Cathedrals of *Cefalù* and *Monreale*. Figure 12 synthesises the organisation of the Regional Council of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian Identity, including the ten territorial superintendencies.

³⁴ The Sicilian Region benefits from exclusive legislative competence in the field of heritage conservation, including museums, libraries and cultural institutions of local interest (R.D.L. 455/46, Article 14). The exclusive competence confers full legislative power within general limits, such as international obligations, legal system principles and constrains due to social and economic reforms. *Source*: Immordino, M. (2003). *Beni culturali e ambiente nelle scelte della regione Sicilia*. Aedon, rivista di arti e diritto online, number 1. Available online at <http://www.aedon.mulino.it/archivio/2003/1/immordino.htm> Accessed 6/05/2022.

³⁵ The regional law 80/77 established the single superintendencies in Sicily. They consist of 9 territorial structures, covering the different Sicilian provinces (*Palermo, Messina, Catania, Siracusa, Ragusa, Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Enna, Trapani*) plus the sea superintendency for the whole region. Each structure is organised into several technical-scientific sections (archaeological, architectural-urban, historical-artistic, environmental, and bibliographic) (Article 12) to fully preserve the region's extensive cultural heritage (Sgarlata, 2016). Due to a recent regional resolution (Resolution n. 108, 10 March 2022) the organisation of the superintendencies is undergoing a deep transformation. In fact, the resolution envisages the abolition of several technical units, which have been reduced to two macro-hybrid areas: on the one hand the architectural, historic-artistic, demo-ethnoanthropological heritage and landscape, on the other the archaeological, bibliographical, and archival heritage. The ongoing restructuring is concerning many of the sector's specialists due to the loss (after a continuous weakening) of the capillary know-how needed to preserve regional heritage. *Source*: Mazza, S. (2022). *C'erano una volta in Sicilia le Soprintendenze*. Finestre sull'Arte. Available online at: <https://www.finestresullarte.info/opinioni/sicilia-c-erano-una-volta-le-soprintendenze> Accessed 6/05/2022.

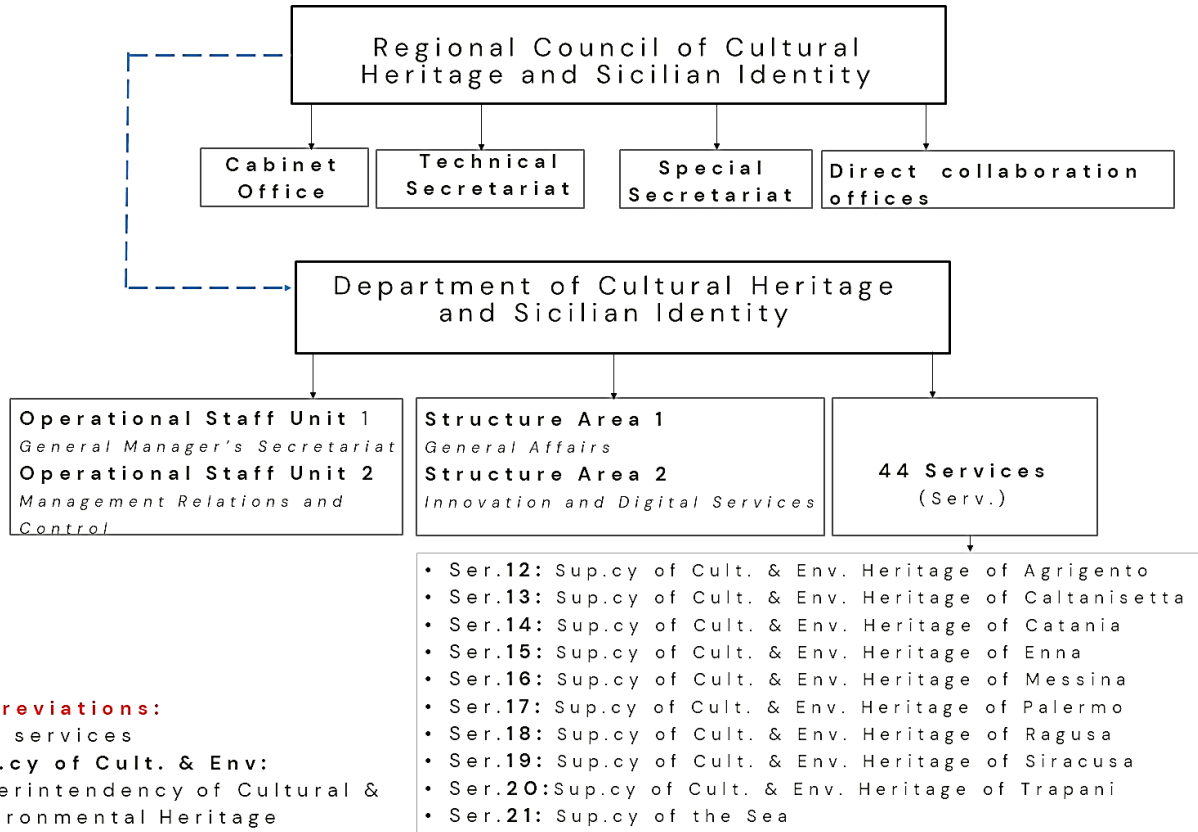


Figure 12 Streamlined organisation chart of the Regional Council of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian Identity. *Source:* own elaboration. Retrieved information from the Council official website:

<https://www.regione.sicilia.it/istituzioni/regione/strutture-regionali/assessorato-beni-culturali-identita-siciliana> Accessed 6/05/2022.

Further tools to protect and enhance WH sites are provided by local administrations. All three municipalities are responsible for the management of the urban spaces surrounding the WH monuments, their planning, mobility, and cultural animation, requiring a cross-departmental commitment inside each administration.

○ *An overview of the Palermo urban context*

Urban regulations instead refer to the recent history of the historic center of Palermo. Between the end of the fifties and the sixties, the historical center was leaning towards a condition of abandonment, in throws to illegal political and economic powers strongly instigating an aggressive urban sprawl towards the outskirts of the city. This period is known as the ‘Sack of Palermo’ (Barbera, 2014) and pursued until the end of the eighties. Public administrators, corrupt politicians, and



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economic players turn the city into a wild concrete landscape, granting several building permits to crime frontmen. The logic was to destroy historic properties and to build new ones occupying as much free green areas as possible, without adhering to planning regulations. (Barbera, 2014; Butera, 2010; Motta et al., 2018).

Apparently, the general urban development plan (PRG) elaborated by the Municipality of Palermo and approved by the Sicilian Region between 1962 and 1963, intended to adopt a positively new strategy opposing to the previous savage building expansion, delivering a Detailed Recovery Plan for the Historic Centre³⁶ (*Piano Particolareggiato di Risanamento per il Centro Storico or P.P.E.*) (Carta, 2018). However, the historic center was assessed as “an unrecoverable environment” (Costantino, 2010, p. 499) in need of being reclaimed through the eventration of the most populated parts and connected to the new city through new large roads and its recovery was not a priority of the political agenda.. The initial breakthrough occurred at the end of the eighties when the new administration commissioned a panel of three experts (Cervellati, Benevolo, and Insolera) to draw the P.P.E. The urban plan was approved by the Sicilian Region in 1993 and implemented through six municipal notices receiving substantial public funds (Cannarozzo, 2010, 2014) and private co-funding (Carta, 2018). The planning tool, equipped with an extended regulatory appendix (Appendice Legislativa, 1993) aimed to arrest any attempt of property speculation and promoted an extensive and strict conservative approach of the urban fabric, including monumental, minor buildings and vacant areas. The implementation of the P.P.E combined with further regulatory actions and supported by the availability of public (Regional Law 25/93, Articles 124 and 125) and European funds (European Regional Development Fund 200-2006) initiated a radical and long process of recovery and restoration of architectural buildings in the historic center (Carta, 2018): “almost 90 million euros to fund 600 private interventions, as many interventions for monumental public buildings and more than 2000 direct interventions by private individuals” (Carta, 2018, p. 137).

4.2.1 Early institutional interactions towards the WH nomination

The inscription process of the *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site in the WH List took about twenty years. In 1996 the interim monumental cluster of Palermo *Historic Centre, the Botanic Garden, and the Monreale Complex* was already included in the national Tentative List³⁷. The Italian Commission for UNESCO and the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Culture insisted for some amendments in the proposal. Such changes

³⁶ The maps of the P.P.E. can be consulted on the Municipality of Palermo's website at <https://www.comune.palermo.it/amministrazione-trasparente.php?grp=3&lev=4&id=173> Accessed 18/05/2021.

³⁷ Retrieved information from: *La Sicilia sotto il segno dell'UNESCO*, In *Energeo Magazine*, April-May 2015, pp. 22 – 25 https://issuu.com/lucianoaesso/docs/energeo_n1_apr-mag2015_web Accessed 18/05/2021.



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occurred recurrently. The WH Committee released new recommendations (soft low); the State Parties transposed them and addressed local authorities' actions to gain or maintain the WH status. In 1997 WH OGs stated that the listing of entire historic centres would be exceptionally admitted from small to medium-sized urban areas (UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 1997, pp. 30-34). The struggle of the WH Committee and the Advisory Bodies to oversee the OUV, authenticity, and integrity of a historic centre under constant development led to such decision. The proposal was therefore modified: on June 6, 2001, the new site referred to as *Palermo and the Cathedral of Monreale*, was identified according to the UNESCO Criteria II, IV, and V³⁸. At this time, *the Cathedral of Cefalù and its historical settlement* had been separately submitted from that of *Palermo and Monreale*.

The request for further changes persists. Since the launch of the Global Strategy in 1994, the WH Committee sought to mitigate some gaps in the WH List to make it more credible and fairer (UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 1994). The strategy strives to to strengthen unrepresented geographical areas, and to broaden the typologies of inscribed WH sites, such as the cultural landscape, routes, and other heritage mixed sites which also incorporate intangible dimensions, highlighting the socio-anthropological and environmental function of a location of heritage.

The provisional site *Palermo and the Cathedral of Monreale* still latched onto an obsolete logic. To have a greater chance to achieve the WH status, Italian sites (in general) should have emphasised the originality of the candidacy, since Italy is one of the most represented countries³⁹ in the WH list. For this reason, the Italian National Commission for UNESCO - in concert with the Ministry of Culture - encouraged local authorities and site managers to review proposals in the Tentative List several times, before launching the official nomination procedure. The *Palermo and the Cathedral of Monreale* proposal underwent further changes. In this phase, experts and politicians firmly took the lead, confident that the achievement of the WH status would have been beneficial for the entire territory.

The idea of an *Arab-Norman* route for the WH List stems from an international seminar on Islamic gardens organized in Palermo in October 2006⁴⁰.

³⁸ Retrieved information from the official website *Palermo Arabo-Normanna e le Cattedrali di Cefalù e Monreale* <https://arabonormannaunesco.it/la-nomina/la-candidatura.html> Accessed 18/05/2021.

³⁹ Today UNESCO recognises 1154 WH sites (897 cultural, 218 natural and 39 mixed) in 167 countries worldwide. With 58 WH sites inscribed into the WH List, Italy currently counts the largest number among all countries. Retrieved information from the official website of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO <http://www.unesco.it/it/ItaliaNellUnesco/Detail/188> Accessed 20/10/2021.

⁴⁰ Information retrieved from the online sources:



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In 2008 the director of the *Fondazione Banco di Sicilia*⁴¹ (today *Fondazione Sicilia*), together as director of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO at that time, financed⁴² a research project to refine the idea and identity of heritage sites to be included in the route. Three art historians, who will join then the Scientific Committee, elaborated the notion of the *Arab-Norman syncretism*⁴³ as a bonding trait between all the properties included in the WH serial site.

In line with the most recent indications from the WH program, the *Arab-Norman syncretism* merges the intangible aspects of interexchange and coexistence among diverse cultures and religions with the tangible side concerning a unique architectural style. These two assets have been merged into a less standardized typology of site: a serial cultural itinerary including eight monuments from Palermo and both the Cathedrals of *Cefalù* and *Monreale*. A representative of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Culture (from the UNESCO World Heritage) also participated in drawing the new proposal⁴⁴, contributing to its success. As a result, in 2010 the serial site was re-included in the national Tentative List, in view of the later WH nomination.

1. Barbera, G. (2006). *I giardini islamici della città nel Patrimonio dell'Unesco*, la Repubblica. digital archive, 19/10/2006. <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2006/10/19/giardini-islamici-della-citta-nel-patrimonio.html?ref=search> Accessed 20/05/2020.

2. Sfera, B. (2010). *Tra gli arabi e i normanni Palermo chiama Unesco*. Estratto Archivio MIFI Sicilia, Numero 050 p.4, 13/03/2010. <https://www.milanofinanza.it/news/tra-gli-arabi-e-i-normanni-palermo-chiama-unesco-1648473?amp=False&archivio=True> Accessed 20/05/2020.

⁴¹ The *Fondazione Sicilia* was established by Treasury Ministry Decree no. 436251 on December 21, 1991 (original name *Fondazione Banco Sicilia*). It is a private, non-profit legal entity with full statutory and managerial autonomy. It derives from *Banco di Sicilia*, a public credit institution, following a restructuring operation under the Law n. 218, 30 July 1990. It incorporates the previous *Fondazione Cassa Centrale di Risparmio V.E. per le Province Siciliane*.

Retrieved information from the official website: https://www.fondazionesicilia.it/it/fondazione/lo-statuto_a99 Accessed 20/05/2020.

⁴² From the 2009 final Balance Sheet of the Foundation, it emerges that 30.000 euros were allocated to *Civita Sicilia* (SPA) for the organization of the Scientific Committee and the realization of the Arab-Norman itinerary project finalized at the UNESCO WH candidacy. Retrieved information from: <https://www.fondazionesicilia.it/it/fondazione/bilancio.php>. Accessed 20/05/2020

⁴³ Longo, R., Anzelmo, F., (2009). *Palermo Arabo-Normanna e le Cattedrali di Cefalù e Monreale. Candidatura a Sito Patrimonio dell'Umanità. Documentazione per l'inserimento del sito nella lista propositiva del Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali*.

⁴⁴ Longo, R. (2015). *Palermo arabo-normanna. Presente, passato e futuro di un patrimonio universale*. In *PER Giornale Della Fondazione Salvare Palermo Onlus*, 43, 9-13. <http://www.salvarepalermo.it/attivita-sociale/osservatorio/item/1098-palermo-arabo-normanna-presente-passato-e-futuro-di-un-patrimonio-universale> Accessed 20/05/2020.



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Alongside with experts' contribution, the accomplishment of the WH candidacy also required consistent political advocacy between the national and regional forces, to promote the site from the Tentative List to the WH nomination.

On July 27, 2009, a national deputy introduced a solution⁴⁵ to the VII national Commission for Culture, Science and Education⁴⁶ (of the Italian Chamber of Deputies) in order to solicit the Government's commitment to accelerate the process towards the WH nomination. It follows, in March 2010, a first on-site inspection by a delegation from the VII Commission to visit main Arab-Norman sites and an official meeting with the Commission of Culture of the Sicilian Regional Assembly⁴⁷ (ARS).

In 2010, the Regional Councillor for Cultural Heritage referred to the establishment of a technical-scientific Committee (regional decree n. 26, June 24, 2010) involving the President of the province, the mayors, academic authorities, the Chamber of Commerce, and all those who may advise regional administration in completing the complex procedure towards the WH nomination and designing research programs. The Committee would be in charge until the finalization of the procedure, at no cost. Since it also included representatives of local governments, it served as a coordination device between the Sicilian Region and other institutions. The Committee was presented to a larger audience during a press conference⁴⁸ and the first working table was settled a few days later.

⁴⁵ Resolution text presented by the former national deputy, available at http://dati.camera.it/ocd/aic.rdf/aic7_00197_16. Accessed 20/05/2020.

⁴⁶ The parliamentary commission is a collegial body of the Italian Republic Parliament. It is ruled the Italian Constitution (Article 72) to discuss legislative bills before reaching the Parliament. The VII Commission on Culture, Science and Education is permanent. Permanent commissions have been established since the XVII legislature within the Chamber of Deputies and are 14 in all. They hold sector-specific competencies (including the cultural field) and intervene in the process of law formation. Retrieved information from the website <https://www.camera.it/leg18/48>. Accessed 20/05/2020.

⁴⁷ Giarrusso, C. (2010). *L'itinerario arabo-normanno traino per il turismo isolano*. Online magazine QdS.it, March 17 2010. Available at https://qds.it/3423-l-itinerario-arabo-normanno-traino-per-il-turismo-isolano-htm/?refresh_ce. Accessed 20/05/2021.

⁴⁸ On March 13 2010, at *S. Giovanni degli Eremiti* Church in Palermo, the Regional Councillor for Cultural Heritage announced the launching of the official procedure to inscribe the Arab-Norman serial site into the Unesco WH List. Also the general director of the Regional Department for Cultural Heritage, the president of the *Fondazione Banco di Sicilia* and the involved mayors attend the press conference. Retrieved information from: Sfera, B. (2010). *Tra gli arabi e i normanni Palermo chiama Unesco*. Estratto Archivio MIFI Sicilia, Numero 050 p.4, 13/03/2010. <https://www.milanofinanza.it/news/tra-gli-arabi-e-i-normanni-palermo-chiama-unesco-1648473?amp=False&archivio=True> Accessed 20/05/2020.



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4.3 Before the World Heritage nomination

Following this period of political advocacy, in 2011 the RDCHSi entrusted the Sicily World Heritage Foundation⁴⁹ (SWHF) with coordinating both the nomination dossier and WH management plan.

To fulfil such task, the SWHF developed a participative strategy consisting of both interactions with organized groups with specific interests at stake (Bobbio, 2010) and new forms of inter-institutional collaboration (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Costumato, 2021). Since the WH management plan is increasingly conceived as a means of territorial development, it should include interests and perspectives of diverse local actors (Badia, 2012; Pereira Roders & van Oers, 2011; Ruoss, 2015).

In such regard, ICOMOS specifically requests how neighbouring communities have been involved during the drafting of the WH nomination dossier and management plan:

[...] How have the residents and neighbouring communities been involved in the preparation of the nomination dossier and the management plan? Have they provided explicit consent to the presentation of this World Heritage nomination?" (Andaloro et al., 2018a, p. 352).

4.3.1 Interactions with organized groups

In response to the ICOMOS request, the SWHF clarifies that a plethora of institutional, socio-cultural, and private local actors (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 104-106) should participate to establishing the WH management plan (Annex 1, n. 1).

The main purpose of this strategy is twofold. On the one hand, both entities would gather technical knowledge and suggestions to make management plan's objectives and actions adherent to the context's peculiarities. On the other hand, the SWHF would lay the foundations for a participated governance system of the WH serial site.

Between 2011 and 2013 the SWHF and RDCHSi, working as promoting entities of the candidacy, arranged 4 decisional arenas – differentiated by subject - consisting of 19 technical tables and formal meetings (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 14-26) (Table 6). As with complex projects (i.e., urban planning), participants of the process were divided into "discrete bodies" in order to decide or discuss on specific topics smoothly (Fung, 2006).

⁴⁹ The Sicily World Heritage Foundation was established by the Sicilian Region and the Italian National Commission for UNESCO in 2005. It contributes to enhance, preserve and manage the Sicilian WH sites and to follow up any new candidacy. The Foundation consists of both a director and auditors' boards, a scientific committee and an operational team. Its capital, established by a Sicilian Regional Council resolution (21/12/2007), may be expanded through private donations, partnerships and project's income. Retrieved information from the SWHF official website <http://unescosicilia.it/wp/statuto/> Accessed 20/10/2020.



Table 6 Reconstructing the participatory processes before the WH candidacy.

Stage I Four decisional arenas for the WH candidacy. Period: 2011-2013 Main initiators: SWHF and RDCHSi				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
5 technical tables (invited space)	Professional stakeholders: Advisors of the scientific-technical committee	Deploy technique and expertise: Experts exchange technical advice for decisions	None	Institutional: Collective decisions pursued through a collaborative approach
4 participated meetings (invited space)	Professional stakeholders: Institutional players, experts from the scientific- technical committee and representatives of cultural and economic associations	Express preferences: Associations' representatives advance their preferences	Advice and consult: Promoting entities integrate input from associations into the WH management plan.	Institutional: Collective decisions pursued through a collaborative approach;
3 institutional meetings (invited space)	Professional and political stakeholders: Representatives of regional officials, local public and religious authorities, responsible for the protection and use of the WH serial site	Deploy technique and expertise: Experts exchange technical advice for decisions	None	Institutional: Mutual openness, willingness to collaborate and esteem in the promoting entity (SWHF)
7 combined institutional and technical tables (invited space)	Professional and political stakeholders: National authorities, advisors from the scientific committee and representatives of regional, local public and religious authorities	Deploy technique and expertise: Experts exchange technical advice for decisions	None	Institutional: Collective decisions pursued through a collaborative approach.



Communication and Promotional campaign (invited space)	Diffuse public sphere: Individual citizens, representatives of associations, schools, training institutions and organizations	Listen as a spectator: The public is informed on the WH candidacy progress	Personal benefits: People gain awareness of the ongoing process	Intrinsic: Awareness
1 Electronic town meeting (invited space)	Randomly selected: The Municipality of Palermo randomly selects participants from its demographic database	Develop preferences: Participants define their preferences through group discussions and tele-voting	Advise and consult: The Municipality integrates inputs from participants into the municipal resolution	Instrumental: Benefits for urban spaces surrounding the WH monuments. Institutional: Collaboration among administration's units

Source: own elaboration.

The first arena dealt with technical decisions such as the definition of the Buffer Zones system (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 56-80); state of conservation and risk factors of the heritage properties; requalification and protection measures to be carried out. It consisted of **5 technical tables** run by the advisors of the scientific-technical committee⁵⁰ acting as professional stakeholders to “deploy technique and expertise” (Fung, 2006, p. 69) (Table 6).

The second arena aimed to define the objectives and activities of the 4 action strategies included in the WH management plan: knowledge; protection and conservation; social and cultural enhancement; communication and promotion (Ernst & Young, 2006). It was structured in **4 participated meetings** to achieve shared perspectives among professional stakeholders (Table 6) consisting of institutional players, experts from the scientific- technical committee and representatives of cultural and economic associations⁵¹ operating in the three municipalities. The group of actors presented joint ideas, preferences and doubts to the coordinating and expert

⁵⁰ There is no formal document listing all the members of the scientific-technical committee. Actors (both typology and number) and their contributions vary depending on the issue to be dealt with. As stated in the WH management plan, the scientific-technical committee consists of “several professionals in the fields of art history, intangible culture, infrastructure, urban planning, tourism and territorial marketing” (Andaloro et al. 2018b, p. 26). The committee operates under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Culture and National UNESCO WH office and is supervised by a team of academic experts (Andaloro et al. 2018b, p.3).

⁵¹ Among the economic actors the Palermo Chamber of commerce, the Italian Banking Association from Sicily (*ABI Sicilia*), *Confindustria Palermo*, the tourism direction of Palermo regional province; the president of hotels and tourism section in *Confindustria Palermo*; *Assoturismo Confesercenti*; representative of the Agritourist Sicily Association; president of *Via Roma Palermo* Association stands out. Among cultural players the Foundation *Salvare Palermo Onlus*, representatives of the Italian Environment Fund Association (FAI) and the National Association of Art History Teachers (ANISA), school's representatives are mentioned in the WH management Plan (Andaloro et al. 2018b, pp. 14 -20).



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committees, regarding how to achieve sustainable strategies to preserve and enhance the WH site and generate new opportunities of local development. During these meetings, the promoting entities maintained their role of coordinators, following the advice and consultation mechanism, whereby they received input from association's representatives and integrated them into the WH management plan and share progress (Table 6) (Annex 1, n. 7,8). As a result, several initiatives - some of which already in progress- for enhancing WH properties have been included into the WH management plan. Some of which included the creation of integrated tourist routes based on slow mobility, educational projects with schools etc. (Andaloro et al., 2018b).

The third and fourth arenas covered the WH site governance topic.

Specifically, **3 institutional meetings** gathered representatives of regional officials, local authorities (mainly city councils of Palermo, Cefalù and Monreale), religious bodies and managers directly responsible for the protection and use of the WH serial site. The main purpose was to agree on the most appropriate governance structure to strengthen common interests and reduce divergences that could negatively impact both the ongoing nomination and the future operability of the WH management plan (Table 6).

Other **7 combined institutional and technical tables** aimed to interact with national authorities, namely the Ministry of Culture and the UNESCO World Heritage office. These tables were combined with four site inspections⁵² during which national authorities verified protection measures, state of conservation and accessibility of heritage buildings in their context, before submitting the nomination to the WH Committee. Advisors from the scientific committee also took part in both meetings and combined tables, during which decisions concerning the WH management plan have been approved/elaborated through the technical expertise mechanism (Table 6)(Annex 1, n. 4). The absence of representatives of civil society in institutional meetings and technical tables (including combined ones) limited the influence they could exert on decisions (Table 6).

Residents and neighboring communities – as referred to by ICOMOS in its request – and more in general non-organized citizens (Bobbio & Pomatto, 2007) did not participate in these arenas. Rather, they have been informed on the ongoing work on the WH nomination through a diffused **communication and promotion campaign** (Table 6).

Main stages of this campaign have been recreated through a local press review, as follows:

- **August 3, 2010:** public conference entitled *Cefalù, Monreale e Palermo e i loro beni culturali, candidati quale patrimonio dell'umanità*⁵³ (Cefalù);
- **October 18, 2010:** public conference entitled *Percorsi del mosaico nel*

⁵² Retrieved information from: Scarafia, S. (2013). *Ispezione dell'Unesco Palermo sotto esame*. La Repubblica, 20/07/2013. Available at: <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2013/07/20/ispezione-dell-unesco-palermo-sotto-esame.html> Accessed 20/09/2021.

⁵³ Retrieved information from *the L'altra Cefalù* online magazine <http://www.qualecefalù.it/lac/node/1973> Accessed 16/11/2021.



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*territorio della provincia di Palermo: costituzione di un Comitato promotore a sostegno dei beni storico monumentali arabo normanni candidati patrimonio dell'umanità*⁵⁴ (Cefalù);

- **December 16, 2011:** press conference entitled *Il Piano di gestione per le candidature all'iscrizione WHL del percorso Arabo-Normanno della Città di Palermo, Cefalù and Monreale*⁵⁵ (Palermo);
- **October 11, 2012,** conference to support the WH nomination *Palermo Arabo Normanna e le cattedrali di Cefalù e Monreale* for the Rotari club members⁵⁶ (Palermo);
- **January 31, 2014:** public conference entitled *Itinerario Arabo Normanno e candidatura Unesco*⁵⁷ (Monreale);
- **March 7, 2014:** press conference about the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding among the three mayors of Palermo, Cefalù and Monreale (Palermo)⁵⁸;
- **July 4, 2015:** press conference about the achievement of the WH status⁵⁹ (Palermo).

People participating in these initiatives belong to the diffuse public sphere including individual citizens, representatives of associations, schools, training institutions and organisations interested in learning about the on-going WH nomination (Table 6). In this phase, participants attended the initiatives as spectators, because of their interest in being informed of the WH candidacy progress. They pursue the personal benefit to raise awareness on the ongoing process (Table 6). In addition, each municipal administration supported the engagement of residents and neighbouring communities. Respondents from the three municipalities highlighted the common need to firstly interact with residents and traders in the areas closer to the WH properties. Since these areas would have undergone several requalification measures in view of the WH candidacy, public administrators needed the collaboration of the people directly influenced by such changes (Annex 1, n. 9,10,11).

⁵⁴ Retrieved information from *L'altra Cefalù* online magazine <http://www.qualecefalu.it/lac/node/2826> Accessed 16/11/2021.

⁵⁵ Retrieved information from the online archive *La Repubblica* newspaper <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2011/12/16/undici-tesori-arabo-normanni-candidati-al-patrimonio-unesco.html> Accessed 6/11/2021.

⁵⁶ Retrieved information from *LiveSicilia* online magazine https://livesicilia.it/2012/10/10/rotary-club-a-palazzo-steri-2/?refresh_ce Accessed 16/11/2021.

⁵⁷ Retrieved information from *TNS Sicilia* online magazine https://travlnostop.com/sicilia/beni-culturali/unesco-a-monreale-focus-su-itinerario-arabo-normanno_112112 Accessed 16/11/2021.

⁵⁸ Retrieved information from *Trinacria News.eu* online magazine <http://trinacrianews.eu/protocollo-dintesa-con-unesco-per-candidatura-itinerario-arabo-normanno-patrimonio-dellumanita/> Accessed 16/11/2021.

⁵⁹ Retrieved information from *Comune di Palermo* official website: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/palermo-informa-dettaglio.php?id=7540&tipo=1> Accessed 16/11/2021.



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“ [...] On some territorial portions – mainly Buffer Zones level 1 and 2 - the municipal administration had to carry out a series of interventions to protect the monuments so that they could be candidated as WH sites [...]. The UNESCO also requires us to animate the areas around the monuments and to involve residents and other local actors. So, since 2015 I have been working with some neighbourhood that are close to some iconic monuments such as the Royal Palace and the Zisa Castle[...] In a moment of economic crisis for Palermo, traders in *Corso Vittorio*, merchants in *Ballarò* realised that the WH recognition would be an opportunity not to be missed. An opportunity for revitalisation. They understood that by standing together and creating a network they could overcome this moment [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020) (Annex 1, n.9).

However, the municipalities did not follow a common participatory approach. They acted according to specific priorities, available resources, and ongoing programs. In regards of the city of Palermo, for example, the urgent need to improve accessibility of the downtown areas surrounding the WH properties coincided with the ongoing municipal programs of creating a more sustainable mobility network⁶⁰ and participative decision-making system⁶¹. Between 2012 and 2013 the Municipality of Palermo launched an active democracy project, known as *Patecip@attivi*⁶², consisting of 25 initiatives (i.e., focus groups, neighbourhood walks, themed workshops, virtual town meetings, etc.) to involve citizens in planning the city’s development strategy (Annex 1, n. 12, 13).

One of the strategic assets of this project concerned cultural policy, as it aimed to discuss on preparing the city to succeed in forthcoming opportunities, such as the WH recognition, Palermo Italian Capital of Culture 2018, and the contemporary art biennial *Manifesta 2018*. In this framework, the Municipality arranged a virtual **town meeting**⁶³ - one out of five – to assess the matter of

⁶⁰ The General Urban Traffic Plan (P.G.T.U.) of the Municipality of Palermo contains the sustainable mobility project. Plan available at <https://www.comune.palermo.it/amministrazione-trasparente.php?grp=3&lev=4&id=168> Accessed on 7/05/2022.

⁶¹ Guidelines for citizen participation to local administration decisions, published by the Municipality of Palermo (Resolution n. 25, 25/02/2015). Guidelines available at <https://www.comune.palermo.it/js/server/uploads/28102016191320.pdf> Accessed on 8/05/2022.

⁶² Retrieved information from <https://www.comune.palermo.it/partecipa-partecipattivi.php> Accessed 14/10/2021.

⁶³ The e-TM is a forum during which a selected group of citizens discussed (among several topics) the city pedestrianization plan, to influence correlated public decisions. During the e-TM meeting, citizens have been divided into small groups organized around a table. Group discussions were linked to an electronic survey system (easy to use) that promptly transmitted results from groups’ discussion to a plenary assembly (Theme Team) in charge of identifying emerging issues. At the same time, everyone could express personal opinions through televoting. The whole process was articulated into three phases: an in-depth examination of the treated topics; discussion of the topics in groups; elaboration

pedestrianizing some areas of the historic centre near the WH serial site. Through this mechanism, randomly selected participants (Fung, 2006) expressed their preferences, agreeing that pedestrianization was a priority in areas close to monuments (71% of participants) and in the historical city centre (83% of participants), in order to reduce pollution and improve the liveability of the city (56% of participants) (Comune di Palermo, 2014).

The Municipality considered the input from participants to the virtual town meeting and launched an extensive pedestrianisation plan. In July 2014 two iconic buildings of the future WH serial site – *S. Maria dell'Ammiraglio* and *S. Cataldo* churches – regained relevance in the urban landscape and improved its accessibility through the pedestrianisation of the facing *Piazza Bellini* (Annex 1, n. 6) (Figure 13).



Figure 13 *Piazza Bellini*: before and after the pedestrianisation.

Images' Source: **A** - <https://www.palermomania.it/news/societa-arte-cultura/palermo-da-oggi-stop-alle-auto-nelle-piazze-bellini-e-pretoria-63922.html> Accessed 11/10/2021; **B** – own image.

In this phase emerging public values fell within both the institutional and the instrumental domains.

The first cluster is associated with the transformation of societal interests into public decisions (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 363). It emerged mainly from the 5 technical tables occurred among

of the emerging reflections in form of questions that each participant can answer through a personal answer. It has been promoted by the Municipality of Palermo who randomly select, from its demographic database, 98 citizens representatives of the eight-city divisions and a small percentage (3%) of people leaving outside the metropolitan belt. About 32 associations also took part in the e-TM as interlocutors and facilitators during tables' discussions, together with several municipal councillors and officials (more than 10) (Comune di Palermo, 2014).



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specialists and the 4 meetings addressed to the civil society representatives (Table 6). Societal interests were conveyed by proposals from the associations, advice from experts, and willingness of municipal authorities to maximise the benefits from the WH nomination. They turned into potential public decisions when included into the WH management plan as objectives and activities which can affect people's lifestyle, their relationship with the concerned heritage and surrounding context when implemented.

Following Jørgensen and Bozeman's classification (2007), prevalent public value in these arenas relates to a collective choice pursued through a collaborative approach. The common desire to achieve the WH status and trigger new benefits for the whole territory prevails over individual interests, leading to productive synergies among diverse actors (Annex 1, n. 14).

The institutional cluster also embraces the sphere of the "relationship between public administration and its environment" (Jørgensen and Bozeman 2007, p. 364). The absence of citizens in decisional tables to draft the WH management plan, prompted municipal officials to seek alternative means of interaction in the field. This approach generated further public values such as openness of public administrators to listen citizen requests and their responsiveness in adopting shared solutions (Annex 1, n. 19).

Instrumental values take on a dual facet. Firstly, both public administrators and citizens benefitted from the quality improvement of some urban spaces surrounding WH monuments. The case of *Piazza Bellini in Palermo* is rather emblematic (Annex 1, n. 6). The pedestrianisation of the square which aimed to improve both preservation and use conditions of two iconic WH properties – respectively *S. Maria dell'Ammiraglio* and *S. Cataldo* Churches – served the Municipality to also demonstrate the legitimacy of its participatory strategy, as it was an objective of the *Partecip@attivi* project. Furthermore, citizens acquired the opportunity to re-appropriate the square's public function, emphasizing its contemporary cultural value. Since the pedestrianisation in 2014 and the WH nomination in 2015, *Piazza Bellini* has become the venue for a series of cultural events (such as *Cinema and Piano city*, *Festival della Letterature Migranti*, *Bal Folk* etc.) open to all citizens (Figure 14).



Figure 14 Piazza Bellini hosting cultural events. Images' sources :

- A** <https://www.palermomania.it/news/societa-arte-cultura/palermo-da-oggi-stop-alle-auto-nelle-piazze-bellini-e-pretoria-63922.html> Accessed 10/6/2021.
- B** <http://www.istitutoeuroarabo.it/DM/dance-additected-il-bal-folk-a-palermo-pratiche-coreutiche-e-dinamiche-identitarie/> Accessed 10/6/2021.

Secondly, local administrations had the chance to start experiencing new collaborative arrangements among different administrative units. Concerning the Municipality of Palermo, for example, various councillors from different departments and officials from municipal service companies took part in some of the tables dedicated to the WH governance in order to share resources to finalise the WH candidacy (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 17-18).

4.3.2 Formalised inter-institutional collaboration

As the main outcome of previous participatory processes, on 20 February 2015, both public institutions, WH property owners and managers – a total of 14 actors - signed a Protocol of Understanding to develop a “participatory management system involving social, cultural, religious and economic forces of the territory, ensuring citizen’s participation” (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014, Article 1, paragraph 3).

By signing the protocol, all the stakeholders formalised their interest and commitment in maintaining the “integrity of the WH site’s values over time” (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014, Article 1, paragraph 2, p. 2) through an inter-institutional collaborative agreement between “autonomous institutions of both “equal status and at different levels of government” (Costumato, 2021, p. 6). Although such formalisation may seem obvious given the multiplicity of the involved actors, it is not. As stated by two interviewees, the management of other WH serial sites in Sicily – such as the Aeolian Islands, the Late Baroque towns of *Val di Noto* and Mount Etna – suffered from political disagreements between involved municipalities. Such opposition strongly hindered any



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form of integrated co-ordination to guarantee long-term protection and development strategies for the three WH sites (Annex 1, n. 2, 3).

“[...] I tried several times to assemble the governance of the WH Aeolian Islands and other sites. But each time, the process failed to succeed, because one mayor opposed the other. This situation occurs often in Sicily, but also in other parts of Italy [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019) (Annex 1, n.2).

Concerning the *Arab - Norman* WH site, the combination of directive, cohesive and guaranteeing forces resulted in the establishment of a stable Steering Committee (SC).

Directive forces are top-down and come from the international and national scales. ICOMOS requires a coordination structure to ensure the appropriate management of the whole serial site (Andaloro et al., 2018b, p. 352). The Ministry of Culture supervises both competences and the economic sustainability of the coordination structure.

Cohesive forces developed on the horizontal level of the SC. They are mainly exerted by the three municipalities and supported by the remaining ownership and management entities. The three municipalities share a common action plan for the creation of the Arab -Norman route. Although they act on the basis of their private programs and individual budget availability, they do not seek to prevail over each other. Rather, the proposed interventions are mutually shared (Annex 1, n. 22). Furthermore, the willingness of both religious authorities and private entities – such as the *Federico II* Foundation – to actively participate in the management of the future WH serial site, increases the binding power among the involved actors (both institutional and not).

Finally, guaranteeing forces serve to provide stability within the SC and greater adherence to local conditions. These are exerted by the two entities promoting the WH nomination. More specifically, the Sicilian Region – including the RDCH – is responsible of consistently funding⁶⁴ the planned activities within the WH management plan; the SWHF strives to coordinate and align the SC's operations with the UNESCO's demands (Annex 1, n. 4).

The SC is defined as a “governance tool for coordinating and implementing the management plan of the WH serial site” (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014, Article 2, paragraph 2, p. 2) consisting of ten permanent institutional members. The ten permanent members are: the Regional Department of Cultural Heritage, the Regional Sicilian Assembly, the Italian Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Interior *Fondo Edifici di Culto* (FEC), Municipalities of Palermo, Cefalú and

⁶⁴ In the WH management Plan, the Sicilian Region is mentioned as the funding body for the activities included in the four action plans: knowledge, protection and conservation, social and cultural enhancement, communication and promotion.



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Monreale, Federico II Foundtion, Sicily Foundation and Sicily UNESCO Heritage Foundation (Figure 15).

Moreover, it includes a representative from the national Ministry of Culture, who is responsible of approving the three-year financial and activity plan. With the aim to achieve an “organisational robustness” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 367), the SC is equipped with a specific regulation concerning actor’s roles, decision-making procedure, and economic sustainability. To further clarify, the members of the Committee elect a president in office for a biennium and deliberate with the positive vote of half plus one (of its permanent members). The SWHF is appointed as Operational Structure (OS) committed to implement monitoring and enhancing activities for the WH site and expand the network of technical and scientific partners (Figure 15). Religious authorities join the SC as “participants” rather than permanent members. This means that they participate to verify the conformity of the planned actions with the religious functions, by expressing binding opinions (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014, Article 2, paragraph 2, p. 2) (Figure 15).

The SC meets on average, two to three times a year to approve the activities carried out by the OS and to propose coming annual objectives based on the WH management plan and available resources. In turn, the OS builds the new annual activity plan, following the SC’s decision (Annex 1, n. 5).

Concerning economic sustainability, each year members are supposed to contribute to the WH site’s expenses as follows:

- Each municipality shall provide a fee of 30 cents per capita;
- foundations shall allocate a voluntary contribution on top of specific funds;
- the Sicilian Region shall provide resources in a dedicated budgetary section and contribute through specific European funds.

Religious authorities have no financial obligations to the SC. Further income can be supplied through private donations, sponsorships, and projects. The OS oversees resources management to carry out the activity and plan monitoring.

At the same time, a Technical Committee (TC) is established to support the implementation of events (such as exhibitions, festivals, etc.). The TC consists of various representatives from each public institution within the SC, varying depending on the required expertise.

The formalisation of the SC and the standardisation of its operational procedure are not a mere enactment of a top-down demand from ICOMOS nor a mere strengthening of the authorised environment responsible for WH properties preservation (Smith, 2006).

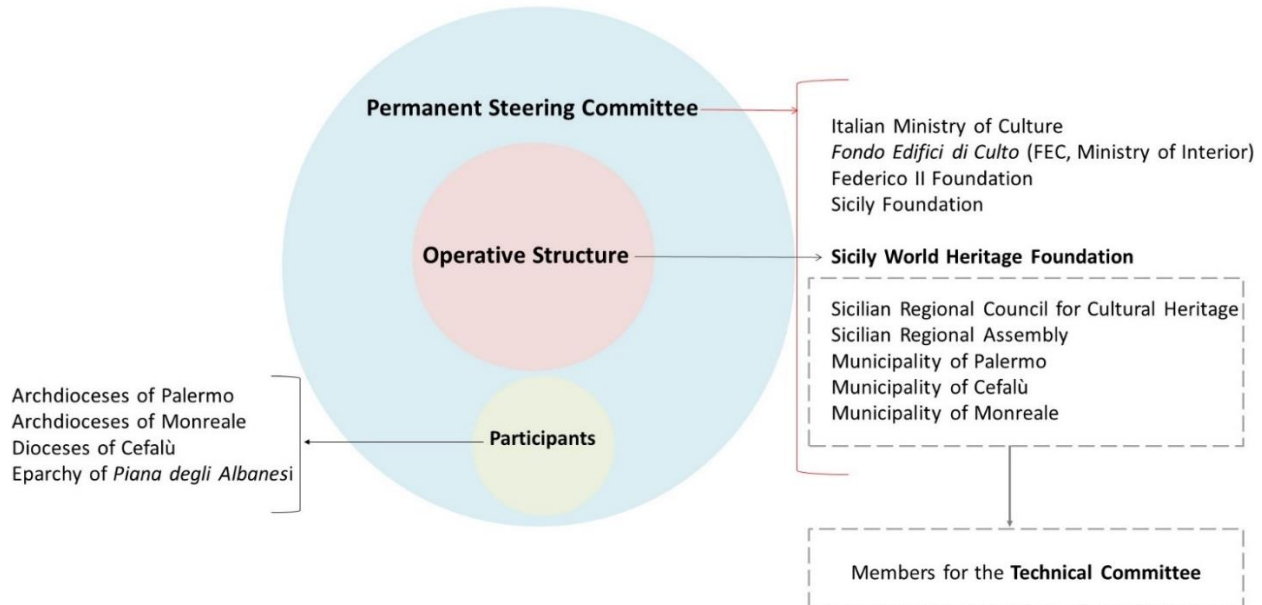


Figure 15 Steering Committee representation. *Source:* own elaboration.

More accurately, the two measures underline how the foundation for building a participatory site governance lies in the inter-institutional collaboration among institutional and non-institutional actors appointed by legal and administrative systems (both local and national) to preserve and enhance a WH site.

As for public network management, the establishment of a regulated co-ordination structure – such as the SC and the OS – provides an anchor for more people, inside and outside public institutions, to start participating in WH site management. It is considered as the basis for a governance structure that can gradually open up to a broader range of actors through a more equitable and horizontal distribution of “decision-making competencies” (Costumato, 2020, p.6, as cited in Markovic, 2017). In this regard, one of the respondents expresses the intention to gather representatives of the associations and civil society, that contributed to the drafting of the WH management plan, into a joint legal entity. The main goal is to facilitate their participation in decisional processes concerning the WH site and gradually encourage more players to be involved (Annex 1, n. 20):

“[...] One of the things that I would like to do in the future for the governance of the WH serial site is to establish a council of associations to institutionalise some debates not only on UNESCO WH but also on sustainable development in general. It is worth understanding how the heritage scattered over the territory, as many small, dispersed forces, can contribute to territorial development if managed within a coordinated strategy [...]” (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).



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In the formalisation process, the connection between inter-institutional collaboration and public values is evident. Firstly, a collaborative attitude is strengthened. More precisely, although the establishment of a joint committee among involved authorities has been undertaken at the request of ICOMOS – and not as a voluntary action –, a relationship of mutual openness and the eagerness to collaborate and estimate the promoting entity SWHF seem to lay the foundation for a “good work environment” and “organizational robustness” of the future governance structure (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 367) (Annex 1, n. 15,16,17,18).

Consequently, further values arise. Such ideals belong to the public intra-organisational domain (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) and refer to two determinants: *trust* and *power-sharing* (Costumato, 2021).

Among SC’s members, *trust* is manifested in the consensus to follow common rules, to allocate economic resources for the accomplishment of WH management plan’s objectives and in their willingness to understand mutual interests, as for the religious authorities (Annex 1, n. 21).

On the other hand, *power-sharing* (Costumato 2020, as cited in Mu et al., 2019) emerges in the low hierarchical nature of the governance structure. Although participating authorities belong to different institutional scales, they all hold the discursive legitimacy to propose issues and decide through the majority plus one of its members.

At this stage, public values emerge in all their potential, yet demonstrating less credibility in building a participatory governance of the WH serial site.

This is evident the Protocol of Understanding (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014, Article 1, paragraph 2, p. 2), which states that the signatories' commitment is to ensure citizen participation. However, the statement remains vague.

To grasp the transition from potential to realistic public values, the research will explore the operationalization of the governance structure after the achievement of the WH status.

4.4 After the World Heritage nomination

Since the successful WH candidacy, from July 2015 until 2020, the SC regularly meets for a total of 14 reunions⁶⁵ to discuss the developed annual activity plan and approve the coming ones. The OS is the main initiator of the whole participatory process (Table 7).

These decisional tables are attended by changing representatives of local public authorities, religious and management entities within the SC. Decisions are determined by the expertise of public officials and private actors following a deliberative regulation (Table 7).

⁶⁵ All the information has been extrapolated by the Minutes of Meetings provided by Sicily World Heritage Foundation, integrated with SC member’s interviews.



Indeed, participants first share and discuss a list of topics on the agenda and subsequently deliberate them with no disagreement among any of them. In case of dissent, the SC is reconvened to discuss the non-agreed issue and will do so with a two-third majority vote of its members. The SC is convened regularly, and its decisions are considered valid if the majority of its members are present, except for those who are invited as consultants and justified absentees⁶⁶. The deliberation is facilitated by the OS president, who provides preliminary informative material to SC members about the daily agenda and mediates conflicting opinions to resolve an agreement (Table 7). All technical issues related to the organisation of specific events for promoting the WH serial site (such as exhibitions, conferences etc.) are settled by the Technical Committee, which from 2016 – its foundation year – until 2020 has met 5 times, independently from the SC (Annex 1, n. 23).

Table 7 Reconstructing participatory processes after the WH nomination.

Stage II SC activity Period: 2015-2020 Main initiator: OS				
SPACE for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
13 official meetings (invited space)	Professional and political stakeholders: The ten members of the SC discuss how to implement the WH management plan. Representatives of the 4 religious authorities supervise religious functions	Between technical expertise and deliberation: SC members deliberate on how to allocate resources for managing the WH serial site through a plus-one majority	None	Institutional: A collaborative and stable approach Instrumental: Better care and liveability of urban spaces Indirect economic benefits from tourism
The school-work alternation project (invited space)	Professional stakeholders: The OS and 4 high schools (both teachers and students)	Express their preferences: Teachers and students express their interests to address courses' content and empirical activities	Co-governance: The OS and schools together create plans to advance the initiative year by year	Intrinsic: Knowledge value Bequest value Instrumental: Students' benefit (career guidance) Institutional:

⁶⁶ Minutes of Meetings 23/07/2015.



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				Collective choice through collaborative approach
The Arab-Norman imaginary contest (invited space)	Diffuse public sphere: The contest is open to everyone for free	Express preferences: People expresses their preferences by voting online	Advice and consult: The general public influences expert's choice through online voting.	Intrinsic: Identity value

Source: own elaboration.

Between 2015 and 2016 the main issues to approve concerned the materialisation of the WH serial site, through the implementation of an appropriate signage, lighting, and accessibility system for each monument. Since these kinds of actions fall under the municipalities' administrative responsibilities, the three mayors within the SC hold greater authority in proposing and implementing suitable solutions. They agreed to avoid burdening the work of the SC with wider problems affecting the metropolitan areas and to stay focused on the WH serial site and its buffer zone.

To this scope they tried to adopt a dual governance approach, strengthening relationships within and between local administrations.

In October 2015 the mayor of Palermo decided to set up an in-house task force working specifically for the WH Arab-Norman serial site. The task force was coordinated by the Vice Chief of Staff and it was formed by representatives of all the municipal technical offices and administrators involved in the management of the WH properties and its buffer zones for various capacities⁶⁷ (Minutes of Meetings 11/11/2015). The main duty was to coordinate and monitor all the measures for developing the WH serial site in the city of Palermo. The measures to be implemented along the WH path ranged from the creation of pedestrians and cycle itineraries, ad hoc tourist information points, new facilities for visitors with disabilities and visually impaired and a free wi-fi network (Annex 31, n. 10).

In the same period, the three municipalities further signed a protocol of understanding with the Coordination network of UNESCO municipalities in Sicily (CUNES)⁶⁸. The network established

⁶⁷ Since its establishment (9/10/2015) the task force managed various interventions concerning the planning of the UNESCO WH itinerary, included the allocation of approximately 70,000 euro to two externalised inter-municipal companies for the urban renewal of the WH itinerary, including the Buffer Zones. Retrieved information from the Social Balance sheet (2015), available at: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/bilancio-sociale.php?anno=2015&id=34&lev=3&cap=71&int=136> Accessed 10/09/2021.

⁶⁸ Information retrieved from: <http://unescosicilia.it/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CUNES.pdf> Accessed 10/09/2021.



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in 2014, gathered 43 representatives of the Sicilian municipalities that include a WH site and are interested in promoting their territory through a shared strategy. By joining this network, the municipalities of Palermo and Cefalù got an additional boost to re-design their tourist offer starting from the WH recognition.

The Municipality of Palermo enhanced both form and content of the “Palermo Welcome”⁶⁹ tourist website, which has been very limited until then. Due to these improvements, the website can now be navigated in six different languages and suggests several urban focus itineraries to the visitors. One of these is a revised version of the Arab-Norman WH serial site. Alongside the 7 WH properties in Palermo, it includes other 8 buildings - mentioned in both the A and B categories of the WH nomination dossier (Andaloro et al., 2018a, pp. 353-354) to spread awareness on them and encourage people to visit it (Annex 1, n. 32).

The Municipality of Cefalù invites visitors, mainly attracted by the WH Cathedral, to extend their stay and explore other heritage sites. In 2019 the town council approved the integrated circuit of Cefalù cultural and natural heritage (SIBAC)⁷⁰ with the proposal of the Cultural Policy Department, which allows visitors to explore 5 cultural – natural sites with a single 5-day ticket (Annex 1, n. 33).

From 2016 to 2020, the SC focuses on the development and enhancement of the WH serial site. It strives to strengthen the planning activity by working on the special funds for Italian cultural and natural WH sites, available under the national law n. 77/2006 (Law 77/2006).

Another crucial issue concerns the creation of a unified access system for the whole WH serial site. Indeed, the fragmented ownership and management of the listed properties hinders a smooth and coordinated visit due to different opening and closing schedules and tariff rates as well (Annex 1, n. 24,25).

Finally, the enlargement of the WH serial site is frequently discussed, referring to the official inclusion of the heritage properties in Category A.

At this stage, the strategies to employ do not predominantly fall under the remit of the three Municipalities. Rather, they require an equivalent commitment from all members of the SC.

However, some weaknesses in the inter-institutional collaboration hamper the achievement of the pre-set objectives, at present.

The first criticality concerns the sharing of resources. The prolonged delay of the Sicilian Region in dedicating a spending section of the regional budget for the protection and management of the WH Arab Norman serial site jeopardises the achievement of some objectives and risks upsetting the collaboration between the SC members. Furthermore, some members fear that the amount of funds that the Sicilian Region allocates from the Social European Fund- Operational programme 2014

⁶⁹ Information retrieved from: <https://turismo.comune.palermo.it/> Accessed 10/09/2021.

⁷⁰ SIBAC official website: <https://www.visitcefalu.com/biglietto-unico-sibac/> Accessed 10/09/2021.



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– 2020 (PO-FSE Sicilia 2014 – 2020)⁷¹ to the WH management plan would have been insufficient to implement preservation measures for non-state heritage properties belonging to local public bodies (Minutes of Meetings 20/12/2016).

As extracted from the SWHF financial reports⁷², the Municipality of Palermo is the only institution to duly supply the annual amount, as stipulated in the protocol of understanding, while the other members (except the Sicilian Region) fail to allocate the common contribution on an annual basis (Annex 1, n. 37) (Table 8).

Table 8 Proceeds from institutional activities allocated by the SWHF for enhancement activities of the WH serial sites

YEAR	PROCEEDS for the WH SERIAL SITE ENHANCEMENT, provided by institutional subjects			
	<i>Municipality of Palermo</i>	<i>Municipality of Cefalù</i>	<i>Federico II Foundation</i>	<i>Others</i>
2016	-	-	-	173.240,50 €
2017	202.330,00 €	4.335,00 €	20.000,00 €	
2018	121.520,00 €	-	-	15.000,00 €
2019	200.000,00 €	-	20.000,00 €	9.000,00 €
2020	189.067,00 €			
	+	-	-	-
	9.955,00 €			

Source: own elaboration from the SWHF's annual financial reports

The shortfall of both the municipalities of *Cefalù* and *Monreale* is due to an inherited budget deficit (Annex 1, n. 40). Nonetheless, both entities strive to integrate WH objectives into their local programme by further reaping benefits also for the municipality at the end (Annex 1, n. 39).

The second challenge lies in the politicisation of the SC economic resources.

Since the Municipality of Palermo largely finances WH site management activities, it acts as a leader of the SC. The Mayor of Palermo serves as president of the SC for the full five years, by

⁷¹ Through the Regional Law n. 9/2020, the Sicilian Region allocates 221,516 euro to some interventions for improving the reception capacity of some properties included in the WH serial site. Available information at http://pti.regione.sicilia.it/portal/page/portal/PIR_PORTALE/PIR_LaStrutturaRegionale/PIR_AssBeniCulturali/PIR_Infodocumenti/PIR_Avvisiecomunicazioni/PIR_10MAG2021BENIUNESCO?fbclid=IwAR05c8KXGynkThzfwOj2QHCinYCycN2vXTA7iliGzoi-X6hFg41JVR30mfE Accessed 7/05/2022.

⁷² Retrieved information from Sicily World Heritage Foundation balance sheets, available online at: <http://unescosicilia.it/wp/la-fondazione/bilanci/> . Accessed on 12/06/2021.



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invalidating the two-year rotation originally envisaged by the agreement. Although interviewed members do not disagree with a continuous leadership, it could threaten the long-term operability of the SC. Seeing as the financial sustainability of the WH serial site relies almost entirely on the contribution of a single political actor, a turn of the elected office or the rise of tensions among members of opposing political parties (such as the Sicilian Region at the present time) may result in a funding gap and therefore undermine the stability of the whole SC (Annex 1, n. 40).

As the minutes show, the increasing politicisation of relationships among SC members starts to obstruct the decision-making process, by leaving some crucial tasks for the WH site development unresolved (such as the new project proposal for extra funds and the integrated visiting system). Many interviewees acknowledge that the potential benefits that the WH designation can bring to the area have only been partially implemented (Annex 1, n. 41,42).

This state of decisional uncertainty within the SC slows down the opening of such meetings to other participants. Indeed, although SC reunions are officially open to the general public, no other actors participate, with the exception of religious authorities and some representatives of the Arab-Norman task force (not even representative of organised groups previously involved) (Annex 1, n. 43).

However, since the beginning, the head of the OS continues to stress the importance of involving local actors in the decisional processes and to find a statutory arrangement to strengthen their role in the WH site's governance. The main fear is that such change could accentuate current SC weaknesses (Annex 1, n. 44).

For this reason, the OS seeks to gradually address participation starting from co-planned educational initiatives, which will be further explained in the next paragraph.

At this stage public values partially confirm the previously emerged ones in both the institutional and instrumental domains.

The SC's members continue to adopt a collaborative approach (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) that allows to accomplish some of the planned activities for both the materialisation and promotion of the WH serial site. Such activities generate instrumental benefits in terms of better care and liveability of urban spaces around WH properties, for both citizens and visitors. The synergic efforts in promoting tourism from the WH recognition have indirectly generated economic benefits for both the Municipalities of Cefalù and Monreale (Annex 1, n. 32, 33). Regardless of this, the problems related to the sharing and politicization of the economic resources start eroding the values of trust and power sharing among the SC members, by hindering both the achievement of additional outcomes for the WH serial site protection and enhancement and the implementation of a more participated governance structure.



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4.4.1 The school-work alternation project and the Arab-Norman imaginary contest

Directly from the achievement of the WH status, the OS pursues the interest of encouraging citizens to participate in the protection and enhancement of the Arab-Norman WH serial site through several awareness-raising events⁷³. Some of these initiatives have been annually renewed following both collaborative and co-creative approaches⁷⁴.

Specifically, this paragraph delves into two practices that are significant in the raising of public values: the school-work educational traineeship project (Law 107/205, 2015) and the Arab Norman imaginary contest (Figure 16). Both initiatives are initiated by the OS.

The school-work educational traineeship project⁷⁵, established by the Italian Ministry of Education (Law 107/205, 2015), aims to enable high school students to interact with the working environment, to evaluate both career interests and skills. Under this program, the OS establishes a co-governing partnership with four high schools in Palermo, developing a lifelong learning plan on the Arab-Norman WH serial site collaborating with teachers and students (Table 7).

For this initiative, high schools constitute the largest population of participants. The sample has been then narrowed down, by selecting school institutions willing to coordinate the project and students interested in exploring the UNESCO WH program (in general) and the features of the newly designated Arab-Norman serial site.

This collaborative (Simon, 2010) project has been running since 2016 and consists of two main steps. A first theoretical training session (frontal lectures) is held by SC members and actors working in the cultural, economic and tourist field. In this phase students have the chance to learn about general rules of the UNESCO WH designation and reflect on strategies to enhance the Arab-Norman serial site. This training moment also entails student's attendance at some of the SC meetings, conferences on UNESCO WH sites' governance and on-site visits to experience WH properties in

⁷³ The UNESCO white nights, UNESCO September, the conference about the network of UNESCO WH Sicilian sites, are among the main organised events. Available information at <https://arabnormannaunesco.it/attivita/eventi-unesco.html> Accessed 7/05/2022.

⁷⁴ As defined by M. Sani, with reference to Nina Simon categorisation of participatory practices in the heritage context (Simon, 2010), in collaborative projects participants are “active partners in the creation of institutional projects [...] controlled by the institution” in co-creative projects participants “work together with institutional staff members from the beginning to define project's goals and to generate the program based on community interests”. Online source: observatoriosocial.fundacionlacaixa.org/es/-/la-gobernanza-participativa-del-patrimonio-cultural?p_1_back_url=%2Fes%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Da-gobernanza-participativa-del-patrimonio-cultural Accessed on 21/11/2021.

⁷⁵ The Italian Law 107/2015 enshrines the alternation schoolwork as a mandatory measure for high school and vocational institutions' students. The next law 145/2018 turn the alternation schoolwork a path for transversal skills and orientation (PCTO).



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their urban context. Involved experts tailor content-based courses on the interests of both teachers and students (Annex 1, n. 26).

The training on the WH serial site is also addressed to teachers. Between 2015 and 2016 the ANISA association, in concert with the OS, organized a dozen of lectures to broaden teachers' knowledge in regard of the WH serial site (Annex 1, n. 27).

Since 2016 this activity has been implemented less frequently: its last session was organised for some schools in *Monreale* in 2019⁷⁶.

In the second step, students engage in practical activities at the WH Visitor Centre to gain both hospitality and tourist promotion skills for the WH serial site. As attested by activity reports, more than one hundred students from the four institutions participate each year, fostering mutual knowledge exchanges. One of the most relevant outputs from the school-work educational traineeship program is the on-ongoing research path on the digital fruition of the WH serial site. Year after year the students of one high school have created three technological tools for the public to easily experience the WH serial site:

- The “UNESCO Palermo” app⁷⁷, containing information about the history, traditions, times and entrance fees of each monument to support visiting organisation.
- An interactive map about the Arab-Norman monuments in Palermo, providing visitors with greater information about some of the properties unofficially included in the WH serial site;
- The creation of virtual tours to plunge into some Arab-Norman buildings⁷⁸.

Through this experience, students have the opportunity to combine their historical and artistic knowledge about the WH serial site with IT experimentation, leaving room for future learners to innovate the inherited legacy (Annex 1, n. 28).

The Arab-Norman imaginary contest is another means to induce people's participation in the development of new interpretative frameworks for the WH serial site.

The initiative is launched by the OS in close collaboration with the Municipality of Palermo, with additional support from the Experimental Centre of Cinematography of Palermo (Strategic development office) and several educational institutions.

It is addressed to a “diffuse public sphere” (Table 7). Furthermore, it is open to everyone for free, without limits of age, nationality or qualification. Participants can express their connection with the WH serial site through three main creative means: photography, video and illustration. The first

⁷⁶ Source: Activity report 2019, SWHF

⁷⁷ Retrieved information from <https://livesicilia.it/unesco-itinerario-arabo-normanno-gli-studenti-creano-una-app/> Accessed 6/05/2022.

⁷⁸ Retrieved information from <http://unescosicilia.it/wp/virtual-tour-sito-unesco-arabo-normanno/> Accessed 6/05/2022.



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edition was launched in 2016 and it was widely disseminated through social media, official websites, and local magazines. A total of 190 submissions were received⁷⁹.

A first selection of the received artworks is carried out through social networks. People express their preferences by voting online and influence the opinion of an expert's panel who selects the first 50 voted artworks for a temporary exhibition and a catalogue publication (Table 7).

The same panel awards 3 or 6 participants (1 or 2 for each category) for the quality and originality of the submitted artworks. The competition also entails a UNESCO community prize, addressed to educational institutes of all grades and categories (i.e., high schools, Academy of Fine Arts, University, music institutes etc.).

The positive response from the public, pushed the OS to organize both the second and third edition⁸⁰ of the contest establishing a mutual beneficial relationship between the WH serial site and the public who participates. The contest comprises of a process of identification and interpretation of the WH serial site through different points of view. It acts as a means to promote the WH site through personalized narrations. In addition, it also turns the WH site into a source of creative and emotional engagement for the public and an opportunity to boost encounters between several public segments: young generations, artists, citizens, visitors, heritage lovers etc.

In this phase, emerging public values belong to both the intrinsic and instrumental spheres (Clark & Lennox, 2019), and overlap with each other. The intrinsic sphere covers both knowledge, identity and bequest values (Clark, 2016, p.94).

The knowledge value consists in making the WH serial site a source of continuous learning. In the framework of the school-work educational traineeship project, students feel grateful to have discovered some aspects of their hometown's heritage that they were previously unaware of (Annex 1, n. 29). Through the constant mentoring of experienced professionals, they use the acquired knowledge to create and strengthen services for the public fruition of the WH serial site (i.e. digital tools and hospitality at the Visitor Centre), generating new advantages for all the people with an interest to explore it (instrumental value) (Annex 1, n. 34,35).

Lastly, students derive individual benefits as well, making them more aware of their skills and professional interests. By experiencing a field that is less tackled in conventional high school programs, such as heritage and tourism promotion, students gain supplementary guidance for future career decisions (Annex 1, n. 36).

Participatory practices in the educational field also strengthen the WH serial site's bequest value. Teachers, students and experts build learning processes together, which are consequently transmitted, year after year, to new working groups. As a result, students act as representatives for

⁷⁹ Activity report 2017, SWHF.

⁸⁰ The fourth edition was suspended due to the pandemic.



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future generations, becoming active players in the process. This way, the students directly inherit, enrich and transmit WH serial site's knowledge value and its legacy (Annex 1, n. 28).

Through the Arab-Norman imaginary contest, the identity value prominently raises, parallelly to people's creative interpretations of the WH properties in their territorial context. This activity strongly conveys personal and collective meanings and perceptions of the WH serial sites. As the contest's title suggests, the WH site's identity constitutes of people's stories, dreams and ideas. It is a tool to make the WH Arab-Norman part of the city and community's life⁸¹ (Annex 1, n. 30).

Finally, some public values also stand out in the institutional sphere, by recalling those detected in the pre-nomination phase.

The school-work educational traineeship project confirms the importance to involve societal actors from the initial drafting phase of the WH site management plan. The will of schools and associations' representatives raised during previous meetings, is now materialised into a long-term program with social public aims to nurture student's interest in the WH site; strengthen teacher's knowledge in regards of WH properties; improve visitor services.

The Arab-Norman imaginary contest sheds light on the relevance of both maintaining intra-organizational stability among the SC'S members and cultivating new connections to enhance public participation. On the one hand the contest's organisation is grounded upon a solid relationship between the OS and the Municipality of Palermo. On the other hand, it allows to involve further local actors in the cultural sphere, including museums and foundations⁸² that host the final exhibition of the contest in turns.

⁸¹ Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermotoday.it/cronaca/comune-palermo-concorso-immaginario-arabo-normanno.html> Accessed 6/05/2022.

⁸² In 2017 the *Fondazione S. Elia* hosted the final exhibition; in 2018 the Regional Museum of Contemporary art (*RISO*) and in 2019 the Regional Archaeological Museum *A. Salinas*.



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Figure 16 The school-work educational traineeship project and the Arab-Norman imaginary contest. Images' source: <https://arabonormannaunesco.it> Accessed 6/05/2022.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter delved into the power relations within the governance structure of the *WH Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site, by questioning its openness to civil society participation.

The overall analysis reveals that participation is under-practiced within the steering committee's decisional processes, with the exception of a few specific entities including religious authorities and professional stakeholders. However, it does not limit itself to detecting whether the participation degree is low, medium, or fully deployed (Arnstein, 1969). Most importantly, it strives to grasp the contextual factors that may favour or hinder participation, by inferring general insights for looking at other WH sites.

The use of the Participatory Heritage Matrix allows the identification and reconstruction of two main stages through which the relation between governance and participation evolves.

The first phase relates to the pre-nomination period. It alternates several participatory mechanisms based on technical tables and meetings between institutions, professionals, and



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representatives of civic and cultural associations and culminates with the formalisation of the SC (Table 6). The whole process highlights that the formalisation of inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021) between public authorities and expert bodies can be considered the base for a more extensive participation (see paragraph 4.3.2). As illustrated in the chapter, the WH nomination procedure is rooted in an authoritative and professional environment (Smith, 2006). To further explain, it requires a synergetic commitment of political actors and specialists in the heritage field over a long period of time and an effective willingness to invest resources on a regional and municipal scale. Thus, the achievement of a regulated form of inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021) among such players can be considered the first milestone in terms of participation to the WH site creation. Besides, the wider public is extensively informed (Arnstein, 1969) about the ongoing process through an ad hoc communication campaign, which also serves to raise their interest in stimulating future participation in WH-related activities (Table 6).

At this stage, the centrality of collaboration among public authorities is stressed by the prevalence of institutional public values (Table 6).

The second phase after the WH nomination still calls for the interdependence between interinstitutional collaboration and public participation in the WH serial site governance structure. After five years of SC steady activity, the OS aims to create a council of local associations to foster the public's participation in the decision-making procedure. However, the weakening of the interinstitutional collaboration between the SC members hinders that intention. The unbalanced share of power and resources along with the politicization of the main funder are the primary threats. As a consequence, the OS implement alternative long-term free access initiatives to trigger a collective engagement in the WH serial sites (the *Alternanza-scuola lavoro* project and the Arab-Norman imaginary contest) (Table 7).

The employment of such initiatives generates synergic participation of students, teachers, and managing bodies, strengthening the public value of the WH serial site in terms of knowledge dissemination, the educational and scientific value for the younger generations (Table 7). Both participatory initiatives, that leverage on the co-production mechanisms, serve the societal common good by creating new services (i.e., digital tools) and content (i.e., interpretative artworks) related to the WH serial site.

In conclusion, four overarching insights regarding the relation between participation and WH site governance can be inferred from this case sub-unit.

Firstly, participation in WH local governance is a matter of trade-offs (Zan et al., 2015). As highlighted in the theoretical chapter, implementing forms of participatory governance requires an investment of resources and the availability of some expertise that the administrations responsible for site management often do not hold.



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Secondly, a formalised and stable inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021) among officials who hold legal and administrative power for the WH site management could allow greater openness to participation.

Thirdly, participation is gradually applied through the WH nomination process.

Finally, the investigation also stresses the discrepancy between illusionary standardization of participation in WH discourses and its heterogeneity in specific contexts. Whether the UNESCO OGs recommend that a diversified universal public (made of local communities, stakeholders, private actors, etc.) is to participate in all decisions concerning the creation and management of a WH site, they minimize the importance of guiding on how to do it. The risk is that participation merely transforms itself into a “democratic façade” (Lusiani et al., 2015, p. 102) that reinforces the position of some actors at the expense of others.



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Chapter 5

The Cassaro Alto district

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the second sub-unit of the case study: the *Cassaro Alto* district. It delves into the participatory dynamics in the *Cassaro Alto* axis, which connects the Royal Palace and the Cathedral of Palermo. Following the WH nomination, the district introduces a new cultural vitality through the action of the *Cassaro Alto* association, established by some traders of the area.

The chapter is structured into 4 sections.

The first part provides historical and contemporary information in regards of the axis function. The following sections reconstruct the participatory process implemented during the WH nomination using the Heritage Participation Matrix.

The second session emphasises on how the participation of some local traders and residents to pedestrianising the axis for the WH nomination stems from an adversarial relationship with local authorities.

The next paragraph deals with participatory dynamics after the WH nomination, by analysing both the establishment of the *Cassaro Alto* association and the organisational mechanism of the *Via dei Librai* initiative. The final section reveals a social spillover effect in the lower part of the axis – *Cassaro Basso* – where local traders, on the good example of the *Cassaro Alto*, decide to establish the *Cassaro D'Amare* association to build a bottom-up maintenance of the axis.



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5.2 Setting the context

The Cassaro was, and is, the richest area of the ancient city in terms of historical, architectural, and monumental values as it retains the densest representation of Palermo's history layered into its buildings (Translation from Di Benedetto, 2009, p. 55)

The *Cassaro*, known as *Via Vittorio Emanuele*, is one of the oldest urban axes crossing the whole historical center of Palermo. It runs (from west to east) from the city's highest point close to the ancient Royal Place towards the sea, at the entry of two historical city gates: respectively *Porta Nuova* and *Porta Felice* (Chirco & Di Liberto, 2017).

The *Cassaro* is the result of millenary stratifications since the Punic, Phoenician and Roman-Byzantine settlements of the city. During the Arabic domination (10th century), it took the name of *Cassaro* (*al-Casr*) which means the *route to the castle* referring to the Royal Palace. In the same period, it turns into a standalone neighborhood endowed with a large market within the city walls (Chirco & Di Liberto, 2017). Urban transformations over the centuries define it as the main pulse of the city (Casamento, 2000). This explains the presence of many remarkable architectural complexes still alive today such as the seat of civil power (i.e., the Royal Place hosts the Sicilian Regional Assembly), religious garrison (i.e. The Cathedral of Palermo), musealized noble residences (i.e. *Asmundo* Palace), and places of cultural aggregation (the historical Regional Library). In 1993 the implementation of the P.P.E. (Cannarozzo, 2014) jointly with further regulatory actions (Regional Law 25/93, Article 1) and European funds (Urban Program I) initiates a radical and long process of recovery and restoration of architectural buildings in Palermo's historic center, including the *Cassaro* area (Carta, 2018; Di Benedetto, 2000).

Today, the long axis (approximately 1800 m) is commonly divided into the *Cassaro Alto* and *Cassaro Basso* areas. The *Cassaro Alto* district extends from *Porta Nuova* to *Piazza Vigliena*, at the crossroads with the historical perpendicular axis *Via Maqueda*. It also includes some alleys bordering two old neighborhoods: *Albergheria* and *Capo*. Instead, the *Cassaro Basso* area departs from *Piazza Vigliena* until *Porta Felice*, looking onto the harbour zone of Palermo (*La Cala*) (Fatta et al., 2009, p. 234). This chapter focuses on *Cassaro Alto*, as it is a crucial area for the WH serial site. As well as holding both the Royal Palace and the Cathedral of Palermo, it also serves as a strategic connection with other WH landmarks, such as the *Martorana*, *S. Cataldo* churches and *S. Giovanni degli Eremiti*. The whole area falls within the WH first-level Buffer Zone.

A last historical detail worth mentioning to understand the value of the participatory practices the educational function of the *Cassaro Alto* area. Since the XVI century, the Jesuits decided to establish their seat of educational and religious life. From this moment, a series of printing houses were founded along the axis to provide teaching materials for the young students from the nobility

(Falletta, 2002, p.28; Vesco, 2007).. Today, the *Cassaro Alto* district keeps alive its educational significance for the whole city. The presence of several high schools, the Regional Central Library as a landmark for many scholars and students, and the concentration of historical second-hand libraries highlight how past habits thrive in the contemporary urban functions of the district (Figure 17; Figure 18).

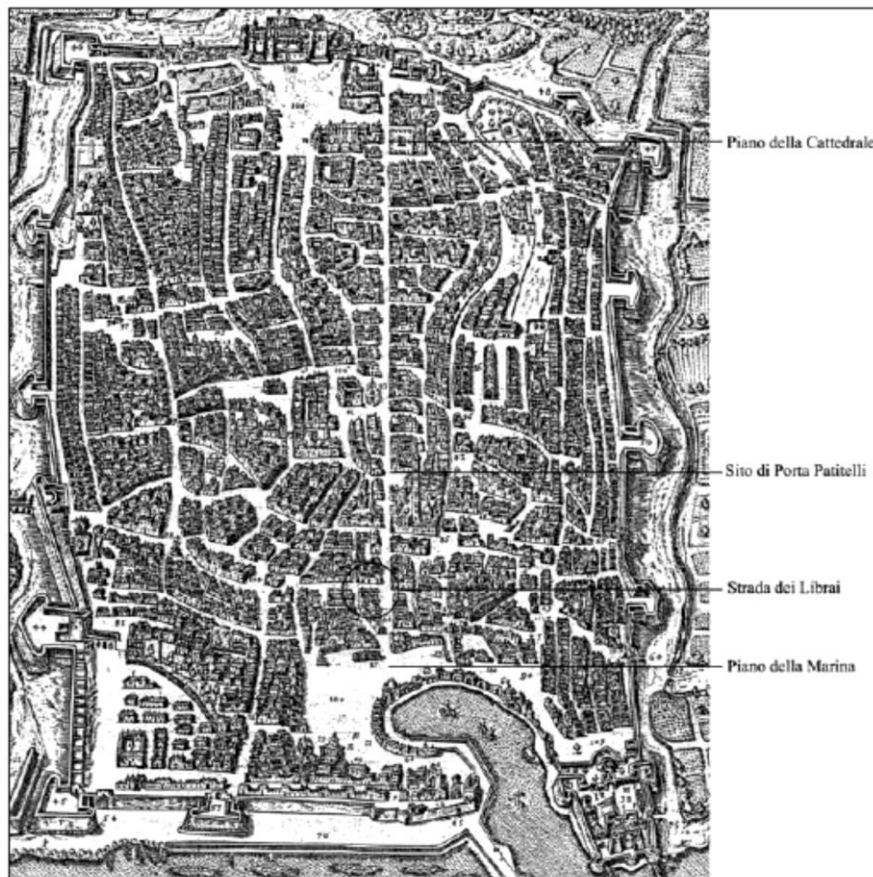


Figure 17 View of the *Cassaro* axis (*Cassaro Alto e Basso*) after the 16th century urban modifications.
Image source: Vesco, 2007, p. 272.



Figure 18 Cassaro Alto axis today. Image source: own elaboration from Google Heart maps.

5.3 Before the World Heritage nomination: the dispute

One of the crucial actions was to move the WH nomination forward dates to July 2014. At that time, the Historic City Office of the Municipality of Palermo carried out a feasibility study to improve the Parliament Square (*Piazza del Parlamento*) facing the Royal Palace.

The square was still used as the parking lot for about 400 cars, reserved for employees and deputies of the Sicilian Regional Assembly. The intervention included the abolition of the parking lot and the improvement of the square's urban design and accessibility to both value the Royal Palace and to re-establish a hitherto denied function of collective use (Assessorato alla riqualificazione urbana e alle infrastrutture, 2014). The project was part of a wider plan to pedestrianize some sections of future WH buffer zones closest to the monuments (Annex 2, n. 1):

[...] The first step was to make pedestrian the so-called WH buffer zones. The Parliament Square in front of the Royal Palace was finally free from all cars. Before it was parking only for regional deputies [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).

The pedestrianization of the *Cassaro Alto* axis (the area from Porta Nuova towards the historic city) would then follow that of Parliament Square (Assessorato alla riqualificazione urbana e alle infrastrutture, 2014). As stated in the WH management plan, the removal of parking lots in monuments' front areas, the reduction of vehicular traffic around, and the promotion of pedestrian mobility were key interventions to guarantee the adequate protection of the WH serial site (Andaloro et al., 2018b, p. 168). Such criticalities were to be resolved as early as possible in order to avoid



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compromising the ICOMOS final inspection done in September 2014. A positive evaluation from the WH Advisory Body would have been essential to keep the nomination on track. Fortunately, the trial pedestrianization stage of Parliament Square started on time for the ICOMOS inspection (Deliberazione di Giunta n.156, 16/09/2014). The Sicilian Regional Assembly (ARS) officially approved the requalification plan in September 2014 (Comunicazione ARS n. 0009112, 2014) and the pedestrianization of the whole square was completed between January and April 2015, as ensured for in the municipal decree. This early achievement had several implications in the WH-making process. Firstly, it complies with the ICOMOS guidance, strengthening the credibility of the local WH Steering Committee at the international level of the WH Convention. In addition, it would re-establish significance to the Royal Palace, restoring its function as a monumental entrance and renewing the visitor's path (Annex 2, n. 15).

On the other hand, transforming the *Cassaro Alto* axis mobility was more challenging and time-consuming. Many of the commercial and educational services in the area were still arranged around the vehicular flow along the axis. Although the traffic's alarming effects on both *Cassaro Alto*'s environment and monuments had already been identified almost ten years earlier (Annex 2, n. 2) (Figure 19), a radical transformation had never occurred even though it had been at times hindered by some citizens (Annex 2, n. 3).



Figure 19 Overview of the *Cassaro* urban axis, before the closure to traffic. *Image source:* <https://www.palermomania.it/news/cronaca-e-politica/palermo-no-area-pedonale-in-cso-v-emanuele-a-natale-56205.html> Accessed 22/09/2020

In this occasion the Municipality of Palermo was determined to accomplish it to succeed with the WH nomination:



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“The process towards the Arab-Norman itinerary will go ahead and must be combined, as required by UNESCO, with decisions to limit vehicular traffic, to preserve both the circuit and the monuments” (Mayor Statement, on *Qds.it* local press, 21/04/2015)⁸³.

Furthermore, the *Cassaro Alto* pedestrianization would serve new political agendas. On the one hand, it would accelerate the implementation of the future General Urban Traffic Plan⁸⁴ (PGTU) aimed at creating a new sustainable mobility system for the whole city. On the other hand, it would have witnessed the validity from the participatory strategy⁸⁵ embarked by the Municipality between 2012 and 2013, partly dedicated to the pedestrianization of the historical centre (Deliberazione di Giunta n.191, 2012; Deliberazione di Giunta n. 25, 2015). The Municipality of Palermo was confident in successfully gathering public consensus also for the *Cassaro Alto* pedestrianization, even before the WH General Assembly in July 2015. To further explain the project, it acted through collective consultations involving schools, residents, and traders of the *Cassaro Alto* area. This investigation allowed to gather locals’ opinions before receiving the final council regulations and gain the necessary consensus to speed up the process (Schaap & Edwards, 2007).

While school directors⁸⁶ and teachers showed a collaborative attitude towards the public administrator's decisions (recognizing the importance for the whole city to get the WH status) (Annex 2, n. 7), whereas the reaction from residents and traders was polarised between supporters and opponents. Although some endorsed the WH candidacy, they feared negative effects on production activities and quality of life in the face of a weak strategy and inefficient public transport system across the whole city (Annex 2, n. 4).

[...] Following the *Corso Vittorio* closure, we –almost 60 traders of the area – end up with a common problem [...]that small trade activity that we did before we could no longer do [...] we could not welcome our customers who could no longer reach our stores [...] (Interview with *Zacco* library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

Since then, a tangled participative process began. As reconstructed from the local press, from March to June 2015, **three town hall meetings, two expert groups and one participated city council** took place to find a common solution for limiting vehicular traffic in the *Cassaro Alto* area

⁸³ Retrieved information from: https://qds.it/19170-palermo-nuove-isole-pedonali-dopo-la-ztl-hm/?refresh_ce Accessed 22/10/2020.

⁸⁴ Retrieved information from: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/amministrazione-trasparente.php?grp=3&lev=4&id=168> Accessed 20/10/2020.

⁸⁵ Retrieved information from: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/sezione-categoria.php?sez=248> Accessed 20/10/2020.

⁸⁶ Retrieved information from: <http://palermo.mobilita.org/2015/02/16/via-v-emanuele-al-via-processo-partecipazione-su-pedonalizzazione-con-le-scuole/> Accessed 23/10/2020.



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(Figure 15).

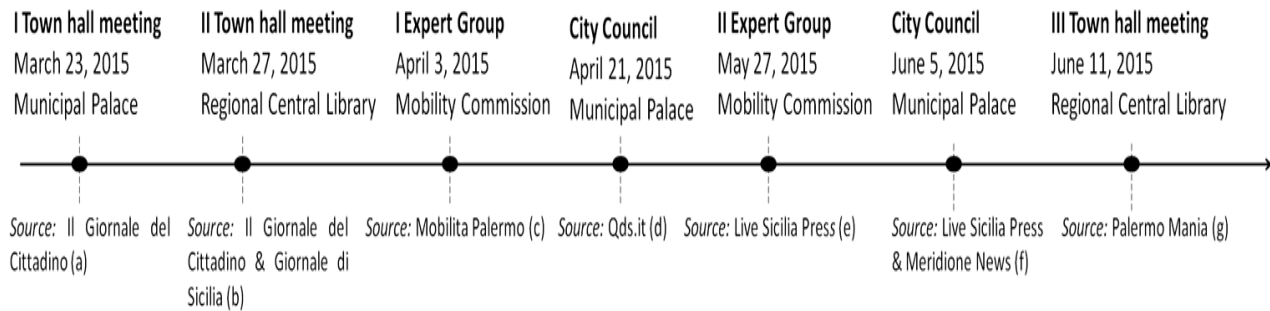


Figure 20 Sequence of town hall meetings, city councils and expert groups dedicated to the Cassaro Alto. Own elaboration from online local magazines and interviews. List of online magazines:

- Il Giornale del Cittadino*, <https://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/assemblea-cittadina-per-il-centro-storico-di-palermo/>
- Il Giornale del Cittadino*, <http://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/secondo-incontro-cittadino-la-pedonalizzazione-del-centro-storico-al->
- Mobilita Palermo*, <https://palermo.mobilita.org/2015/04/03/commissione-mobilita-le-ztl-chi-puo-accedere-in-quali-fasce-orarie/>
- Qds.it*, https://qds.it/19170-palermo-nuove-isole-pedonali-dopo-la-ztl-htm/?refresh_ce
- Live Sicilia Press*, https://livesicilia.it/2015/05/27/chiusura-di-corso-vittorio-emanuele-non-prima-del-20-giugno/?refresh_ce
- Live Sicilia Press*, https://livesicilia.it/2015/06/05/chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-non-ci-fermera-il-dissenso/?refresh_ce
- Meridione News*, <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/34445/proteste-per-la-chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-presto-ufficio-arabo-normanno/>
Palermo Mania, <https://www.palermomania.it/news/cronaca-e-politica/itinerario-arabonormanno-assemblea-cittadina-a-palermo-73777.html>

All accessed 23/10/2020.

The growing tension between the municipal council (*Giunta Comunale*), the political opposition within the Municipal Board, residents, and traders of the area drove the decisional process towards heated interactions. Public opinion was polarised, between those who opposed⁸⁷ and those who supported (Annex 2, n. 5) the WH nomination, by triggering the beginning of a social fracture (Annex 2, n. 8). City council sessions mainly exposed the perspective of the political opposition, disapproving of the closing of the *Cassaro Alto* axis, because of the flawed planning of limited traffic

⁸⁷Retrieved information from: <https://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/secondo-incontro-cittadino-la-pedonalizzazione-del-centro-storico-al-dibattito/> Accessed 13/05/2021.



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zones in the whole city center and the current inefficiency of the public transport system⁸⁸.



Figure 21 Program of the second town assembly. Image source:

<https://www.facebook.com/movimentonsc/photos/1548415052087793> Accessed 20/05/2021.

In this quarrel, town-hall meetings gather public administrators, protestors, and compliant citizens to negotiate a solution⁸⁹. While the Municipality of Palermo convenes the first and the third assemblies, the second is organized by a citizen's association, named *Movimento Nuovo Senso Civico*, defined as an apolitical and non-profit association (Figure 21). It was founded on the 8th of February 2014 by free citizens (i.e., civil servants, professionals, members of national union etc.) as a socio-cultural space where ideas could be commonly discussed, competencies and experiences could be

⁸⁸ Retrieved information from: https://livesicilia.it/2015/06/05/chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-non-cifermera-il-dissenso/?refresh_ce Accessed 13/05/2021.

⁸⁹ Retrieved information from:

1. *Il Giornale del Cittadino*, <https://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/assemblea-cittadina-per-il-centro-storico-di-palermo/>
2. *Il Giornale del Cittadino*, <http://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/secondo-incontro-cittadino-la-pedonalizzazione-del-centro-storico-al->
3. *Meridione News*, <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/34445/proteste-per-la-chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-presto-ufficio-arabo-normanno/> Accessed 10/10/2022.



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shared, in order to build a future vision of the city (Annex 2, n. 9). The association tried to mediate the needs of traders, residents and workers, and those of the municipal administration.

Discussions during town hall meetings followed a similar pattern, ranging from expressing preferences and negotiating to find a shared solution (Table 9), regardless of the climate of strong dispute (Annex 2, n. 12):

Through this procedure public authorities and experts were able to finalise a proposal to put forward. Participants randomly responded, expressing their opinions aware of what individuals wanted to achieve. There was not an aggregation of intents before the assembly, but a common will to negotiate a more advantageous decision (Annex 2, n. 10):

[...] During the meeting in the Regional Library, those who were most sensitive to the discussed issue participated, such as local traders and residents [...] there was not a common representativeness [...] everyone spoke for himself [...] (Interview with the coordinator of the territorial Officine *Albergheria, Capo, Cassaro* and the Arab-Norman itinerary, 17/09/2020).

The risk of jeopardising the success for the WH candidature due to large protests, led the SWHF⁹⁰ in mediating the public assembly and raising awareness of the benefits for all citizens resulting from the WH status, seeking to gain greater consensus for the disputed short-term change on traffic circulation.

The three assemblies are open to the general public, but the chosen location serves to boost passive selectively participants' recruitment (Table 9). Indeed, the selection of the Regional Central Library located along the *Cassaro Alto* axis, as a venue draws the attention mainly of residents and traders of the area who have a particular concern regarding the issue (Annex 2, n. 10).

⁹⁰ Retrieved information from: <https://www.giornalecittadinopress.it/secondo-incontro-cittadino-la-pedonalizzazione-del-centro-storico-al-dibattito/> Accessed 10/10/2022.



Table 9 Reconstructing the first stage of the participatory processes during the *Cassaro Alto* pedestrianisation.

Stage I process in the <i>Cassaro Alto</i> Period: 2015 Main initiators: Municipality of Palermo and <i>Movimento Senso Civico</i>				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
3 Town hall meetings (invited spaces)	Self-selected (open): Assemblies open to the public. The venue's location serves as participant's passive selection	Between expressing preferences and bargains: Participating categories express their needs with the intent of negotiating better conditions	Advise and consult: The Municipality finds a trade-off solution with the Limited Traffic Zone (ZTL)	Institutional: Citizen involvement; Balance of interests; Openness Instrumental (potential): Better environmental conditions; Citizen well-being; New welcoming culture; Economic benefits from tourism Intrinsic (potential): <i>Cassaro Alto</i> historic identity
2 Expert groups (invited spaces)	Professional and political stakeholders: The Technical Advisory Committee on Urban Mobility consists of both professional, institutional actors and technicians who contribute voluntarily.	Deploy technique and expertise: They take decisions regarding a limited traffic zone in the historic center (ZTL1)	None	Institutional: Collaboration Instrumental (potential): Better environmental conditions; New mobility system



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	<i>Self-selected (open):</i>	<i>Between expressing preferences and bargain:</i>	<i>Personal benefits:</i>	<i>Institutional:</i>
1 Participated city council (invited spaces)	The city council opened up to traders, residents and other categories with a stake in <i>the Cassaro Alto</i> pedestrianisation. Political opposition forces also participate	Participating categories express their needs, contrasting the will of the ruling city council with the support of the opposition political forces	Participants' claims have less common influence on the council' action. They convey more personal interests	Citizen involvement

Source: own elaboration.

The assemblies account for about 100 diverse participants, including hotel managers, traders, and employees of the Regional Central Library (Annex 2, n. 11). In the discussions in regards of the pedestrianisation, residents were referred to as the fiercest category, fearing a real estate devaluation after the pedestrianization:

[...] The traders from *Cassaro Alto* and employees of the Regional Central Library as well as a fierce representation of residents took part to the assembly. Residents fear that their property could be devalued as a result of the pedestrianization of the area. There were about 100 participants. Among these, some hoteliers notice the difficulty to bring in their customers. The atmosphere is tense, with plenty of speeches and discussions [...] (Interview with the former president of the *Movimento Civico* Association, 20/10/2020).

On the side of authorities who handled the public speeches, the mayor, the councillor for urban mobility and culture, the director of the SWHF, an expert in administrative law (from the University of Palermo), and presidents of trade associations stood out.

While the first public assembly addressed general criticalities in running the historical center, the remaining two meetings focused specifically on the pedestrianization of the *Cassaro Alto* axis.

At this stage, dissident citizens partially influenced the final decision, dictating some preconditions: limiting car circulation while providing free access time slots to the area for residents, property owners, traders, and students. Furthermore, they had the chance to commonly discuss other critical issues to be solved such as deficiencies in the waste management, lighting and security system of the historical city center. Such topics are usually considered especially during the third town hall



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meeting⁹¹. In such occasion, the Municipality partially acted upon certain claims made by the participants, while suspending the pedestrianization plan for the time being (advise and consult mechanism) (Table 9).

To find an agreed solution shared by the majority and integrated within the General Urban Traffic Plan, the Municipality of Palermo set up a **Technical Advisory Committee on Urban Mobility**⁹². Such committee consists of both professional, institutional actors and technicians who contribute voluntarily and take decisions based upon their technical expertise (Table 10).

In April 2015, the Committee established a restricted traffic zone covering the entire historical center (ZTL1) by allowing residents (about 486 family units) with a pass to circulate in the second section of the axis (from the Cathedral to *Piazza Vigliena*).

The proposal does not meet the aspired consensus. On the contrary, the dissent increased up to the point of bringing the debate to the city council's official seat.

On the 5th of June 2015, prior to the last town hall meeting, the mayor in cooperation with the municipal executive board received both residents and district traders to discuss the issue also in front of political opponent strengths⁹³. As for town hall meetings, the city council is generally open to a selected public sphere (local traders, residents, etc.) and follows a mechanism between expressing preferences and deals (Table 10). However, in this case, the dissent was more accentuated due to the presence of opposing political forces.

⁹¹ Retrieved information from: [Itinerario arabo-normanno, assemblea cittadina a Palermo - Sabina Spera \(bingi.com\)](#)
Accessed 10/10/2022.

⁹² The technical committee on urban mobility has been established through the municipal *Determinazione Dirigenziale* n.18, 19/02/2015. Retrieved information from: <http://palermo.mobilita.org/2015/03/13/si-insedia-la-commissione-sulla-mobilita-prossimo-tema-la-ztl-date-il-vostro-contributo/>; <https://www.comune.palermo.it/noticext.php?cat=1&id=6771>
Accessed 23/10/2020

⁹³ Information retrieved from: https://qds.it/19170-palermo-nuove-isole-pedonali-dopo-la-ztl-htm/?refresh_ce and https://livesicilia.it/2015/06/05/chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-non-ci-fermera-il-dissenso/?refresh_ce
Accessed 20/05/2021.



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Table 10 Members of the technical committee on urban mobility, established in March 2015 by the Municipality of Palermo.

BELONGING INSTITUTION	REPRESENTATIVITY	ROLE
Regional Sicilian Assembly	Head of the Infrastructure and Transport department	Technical expertise;
Municipality of Palermo	Councillor to urban mobility. Municipal Police	Political coordination, Technical expertise Service providers;
University of Palermo	Member of the engineering department	Technical expertise;
AMAT S.p.A. (Public limited company under the Municipality of Palermo)	Manager	Technical and managerial expertise;
Trenitalia S.p.A. (Public limited company wholly owned by the Italian State Railway)	Responsible for the regional commercial officer	Technical and managerial expertise;
FIAB – Palermo Ciclabile (non-profit community organization)	Citizens responsible	Technical advice;
Mobilità Palermo (citizen’s association and informal network)	President	Technical advice;

Source: own elaboration

The approaching of the WH committee date made the city council in office more determined to find a solution, without giving into dissent⁹⁴. After five months of disputes and negotiations, the Municipality officially declares the establishment of a Limited Traffic Zone (commonly known as ZTL in Italian) for the *Cassaro Alto* axis and other pedestrian areas linked to the WH Arab-Norman itinerary. The plan⁹⁵ was gradually implemented, including a trial month during which citizens could point out emerging criticalities on a dedicated virtual forum named *Via Vittorio Emanuele – Percorso Arabo Normanno*⁹⁶. Local authorities intended to leave room for citizen’s suggestions to improve the

⁹⁴ Retrieved information from: https://livesicilia.it/2015/06/05/chiusura-del-cassaro-orlando-non-ci-fermera-il-dissenso/?refresh_ce Accessed 22/09/2020.

⁹⁵ The new traffic plan for the WH itinerary is regulated by three municipal administrative measures:

1. *Deliberazione di giunta* n.106, 18/06/2015;
2. *Ordinanza dirigenziale, ufficio traffico* n. 848, 24/06/2015;
3. *Ordinanza dirigenziale, ufficio traffico* n. 850 del 24/06/2015.

Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermomania.it/news/la-parola-alla-citta/palermo-scommette-sullitinerario-arabonormanno-ecco-le-nuove-ztl-74232.html> Accessed 22/09/2020.

⁹⁶ Retrieved information from: <https://partecipa.comune.palermo.it/infodiscs/index/53> Accessed 22/09/2020.



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finalized ZTL. Unfortunately, the e-forum failed among citizens, due to weak communication (Annex 2, n. 6).

In this phase, emerging public values fall within the institutional, instrumental and intrinsic domains.

The institutional realm concerns the value of citizen involvement and related components such as, balance of interests and will of people (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). At the start of the process, the municipal administration who detain full decisional-making power, open new spaces of dialogue about the future pedestrianisation of *Cassaro Alto* and implementation of the WH Arab-Norman serial site, by inviting schools, residents, and trade associations.

However, as stressed by Creswell (2007), “while opening spaces for dialogue through invitation is necessary, it is by no means sufficient to ensure effective participation. Much depends on how people take up and make use of what is on offer” (Creswell, 2007. p. 275).

In this case, the turning point towards a more participatory process lies in how people react to what is announced. The strong dissent manifested from a part of residents and traders against the pedestrianisation generated a social fracture and reshaping of both participatory mechanisms and power relations. Targeted invitations, initially launched by public authorities, turned into larger town hall meetings and a participated city council. In compliance with the principles of openness and individual liberty for participatory processes (Nagy, 2018) all those who had an interest at stake could participate and had the opportunity to freely express concerns and ideas. Through these schemes, public officials try to find a balance of interests with dissenting forces, by adopting a trade-off decision: the establishment of a restricted traffic zone for the *Cassaro Alto* with specific arrangements for residents and traders replaces the initial idea of pedestrianisation.

Instrumental public values occur as several benefits to the WH monuments and the *Cassaro Alto* area. The first benefit concerns the Royal Palace. Following the clearing of Parliament square, the Royal palace had the chance to introduce a new visit and enhancement process. The monument not only improves its reputation in view of the WH nomination but also re-establishes a spatial connection of openness towards the *Cassaro Alto* district and the whole city (Annex 2, n. 15).

Other players mark the issue of environmental sustainability. They highlight how the limits on vehicular traffic required for the WH serial site’s construction, would improve the environment, pushing the public mobility system towards new horizons, benefitting both citizens’ well-being and the protection of *Cassaro*’s monument (Annex 2, n. 16). Others underline the advantage of the turistic development along the *Cassaro Alto* axis following the WH recognition (Annex 2, n. 17).

While the office municipal administration emphasizes on the economic benefits related to tourism growth⁹⁷, other factors from civil society underline the opportunity citizens may acquire to

⁹⁷Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermomania.it/news/cronaca-e-politica/palermo-orlando-e-il-sogno-unesco-del-percorso-arabonormanno-71860.html> Accessed 22/09/2020.



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improve social behaviour in order to nurture a new welcoming culture (Annex 2, n. 18). In regards of the issue of improving Palermo's touristic reputation, political and civil oppositions⁹⁸ seemed to agree. This argument was instrumental in appeasing dissent and speeding up the process towards the WH nomination.

Finally, intrinsic value emerges as the local trader's need to claim the historical identity (Clark, 2016; Jones, 2017) of the *Cassaro Alto* area within the future WH serial site (Annex 2, n. 13, 14).

5.4 After the World Heritage nomination: collaboration and social coalition

After the WH nomination occurred during the 39th session of the WH Committee in Bonn (28 June – 8 July 2015), the Municipality appeared increasingly determined to formalise the traffic limitation plan for the *Cassaro Alto* axis and the whole historical center. The social fracture between residents and traders persisted. Some people were reluctant in accepting the change, despite the Municipality's commitment to find a shared solution.

The dissent persisted to the point of becoming an official legal battle, carried out by a group of associations and about 200 citizens against the Municipality supporting the ZTL plan⁹⁹. The appeal to the Regional Administrative Court (TAR) lasted almost four years¹⁰⁰. Only in 2020 the Municipality officially converted the entire *Corso Vittorio* from ZTL to a completely pedestrianised area¹⁰¹ (Delibera di Giunta n. 31, 2020).

Previous meetings, despite having occurred in a heated clash, enabled a dialogue between categories that had been poorly connected before (Annex 1, n. 33).

Thus, traders who sustain the relevance of the WH nomination but are keen to stress the correlation between the *Cassaro Alto* area and the WH serial site, decide to aggregate in the *Cassaro Alto* association¹⁰² in December 2015 (Figure 22). The association aimed to set up a collective

⁹⁸ Retrieved information from: <https://livesicilia.it/no-alla-chiusura-del-cassaro-servono-prima-i-servizi/> Accessed 22/09/2020.

⁹⁹ Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermomania.it/news/societa-arte-cultura/palermo-depositato-il-ricorso-contro-le-ztl-ludienza-il-6-aprile-81866.html> Accessed 12/06/2021.

¹⁰⁰ *Ricorso n. 773/2016, sentenza TAR 9/06/2020.*

¹⁰¹ Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermotoday.it/cronaca/via-maqueda-corso-vittorio-emanuele-isole-pedonali-delibera-giunta-comune-reazioni-consiglio.html> Accessed 12/06/2021.

¹⁰² Official website of the *Cassaro Alto* association: <https://cassaroyalto.it/> Accessed 12/06/2021.



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communication channel with local administrators, to call attention to *Cassaro Alto's* relevance in the WH designation (Annex 2, n. 29, 30):

[...] Slowly we have increased in number, reaching a maximum number of about 60 associates. In addition to protecting our rights as an association, we have obtained some benefits in dialogue with the Municipality, such as the granting of public land, improvement of street furniture from benches to 'lighting. At the same time, we are committed to providing our contribution [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).



Figure 22 *Cassaro Alto* Association website. It is evident connection between the association mandate and the WH serial site. Image source: <https://cassaroalto.it/> Accessed 16/05/2021.

Right from the very first lines of the Statute, the association is referred to as an official stakeholder of the participatory process tied to the WH management plan (Cassaro Alto Association, 2015, Article 1), engaged in launching new initiatives for revitalizing the cultural, economic, and touristic life of the district (Cassaro Alto Association, 2015, Article 3). It is open to all the owners or representatives who carry on private business (artisans, libraries, bars, restaurants, etc.) or public activities in the *Cassaro Alto* area. To this purpose, the establishment of public and private partnerships appears a priority action (Cassaro Alto Association, 2015). The Association has grown significantly over time, becoming a landmark in the socio-cultural landscape of the historic city of Palermo. The statute, initially signed by 35 entities, today gathers 58 private businesses along the Cassaro Alto axis.

From this moment on, the *Cassaro Alto* association became a key player in the regenerating process of the Arab-Norman WH serial site. Through a series of new collaborations and long-term



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participatory initiatives, the association was able to nurture and highlight new public values of the WH serial site.

5.4.1 The *Via dei Librai* event: a long-term participatory practice

From its establishment, the *Cassaro Alto* association started planning a series of temporary cultural events¹⁰³ to spread information about the Arab-Norman heritage in the district, raising awareness among the younger generation of the neighbourhood's history and to trigger intergenerational exchange of knowledge (Annex 2, n. 22).

Among the various events, The *Via dei Librai*¹⁰⁴ (*way of the booksellers*) initiative marks a turning point in terms of long-term participatory practices. It stems from the will of bundling the acquired WH recognition, the cultural vocation of the *Cassaro Alto* axis as a historical place of bookmakers and printing houses, and the celebration of the UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day on April 23rd to generate new value (Annex 2, n. 23).

The festival runs along the *Cassaro Alto* axis, where local booksellers, publishers, and cultural organizations display and sell their products, while citizens are invited to actively participate in a series of collateral events (i.e., book presentations, public debates, read aloud, etc.). The *Via dei Librai* event and the WH itinerary is increasing its links to mutual connections. The festival becomes an opportunity for the authorities to inform citizens (Wilcox, 1994) about new achievements or projects concerning the WH site, as occurred in 2016 with the presentation of the new WH Visitor Centre opened along the axis. The *Cassaro Alto* Association can count on additional support to provide continuity to the event. As an example, in 2019 the SWHF was the main sponsor of the event.

Although the organization of the first edition held on the 23rd of April 2016 was challenging (Annex 2, n. 21).

results positively exceed expectations, paving the way for the following annual editions.

¹⁰³ Retrieved information from:

1. <https://www.balarm.it/eventi/festival-e-manifestazioni/sfilata-tra-i-monumenti-dell-arabo-normanno-il-carnevale-dei-bambini-al-cassaro-alto-65295> Accessed 20/04/2020.
2. <https://www.balarm.it/eventi/aperitivi-e-cene/gli-aperitivi-medievali-al-cassaro-alto-alla-ricerca-di-sapori-tipici-60536> Accessed 20/04/2020.
3. <https://www.palermotoday.it/cronaca/santa-lucia-arancina-arabo-normanna-12-13-dicembre-2015.html> Accessed 20/04/2020.
4. ¹⁰⁴ Retrieved information from: <http://cassaroalto.it/la-via-dei-librai-212223-aprile-2018-iii-edizione-bando-di-partecipazione/> Accessed 20/04/2020.



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In an official press release¹⁰⁵ the Municipality of Palermo defines the initiative as a ‘network project’ as 65 partners, from different entities, are involved both as co-organizers and content providers. Further educational institutions¹⁰⁶, plenty of cultural associations, foundations, volunteering entities¹⁰⁷, local editors¹⁰⁸, economic enterprises such as booksellers¹⁰⁹, bars, and restaurants¹¹⁰ participate through book readings, workshops, debates, literary cafes, exhibitions along the axis, and inside historical palaces open for the occasion. Museums, historical libraries¹¹¹, and archives both along and outside the *Cassaro Alto* axis fully embrace the initiative.

Overtime, the *Via dei Librai* grows and strengthens in terms of diversification of the cultural offer (see official programs), event duration, variety of partners, public participation, and spatial expansion (Annex 2, n. 24).

¹⁰⁵ Retrieved information from: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/noticext.php?id=10060> and <https://www.comune.palermo.it/noticext.php?id=9879> Accessed 20/04/2020.

¹⁰⁶ Main educational Institutions: *liceo classico 'Vittorio Emanuele II', liceo musicale e coreutico 'Regina Margherita', il liceo scientifico 'Benedetto Croce', l'Istituzione scolastica 'Ragusa - Kyoara - Parlatore', il Convitto nazionale 'Giovanni Falcone', la scuola 'Cuore Immacolato di Maria' dei Danisinni, la 'Scuola del Fumetto Grafimated Cartoon', il programma 'Intercultura (AFS program)', il 'Centro Musicale'.*

Source: Municipality of Palermo press release 19/04/ 2016.

¹⁰⁷ Main cultural associations, foundations and volunteering entities: *la Fondazione Salvare Palermo Onlus, l'Associazione Italia Nostra, l'Associazione di promozione sociale 'Le Balate' e l'Associazione 'Parco del Sole', il Comitato 'Ballarò significa Palermo', la Parrocchia 'Sant'Agnese' dei Danisinni, le associazioni Segno Indelebile ed Elementi, l'Associazione Francophone de Palermo, il Laboratorio culturale 'L'albero d'oro', 'Magistri Maragmae'.*

Source: Municipality of Palermo press release 19/04/ 2016.

¹⁰⁸ Main editors: *Sellerio, Spazio Cultura, Ducezio, Navarra, La Zisa, Apertura a strappa, Maut 21 editore, Elpis, Leima, Glifo, Rueballu, 500 g, Mesogea, Urban Apnea, Zap, Il Palindromo.*

Source: Municipality of Palermo press release 19/04/ 2016.

¹⁰⁹ Main booksellers: *D'Anna Libri, Edicola Vittoria, Fazio Libri, Libreria Politecnico Siciliano, Libreria Alaimo, Libreria Luigi Portinaio. Libreria Paoline, Libreria Varos 9. Libreria Zacco 10.*

Source: La Via dei Librai 2016, official programme, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁰ Main bars and restaurants: *Antica Trattoria Vittorio Emanuele, Bar Dolce Nina, Bar Duom, Bar Katia, Bar Marocco, Bar Ventimiglia, Caffè e stanze del gusto "RISO", Chioschetto della Cattedrale, Focacceria del Corso, Kaleido, Snack & drink, White Coffè.* Source: La Via dei Librai 2016, official programme, p.7.

¹¹¹ Main historical libraries and museums: *Biblioteca centrale della Regione Siciliana, dal Museo regionale di arte contemporanea di Palazzo Belmonte Riso, dalla Galleria Regionale di Palazzo Abatellis, dalla Biblioteca 'Vittorietti' a Palazzo Steri, dalla Biblioteca Francescana, dal Museo Diocesano, dalla Biblioteca Centrale per le Chiese di Sicilia presso la Facoltà Teologica di Sicilia, dalla Associazione Italiana Biblioteche.*

Information Source: Municipality of Palermo press release, 19/04/2016.



Figure 23 *Via dei Librai* posters at the Zacco library. *Source:* Own image.

From 2017 to 2022 the initiative incited the participation of several actors for its organization and performance (i.e., schools, cultural associations, museums, historical places, foundations, volunteering entities, local editors, economic operators such as booksellers, bars, and restaurants, etc.), creating a new social pact to support local publishers and booksellers (Figure 23).

It gained the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Culture and the UNESCO Commission (Annex 2, Table C).

The organizational strategy becomes more and more structured following and developing participatory logics. Participants who contribute to the initiative's implementation are a varied range of entities, including both professional and institutional stakeholders (such as booksellers, publishers, cultural organizations, sponsors, and public authorities etc.) (Table 11) (Annex 2, Table C). Among all these actors, the *Cassaro Alto* and *Ballarò significa Palermo* associations detain direct authority in planning and implementing the festival's editions (Table 11). In addition, an ad-hoc scientific committee – *Comitato la Via dei Librai* – together with an expert advisory board curates the event and public selection of booksellers, publishers, and cultural organizations (Table 11). The latter comprise of a stable network of contacts. Today 48 editors, 10 libraries, and 15 cultural organizations display as stable event members¹¹².

¹¹² Retrieved information from: <https://www.laviadeilibrai.it/> Accessed 16/05/2021.



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Furthermore, the initiative is mainly participatory in its scope. By ensuring free access to the increasing public, the event is developing a process of knowledge democratization (Kiddey, 2018) about the historical and contemporary facets of the city. As attested by the local press¹¹³, the number of attendees grew through the six editions starting from about 30 thousand visitors in the first edition rising up to 120 thousand followers for the 2020 virtual appointment (Annex 2, Table C). Public engagement is testified also by the increasing sales' percentage (+ average 40% in 2019) for local editors, booksellers, and associations exhibiting along the *Cassaro Alto* axis and consistent flows of visitors in heritage buildings (public and private) open for the occasion (i.e., the Regional Central Library registered 12,000 entrances during the 2019 weekend).

In 2020, due to the ongoing pandemic, *Via dei Librai* experienced a new online format. The scientific and organizing committee launched an invitation for “editors, booksellers, authors, schools, booklovers and citizens to share readings aloud, interviews with authors, books presentations and other inherent initiatives on the *Via dei Librai* website and social media pages.

The response to the invitation was remarkable and developed in a rich program of interventions scheduled around four days. The balance in terms of participation was satisfactory: “72 published videos, 200 posts on Facebook and Instagram pages, 121 thousand followers, 70.5000 visualizations, with 60 thousand minutes of watched video¹¹⁴”. The virtual edition was followed by a shorter appointment¹¹⁵ at the *Cassaro Alto* axis in a moment of lower restrictions for the pandemic, to re-iterate the intimate connection between the initiative and the place (Figure 24).

The 2021 edition also follows a hybrid format (online and on-site) confirming a growing trend of participation¹¹⁶. However, it is not just a matter of quantity. The *Via dei Librai* initiative generated its own community around the importance of supporting local publishers. As reported by many of the mentioned local newspapers, this community is heterogeneous, consisting of citizens, families with children, young students, book lovers but also regional visitors and tourists (Annex 2, n. 24):

¹¹³ *Via dei Librai* 2016: retrieved information from <http://cassaroalto.it/la-via-dei-librai-2223-aprile-2017-bando-di-partecipazione/>; *Via dei Librai* 2017: retrieved information from <https://palermo.gds.it/articoli/cultura/2017/04/24/oltre-70mila-visitatori-grande-successo-a-palermo-per-la-via-dei-librai-cla238dc-a0c6-45d6-b1c7-0a282f9693fb/>; *Via dei Librai* 2018: https://palermo.repubblica.it/societa/2018/04/23/news/palermo_80mila_visitatori_a_la_via_dei_librai_-_194629089/; *Via dei Librai* 2019: <https://www.passionesicilia.it/2019/04/29/la-via-dei-librai-2019-la-citta-dei-saperi-quasi-100-mila-visitatori-la-fotogallery/> All information accessed 16/05/2021.

¹¹⁴ Retrieved information from: <https://www.palermotoday.it/eventi/cultura/la-via-dei-librai-2020-edizione-web-successo-120-mila-utenti.html> Accessed 16/05/2021.

¹¹⁵ Retrieved information from: https://palermo.repubblica.it/societa/2020/09/01/news/palermo_via_dei_librai_2020_torna_sul_cassaro_il_5_e_il_6_settembre-265996977/ Accessed 16/05/2021.

¹¹⁶ Retrieved information from: <http://www.ballarosignificapalermo.it/articoli/eventi-primavera/la-via-dei-librai/> Accessed 20/12/2021.



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[...] My impressions on the typology of attendees depict a large group of Palermo's citizens who have crowded the Cassaro during the initiative. But we also welcome Sicilian and other tourists and not only who stayed in Palermo in the days close to Easter (April 23rd is a date often close to the religious feast) have decided to stop to attend the *Via dei Librai*. [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

Table 11 Reconstructing the second stage of the participatory process at the *Cassaro-Alto*.

Stage II The <i>Via dei Librai</i> initiative Period: 2015 – 2022 Main initiator: <i>Cassaro Alto</i> association.				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUE
<i>Via dei Librai</i> : organisational dynamic (created space)	<i>Professional and political stakeholders:</i> Network of participants who contribute to the initiative's organisation (such as booksellers, publishers, cultural organizations, sponsors and public authorities etc.)	<i>Deploy technique and expertise:</i> A scientific committee – <i>Comitato la Via dei Librai</i> – together with an expert advisory board, curate the event and public selection of booksellers, publishers and cultural organizations	<i>Direct Authority:</i> The <i>Cassaro Alto and Ballarò significa Palermo</i> associations detain direct authority in planning and implementing the festival's editions	<i>Instrumental:</i> Pride in the district after the WH recognition; Self-confidence; Will to do; Social cohesion <i>Institutional</i> Network of collaborators; Relationship of confidence with public authorities <i>Intrinsic:</i> Sense of identity (individual and collective); Knowledge value

Source: own elaboration.

Also, in this phase public values emerge both in the instrumental, institutional and intrinsic spheres. The public values tied to the WH serial site and the *Via dei Librai* initiative are linked by a



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cause-effect relationship. Specifically, some instrumental public values, intended as “benefits to the community affected” by the WH designation (Clark, 2016, p. 95) drove the whole process.

The traders from *Cassaro Alto* district - as well as other citizens – perceive the WH status as an international acknowledgement of the district’s historical relevance and of its monuments, something to be proud of. Some perceive the initiative as an opportunity to renew self-confidence in future work perspectives, ensuring intergenerational continuity to their businesses (Clark 2016, p. 95) (Annex 2, n. 25, 26). This new awareness nurtures their will of contributing to the WH serial site regeneration.

For this reason, they founded the *Cassaro Alto* association and launched the *Via dei Librai* initiative. Both actions reveal how the WH serial site can trigger new contributions to society (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). The establishment of the *Cassaro Alto* association is an example of social cohesion among traders who previously acted separately, despite their spatial proximity (Jones, 2017; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). The *Via dei Librai* initiative turns the creation of the WH serial site into a collective good, offering new learning opportunities to citizens, from children to adults (Annex 2, 34) (Jørgensen and Bozeman, 2007). It reinforces the UNESCO legacy in the *Cassaro Alto* district, by recalling the UNESCO World Book Day and the intangible asset tied to traditional books production and sales.

Its participated organisational strategy also contributes to enrich institutional public values, by activating a durable network of collaborations among several public and private actors. Traders from the *Cassaro Alto* association turn the initial opposition with public administration into a relationship of trust through a mutual exchange of interests and receive support from members of the SC (Annex 2, n. 36).

In the intrinsic sphere, public values raise as sense of identity both on an individual and collective scale (Jones, 2017). The founder of *Cassaro Alto* (individual) perceives the achievement of the WH status as an opportunity to re-connect the citizenry (collective) to the neighbourhood and its most distinctive heritage buildings such as the Cathedral of Palermo (Annex 2, n.25) (Figure 25). *Via dei Librai* is the participatory means to restore this bond, creating new paths of knowledge and awareness open to everyone.



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Figure 24 Participating at the *Via dei Librai* (2020). *Source:* Own images.

In 2022 after the pandemic, the *Via dei Librai* initiative regained city's urban spaces, turning again the WH Cathedral of Palermo a crucial venue for several initiatives open to the public.



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Figure 25 Implementation of The Via dei Librai initiative 2022 (Interconnessini e nodi) in the WH Cathedral of Palermo spaces. Image Source:

<https://www.facebook.com/LaviadeiLibrai/photos/a.1168864819907082/4809155855877942> Accessed 4/05/2022.

5.4.2 Beyond *Via dei Librai*

The participatory dynamics underpinning the establishment of the *Cassaro Alto* association and the *Via dei Librai* initiative generate a multiplier effect of instrumental public values for the area.

Some benefits still concern the associated traders. Their grouping under a common logo and the adherence to the federation of companies *Confcommercio Palermo*¹¹⁷ trigger a process of protection and development. 14 historical commercial activities¹¹⁸ from the *Cassaro Alto* have been inscribed in the public city register – *Negozi Storici* – for their mapping and protection. The register was launched in 2017 by *Confcommercio* and the foundation *Salvare Palermo*. The main goal is to inventory ‘historical shops’ (*botteghe storiche*), ‘traditional venues’ (*locali di tradizione*), and ancient

¹¹⁷ *Confcommercio Palermo* is the representative and coordinating body of Palermo Business Associations (including Palermo province) operating in the trade and tourism sectors. Retrieved information from: <https://confcommercio.pa.it/> Accessed 20/05/2021.

¹¹⁸ The inscribed historical commercial activities are: *Isola saporita*; *Tabacchi Analdi*; *Bar Marocco*; *Libreria Zacco*; *Giambertone gioielli*; *Gioielleria Ardito*; *Vincenzo Argento-Spettacoli Opera dei pupi*; *Vincenzo Argento-Laboratorio artigianale di pupi siciliani*; *Bar Ventimiglia*; *Chioschetto Cattedrale*; *Oreficeria Bottiglieri*; *Sartoria Romano*; *Maer Souvenir*; *Scalisi Tabacchi*; *Bisso Bistrot*; *Pantaleone Articoli religiosi*; *Sant’Angelo Francesca*. Retrieved information from: <https://livesicilia.it/palermo-le-botteghe-storiche-lelenco-di-negozi-e-alberghi/> Accessed 20/05/2021.



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crafts of cultural interest' (*antichi mestieri di interesse culturale*) that have operated for at least 50 years in the city, by preserving the same merchandise and signs¹¹⁹. The intent is also to recognize traders' commitment in giving continuity to past customs and traditions, by keeping the richness and diversity of the urban fabric alive. At the same time, *Confcommercio* collaborates with local authorities to support registered activities, avoiding the succumbing to the new commercial logic (Annex 2, n. 27).

The *Cassaro Alto* association becomes a space for dialogue between historical traders who hold a deep understanding of the cultural roots of the district and those who manage new activities related to tourist services. In doing so, the *Cassaro Alto Association* contributes both to protecting the cultural diversity along the WH itinerary, and partially guaranteeing the diversification of services to citizens (especially residents) and attenuating the homogenization of the commercial offer, which is one of the ongoing *touristification* (Tozzi, 2020) effects in the historical centre¹²⁰ of Palermo (Giubilaro & Picone, 2020; Prestileo, 2020) (Annex 2, n. 28). Other than attaining collective protection, traders from the *Cassaro Alto* association establish an innovative dialogue and exchange with the Municipality of Palermo by opening an additional negotiation channel to achieve indirect benefits for their businesses, such as the granting of public land (Annex 2, n. 29).

Other effects relate to the value of social cohesion. In 2016, some residents, shopkeepers and third sector actors along the *Cassaro* lower¹²¹ section – *Cassaro Basso* – decided to establish the *Cassaro d'Amare* association. Inspired by the *Cassaro Alto* model, the new association seeks to interact with local administrators to solve concerns of the area and work for its enhancement. The pedestrianisation of the axis is the first step towards the requalification of the axis. Unlike the *Cassaro Alto* case, this is not a matter of finding an agreement between opposing opinions. Rather, the *Cassaro Basso* association requests it, to improve the liveability of the area and indirectly benefit from the increased tourist flow since the WH recognition. (Annex 2, n.35).

In 2021 the two associations established a partnership¹²², collaborating together with their commercial activities across the entire axis to initiate a novel process of cultural enhancement.

¹¹⁹ Retrieved information: <https://www.ilsitodisicilia.it/botteghe-storiche-un-marchio-un-registro-quelle-palermo-provincia/> Accessed 20/05/2021.

¹²⁰ Additional information retrieved from: <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/85038/palermo-citta-merce-cosa-significa-il-boom-del-turismo-nasce-un-osservatorio-tra-gli-interstizi-la-marginalita/> Accessed 20/05/2021.

¹²¹ Retrieved information from: <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/60714/pedonalizzazioni-cassaro-damare-aderisce-a-confesercenti-obiettivo-comune-per-far-vivere-il-centro-a-cittadini-e-turisti/> Accessed 20/05/2021.

¹²² Retrieved information from: <https://meiweb.it/2021/12/10/natale-sul-cassaro-da-porta-nuova-a-porta-felice-al-via-il-prim-weekend-di-iniziativa/> Accessed 10/10/2022.



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5.5 Conclusion

This chapter investigated on the participatory strategies enacted in the *Cassaro Alto* neighbourhood, in Palermo. The urban district emerges as a focal unit for grasping participatory dynamics related to the creation and development of the Arab – Norman WH serial site.

By applying the Participatory Heritage Matrix, the trajectory towards the WH nomination has been reconstructed in detail.

At an early stage before the WH nomination, the participatory process is characterised by dissent and contrasts between public administrators, traders, and residents of the area. It involves three different approaches - town hall meetings, expert group consultations, and a participatory city council - which were not intentionally designed before (Nabatchi, 2012). The process was highly polarised between two contrasting positions – for and against *Cassaro Alto* axis' pedestrianisation – hindering a smooth dialogue between parties, weakening the local administration's effort to find a trade-off solution, and compromise the usefulness of a dedicated virtual forum (named *Via Vittorio Emanuele – Percorso Arabo Normanno*) to better detect public opinions.

Contrasting forces and the un-shared outcomes (Nabatchi, 2012) - both the pedestrianisation and the WH status – are the two main factors that weaken the effects of the deployed participatory mechanisms and constrain much of the emerging public values to the potential level (rather than a concrete one). Indeed, public values mainly convey the aspirations of those actors who consider the WH nomination a chance for an environmental and cultural enhancement of the whole area.

However, some of them serve as engines for a fully participatory action in the subsequent stage after the WH nomination.

Specifically, the dialogue with public authorities – albeit a feeble one – and the engagement of targeted citizens (Table 11) – based on their interest and proximity – provide an opportunity for encounter and reflection, beyond the ongoing dispute. Thus, those traders who wish to re-assert the historical and cultural identity of the *Cassaro Alto* area through the WH nomination, transform the social fracture into a cohesive force, by establishing the *Cassaro Alto* association. Through the organisation of the *Via dei Librai* festival, the new association carries out a process of direct participation (Nabatchi, 2012) to celebrate two cultural pillars of the area: the WH Cathedral and the book tradition. As representatives of society members who have no administrative or ownership authority in the SC (Nabatchi, 2012), the association detains direct authority (Fung, 2006) in planning and implementing one of the most relevant events for the enhancement of the WH serial site along the *Cassaro Alto* axis (see Annex 2, Table C). The festival is participatory also in its scope, namely, to engage citizenry, and the public in general, in reviving the cultural and historical values of the *Cassaro Alto* district through the book theme in adherence to the UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day.



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From now on, the Arab-Norman WH serial site lies at the heart of a virtuous enhancement process whereby participation and realistic public values strengthen each other. The more the community is engaged to participate – as collaborators, sponsors, partners, visitors etc. – in the initiative, the more the constellation of public values expands (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) (Table 11), emphasising on the relational identity and intangible facets of the WH serial site, rather than its tangible monumentality.

This chapter also highlights the distinction between potential and real public values as functions of shared authority and decisional power (Arnstein, 1969; Fung, 2006). This means the more decisional power is shared, the more the process is participatory, and the more public values are realistic.

In addition, the analysis correlating the participatory schemes, public values, and the urban space (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006) included in the WH serial site, suggests a model of *polycentric participatory governance* (Carlisle & Gruby, 2019; Ostrom, 2001; Stephan et al., 2019) (see Chapter 6). As introduced in chapter one, the polycentric governance model is a core notion in the common theory (Ostrom, 1990), entailing a “complex form of governance with multiple centres of decision-making, each of which operates with some degree of autonomy” (Carlisle & Gruby, 2019, p. 928).

Considering the participatory governance of WH serial sites in a polycentric perspective means recognising that participation of civil society in decision-making does not necessarily occur centrally within the governance structure for WH site management. Rather, it may be decentralised in a proximity spatial area, where circumscribed communities (M. Di Giovine, 2017) (local traders in the *Cassaro Alto* case) act on specific tasks. It is then up to the managing authorities (the SC for the WH Arab-Norman serial site) to recognise such communities’ role, to strengthen their actions in favour of the WH site and to make their decisional power increasingly autonomous. For the *Cassaro Alto* case, the association of traders not only deliberate autonomously on several initiatives for the WH serial site enhancement, but also influences the will of other local actors to improve the surrounding urban space, as in the case of the *Cassaro D’Amare* association. Finally, the analysis highlights three core public values as enabling conditions for the shaping of a polycentric participatory governance: social cohesion (instrumental sphere), a relationship of collaboration with public authorities (institutional sphere) and sense of identity and belonging from the involved community (intrinsic sphere) (Table 11).



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CHAPTER 6

The *Danisinni* neighbourhood

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the participatory dynamics in the *Danisinni* neighbourhood (third sub-unit) in the historic center of Palermo. Considered a strategic connection between two buffer zones surrounding the Royal Palace and the *Zisa* Castle, the neighbourhood exploits the WH candidacy to strengthen a process of cultural and social revitalization and overcome a lengthy marginalisation.

The whole process is based on the active participation of the *Danisinni* community and some residents.

The chapter is divided into 3 main parts.

The first part introduces the historical and contemporary context, highlighting the peculiarities of the Arab period as the main link with the WH serial site.

The next sections reconstruct the participatory dynamics performed in the district in relation to the WH candidacy -before and after the nomination – by applying the Heritage Participation Matrix.

Section 5.3 focuses on the pre-nomination phase and highlights how the participation of the *Danisinni* community stems from an act of exclusion by the managing bodies of the WH serial site.

The following paragraphs reconstruct the participatory dynamics subsequent to the WH nomination by analysing two projects: *Rambla Papireto* and *In Transito*. Both schemes focused on the development of the WH itinerary through *Danisinni* and on initiating further touristic development.



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The two projects introduce additional players with an interest in the neighbourhood. Some stakeholders, such as *Airbnb*, are transitory, while others take root by contributing to the ongoing neighbourhood transformation, as the *Academy of Fine Arts*. The public values generated throughout the participatory process (before and after) witness a growing empowerment of the *Danisinni* community and the assertion of their perspective for the touristic and cultural development of the neighbourhood, with an upheaval of the planned outcomes. Indeed, the itinerary through the *Danisinni* is not yet completed and the *Zisa* Castle (including the homonymous neighbourhood) stays in isolated condition.

6.2 Setting the context

“If you ask 50% of Palermo's citizens where the Danissinni neighborhood is, they don't know. Yet, it is located only five hundred meters from the Cathedral. This area is unfamiliar to most people because it is in the bed of the Papireto river. In addition, it is not very visible, and the access road is the same one from which you leave.” (Tarozzi, 2019).

As described by Raimondo *et al.* (2011), *Danisinni* is a historic neighbourhood which uncovers a sloping irregular area of approximately 12 hectares. It extends towards North-South, between *Via Cappuccini* and *Via Danisinni*.

The area is nestled between many of the WH Arab-Norman monuments. *Danisinni* is located about 600 meters from the Cathedral, 500 from the Royal Palace, and 800 from *San Cataldo* and *Martorana churches* (Orlando, 2019, p. 27). Moreover, the area strategically connects the Royal Palace to the *Zisa* Castle, which lacks a sound connection to the rest of the itinerary as it is placed outside the historic city walls in a suburban district. Geographically, the neighbourhood still maintains the shape of a natural land depression, which historically collected and carried the waters of the *Papireto* river (Todaro, 2019) towards the sea. A staircase of Arabic origin reconnects *Danisinni* square to the upper *Zisa* district. Due to its richness in natural resources -including its fertile muddy soil, the stone quarry from the caves upstream of the riverbanks, and the public washhouse (Raimondo *et al.*, 2011) for its water abundance, the main work activities carried out within the *Danisinni* district were related to agriculture. Consequently, peasants and humble families, who were involved in such working tasks, and who could not afford the life-cost within the city wall, used to live in some dwellings close to the caves (Annex 3, n. 1).

According to the popular tradition, the origin and the name of the district date back to the Arab domination when Emir *Abu Sa'id*, governor of Palermo in 916, decided to build his residence on top of the *Papireto* river, referred as *Ayu'abi Sa'Idin*, latterly the source of Abu Said. Over the centuries this toponym was extended to the whole area and changed into different phonetic forms until turning into the current name *Denisinni* or *Danisinni* (Todaro, 2019).



Figure 26 *Danisinni* archive photos (1953). Images' source: Raimondo et al., 2011.

The Iraqi geographer Ibn Hawqal, who visited *Palermo* in 972-973, provided a picturesque image of *Danisinni* during the Arab domination, referring to a natural depression with plenty of natural water sources used for supplying some of the city's fountains through an ingenious water transport system, and to produce papyrus plants¹²³. The neighbourhood shares historical and cultural roots with the WH itinerary, recalling the concept of know-how interchange (cultural, technological and artistic) in the Islamic period, expressed by the OUV of the WH serial site (Andaloro et al., 2018a). Despite its spatial proximity and historical affinity with the WH route, the area initially was even not included in the second-level buffer zones, instigating the neighbourhood's state of isolation, of which it has been suffering for many years now (Annex 3, n. 3).

In addition, the lack of specific urban policies¹²⁴ and of a sound mobility plan, led the *Danisinni*'s residents into a condition of socio-economic marginalization (Figure 26). Today, the district's main square is still only connected to the surrounding urban area by a single street and currently lacks essential public and private services (Giubilaro & Lotta, 2018). Today, about two thousand people live in *Danisinni*. From a social perspective, a high unemployment rate and risk of early school leaving (Battaglia et al., 2018) stand out as the most common consequences of

¹²³ The geographer Ibn Hawqal's piece *Kitāb al-masālik wa l-mamālik* (*Libro delle vie e dei reami*, 977) was translated into Italian by historian Michele Amari in his *Biblioteca arabo-sicula* first published in 1880 in Turin.

¹²⁴ The *Piano Giarrusso* Plan (1886) that would have connected the *Danisinni* neighbourhood with the current *Piazza Indipendenza* was not implemented. Today, with reference to the 2004 *Piano Regolatore Generale* (PRG), the district has been designated as a public green area, with the future ambition of creating an urban park in system with the neighbouring *Fossa della Garofala*. (Giubilaro e Lotta, 2018, p. 483).

marginalization. Almost all respondents emphasize the need to empower the younger generations, a key lever for lasting future changes in the district (Annex 3, n. 2) (Figure 27).

In this context, the perspective of developing the touristic potential of *Danisinni* area across the WH itinerary catches the interest of the third sector actors who seek to improve social conditions and stimulate economic growth for both *Zisa and Danisinni* territories. As emphasised by one of the interviewees, dreaming of territory rescue (Dolci, 2013) is a way to experiment with new openings, contrasting the neighbourhood's closure within illegal dynamics.



Figure 27 Overview of the *Danisinni* district. *Source:* Own images



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6.3 Before the World Heritage nomination: the exclusion

The inclusion of the *Danisinni* neighbourhood within the WH management plan stems from an early act of exclusion. The institutional void that negatively affected the neighbourhood since the post-war period, erased the historical and contemporary function of the district from the collective imaginary. During the elaboration of the WH management plan, experts, authorities, and other involved actors did not consider that the *Danisinni* area would be a strategic junction between two first-level buffer zones (the one around the *Zisa* Castle and the one around the Royal Palace and the Cathedral), neglecting a peculiar trait of the Islamic walkway. The neighbourhood still holds historical evidence of the Arab period, enriched by several popular traditions (Annex 3, n. 4).

The requirement to include the neighbourhood into the WH candidacy comes from a grassroots claim expressed by the St. Agnes parish and the non-profit association *Insieme per Danisinni*. Both entities are territorial landmarks for people living in *Danisinni*.

The St. Agnes parish started charity activities in the 60s when it was officially recognized and a few years later, it hosted assistance events in the confraternity¹²⁵ church inside the neighbourhood. The same confraternity laid the foundations of the association *Insieme per Danisinni* in 1763. In 1991 the association took its current name and statute. It mainly pursues goals of territorial development, social inclusion, and education, promoting environment and cultural heritage protection (*Insieme per Danisinni*, 2020). Their activities are grounded in community volunteering. For years, they were committed to supporting the precarious conditions of the residents, fulfilling basic needs such as school care, education, and food provision. Today, both St. Agnes parish and the Association *Insieme per Danisinni* are united in the *Danisinni Community*, a third sector entity involving a large part of residents who take part in community activities¹²⁶. They still act as socio-institutional garrisons in the neighbourhood, by accomplishing some duties pertaining to local administration, including the management of urban spaces.

Since 2014, due to the arrival of a new guide at the *St. Agnes* parish¹²⁷, the *Danisinni Community* started planning a new vision of development for the area. While satisfying community daily needs is always a priority, the residents also wish to cultivate new ethical and legal perspectives of future growth for young people. The strategy is to initiate new projects aimed at enhancing the environmental and cultural roots of the neighbourhood, which are now almost forgotten. Being part of the WH UNESCO recognition would have been an achievement to be proud of for the living community: a global recognition to regain visibility after years of marginalization (Annex 3, n. 7, 9).

¹²⁵ Retrieved information from: <http://parrocchiasantaagnesevm.altervista.org/joomla/parrocchia.html> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹²⁶ Retrieved information from the official website of the Danisinni community: <https://www.danisinni.it/chi-siamo/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹²⁷ Retrieved information from: <https://lavialibera.it/it-schede-36-danisinni> Accessed 12/11/2020.



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Between 2013 and 2014, the *S. Agnese* parish collaborated with the association *A.S.T.E.S Sicilia* (Sustainable Territorial Development Association)¹²⁸ to implement a socio-economic development plan for the district, provocatively called *Danisinni RI.DE. (R)nasce dal DEgrado*). As part of the initiative, they decided to symbolically resurface the *Papireto* river water and create a bio-pond¹²⁹ for papyrus planting in the spaces of the abandoned *Galante* kindergarten. The intention is firstly to evoke the Islamic roots of *Danisinni* and mark its affinity with the WH Arab-Norman itinerary to be officially part of it. The project also strives to create a shared garden to trigger new social practices related to environmental sustainability, in a highly disadvantaged district with no primary services at all (Pirrera & Scalora, 2014).

From this moment onwards, the first stage of an articulated participatory process starts. It moves from the bottom to the top and combines two different designs (Table 12). The initiators of the process are S. Agnes parish, the associations *Insieme per Danisinni* and *ASTES Sicilia*. Having agreed on the common interest of gaining the WH status, they activate a double strategy.

Table 12 Reconstructing the first stage of the participatory process in *Danisinni* district.

Stage I				
Danisinni community process of claiming inclusion in the WH serial site.				
Period: 2014				
Main initiators: Danisinni community representatives and A.S.TE.S. Sicilia.				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
Participated meetings about the WH serial site (invited space)	Professional stakeholders: A representative from A.S.TE.S Sicilia association interfaces with the officials in charge of the WH candidacy	Aggregate and bargain: After aggregating the <i>Danisinni</i> community interest, the representatives negotiate the inclusion of <i>Danisinni</i> district within the WH serial site	Communicative influence: The representative tries to mobilize the officials' opinion regarding <i>Danisinni</i> 's relevance for the WH serial site	Instrumental: Greater visibility against isolation; WH as a potential driver for territorial development; Environmental sustainability Institutional: Attention from the WH site's managing authorities (weak)

¹²⁸ Retrieved information from: https://www.astes.it/?page_id=30 Accessed on 12/11/2020.

¹²⁹ The Italian association for the bioengineering (AIPIN) also participates to design the bio pond. Retrieved information from: <https://www.biocitysr.com/blank-s2b9s> Accessed 12/11/2020.



<p>Informal outreach activities (created space)</p>	<p>Professional stakeholders:</p> <p>Neighbourhood associations and additional professionals lead visits and discussions in <i>Danisinni</i>.</p>	<p>Deploy technique and expertise:</p> <p>Neighbourhood associations and additional professionals deploy their knowledge regarding the <i>Danisinni</i> district.</p>	<p>Communicative influence:</p> <p>Neighbourhood associations and additional professionals seek to influence officials' opinion about the neighbourhood's historical and contemporary significance to the WH serial site.</p>	<p>Instrumental: Greater visibility; against isolation Environmental sustainability</p> <p>Intrinsic: Recovery of the <i>Danisinni</i> collective memory (identity value); Growing awareness about the neighbourhood's historical and cultural legacy (knowledge value)</p> <p>Institutional: Attention from the WH site's managing authorities (weak)</p>
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Source: own elaboration.

On the one hand, a professional representative bargains a shared objective during official tables concerning the WH itinerary, to influence authorities and expert's opinions regarding the role of the *Danisinni* neighbourhood in the WH itinerary (Table 12). In this occasion, the negotiation was carried out by a representative of *A.S.T.E.S Sicilia* who, acting as a professional expert, could have exercised greater persuasive power over the parties responsible for the WH nomination (Annex 3, n.3):

[...] She (A.S.T.E.S. Sicilia representative) attended several meetings and struggled to get the *Danisinni* included in the WH Arab-Norman itinerary, otherwise, they would have been excluded. She met the referent, the coordinator of the UNESCO table. She brought the maps; she showed them an itinerary, and they were astonished because they said: "it had been missed"[...] Well, in the end, we succeeded to be included and that it was a big driver for the whole neighbourhood" (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

On the other hand, the association *Insieme per Danisinni* and St. Agnes parish (together with further players¹³⁰) as representatives of the entire neighbourhood are engaged in organizing informal

¹³⁰ A.S.T.E.S, AIPIN, and il *Mirto Verde* Association take part to the organisation of informal outreach activities.



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outreach initiatives (Bobbio, 2004; Bobbio & Pomatto, 2007; Bobbio & Ravazzi, 2015) to bring some of the institutions in charge of the WH candidacy into *Danisinni* (and not vice-versa), to acquaint them with its peculiarities and to set the stage for future interactions with residents.

They act as professional stakeholders who spread their specialised knowledge of the neighbourhood through informal walks and visits, raising awareness and capturing the attention of the WH managing authorities. Unlike a formal decisional arena, this discussion does not address a decisional issue. It is a means to influence a hoped-for final decision (to include *Danisinni* within the WH itinerary) discussed in other venues (Table 12). One of the first neighbourhood walks was organised in June 2014 (Figure 28).

The initiative is attended by representatives of the SWHF, the Regional Department of Cultural and Environmental Heritage, the Academy of Fine Arts, and residents of the district. The organizers' main purpose is to show the ongoing recovery process in *Danisinni* to officials, starting from the revitalization of the Arabic Garden, whose custody has been entrusted to the young people living in the district¹³¹. Visits intensify until the 2016 opening of the Arab garden¹³², which is self-managed by the community and neighbourhood residents.

¹³¹ <http://parrocchiasantaagnesevm.altervista.org/joomla/associazioni/le-sorgenti-del-papireto.html>

¹³² Named the Arab Garden of Jesus, it has been realized thanks to the contributions of further public and private actors, such as the University of Palermo and the flower shop *Vivai Lo Porto*. Retrieved information from: https://palermo.repubblica.it/cronaca/2016/01/07/foto/danisinni_rinasce_il_giardino_arabo_di_gesu_-130798746/1/. Accessed 12/11/2020.



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In collaborazione con:

Pomeriggio con the':

Giuseppe Scalora

conversazione con un paesaggista

Piazza Danisinni, a Palermo, il 6 Giugno 2014 alle ore 17.00

Programma

Nella cornice dei Danisinni, rapidi saluti e due minuti di introduzione con l'asse dei Papiri Siracusa-Palermo; quindi **Giuseppe Scalora** presenterà il suo libro

"Itinerari per la conoscenza del paesaggio urbano"

e converserà con esperti (Ornella Amara, Francesca Mercadante, Ferdinando Trapani) e rappresentanti del quartiere (Frà Mauro, Sebastiano Pippo Morello, Maria Sabrina Leone) sul tema:

"Il recupero della conoscenza e della bellezza degli spazi di Danisinni".

Altri invitati al thè: Aurelio Angelini, Simona Aprile, Mariapina Di Mauro, Giulio Giallombardo, Andrea Lupo, Emanuele Nicosia, Lucia Pierro, Laura Scaduto, Marco Scarpinato, Francesco Urone e, naturalmente, gli abitanti.

Infine, sorseggiando il thè l'AIPIN presenterà il Premio Internazionale Gino Lo Re 2014 di Ingegneria Naturalistica per la Qualità del paesaggio mediterraneo.



Si inizia puntuali, perché Danisinni non può aspettare !

Le conclusioni? Alla sera, con "Pani cà meusa" in Piazza!

Altre INFO su: www.parrochiasantaagnesevm.altervista.org/joomla/danisinni.html

Figure 28 Invitation to the *Danisinni* neighbourhood walk. Image source:

<http://parrocchiasantaagnesevm.altervista.org/joomla/associazioni/le-sorgenti-del-papireto.html> Accessed on 14/02/2020.

Through this bottom-up participatory process, the *Danisinni* district has been included in the WH management plan. Specifically, the objective number 2 of the social and cultural enhancement plan (Andaloro et al., 2018b, pp. 173-174) refers to the creation of a new sustainable tourist route through the *Danisinni* neighbourhood aiming to connect the two main WH buildings: the Royal Palace and the *Zisa* Castle. The pedestrian route (about 1.4 km) is expected to start from *Piazza Indipendenza*, passing through *Danisinni*'s sunken square, crossing the garden, further climbing up the ancient Arabic stairs to the *Zisa* district (Figure 29). The ambition is to make *Danisinni* district a

green resting route, where visitors can experience a detachment from the city's hustle inside a peaceful green environment that revokes the ancient Arabic landscape.



Figure 29 View of the route through Danisinni district: from the WH Royal Palace to the Zisa Castle.
Image Source: elaborated on Google Heart.

At this stage, public values arise in the instrumental, intrinsic, and institutional spheres (Table 12).

Instrumental values emerge as benefits (both potential and realistic) for the *Danisinni* community against its marginalization. The claims for including the district in the WH serial site and the achievement of this goal, provide the *Danisinni* community – represented by St. Agnes Parish and the association *Insieme per Danisinni* - a greater visibility against a long period of isolation from the rest of the city (Annex 3, n.9). On a long-term perspective, the WH nomination is perceived as catalyst to action for the whole community (Annex 3, n. 10) and a potential driver for territorial development (Annex 3, n. 11). Finally, the recovery of the Arabic Garden becomes an input to imagine a 'greener' future for *Danisinni*. The idea consists in arranging the hectares of uncultivated land still present in the neighbourhood, moving towards environmental sustainability (Annex 3, n. 12).

The intrinsic domain includes identity and knowledge values (Clark & Lennox, 2019) brought from the *Danisinni* community perspective, and it is conceived through informal outreach initiatives. The identity value lies in the opportunity of recovery of the *Danisinni* collective memory (Annex 3,



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n. 7) in order to build new connections and plans worthy of a global recognition such as the WH one (Annex 3, n. 8):

[...] Today when I participate to some conferences and assemblies, I realize that many social actors working in Palermo area have passed through *Danisinni*. They have passed through and then left because, at that time, we were not organised to welcome them. Today, instead, we are beginning to attract these resources thanks to the courage gained from such a relevant recognition (UNESCO WH) for our expectations (Interview with a member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 21/05/2020).

The knowledge value implies a growing awareness regarding the neighbourhood's historical and cultural legacy that has been neglected for a long time (Annex 3, n.8).

Values in the institutional sphere are the weakest. On the one hand, the claim for the WH recognition by the *Danisinni* community began to draw the attention of the WH site's managing authorities. The Municipality of Palermo, for instance, began to sponsor a series of cultural initiatives¹³³ to attract citizens and local organizations (such as schools, cultural associations, etc.). However, authorities' actions are still weak. The re-opening and requalification of the area is delegated to the local community that does not always have the appropriate resources to handle it (Annex 3, n.14).

6.4 After the World Heritage nomination: from collaboration to competitiveness.

Following the WH nomination, the interest to incorporate the *Danisinni* neighbourhood into the Arab-Norman route grows for both the SC managing the WH serial site and the *Danisinni* community.

The shared objective leads to a new participatory process based on collaboration.

The first stage of the process entails increasing interactions between the Municipality of Palermo and the *Danisinni* community with the aim of reopening the neighbourhood to the city. The Municipality of Palermo tries to mitigate the residents' mistrust, involving younger people in several creative activities that show the connection between the *Danisinni* district and the Arab culture, and could requalify the spaces to be passed through to reach the *Zisa* Castle (Annex 3, n. 15 and 16).

¹³³ Retrieved information from: <https://www.comune.palermo.it/noticext.php?cat=3&id=5812>
<https://www.palermotoday.it/eventi/cultura/palermo-apre-le-porte-danisinni-da-amare-11-aprile-12-aprile-2015.html>
Accessed 12/11/2020.



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The main interest is to promote the implementation of the WH route as an opportunity for social development of the neighbourhood. For this purpose, representatives of the *Danisinni* community frequently interface with the WH Arab-Norman task force.

From 2015 to 2018, concertation tables between the two parties were held every two months, often within the neighbourhood. The way of interacting during the tables changes. Tables shift from a top-down attitude in which the administration's perspective prevails to a circular approach based on a fairer exchange of interests (Annex 3, n. 44):

[...]Between 2015 and 2018, consultation tables were very frequent. At least every two months we used to review the situation [...] For properly planning, it was necessary to discuss in a circular table, not a vertical one! But a circular one where all the partners had an equal voice and the ability to discern the results of synergy, not the result of the single political actor. Well, slowly, the mayor has understood this! (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

Representatives of the *Danisinni* community act as professional stakeholders who serve the interest of the neighbourhood to start a new process of territorial development fuelled by the WH recognition (Table 13). They are committed to negotiating a clear development model in which the *Danisinni* neighbourhood becomes a place of care, of welcome and encounter for the whole city (Table 13) (Annex 3, n. 17). According to the mechanism of advice and consultation, the municipal administration tries to integrate the input received from the *Danisinni* community into new projects to develop the WH itinerary (Table 13). Thus, some public values emerge in the institutional sphere, denoting a predisposition of the public administration in dialoguing with the *Danisinni* community, listening to their opinion and finding a balance of interests (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) to accomplish the WH route (Table 13).



Table 13 Reconstructing the second stage of the participatory process at *Danisinni* district.

Stage II <i>Danisinni</i> district: from collaboration to competitiveness Period: 2015-2019 Main initiators: representatives of <i>Danisinni</i> community and Municipality of Palermo.				
SPACES for PARTICIPATION	WHO	HOW	WHAT	PUBLIC VALUES
3 Town hall meetings (invited space)	Professional stakeholders: Representatives of the <i>Danisinni</i> community participate to concertation tables with the Municipality of Palermo.	Aggregate and bargain: Representatives serve the interest of the whole neighbourhood and negotiate their interests.	Advise and consult: The Municipality of Palermo seeks to integrate <i>Danisinni</i> community's opinions into new projects for the WH route	Institutional: Dialogue Listen to public opinion Balancing of interests
<i>Rambla Papireto</i> Project (created space)	Open, self-selection: Self-selected audience based on the <i>Danisinni</i> location.	Between develop and aggregate preferences: Both project developers (Municipality of Palermo, Academy of Fine Arts and <i>Danisinni</i> community) and beneficiaries (<i>Danisinni</i> residents) express and gather their preferences to define project initiatives.	Co-governance: Both project developers and beneficiaries plan and implement the initiatives.	Instrumental: <u>Benefits to the <i>Danisinni</i> area:</u> street art; farm-garden, recovery of the Arabian staircase, reduction of anti-social behaviour, cultural animation, <u>Benefits to individuals:</u> greater knowledge, better future for young residents, <u>Benefits to community:</u> pride of belonging to the area Confidence in the community ability. Institutional: Cooperativeness, enthusiasm, dialogue, participation



<p>In-Transito Project (created space)</p>	<p>Open, self-selection:</p> <p>Self-selected audience based on the interest in contributing to the project.</p>	<p>Between aggregate and deliberate preferences:</p> <p>The whole assembly deliberates on the final project to be implemented.</p>	<p>Direct authority:</p> <p>Participants plan and select the project to be implemented.</p>	<p>Instrumental:</p> <p><u>Benefits to the <i>Danisinni</i> area:</u></p> <p>tourist promotion, creation of additional services.</p> <p><u>Potential benefits to community:</u> new job opportunities, greater financial autonomy for parish activities.</p> <p>Intrinsic:</p> <p>Distinctiveness value, identity value, bequest value.</p> <p>Institutional:</p> <p>Competitiveness, Residents' participation</p>
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Source: own elaboration.

6.4.1 The *Rambla Papireto* project.

The good synergy between the two parties leads to the second stage of the participatory process, that is materialized through the *Rambla Papireto* project¹³⁴.

Managed by the Academy of Fine Arts of Palermo, the participatory project aims to create a tourist-artistic route that connects the WH Royal Palace and the *Zisa* Castle through the *Danisinni* district. The main objective is to requalify both urban spaces of the ancient Arabian route through artistic creations, using art as a tool of social improvement and community engagement in the neighbourhood.

The project was launched from April to October 2017 and consists of three different workshops with a cycle of 16 meetings each: street art, social circus, and communication laboratories¹³⁵.

The project is funded by the Municipality of Palermo as part of the initiative 'Palermo Youth Capital 2017' with a total of 25 thousand euros. The workshops are managed by three local youth

¹³⁴ Retrieved information from: <https://www.artribune.com/progettazione/architettura/2017/07/rambla-papireto-rigenerazione-urbana-palermo/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹³⁵ Retrieved information from: https://www.comune.palermo.it/js/server/uploads/_19052017113841.pdf Accessed 12/11/2020.



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associations¹³⁶ and are targeted towards children and young people in the neighbourhood. However, the communication lab is exceptionally addressed only to the students of the Academy of Fine Arts to promote the project and activate a crowdfunding campaign. The scheduled artistic performances are varied: make-up and circus art workshops, street art installations, parades, and tours around the neighbourhood with the young guides of *Danisinni*, circus art and fire shows.



Figure 30 Rambla Papireto project. Image Source: <https://www.ilsicilia.it/street-art-e-rambla-papireto-ecco-il-progetto-per-far-rinascere-il-quartiere-danisinni/> Accessed 12/11/2020

The *Rambla Papireto* project is part of a broader vision to transform the *Danisinni* neighbourhood. Such a perspective comes from the harmonic combination of the three actors' interests (Figure 30).

In particular, the Municipality of *Palermo* takes the priority to enhance the tourist route related to the WH serial site through the *Danisinni*.

The Academy of Fine Art aspires to continue a process of social art research for the neighbourhood's regeneration. In 2015 – under the *DanisinniLab* project - a lecturer from the Academy of Fine Arts donated a loan to employ ten thousand hectares of abandoned land to the St.

¹³⁶ Retrieved information from: https://www.comune.palermo.it/js/server/uploads/_19052017113841.pdf Accessed 12/11/2020.



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Agnes Parish. The goal was to transform it into a social garden and a didactic farm for community use. Riding the fervour of WH recognition, the Academy continues its work in the neighbourhood (Annex 3, n. 18). In fact, they envision *Danisinni* as a collective work of art where artistic practices serve to reawaken a sense of common good among residents and to mitigate marginalization and school dropout. The adopted methodology consists in cultivating interactions between local youth, academy students, professors, and other city stakeholders (Annex 3, n. 20).

The *Danisinni* community tries to address urban requalification and tourism development towards residents' collective needs, to stimulate a culture of legal work and a more widespread interest in education within the district.

Furthermore, the *Rambla Papireto* project empowers residents who actively participate to its implementation, by showing enthusiasm and expectations for the children's growth (Annex 3, n. 32).

Following a participatory strategy, the organisation addresses a self-selected audience based on the location: the *Danisinni* residents and other active actors¹³⁷ in the neighbourhood (Table 13). The project is planned and develops according to a mechanism of co-governed partnership in which both developers and beneficiaries collaborate to the plan to implement the residents' tailored initiatives (Table 13). The four main actors in the design of the *Rambla Papireto* project aggregate their preferences and advance a collective choice, each maintaining a distinct role. The Municipality of Palermo is the initiator of the process, with a main stake in the enhancement of the WH route. Through service delivery, it finances and supports the events' implementation. The Academy of Fine Arts is the main designer of the project, with the role to select three associations that coordinate the laboratories. The St. Agnes parish and the association *Insieme per Danisinni* act both as co-designers and facilitators for the engagement of the local community, which sometimes is cowed by the re-opening of the district to the city. Finally, the residents who participate in the activities are the main implementers of the project (Table 13).

In this phase, public values appear mainly in the instrumental sphere. Firstly, they emerge as “benefits to the area where the project took place” (Clark, 2016, p. 304).

Street murals on façades of some houses together with the gradual recovery of the farm garden in the center of the depression make the *Danisinni* more welcoming (Annex 3, n. 37).

With this initiative, the development of the artistic-touristic route related to the WH serial site started to take shape. The temporary recovery of the Arabian staircase that connects the *Danisinni* square to the overhead *Zisa* district, is the symbol of this transformation. As the staircase was cleaned and coloured by the *Sottosopra*'s association¹³⁸, the connection to the *Zisa* Castle was successfully

¹³⁷ Main actors: A.S.T.E.S, Centro Tau, Fondazione Gimbe.

¹³⁸ Retrieved information from: <https://www.savethechildren.it/partecipazione/movimento-giovani-sotto-sopra?fbclid=IwAR1GI7QuBlxQPcfCsntS3SbG2VOzjDDG-1wlxuMr17BBnDFBZneEXNBb824> Accessed 12/11/2020.

emphasized, improving one of the most isolated areas of the WH serial site in Palermo (Annex 3, n. 19) (Figure 31).



However, the benefits achieved through the improvement of the urban public spaces were not only aesthetic, but also social. In particular, they concern “the reduction of anti-social behaviour”

Figure 31 Recovery of the Arab stair in Danisinni by the Sottosopra association. Image Source: <https://www.facebook.com/sottosoprapalermo/photos/a.1873134932925896/1873135596259163>

Accessed 12/11/2020

(Clark, 2016, p. 95) and of self-exclusion by the residents (Annex 3, n. 38).

The echo of changes occurring during the *Rambla Papireto* project reached other players, external to the neighbourhood, who decided to act on community involvement. The arrangement of



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the play *Elisir di Danisinni*¹³⁹ by the *Teatro Massimo* in the garden farm, is one of the most emblematic examples. Residents of the district were invited not only to attend the rehearsals but also to participate in the performance (Annex 3, n. 39).

Secondly, instrumental values emerge also as “benefits to individuals” (Clark, 2016, p.95), particularly towards young people. Following the *Rambla Papireto* experience, some representatives of the Academy and *Danisinni* community established a Social Museum¹⁴⁰ within the neighbourhood. Today, the Museum coordinates a series of educational and artistic activities - such as the permanent drama school¹⁴¹ - which have instilled greater confidence for better life expectancy in some young residents of *Danisinni* (Annex 3, n. 40).

The third group of instrumental values concerns “the benefits to the community” (Clark 2016, p.95). Due to the positive and real changes provided by the *Rambla Papireto* project, the *Danisinni* community and the residents further strengthened their conviction to trigger positive changes after the WH recognition (Annex 3, n. 41).

Further public values pertain to the institutional sphere, especially to the realm of relations between “the public administration, its environment and the citizens” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

One of the most apparent values is the cooperation between the Municipality of Palermo and other players involved in the *Rambla Papireto* project. On top of cooperation, the enthusiasm of the local administration on enhancing the *Danisinni* neighbourhood’s condition contributes to the initiative’s success (Annex 3, n. 45).

Through the WH Arab-Norman task force, the Municipality of Palermo initiated a capillary project on the territory, encouraging dialogue and a balancing of interests with the residents and local actors already active in *Danisinni*. Such values are crucial to overcome the initial mistrust of residents and successfully implement the project (Annex 3, n. 15).

At this stage of the participatory process, the WH serial site acts as a catalyst to the social care process in the *Danisinni* neighbourhood. However, the touristic aspect of the WH itinerary is left in the background. The materialisation of the WH route through *Danisinni* starts with the recovery of the staircase, but it still lacks adequate signage and an easy-to-access way up to the *Zisa* Castle.

¹³⁹ Retrieved information from <https://www.teatromassimo.it/sala-stampa/comunicati/l-elisir-di-danisinni-progetto-operacity-il-teatro-massimo-nel-quartiere-di-danisinni-con-l-elisir-d-amore-di-donizetti-nella-colorata-versione-di-fabio-cherstich-e-gianluigi-toccafondo-il-coro-sara-composto-dagli-abitanti-di-danis> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁴⁰ Retrieved information from: <https://museosocialedanisinni.it/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁴¹ Retrieved information from: <https://www.gigiborruso.it/danisinnilab.html> Accessed 12/11/2020.



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6.4.2 The *In-Transito* project

One of the main causes of the deceleration of the materialisation of the WH route through *Danisinni* is the lack of adequate economic resources to invest (Annex 3, n. 20).

The *Rambla Papireto* project had received negligible funding, and the additional amount was gathered through a follow-up crowdfunding campaign, which was used to set up the social circus¹⁴² in the farm garden, at the behest of the *Danisinni* community.

Although the WH route is not yet finalised, the district still has gained a more appealing appearance for experiential tourism offers. In 2017, the company Wonderful Italy¹⁴³ selected the *Danisinni* district for the launch of a national pilot project that aims to increase tourism in lesser-known places and minor destinations, offering authentic experiences¹⁴⁴ to visitors.

In the wake of experiential tourism, the Municipality of Palermo came up with the *In Transito* project to finalise the WH itinerary through *Danisinni* (Annex 3, n. 21).

The *In Transito* project¹⁴⁵ represents the last stage of this participatory process, bringing new stakeholders into the touristic development of *Danisinni* neighbourhood (Figure 32).

The project stems from a preliminary agreement between the Municipality of Palermo and the Airbnb company. Specifically in February 2018, the Municipality of Palermo and Airbnb agreed to co-manage the tourist tax collection through the Airbnb platform (Deliberazione di giunta n.274, 2018).

According to the agreement, Airbnb would collect tourist tax through local hosts during the booking process and would subsequently transfer it to the municipal treasury every three months. 10% of the collected amount would be retained by the Airbnb operators. However, they decided to partially re-invest this sum to implement social projects requested by the citizenship, in *Danisinni* and *Ballarò* districts.

¹⁴² The crowdfunding campaign launched on the Produzioni dal Basso platform raised € 6,425.00 for the creation of the social circus in *Danisinni* district. Retrieved information from: <https://www.produzionidalbasso.com/project/danisinni-circus/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁴³ Retrieved information from: <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/60047/wonderful-italy-parte-da-danisinni-per-un-turismo-alternativo-non-si-viaggia-per-cambiare-letto-ma-per-vivere-esperienze/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁴⁵ Retrieved information from: <https://intransito.comune.palermo.it/> Accessed 12/11/2020.



Figure 32 The *In-Transito* Project. Image Source:

<https://intransito.comune.palermo.it/https://www.facebook.com/sottosoprapalermo/photos/a.1873134932925896/1873135596259163> Accessed 12/11/2020.

. Specifically, for the *Danisinni* district, the Municipality's will was to facilitate the pedestrian connection between three main monuments of the WH serial site: the Cathedral of Palermo, the Royal Palace, and the *Zisa* Castle (Annex 3, n. 22).

Funds were invested within a participatory process planned by the social enterprise *BiPart*¹⁴⁶.

The process consists of three main stages: training and knowledge; deliberative assembly and extensive vote.

The first stage included short training courses on the participatory methodology developed by *Bipart* for both the Airbnb staff and some officials of the Municipality of Palermo. In regards of Airbnb, some members of the local hosts' association – named *SiHost*¹⁴⁷ – were selected and trained as facilitators for the following deliberative tables (Annex 3, n. 23).

Other trainings on participatory methodology have been addressed to staff of the Municipality of Palermo involved in the project implementation. (Annex 3, n. 24).

The knowledge phase also involves neighbourhood exploration. Some municipal officials, members of the *SiHost* association, and of the Airbnb staff guided by the *Danisinni* community visited the neighbourhood and got to know some of the inhabitants in their homes. Residents, who were previously prepared for these meetings, reacted positively, and organized a social lunch for all the visitors (Annex 3, n. 25, 26).

¹⁴⁶ BiPart is a platform that supports local authorities, third sector organisations, informal groups and enterprises in defining and managing participatory processes. Retrieved information from: <https://www.bipart.it/about> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁴⁷ Retrieved information from: <https://www.hostpiuhost.it/p/news/7-lassociazione-sihost-si-presenta-ufficialmente-alla-citta-di-palermo> Accessed 12/11/2020.



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The second phase of the project deals with the organisation of a deliberative assembly within *Danisinni*. The assembly is open to all citizens who wish to propose a project pertaining the sustainable tourist development of the district. The assembly is attended approximately by a hundred people including residents, professionals, and associations already active in the area. The participants are divided into 10/12 tables to elaborate, in about three hours and a half, a common proposal in line with the request and feasibilities of the available budget (Annex 3, n. 25, 26).

Each table is followed by one or more facilitators, in this case members of the association *SiHost*. They have the task of moderating and finalising the discussion to attain coherent proposals to present to the assembly, which can then vote for its favoured.

Therefore, the project thus is categorised into the third phase of extensive voting. Out of 12 projects, the first three selected by the assembly are published on the *In-Transito* website. A wider audience made of both citizens and visitors from all over the world can vote them and the project with the highest score is then implemented. The platform requires the authentication of each user who can only vote once for one project¹⁴⁸.

In general, the whole process is open to all those who wish to participate. It follows a self-selection mechanism depending on people's interest in contributing to the project development in *Danisinni*, either as project assistants or proponents (Table 13). During the public assembly, defined groups of participants, propose their project ideas with the assistance of professionals. The assembly and later a wider public (online), deliberate the final project to be implemented. Thus, the participants exercise direct authority over deciding the project to be implemented with the allocated budget from the Municipality of Palermo and Airbnb (a total amount of 20 thousand euros) (Table 13).

Concerning the project content, three proposals have been admitted to the final online vote.

The first concerns the realization of a mobile social kitchen in the *Danisinni* garden farm and is carried out by some members of the *Danisinni* community, in the perspective to trigger entrepreneurial growth within the neighbourhood (Annex 3, n. 28).

The second proposal deals with the finalisation of the WH route through *Danisinni* for a more accessible connection between the Royal Palace and the *Zisa* Castle. It is elaborated mainly from representatives of the Academy of Fine Arts, whose perspective is closer to the Municipality's. The main activity is to design the pedestrian route through artistic interventions (Figure 33). The project designers propose a system of horizontal and vertical signposting composed of panels painted by some artists and local actors. Furthermore, the project foresees the requalification of the flowerbeds facing the ancient Arab-Norman staircase, both on the sides of *Danisinni* square and overhead courtyard.

¹⁴⁸ Retrieved information from:



Figure 33 *Attraverso Danisinni*, project proposal by the the Academy of Fine Arts (Palermo). Image Source: <https://intransito.comune.palermo.it/intransito-progetti-dettaglio.php?sel=6> Accessed 12/11/2020.

The third final project is proposed by the *CaravanSerai* association, who already organised a crowdfunding campaign in *Danisinni* - after the *Rambla Papireto* project -, to realise the social circus. Known as *Danisinni Officine Creative*, it is based on the engagement of the *Danisinni* community to develop creative workshops and merchandising products (Annex 3, n. 29).

Among the three projects, the social kitchen was selected with 452 votes¹⁴⁹, by pausing the accomplishment of the WH route, launched trough the *Rambla Papireto* project. This way, the *Zisa* Castle remained isolated from the rest of the WH serial site, suffering from an inadequate fruition system and an under-sized development potential for the homonymous *Zisa* district (Annex 3, n. 30, 31).

During this phase of the *In Transito* project, the *Danisinni* community and the Academy of Fine Arts start competing against each other, further delaying the accomplishment of the WH route. The reason of the collaboration breakup between the two actors was triggered by an external factor of the project implementation. Between 2018 and 2019 the *Danisinni* community and the *Municipality of Palermo* clashed due to the requalification of the neighbourhood's *Galante* kindergarten. While the *Danisinni* community and the *Centro Tau* struggle to rehabilitate the old

¹⁴⁹ All information about the project are now available at: https://www.comune.palermo.it/js/server/uploads/_06022019141015.pdf Accessed 10/10/2022.



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kindergarten and to regain an educational garrison for the residents, the Municipality argues that it should have been more effective to demolish the old premises and build new ones.

Such discrepancy of perspectives led the *Danisinni* community to temporarily withdraw from the WH route project previously shared with the Municipality of Palermo and presented by the Academy of Fine Arts in the framework of *InTransito*.

The community attempted to affirm its development vision for the neighbourhood. A conception of such development is always based on slow tourism and leverages on the historical connection with the Arab-Norman WH serial site. However, it prioritises the creation of new job opportunities for residents rather than the materialisation of the WH route. According to the *Danisinni* community, the mobile kitchen - labelled as *I Sapori di Danisinni*¹⁵⁰ – had the potential to bring a new entrepreneurial mindset to the neighbourhood (Figure 34). Indeed residents, especially women, may get involved in cooking traditional dishes for visitors. Moreover, the kitchen project is part of a broader development plan (Figure 34).

In July 2021, the *Danisinni* Community inaugurated the new *Borgo Sociale*¹⁵¹ (social centre). With the contribution of the *Azimut* Foundation, the *Danisinni* community recovered a cluster of abandoned houses within the district. The renovated buildings already hosted an early-childhood workshop and a parish medical center. A further part will be used to create a guesthouse for visitors, who can participate in local gardening activities and traditional cooking during their stay. Hence, the farm, the new *Borgo Sociale* and the mobile kitchen strive to become a new cluster of spaces for social tourism, allowing some residents to get a job in this field and counteracting the high unemployment rate in the neighbourhood (Annex 3, n. 42).

¹⁵⁰ Retrieved information from: <https://www.danisinni.it/saporididanisinni/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

¹⁵¹ Retrieved information from: <https://palermo.meridionews.it/articolo/94905/danisinni-arrivano-altre-due-strutture-per-il-sociale-qui-si-anticipa-il-cambiamento-grazie-alla-bellezza/> Accessed 12/11/2020.



Figure 34 Representation of the project *I Sapori di Danisinni*, displaying the connection between the neighbourhood and some iconic monuments of the WH serial site. Image Source: <https://www.danisinni.it/saporididanisinni/> Accessed 12/11/2020.

Although the WH route through the *Danisinni* still remains unfinished, the process for its realisation yields more robust results in terms of participation than expected. From the *In Transit* project, the *Danisinni* community gains more decision-making power and leads the process towards a long-term social development path based on residents' activism. Tourism represents an integral part of it and serves to heal the fractures between the Municipality of Palermo and the *Danisinni* community, being a shared interest. The community uses the acquired leading position to reclaim a few pending battles, such as that of the *Galante* (Annex 3, n. 33). In December 2021, the *Danisinni* community together with the *Centro Tau* succeeded in officially receiving 3 million euros from the European Regional Development Fund - Operational Program for the rehabilitation of semi-abandoned kindergarten.

As in the *Rambla Papireto* project, instrumental public values prevail at this stage.

The most apparent ones concern the district's regeneration (Clark, 2016) through tourist promotion, the creation of additional services (such as the mobile kitchen) and the renewal of old spaces – (such as the *Borgo Sociale*). Moreover, the move towards tourism development potentially introduces a value of economic growth, which is perceived by the *Danisinni* community as a prospect for new employment opportunities and a more dignified lifestyle for residents (Annex 3, n. 41).

Other public values relate to the intrinsic sphere. They concern the empowerment of the *Danisinni* community who consider tourism development a means to affirm the peculiarities of the



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district compared to the surrounding urban context (distinctiveness value) and the acquired negotiation skills as a cohesive community (identity value) (Annex 3, n. 34).

In addition, the process of cultural regeneration following the WH recognition along with tourist growth potential adds bequest value for young residents who have the chance to nurture new aspirations by caring for the *Danisinni* cultural legacy (Annex 3, n. 35).

In the institutional sphere, two main values arise, mutually influencing each other: competition and participation. In the context of the *In Transito* project, competition generates two factions: on one side the *Danisinni* community and on the other the Academy of Fine Arts and the Municipality of Palermo. Following a moment of disconnection, the three actors gather once again to collaborate for the cultural and social development of the neighbourhood, but in a new relational asset: each one has a defined role. This new balance led to the implementation of additional cultural initiatives for the whole community (Annex 3, n. 46). The variety of achievements motivate residents to participate more in the neighbourhood's life, partially overcoming the obstacles of apathy and lack of confidence for changes after years of institutional vacuum in *Danisinni* (Annex 3, n. 47).

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the participatory process occurred in the *Danisinni* neighbourhood. By applying the Participatory Heritage Matrix, two macro stages have been identified.

The first stage (before the WH nomination) is a bottom-up strategy and comes from a claim by the *Danisinni* community for being excluded from the WH serial site.

It intertwines a dual strategy. On the one hand the *Danisinni* community – represented by the A.S.T.E.S non-profit organization – participates in formal meetings for the creation of the WH site, to negotiate the neighbourhood inclusion. On the other hand, they strive to raise awareness among WH official representatives about the marginalized neighbourhood, through informal participatory practices such as neighbourhood walks. The public values arise mostly from the single agency of the *Danisinni* community who interpret the WH recognition as a chance to regain awareness of the historical and cultural legacy of the neighbourhood and external visibility after years of marginalization (intrinsic sphere) (Table 12). However, the weakness of institutional public values denotes a passive position of the WH serial site managing authorities in the ongoing participatory process. Unlike most widespread participatory mechanisms (Fung, 2006), the authorities act as spectators rather than process leaders. Such passivity burdens the *Danisinni* community's effort to create new perspectives of change for the district without institutional support. This dynamic demonstrates that bottom-up participatory dynamics requires a pro-active and responsive institutional environment to generate community empowerment (Bobbio, 2010).

The second stage (after the WH nomination) introduces a different scenario. The participatory process is articulated in two projects: the *Rambla Papireto* and *In-Transito*.



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The two projects adopt different participatory mechanisms.

The *Rambla Papireto* is based on a co-partnership between project designers (namely the Municipality of Palermo and the Academy of fine Arts) and project beneficiaries (namely the *Danisinni* community and some residents) (Table 13). It is initiated by the Municipality and aims to realize the WH route through *Danisinni* by avoiding any imposition from the top. Cultural and creative activities are designed to foster residents' engagement and to prepare them to the district reopening after a lengthy isolation. The inclusive approach generates a convergence of interests among all the involved parties. Emerging public values show how collaboration among stakeholders and the public authority's willingness to consider residents' needs (institutional public values) lead to the achievement of several benefits for both the area and the community (instrumental public values) (Table 13).

The *In-Transito* project is developed through a planned participatory strategy that consists of three moments: targeted training, public assembly, and deliberation (Table 13). It brings additional stakeholders into the *Danisinni* context - including the Airbnb operators, the *SiHost* association etc. –nurturing a new cultural ecosystem (Borin & Donato, 2015) within the district.

Despite a meticulous planning process, the participatory project brings competition between groups (Nabatchi, 2012), risking to erode the fruitful collaboration established so far. The competition leads to different outcomes than those expected by the project's initiator (Municipality of Palermo). The WH route through the *Danisinni* remains incomplete and consequently the *Zisa* Castle is barely integrated to the rest of the WH serial site. However, the *Danisinni* community succeeds in affirming its vision of tourist and cultural development, aimed at pursuing a new entrepreneurial environment for *Danisinni* residents. The emerging intrinsic public values highlight such community empowerment.

In line with the *Cassaro Alto* dynamics (see Chapter 3), the *Danisinni* case confirms a polycentric participatory governance model for the WH serial site. Unlike the literature on participatory governance of WH sites (see Chapter 1), the *Danisinni* case shows how increasing decision-making power of local communities does not always result in the achievement of more likely measures to enhance and preserve a WH site.

A further consideration concerns the interaction between the available economic resources and participatory practices. The limited budget allocated to both projects -the *Rambla Papireto* and *In-Transito* projects – requires the search for additional funds. Thus, a varied pool of actors – such as Airbnb, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Caravanseraï association etc. – collaborates with *Danisinni* residents and contributes to shape an increasingly participatory approach.

Finally, the analysis stresses how public values serve as indicators of actor's positions during the participatory processes, emphasizing both the balanced and unbalanced features between the forces at play.



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Chapter 7

Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This last chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of the three embedded units of the WH serial site *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* (see Chapters 3,4, and 5), conducted through the *Heritage Participation Matrix*. With the main purpose of answering the research questions, this section brings out two novel concepts that might inspire future research: WH *polycentric participatory governance* and the WH *relational buffer zones*. Both notions draw on the multidisciplinary theoretical framework as well as on empirical observations.

The chapter extensively unfolds both concepts in four main paragraphs. The first section inquires about how participation is enacted in the governance of the WH serial site, by proposing a three-step approach to interpret WH sites' participatory governance as a gradual process.

The second section tackles the relation between participation in governance and enhancement initiatives, outlining a possible *polycentric participatory governance* model for the investigated WH serial site. The third paragraph delves into public value dimensions, functions, and variations along with participatory mechanisms, advancing a commons' perspective.

The fourth part relates back to the spatial nature of participatory processes to elaborate and discuss the concept of *WH relational buffer zones*.

7.2 WH sites' participatory governance as a process

How is participation enacted in WH sites' governance, at the local level?

The increasing focus of both discourses (see paragraphs 1.2.1., 1.2.2.) and practices (see paragraph 1.2.3.) on the importance of strengthening participation in WH sites' governance clashes with a knowledge gap on how such forms might be achieved. To contribute to filling this gap, the research looked at the extensive social and political science debates on the topic of participatory governance (see Chapter 1) in order to extrapolate some core dimensions which bear on WH studies and to advance the debate. These dimensions, such as power distribution (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1997; Wilcox, 1994), institutional design (Cornwall, 2008; Fung, 2006; Uittenbroek et al., 2019) purpose (Fisher, 2012; Heinelt, 2010; Ostrom, 1990) and spatial nature (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006; Cornwall, 2002) were adopted to understand how participation is enacted in the WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site's governance: this has made possible a threefold response to the research question.

The first answer asserts that WH sites' participatory governance is a gradual process, articulated in three phases (Turnhout et al., 2010; Wilcox, 1994). These can be detected in any WH site as they stem from the standard procedure contained in the OGs. Their features change according to their specific context. (Figure 35).



Figure 35 Conceptualisation of a three stepwise participatory governance for WH sites. *Source:* own elaboration.

The *inception* refers to the active participation of several institutional and professional stakeholders who collaborate to propose a new WH site to include in the national Tentative List. This phase is long-lasting for the majority of WH sites as it is marked by multiple interactions between the local, national, and international scales that characterize the WH regime (see Chapter 1, Part I). In the case of the WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site, this procedure occurred from 1996 until 2011, when the RDCHSi appointed the role of



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coordinating the scripting of the WH nomination dossier to the SWHF. This phase sets the boundaries between the local actors' ecosystem with the agency (in terms of political advocacy, financial capacity, and specialized knowledge) to bring forward a WH candidacy; and it may include the establishment of temporary panels (such as the regional committee) (see Chapter 1) as embryonic forms of the governance structure.

Formerly, the *formalisation* stage occurs when previous interactions turn into a regulated inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021), laying the foundations of a governance structure of the WH serial site. As highlighted by the *Heritage Participation Matrix* (Table 6), the formalisation of the SC came through 3 institutional meetings and 7 combined tables, intertwined in a more articulated participatory process to draw up the WH management plan. Formalisation culminates in an agreement between, ownership, managerial, religious, and institutional entities (Fondazione Patrimonio UNESCO Sicilia et al., 2014) to collectively manage the WH serial site. Reaching such an agreement required the effort of overcoming political opposition among local authorities and maintaining the interests of each managing and owning body, within a new collective stewardship. Moreover, this phase serves a dual function. On the one hand, it is the result of a pursued participatory attitude; on the other, it lays the foundation for opening decisional arenas to non-organized citizens (such as residents and neighbouring communities, following the ICOMOS request). In the investigated WH serial site, this approach to a wider public took place at an information level (Arnstein, 1969) through a widespread communication and promotion campaign (see Chapter 3). In addition, each municipality within the SC actively engaged residents and communities in various transformations due to the WH serial site establishment.

Openness, the third and final step involves a formalised participation of civil society representatives in WH site governance, with the goal of ensuring a democratic engagement (Fischer, 2012; Fisher, 2010) of ordinary people in managerial decisions. The analysed case study reveals how such formalisation may occur and which kind of decisions are prevalently involved. Indeed, SC meetings (despite being open to the general public) are usually under-practiced, with the exception of some specific subjects such as religious authorities and professional stakeholders. However, such weakness proves how important it is to explore the logic behind inter-institutional collaboration in extensive detail. More specifically, the challenge to ensure financial sustainability and the risk of politicizing the main funder, threaten the inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021) within the SC. By opening to a broader public, the SC could have jeopardized its functioning, introducing additional interests and perspectives. This fragile balance also prevents the OS from adopting a statutory arrangement through which local stakeholders may engage in WH serial site decision-making processes. Rather, the OS seeks to compensate for the weak participation in the Arab-Norman WH site's governance by activating some long-term participatory initiatives, such as the school-work



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alternation project and the Arab-Norman imaginary context. These initiatives allow some representatives of civil society to participate in decisions concerning the WH serial site enhancement.

However, there is no impediment that states formalised participatory governance will be practiced in the future. Some of the best Italian practices, such as the Dolomites and the ‘Longobards in Italy. Places of power’ WH heritage serial sites (see Chapter 1, part 1), exemplify how participatory governance can unfold through community networks and thematic planning groups that evolve and grow over time.

To conclude, looking at WH sites’ participatory governance as three steps process is suitable to unfolding its evolving nature. Moreover, it helps to clarify the main causes that prevent, or on the contrary favor, extensive and institutionalised participation in decision-making. The literature review has previously highlighted bureaucratic constraints, political willingness, and divergence of interests as the main obstacles to achieving WH sites’ participatory governance. The instability of inter-institutional collaboration - that gathers the issues of financial sustainability, the politicization of the funding body, decision-making regulations of a WH site’s governance - adds to these factors (see Chapter 3, paragraph 3.3.2). Applying the three-step approach to other WH sites may help to develop a systematized knowledge concerning the functioning of governance structures and the institutionalisation of wider participation in WH sites’ management decisions.

The second insight reveals that participation in WH sites’ governance takes different forms and attributes (Rosetti et al., 2022) and follows different dynamics depending on the micro-context (such as that of an urban neighborhood) and the actors involved.

The empirical investigation of the research highlights two interesting perspectives on this issue:

1. participation as a spontaneous form of social cohesion among actors operating in the same urban area;
2. participation as a new form of collaborative interactions between actors operating in different sectors.

The first perspective was conceived prior to the achievement of WH status.

It arises from a contrast between the Municipality of Palermo, part of the SC, and some residents and traders operating in the *Cassaro Alto* area. In this case, participatory mechanisms significantly evolved during the process: from conflicting town meetings between public administrators and citizens to discussing alternative pedestrianisation solutions, to the spontaneous creation of a cultural association (*Cassaro Alto*) that still collects almost all the traders of the areas today (historical bookstores, tobacco shops, bars, etc.). Initially, the traders considered the association as a formal vehicle to gain greater credibility before the Municipality and to claim their interests. More recently, the association has turned into a tool of cooperation between the traders themselves and a collaboration with local authorities to revitalize the cultural interest of the historical road, especially



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in light of the acquired WH status. The cultural initiative *La Via Dei Librai* arranged by the association along the pedestrian axis today reaches its sixth edition, showing evidence of a stable alliance between the *Cassaro Alto* association, nonprofit entities, and the Municipality. The event is a form of active citizen participation that has grown over the years in terms of public attendance, organizational structure, and networks of public and private partners.

The second perspective follows the achievement of the WH nomination. It is related to the sustainable tourism development that the SC aspires to achieve (Andaloro et al., 2018) by creating complementary routes to the WH itinerary. This is the case of *Danisinni* historical neighborhood, which connects two iconic monuments included within the WH serial site: the *Royal Palace* and the *Zisa Castle*. Being part of an international WH site, the *Danisinni's* community groups third sector actors, a religious garrison, and some residents has increased its self-esteem after years of marginalization (Giubilaro & Lotta, 2018). This strengthens its position within forthcoming projects and creates a fertile ground for the start of new collaborative initiatives, including the participation of further local players (Academy of Fine Arts; Biondo Theater, etc.) and non-local players (Airbnb, Wonderful Italy, etc.). The two projects for tourist development (*Rambla Papireto* and *Intransito*), have led to results which are different from those expected, due to partial shifts of interest and the affirming of the *Danisinni* community's willingness and development vision for the neighborhood.

The two forms detected do not seek to be exhaustive. Nevertheless, they pave the way for a systematic study, classification and comparison of diverse forms of participation in WH sites' governance which is still lacking in the literature. They also stress the importance of deepening knowledge of the organizational and operating mechanisms of participatory processes in the field of heritage studies.

The third response shows that the development of participatory processes in the governance of WH sites stems from the concatenation of several top-down and bottom-up initiatives. These latter may fall outside the scope of formalized committees with decision-making power for managing WH sites, and evolve over time. In the investigated WH serial site, this aspect emerges in both participatory initiatives for WH serial site enhancement (*Via dei Librai*) and tourist development (the route through *Danisinni*) that intercept a range of participating actors external to the SC members. Such evidence reiterates the importance of looking at WH sites' governance as “distributed and disassembled” (De Cesari 2020, p.14) structures in order to discern whether or not a sharing of decisional power has occurred in some fields (i.e., enhancement, conservation, development, etc.) between players with agency and those without. Even in the cases where shared decision-making power and thus the achievement of participatory forms of governance were not detected (as in the analysed WH serial site), the investigation of participatory processes at the micro-level would allow



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the identification of hindering factors, the actors with an active interest in WH sites, and consequently provide concrete inputs on how to pursue participatory forms of governance in WH sites in future.

To summarize, the three responses suggest that participatory governance of WH sites is a gradual process articulated in three main steps – inception, formalization and openness – it can take different forms whose knowledge needs to be systematized and which stems from the concatenation of multiple initiatives that may not warrant an immediate sharing of decisional power.

These reflections were elaborated from the data collected using the HPM. This latter has been conceived as sharable tool for the investigation of further cases. The main functionality is to “break down” (Veldpaus 2015, p. 95) the implementation of WH sites’ participatory processes, extrapolating and correlating the core determinants poorly explored in WH related literature:

1. *where* participatory processes occur (invited and created spaces for participation) (Cornwell 2008; Bobbio, 2004);
2. *who* (participants), *how* (communication and decision modes) and *what* (authority and power) dimensions determine institutional design of participatory processes (Fung, 2006);
3. *why* (public values) participatory processes are undertaken in terms of main purposes (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

7.2.1 Participation in WH site’s governance and enhancement initiatives

What is the relation between participation in decision-making and enhancement initiatives of a WH site?

The literature review concerning WH sites in the Italian context highlighted a proliferation of participatory initiatives to engage a wider public in certain decisions (i.e., WH site’s enhancement, development strategies, updating of the WH management plan etc.) (Table 3). The review also reveals several limitations in enacting participation in WH sites’ governance (Table 3).

While maintaining a distinction between participatory initiatives and governance (Sani, 2010) this research question addresses a scarcely explored relationship between the two, to detect generated public values.

A first observation analyses the organisation of participatory initiatives. The *Heritage Participation Matrix* reveals how organisational patterns draw on the same participatory mechanisms theorised for the decision-making arenas (Fung, 2006). Such evidence pertains to both invited and created spaces for participation. In regards of the invited spaces, the school-work alternation project, and the Arab-Norman imaginary contest (Table 7) are among the enhancement initiatives that clearly base their organisation patterns on participatory mechanisms. Participants, represented by schools and citizens, actively contribute to deciding the content and purposes of the enhancement initiatives,



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through the mechanisms of co-governance and advice and consult. More specifically, they act under the coordination of the OS, which launches both initiatives and supports their implementation in the long term.

Amongst the various created spaces for participation, *Via dei Librai* best highlights such coordination. Here, citizen's associations hold direct authority (Table 11) in both planning and implementing a permanent event that is highly participative also in its scope: revitalising the *Cassaro Alto* cultural legacy through community building.

Hence, participation in enhancement initiatives and decision-making of WH sites interrelates through institutional design mechanisms (see Chapter 1, part 2). Given the broad aim of this thesis to understand how participatory processes may contribute to WH sites' public values, the emphasis on participatory mechanisms provides a twofold advantage. On the one hand, it widens the investigation field in which public values can be detected by including the organisational dimension of participatory initiatives.

On the other hand, it paves the way for a novel concept: *polycentric participatory governance* of the WH sites. This concept echoes Ostrom's theory on commons that affirms polycentric governance as a valuable tool for managing common natural resources by concerned communities (see Chapter 1, part 2). A polycentric governance system is endowed with several decision-making units, intertwined with each other, holding a significant operational autonomy (Ostrom, 1998). Each unit recognizes the steering role of a centralized institution, such as the State, as a guide and a support for decision implementation. The notion of polycentric participatory governance for WH sites envisions a system of diffused participation in WH sites decision-making. Various segments of civil society (citizens, young generations, civic associations, experts, etc.) may decide on certain issues based on their interests and competencies: from sites' preservation to enhancement and development strategies. They may constitute autonomous decisional units that look out for each other and operate under a coordinating umbrella.

The analysis of the WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site, reveals several potential decisional units. The school-work alternation project shows how involved schools and young generations could become a well-defined decision-making center for educational and awareness-raising activities related to the WH serial site. In the same way, the *Cassaro Alto* community, which gathers many local stakeholders under the umbrella of the *Via dei Librai* initiative, may hold decision-making autonomy concerning the enhancement strategy of the intangible legacy of the WH Arab-Norman serial site. The *Danisinni* community, together with all professional actors (such as *Centro Tau*, Academy of Fine Arts, Airbnb, etc.) stands out as a potential decisional unit concerning urban and social regeneration initiatives aimed at better integrating the Zisa Castle to the rest of the WH route in the city of Palermo. From a polycentric perspective, the SC plays a coordinating role that addresses the decisional units following the WH



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management plan updating and supporting the financial feasibility of each unit's initiative. In addition, it liaises with national authorities (such as the Italian Ministry of Culture, and the National Italian Commission for UNESCO) and international bodies (such as ICOMOS) which monitor WH sites' preservation and development over time. The OS, identified in the SWHF, would bridge between the interests of the SC and the multiple units, especially in event of conflicts. It can guarantee that the decisions of each unit are taken according to a participatory approach and are integrated into the management of the whole WH site.

As the OS, municipal administrations also cover a bridging function. On the one hand, they coordinate within the SC. On the other hand, they facilitate the participation of local actors. This twofold role is evident for the Municipality of Palermo, which overwhelmingly leads SC's decisions – due to a greater political and economic weight - while enacting a multifaceted strategy to interact with urban communities, to integrate their needs and aspirations into the WH serial site's planning. Such strategy consists of the temporary field action carried out by Arab-Norman Task Force (mainly in *Danisinni* neighborhood), the role of the municipal district's office (*circostrizione 1*) as a liaison between territorial communities and town councils (mainly in the *Cassaro Basso* neighborhood) and the inclusion of the WH serial sites programs into the broader participatory framework of the Municipality of Palermo (i.e., the *Partecipattivi* project). Such evidence highlights the increasing centrality of the role of municipalities in building participatory governance for WH sites. The polycentric perspective suggests to deeply look into local administration, to grasp the scattered nature of WH sites' participatory governance.

Figure 36 illustrates a possible configuration of a participatory polycentric system for the WH Arab-Norman serial site.

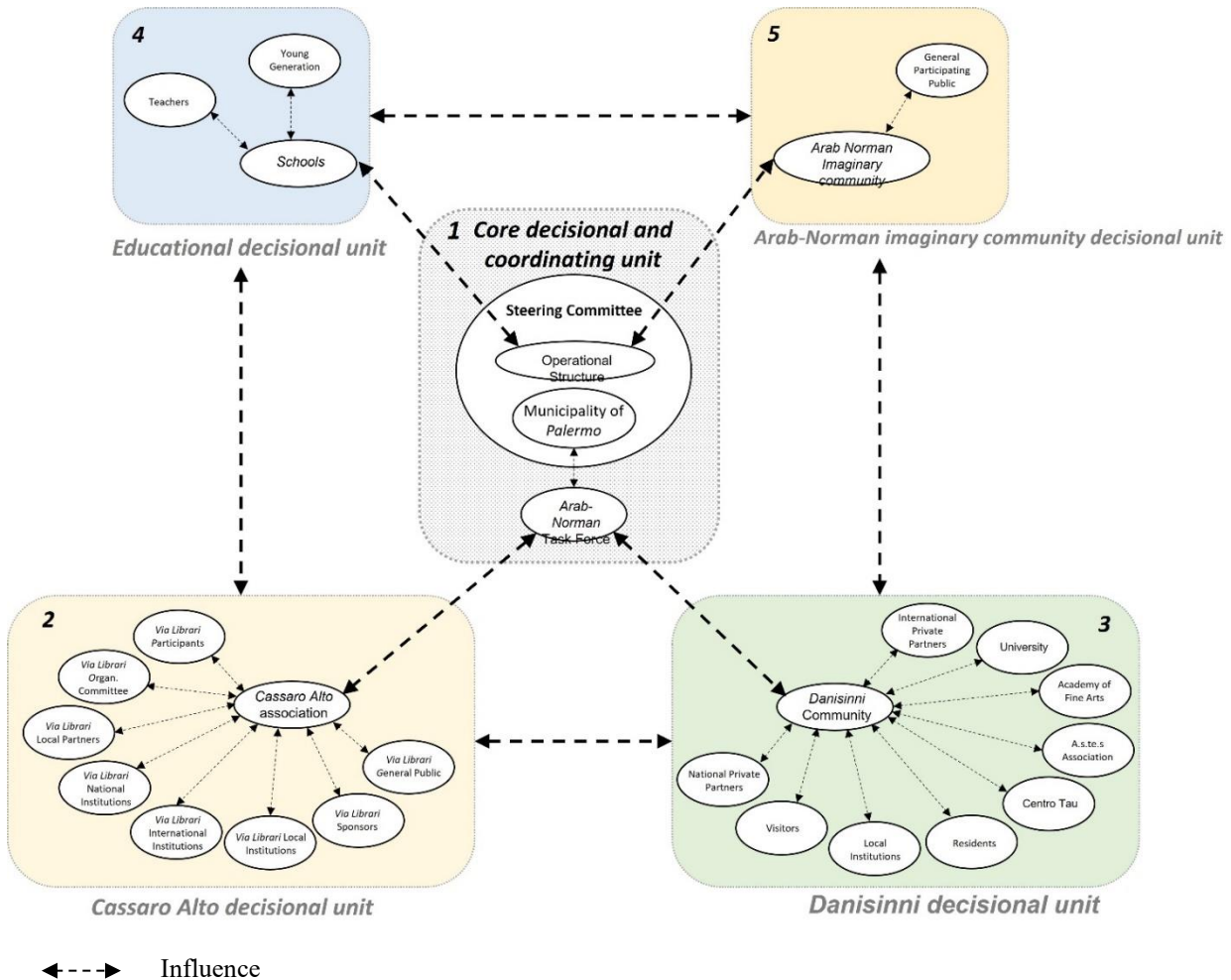


Figure 36 Polycentric participatory governance model WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site. *Source: own elaboration.*

A polycentric participatory model could yield a range of advantages for a WH site governance.

Firstly, the development of decentralised participation in decisions could improve participatory processes' effectiveness. As Fung (2006) states, a large part of public participation mechanisms is “open to all who wish to attend” (Fung 2006, p.67) at the risk that participants are not representative of any larger population and fail to reach any decisions at the end of the process. Such weakness emerged in the case of the *Cassaro Alto* district. Indeed, the Municipality of Palermo failed to reach an agreement with residents and traders on the pedestrianisation of the urban axis, despite three town hall meetings, one city council, and two expert groups (Table 9). Rather, polycentric participatory governance consists of distinct units for participants' typology and purposes of action.



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It can better elucidate the representativeness of a unit compared to a larger sample (such as citizens or civil society) and support participants' convergence on a shared interest. This way, it would facilitate the achievement of a common decision, even in the case of conflicting opinions. With a smoother achievement of a final decision, adopted participatory mechanisms reduce the threat of inconclusiveness and are more effective in materializing chains of action. This is clearly shown in the case of the *Cassaro Alto* district, with the establishment of the *Cassaro Alto* association and the *Via dei Librai* initiative. Notwithstanding the contrasting position of many residents, local traders succeeded in sharing and implementing an enhancement strategy for the neighborhood, starting from the WH status achievement.

Hence, a polycentric participatory governance approach may help to differentiate which social groups participate in specific categories of WH site decisions, by providing guidance on how to navigate a large and heterogeneous public, a topic not addressed by UNESCO policies (UNESCO, 2015c, 2019a). On the contrary, polycentric units hold clear-cut contours, that may facilitate mutual recognition and consequently boost collaborative relationships among them. For the WH Arab-Norman serial site, this feature may guarantee a more integrated connection between the cluster of properties in the city of Palermo and the two Cathedrals of Cefalù and Palermo located in different municipalities. By transferring this approach to trans-regional and trans-national WH serial sites, which may extend over diverse territories, a cross-cultural awareness of each context's peculiarities would be facilitated. Subsequently, the development of a more coherent and integrated WH site planning would be implemented.

A further benefit of polycentric participatory governance consists in including multiple actors' perspectives that can highlight different criticalities and opportunities (Rocco & Clarke, 2022) for a WH site. In the analysed case study, the *Danisinni* neighborhood subunit, highlights the unresolved criticality of the *Zisa Castle's* physical isolation from the rest of the route, while potentially developing social regeneration projects for the downtown neighborhoods connected to the WH route.

The *Cassaro Alto* subunit, on the one hand, emphasizes the benefits – in terms of public participation and values – of long-term enhancement projects on the intangible nature of the WH serial site. In fact, the *Via dei Librai* initiative enriches the interchange of human values conveyed from criterion ii of the OUV by highlighting the historical heritage of the neighbourhood as an editorial centre and emphasises on its connection to the WH Cathedral of Palermo, which is included as an image in the initiative logo and is actively committed to the initiative's development.

On the other hand, The *Cassaro Alto* subunit highlights the criticality of including also additional neighbouring WH properties due to the lack of a common accessibility policy. As pointed out in the SC minutes of meetings, public authorities and management bodies have been unable to establish it for the WH serial site.



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Finally, participatory polycentric governance may reduce the redundancy of governance actors (Rocco and Clarke, 2022 p. 367), by facilitating the diversification and adaptability of the governance structures to changes. This entails that polycentric units may vary in terms of inner members and grow in numbers over time, depending on the WH sites' requirements. This approach significantly extends the participation in WH site decisions to multiple societal individuals, by strengthening the representativeness and inclusiveness of participatory governance. The more decision-making units expand and engage on heterogeneous actors, the greater participation shapes WH sites as common goods for society. The centralized structure – corresponding to the SC for the Arab-Norman WH serial site – would remain stable. The only variations concern the rotation of political and management positions.

In concerns of the WH Arab-Norman serial site, the variation of units may be related to the potential expansion of the site through the involvement of the heritage properties included in the A and B lists of the WH management plan (Andaloro et al., 2018b) (see Chapter 3). During the fieldwork, the *Castle of Maredolce* was investigated as a potential site in the A list. The heritage site is located in the suburban district of *Brancaccio*, about 3 km away from the WH Admiral Bridge. Following a thorough on-site interview with the president of the *Castello e Parco di Maredolce* association¹⁵², it emerged that the association has long been engaged in enhancement, research, and outreach activities for the site together with other local actors (inside and outside the district). The association is also pursuing a pressing application to receive the allocated budget for architectural conservation works from the regional authorities. With the help of these interventions, the entire park would be finally included in the WH serial site. From the perspective of a changing polycentric participatory governance, the above-mentioned association and the actors operating for the rehabilitation of the *Castle of Maredolce* could constitute an additional unit in case of inclusion in the WH serial site.

By conveying different perspectives and interests within a branched governance structure, each unit may provide new inputs and resources for SC, allowing to strengthen planning activities for the WH serial site and guaranteeing financial stability in return. As revealed from the meetings and interviews with SC's members, one of the major criticalities for the SC is to find alternative financial resources (beyond actors' contributions) to maintain an appropriate activity and monitoring plan for the WH serial site. In fact, it is important to bear in mind how financial instability threatens the climate of inter-institutional collaboration among the SC members. Hence, the intensification of planning activities could indirectly contribute to re-establishing a collaborative environment in the SC and ensure reliable coordination of the whole polycentric structure.

¹⁵² The *Castello e Parco di Maredolce* Association was founded as a voluntary organisation in 1999 for the enhancement of *Maredolce* Castle. Retrieved information from: <https://www.associazionecastelloeparcodimaredolce.org/> Accessed 12/10/2021.



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In conclusion, the notion of polycentric participatory governance preserves an ever-closer relationship between participation in WH sites' governance and initiatives. Other than endorsing participatory mechanisms, participatory initiatives identify a variety of actors who could constitute the decision-making units of a polycentric system, given their interest in WH site-related activities and the benefits obtained.

Further research should investigate how polycentric participatory governance can be implemented in order to expand the notion of a WH site as a common good.

It is extremely valuable to observe the organisation of the units, their variations over time, their coordination, and the adopted participatory mechanisms. An extensive and comparative study of multiple WH sites would elucidate how polycentric participatory governance can be a responsive tool for contemporary transformations, ensuring a more represented participation of civil society and it would be more inclined to innovation due to the greater decision-making autonomy of each unit.

7.3 Public values and participatory mechanisms

How do public values and participatory processes relate? How do public values vary as the adopted participatory mechanisms vary?

In order to answer the two research questions, the nexus between public values and WH site's participatory processes has been observed from a twofold perspective based on the information gathered in HPM. The first perspective approaches WH sites under the cultural commons' lens (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020). The second one scrutinizes participatory processes detected in the 3 subunits at the micro-level to reveal some trends on how public values in each domain may vary as participatory mechanisms change.

Taking the first angle, public administration studies have already asserted a nexus between participatory processes and *public values* (see Chapter 1, part 3). More precisely, public values denote how the public sector “should create or contribute to the common good and the public interest” (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007, p. 361) and participatory processes are considered a tool for public administrators to achieve this purpose by including citizens' perspectives in public decisions (i.e., decisions related to public services) when steering society (Grüb & Martin, 2020).

Similarly, the research strives to explore how participatory processes contribute to the perception of WH sites as shared resources that can convey societal benefits in forms of public values.

While the global procedure for nominating a WH site (see footnote n. 4) may seem at odds with conceiving heritage as commons as it entails the prevalent action of political elites and experts (Smith, 2006; Fairclough, 2020), the investigation of the WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site – together with the further case studies



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reviewed in the paragraph 1.2.3. - discloses several shared features with “cultural commons” (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020).

As an example, in the *Cassaro Alto* district local traders (including some residents and citizens) valued the WH site as a medium for the revitalization of the neighborhood’s cultural identity.

Based on this motivation, they turned conflict with local authorities into dialogue and collaboration through the recurring *Via dei Librai* initiative, that has become a long-term participatory enhancement strategy of the WH serial site and the whole neighborhood. In this transition, public values changed, as did the institutional design (*who, how and what*) of the analysed participatory processes (Tables 9 and 11).

Stage I saw professional and political stakeholders leading the participatory process (*who* and *what*) and the general public (mostly residents, traders and citizens) participating with a fragmented negotiating power between individual needs (*how*). Most of the public values in the instrumental sphere (i.e., better environmental conditions, citizen well-being, new welcoming culture etc.) and the intrinsic sphere (i.e., recovery of the historic identity) emerged at the potential level (Table 9), conveying participants’ aspirations about the WH candidacy, that were as yet not operational. However, public values in the institutional domain concretely addressed the principles behind a participatory process: willingness to collaborate and openness to public involvement (Table 9).

Stage II saw a network of professional stakeholders and public authorities (*who*) guiding the participatory *Via dei Librai* initiative through their expertise (*how*), with a group of civic associations detaining direct authority (*what*) in planning and implementing the initiative. At this stage, public values carried forward some concrete benefits resulting from enhancing intangible assets of the WH serial site. Public values in the institutional and intrinsic sphere were aligned with the previous one. Therefore, the potential re-appropriation of the *Cassaro Alto* historic identity materialised as an individual and collective sense of identity and knowledge value (intrinsic sphere), as well the inclination to public involvement and collaboration which became a strengthening of a social network and relationship of confidence with public authorities (institutional sphere) (Table 11). Conversely, the instrumental sphere gathered different public values, displaying more emphasis on social cohesion, self-confidence and pride rather than on material benefits such as economic returns from tourism or better environmental conditions.

Concerning the *Danisinni* subunit, the *Danisinni* community (see p. 171) valued the WH site as an opportunity to launch a process of cultural recognition and development of a largely marginalized neighborhood. For this reason, the *Danisinni* community reclaimed the district’s belonging to the WH serial site and took advantage of this global label to be part of a participated regeneration process aimed at the sustainable tourism development of the WH serial site. As for the



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Cassaro Alto the transition from the recognition to development phases implied a transformation of both institutional design and public values of the analysed participatory processes (Tables 12 and 13).

Stage I saw professional stakeholders as a representative voice of the whole district (*who*) engaged to influence (*how*) officials' opinions on the cultural contribution of *Danisinni* to the WH serial site, through bargain and expertise (*what*). Most of the detected public values refer to a range of immediate benefits for the community, such as greater visibility and environmental sustainability (instrumental sphere), growing awareness and recovery of collective memory (intrinsic sphere). However, public values in the institutional sphere remained weak due to the low level of attention from involved public authorities (Table 12).

Stage II saw a wider range of participants, including external actors mainly grouped into project developers and beneficiaries (*who*) sharing ideas and preferences (*how*) for co-governing and managing (*what*) two projects (*Rambla Papireto* and *In-Transito*) aimed at regenerating the district while triggering the WH serial site touristic development. Generated public values showed a progressive strengthening of the *Danisinni* community who reaped a series of improvements for the urban area and benefits for both individuals and community (instrumental sphere). This process was complemented by a novel climate of dialogue and cooperation among the *Danisinni* community, public authorities and third actors (institutional sphere) and marked a crucial recovery of *Danisinni* historical roots, generating greater awareness of the district's cultural legacy (intrinsic sphere). Such cultural identity repossession was the engine of a gradual and still ongoing development processes of *Danisinni* district.

This analysis discloses how participatory processes related to the construction and development of a WH site may bring some cultural commons' components into play: the action of heritage communities where a plurality of actors intersects (Fig. 38), the dissemination of collaborative approaches and multidimensional public values (Cerreta & Giovene di Girasole 2020, p.3). Thus, echoing cultures' definition in the commons' perspective, WH sites can be looked as human-constructed "shared resources capable of yielding collective benefits to people" (Bertacchini et al. 2012, p. xi).

This perspective opens further reflections for a broader research agenda.

Firstly, the relationship between participatory processes and public values follows a sequential logic (Figure 37) whereby the expectations and interests towards a WH site by one or more groups of actors converge into participatory processes and can give rise to diverse public values. The more the collective interests prevail over the individual ones, the more institutional design of participatory processes triggers deliberative decisions on a shared goal; the more invited and created spaces for participation are balanced, the more initial expectations can be converted into public values for society.

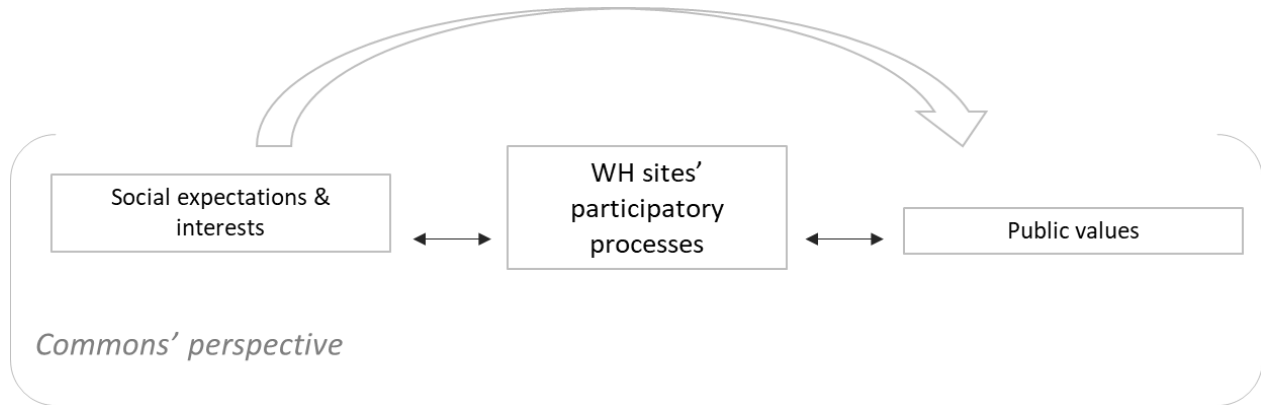


Figure 37 Relation between WH sites' participatory processes and public values, according to a commons' perspective. *Source:* own elaboration.

However, such relationships still lack some core elements that distinguish cultural commons. Indeed, community members have to share and follow agreed rules to approach the commons and have to participate “in the different phases of the process: that is from the recognition of the cultural good to the definition and sharing of rules, objectives and values for its use and conservation” (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole 2020, p.3).

The investigated case study reveals a fragmented picture, where the identified communities still act without any regulatory framework aimed at integrating their contributions into a long-term management approach of the WH site (Lekakis, p. 3). The risk is that generated public values will be dispersed rather than consolidated over time through common conduct. Moreover, such communities are not included into official decisional arena driven by the SC, as detected in all three sub-units (Tables 6, 9 and 12). Collected data confirm how the procedure towards WH nomination (UNESCO, 2005b, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015a, 2017, 2019b, 2021b) is highly authoritative (Smith, 2006; Fairclough, 2020) and leaves scant room for civil society participation in decisions, except for experts, management entities and property owners. Public values are mostly limited to the institutional sphere and stem from the least degree of authority and power (no influence, personal benefits, communicative influence and advise and consult). They convey a set of crucial principles (like mutual openness and esteem, and willingness to collaborate) disclosing the unanimity of intent among public authorities and professionals in pursuing the WH status after about a decade of work and political negotiations.

Hence it emerges how the relationship between WH sites' participatory processes and public values is imbued with a dilemma: the coexistence of exclusivity and inclusivity. Exclusivity is determined by the nomination procedure (UNESCO, 2021b; UNSECO, 1972) based on the work of



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political forces, experts, and technicians. Inclusiveness arises from collective actions that share many elements with cultural commons (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020).

While Fairclough (2020) states that WH site's exclusivity and their belonging to a "global scale of values" precludes considering them as commons, this research demonstrates that WH sites' public values are also deeply rooted in local contexts and their belonging to a global scale of value does not prevent local communities' actions. Rather, local actors' perceptions of achieving global recognition embodied in the WH sites' OUV can serve as a driver for participation, also for claiming a missing inclusion as in the case of *Danisinni*.

Turning to the second perspective, two main remarks can be advanced.

Firstly, public values change according to the institutional design (Fung, 2006) of participatory processes, following some general patterns. Specifically, when the participants' domain (who) is limited to political and professional actors interacting based on technical knowledge (how), public values fall predominantly into the institutional sphere, underlying the sharing of purposes and collaboration to achieve a shared goal (Table 6).

When professional actors (who) participate to represent the needs of a broader community and negotiate with public authorities or technically motivate their claims (how) to mobilize public opinion (what), public values also populate the instrumental and intrinsic spheres if they reach even partially what is being discussed (Table 12). When a broad audience selected based on the interest (who), succeeds in discussing different preferences (partly through the support of facilitators of the participatory process) (how), reaching an agreed decision, and co-managing its implementation (what), instrumental public values are strengthened due to the greater benefits achieved (Table 12).

Secondly, comparing the situation before and after the WH nomination it is noticeable how after the WH nomination, the right side of the HPM becomes densely populated: and co-governance and direct authority mechanisms are prevalent. Public values increase along with all three categories (institutional, intrinsic, and instrumental), ranging from collaboration and confidence with public authorities to benefits to community, self-confidence, and sense of identity.

Consistently with the proposed model of polycentric participatory governance of WH sites, this trend shows the crucial contribution of created spaces for participation and participatory initiatives in reducing the authoritative environment of a WH site and fostering participatory processes. As an example, public values pertaining to the *Danisinni* and *Cassaro Alto* districts are determined by several participatory initiatives (*Rambla Papireto*, *In-Transito* projects and *Via dei Librai* initiative) during which some representatives of civil society assert direct authority. The SC plays a coordinating role and support the development of participatory processes through collaboration.



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A further observation considers public values as a function of the actors who take part in participatory processes (*who*) and their interaction modes (*how*).

Looking at the *Heritage Participation Matrix* (in Chapters 3, 4 and 5) it emerges how the combination of professional stakeholders as participants and the interchange of technical expertise as a way of interaction generates public values mostly in the institutional and instrumental sphere due to actors' convergence towards achieving common goals. This shared interest results into a prevalent willingness to collaborate (institutional public values) and into the operationalization of planned measures to improve the livability of urban spaces or indirect economic returns from tourism development.

On the contrary, open-self-selection mechanism while supposed to guarantee broader participation, risk being fruitless if not supported by specific participatory techniques.

This evidence emerges in the *Danisinni* district where both the *Rambla Papireto* and the *In-Transito* projects adopt expertise and specific techniques to engage residents and citizens in participation (see Chapter 5). Opposedly, for the *Cassaro Alto* neighbourhood, the open self-selection was not planned in advance and the weakness of the participatory technique (coupled with a strong dissent among participants) limited public values to a potential level. The open self-selection method gives more space to participant's subjectivity expressed through intrinsic public values. The intrinsic domain risk to convey individual rather than collective interests, if not adequately addressed. It can be limited to passive attitudes such as expression of preferences or listening as a spectator.

In conclusion, the following analysis on the relationship between public values and participatory mechanisms related to the construction and development of the WH *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* serial site confirms that one of the main purposes of participation in WH sites' governance is to expand WH sites' meaning as cultural commons to (Council of Europe, 2005) made of "different chains of experiences [...] to generate new valuable affective environments [...] in the interplay between hierarchies of value and the local contexts" (Alonso Gonzalez 2014, p.25).

The pluralist approach to public values adopted in this research from the branch of public administration studies (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007) helped to reveal how public values change depending on the actors who convey them and how they evolve in the various stages of a participatory process. Nevertheless, the innovative analysis conducted through the *Heritage Participation Matrix* shows that public values also change according to the adopted participatory mechanisms. For the WH Arab-Norman serial site, a debate arised regarding how the more civil society representatives hold decisional control over the participatory process. the more intense and varied is the typology of public values generated by the process. To be further explain, such correlation occurs with direct authority



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or co-governance mechanisms (Fung, 2006) which express a high degree of participants' influence on final decisions and actions. Moreover, the investigation discloses a correspondence between sequences of mechanisms and public value domains. As an example, the pattern consisting of professional and political stakeholders as participants (*who*) and technical expertise as interaction modes (*how*) is connected to public values in the institutional and instrumental sphere.

Last but not least, the investigation highlights some contextual factors that may affect the variation of public values as participatory mechanisms change. The design technique of a participatory process (Bobbio, 2004; Bobbio & Pomatto, 2007) is one of the most influential factors. The adoption of specific techniques, such as the virtual town meeting, or the development of a well-planned co-participatory approach, such as the school-work alternation project, streamline the achievement of pre-set objectives and consequently support the rising of varied public values (especially those belonging to the instrumental sphere). A second factor relates to the response to participatory decisions and actions. In other words, the way a wider public (beyond participants) reacts to a taken decision could enrich generated public values. This particular situation occurred in the pedestrianisation of *Piazza Bellini*, improving the accessibility of two WH properties in the city of Palermo. Beyond the instrumental value of improving the urban space through pedestrianisation, citizens emphasise the cultural and public function of this renovated space, by organising community events that would not have been feasible in the past (see Chapter 3). Finally, controversy appears as a further contextual factor, affecting the variety of public values. In the *Cassaro Alto* analysis, debates supported to strengthen traders' awareness of their negotiating power with public authorities, consequently empowering their position as leading players in forging an identarian connection between the WH serial site and the *Cassaro Alto* district. Public values acquired from contestation mostly lie on the potential level, without yielding any immediate benefits.

Of course, such remarks are neither meant to be exhaustive nor expect to be all-purpose regarding other WH sites in different contexts. Rather, they aspire to trigger further research in different environments to enrich the range of correlations and to draw more robust inferences.

7.4 WH relational buffer zones as spaces for participation

This final discussion paragraph tackles the spatial nature of WH participatory governance, linking theories addressed in Chapter 1 (paragraph 2.2) with the empirical evidence of this research. As extensively considered in the theoretical framework, participation in decision-making unfolds both in abstract spaces consisting of social and power relations and in material locations where these processes occur. Participatory processes may encompass both *invited spaces* for participation by public authorities and *created spaces* ignited by civil society representatives. Such spaces for participation can cover multiple and multi-layered forms (Cornwall, 2002; Ciaffi e Mela, 2006) and they are able to influence each other, generating a chain of interconnected participatory actions.



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Adopting a polycentric approach (see paragraph 6.1.1.) that observes the WH serial site's participatory governance as a diffused rather than a centralized process within a single decisional structure, a remarkable spatial imprint emerges from this research, enabling the elaboration of an innovative concept within the broad WH sites' debate.

This thought concerns the *WH relational buffer zones* notion. Hitherto, WH buffer zones constitute a mere technical expedient to more adequately preserve a WH site (see Chapter 1, part 1). The latest version of the OG (UNESCO, 2021) defines a WH buffer zone as “an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property” (UNESCO 2021, paragraph 103). The concept of *WH relational buffer zones* aims to provide a novel interpretative framework, that looks at buffer zones as spaces of openness and social research rather than mere areas of legal restriction. This new proposal also reverses the way buffer zone boundaries are conceived: from rigid demarcations (both legal and geographical) around a WH site to edges of produced areas for mutual and broader interactions. The dynamic conception of fixed and seemingly pre-established spaces, such as WH buffer zones, stems from combining some traits of the *production of space* theorised by Lefebvre (1971) with an in-depth investigation of participatory mechanisms (Fung, 2006). Lefebvre argues that space does not exist *per se*, as a static container of objects and individuals. The French philosopher provides a processual interpretation of space, intended as both a “product and producer” of social relations (Lefebvre, 1971 p.73). During production processes, people make rational use of space's physical elements (such as objects, materials, etc.) through a sequence of actions. In this vein, humans do not simply forge social relations but generate what Lefebvre defines *social space*. A *social space* detains a polyvalent facet. It is simultaneously a “sequence and a set of operations” (Lefebvre, 1971, p. 85). Not only does this domain stem from human relations and knowledge exchanges during social labour, also, it provides material objects and elements given by nature, fostering the development of such relations. Moreover, *social spaces* hold both physical and ideal boundaries which are socially generated and combined with each other.

Looking through the lens of *social space*, this thesis argues that WH buffer zones are both the setting, allowing participatory processes to unfold, and the product of human relations triggered by participatory processes. Buffer zones' features (both historical and contemporary) lay the foundations of participatory processes and influence their evolution. The *Cassaro Alto* neighbourhood embodies this dual function as a *social space*. Being a key area of the first level buffer zones for the WH properties in Palermo historic centre, the district stands out as an animated sequence of participatory mechanisms that distinguish such buffer zone's section as a social relational fabric rather than a static preservation enclosure.

By considering the *Cassaro Alto* as a setting, it arises that the chain of actions behind the two stages of the participatory process (before and after the WH nomination) are built upon various



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material, immaterial and social peculiarities of the district. The first stage of the process revolves around *Cassaro Alto*'s vehicular plan, the organisation of trade activities, and the resident's needs. The goal is to attain a trade-off between public authorities, residents and traders. The former press for changing the neighbourhood's accessibility to ensure adequate protection to the future WH properties. While traders and residents who claim a *status quo* fearing negative consequences on the already fragile business activities, a real estate devaluation and hard living conditions due to the inefficiency of the public transport system. Therefore, the social, and physical attributes of the district mark a stark divergence between social groups. Such contrast embeds the first part of the participatory process and paves the way for further transformations within the second stage. This latter is built on the district's historical vocation as a hub for manuscript and book printing on the new pedestrian dimension of the urban axis, and on a social fracture that evolves in an opposing cohesion and an impetus for the WH site enhancement. Accordingly, most of the traders renounce their conflictual position and gather in the *Cassaro Alto* association. With this strategy, they gain a leading role in revitalising the neighbourhood's cultural side mainly through the *Via dei Librai* initiative. This sense of togetherness ensures a high level of participation in the second stage.

Alternatively, approaching the *Cassaro Alto* buffer zone as a product of participatory mechanisms depicts the district as a tight network of relations and values. As shown in Annex 4, *Via dei Librai* is a collective social pact that annually gathers a multiplicity of actors who are committed to enacting a knowledge democratisation process for the benefit of the whole city. In turn, these players' contributions generate a diffuse network of deep-rooted public values in the district, such as confidence in public authorities, a sense of collective identity, pride in the district, willingness to collaborate, etc. Through the lens of a participatory process, WH buffer zones as *social spaces* may be perceived as a flow of human relations and public values that change together with the areas' futures. Notwithstanding WH buffer zones' spatial boundaries supposedly delineate a fixed protection area, what they contain is constantly changing.

Additionally, within the conception of WH relational buffer zones, the adjective *relational* does not cover only the social dynamics within WH buffer zones. In addition, it also refers to the capacity of *social spaces* to interpenetrate each other along their boundaries. Bearing this aspect in mind, it is plausible to admit that multiple WH buffer zones can mutually interrelate and may generate *social spaces* in between them. In this case, WH buffer zones' boundaries both demarcate the physical extension and social interfaces of these areas. This is the case of *Danisinni* neighbourhood. Despite being a strategic connection between the first-level buffer zones around the *Zisa* Castle, the Royal Palace, and (partly) the Cathedral of Palermo, the *Danisinni* has not been officially included in the buffer perimeter. However, the high functionality of the district in enhancing the WH serial site's route and its Arab historical-geographical background increases the *Danisinni* area's affinity with the WH serial site. For these reasons, the neighbourhood takes on the connotation of *social space*. As



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for the *Cassaro Alto* district, the *Danisinni* area has been identified both as a setting and product of the two participatory process stages. As a setting, the marginalisation and poor conditions of the neighbourhood, the growing awareness of its Arabic roots by the local community (both volunteers and residents), and the yearning for social redemption steer the first stage of the participatory process towards recovering the district's collective memory and achieving greater visibility in the eyes of public authorities through a claim of belonging to the WH serial site. As well as the second stage of the participatory process is fuelled by an assertive awareness (for both local communities and public authorities) of the neighbourhood's strategic role in the touristic development of the WH serial site in contrast with isolation of the *Zisa* Castle and social regeneration.

As a result, the neighbourhood emerges with a of partially changing fabric and steady social relations. Indeed, some actors appear transitory depending on a project's duration (i.e., Airbnb, the artists, etc.), while others take root as a garrison of cultural and social development in the neighbourhood (i.e., Academy of Fine Arts, *Danisinni* community, etc.). Again, as in the *Cassaro Alto* sub-unit, the relational network within *Danisinni* is also made of public values that embody a series of benefits for the urban space and young residents and a stance of the *Danisinni* community in asserting its idea of the social, environmental, and cultural revitalisation of the neighbourhood (Table 13).

The exclusion of the neighbourhood from the WH buffer zones (even the second level) weakened the benefits that the *Danisinni* social space could have brought to the WH serial site. In particular, the connection between the two buffer zones encompassing the district is weak (Figure 29) at the expense of the *Zisa* Castle which remains disconnected from the rest of the WH serial site.

In conclusion, the conceptualisation of *relational WH buffer zones* shows how apparently fixed and predetermined technical areas for preserving a WH site, actually unveil vibrant *social spaces* rhythms paced by articulated participatory processes (in several stages and mechanisms).

Such *social spaces* may extend within a buffer zone contour (i.e., *Cassaro Alto* district) and in between buffer zone boundaries (i.e., *Danisinni* district), consisting in the distribution of social relations and public values tied with the unfolding of participatory processes.

This study suggests that when defining WH buffer zones' boundaries, experts should also consider the socio-cultural peculiarities of these areas in order to strengthen their potential contribution to a WH site's development, beyond preservation. In addition, findings of the two districts demonstrate that participation in WH sites' governance occurs in a diffused and polycentric way. Due to their proximity to WH properties, WH buffer zones can be considered preferential areas where to extensively investigate participatory dynamics in order to better understand how polycentric participatory governance structures of WH sites are articulated, evolved or fail. This impetus for further research could give birth to a new integrated and comparative strand of studies for WH sites: exploring how polycentric participatory governance of WH sites unfold in WH buffer zones. The



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main purpose is to extrapolate organisational similarities and differences of the structures, contextual influencing factors their operability (both positive and negative), and effects in the local context in terms of added public values.



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Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The aim of this doctoral thesis was to understand how participation is enacted in WH sites' governance and to what extent it contributes to forging WH sites' perception as commons.

While the research focus arose from observing the governance global-local nexus in the WH convention (Coombe & Weiss, 2015; Ferrucci, 2012; Schmitt, 2015), it expanded along the way and encompassed further themes, like the relationship between participatory processes and public values (Bobbio, 2019; Cornwall, 2002; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

Since the debate on the WH Convention and governance mostly focused on global manipulation of the WH decision-making system (Bertacchini et al. 2017) and the imbalances of the listing mechanism (Frey et al., 2013), the main purpose of this study is to redirect attention onto civil society participation in WH sites' governance. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the WH Convention, several scholars reiterated the relevance of questioning the concept of governance within the WH framework (M. Albert et al., 2022). While affirming the still dominant role of national governments in determining WH sites' governance (Bernecker & Franceschin, 2022; Schmedt, 2022), they noticed the ascendancy of civil society in building long-term WH sites protection's strategies amid growing challenges (from climate change to conflicts), in strengthening the connection between the WH Convention and the global agenda on sustainability and in advocating for more inclusive governance towards local communities (Bernecker et al., 2022). The same scholars also emphasized



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how knowledge gaps concerning WH governance are still far-reaching, echoing the need for new research that could clarify how WH sites' governance structures are differently arranged, what influence such structures exert on WH sites' protection and how to promote communities' participation in decisions (Schmedt, 2022). Furthermore, the authors underlined how the fragmentation of civil society initiatives is still wakening their potential of “mitigating the gap between the decision makers and those relegated from the decision-making process” (Bernecker et al. 2022, p.83) and in turn they express the need to undertake a systematic investigation.

This doctoral research is rooted in the current debate on WH sites, governance and participation and contributes to advancing novel reflections on three main fronts. It demonstrates:

1. the relevance of in-depth analysing power dynamics within WH sites governance structures, to understand the propensity, or conversely the reluctance to greater participation in decisional processes;
2. the importance of considering participation in both decision-making and enhancement initiatives in WH sites in order to align contributions from both parts in terms of public values;
3. the need to deploy a systematic approach to the analysis of WH sites governance and participation in order to facilitate comparison between different contexts.

Concerning the first point, Chapter 3 highlighted how collaboration among multi-institutional actors within WH sites' governance structures is built through a formalisation and regulation process that is little explored in the existing literature (Badia et al., 2012b; Heritage Research Lab et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020a). Accordingly, the six steps through which WH sites' nomination is articulated (see footnote n. 4) require a preponderant action by local institutions and experts. Collaboration among these actors is not always guaranteed or lasting, hindering both WH site's management and the opening of decisional arenas due to political contrasts. One of the interviewees confirmed this aspect, by explaining the impossibility of reaching integrated forms of coordination among several public authorities involved in other WH serial sites in Sicily. The research extrapolates some analytical drivers concerning this issue. The first driver intercepts directive, cohesive and guaranteeing forces within WH sites' governance structures (see paragraph 4.3.2) whose ways of interaction influence governance's stability. The second driver refers to a series of determinants such as trust, power, and resource sharing (see paragraph 4.3.2) that impact the modes of actions and achieved results over time. Further studies should look at additional case studies to understand whether other forces and determinants affect the stability of WH sites' governance structures and in turn their participatory nature.

Regarding the second point, the thesis conceptually distinguished participation, participatory governance, participatory enhancement initiatives, and public values:



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1. *Participation* is intended as an umbrella term, including all participatory approaches, inside and outside the institutional fabric, with different levels of engagement of different actors to preserve and enhance WH sites (Brodie et al., 2009; Cornwall, 2008a; Stiti & Ben Rajeb, 2022)
2. *Participatory initiatives* gather set of activities and projects aimed at building diverse and shared social meanings of a WH site, through co-design or co-implementation (Badia et al., 2012b; Biondi et al., 2020; Piber et al., 2019);
3. *Participatory governance* is interpreted as decision-making responsibility shared among institutional and non-institutional actors for the management of a WH site (Bobbio, 2019; Fisher, 2010; Kooiman, 1999; Sani, 2016);
4. *Public values* are seen as plural values that convey principles and benefits generated from both participatory governance and initiatives (Clark & Lennox, 2019; Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

The researcher looked at these key concepts from an integrated perspective. The observation of several WH case studies (see paragraph 1.2.3 and 1.2.4) revealed the increase in participatory initiatives to engage citizens and local communities in WH sites' management strategies alongside several challenges in achieving participatory forms of governance. To date scant attention has been paid to the relationships between participatory initiatives and governance of WH sites and their final purpose, leaving the contribution of participatory initiatives in the shadows.

By conducting a deep analysis of the *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* WH serial site, this thesis has demonstrated that WH sites' participatory governance is a complex macro-process that evolves through three crucial moments: inception, formalization, and openness (see Chapter 7). Empirical analysis (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6) showed how several participatory initiatives could occur during the three moments to enhance WH sites. Through their organisational dynamics, participatory initiatives for WH sites' enhancement provide further decisional arenas (see Chapters 5, and 6) where representatives of civil society can reflect and decide upon specific issues. These arenas are based on the same participatory mechanisms of formal decision making (Fung, 2006) and significantly contribute to generating a multiplicity of public values that outline the “new valuable affective environment” (Gonzales 2014, p. 25) of a WH site as *commons* (Cerreto & Giovane di Girasole, 2020). In addition from a polycentric perspective (see paragraph 7.2.1.), investigating participatory initiatives could also advise which actors should be involved in order to initiate the sharing of decisional responsibilities and in which realms of action, especially when WH sites' governance is hardly participatory, as in the analysed case study.

Finally, the third point relates to the *Heritage Participation Matrix*. It is conceived as a multi-functional analytical tool to systematize knowledge about WH sites' participatory processes, through the correlation of three main dimensions that have been poorly explored in WH heritage studies: the spatial dimension (invited and created space for participation) (Ciaffi & Mela, 2006; Cornwall,



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2008b), institutional design (Bobbio, 2019; Fung, 2006) and purpose in terms of produced public values (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). Invited and created spaces in WH sites' processes intertwine with the ongoing projects, political interests, administrative procedures in the local context. This evidence proves that investigating participation in WH sites can no longer be confined to site boundaries or properties. It has to include the reference context to detect mechanisms, created public values and their relationship to participants' perception of the OUV.

Broader research on WH sites should be set on the use of the HPM to understand whether its extensive use could generate comparable data and find any trends on the following issues:

1. Setting a systematic classification of participatory mechanisms adopted in WH sites' making processes;
2. Understanding how participatory processes are organised and how they may evolve in WH sites' making processes;
3. Proposing novel concepts, by interweaving empirical data on participatory processes in WH sites and already elaborated theoretical notions (institutional design; public values).

Hence, although the doctoral research focused on a single case study, the *Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale* WH serial site, it approached it from a broad perspective grounded on a multidisciplinary theoretical background (see Chapter 1) that allowed for generalized results, summarized below.

8.2 Summary of main findings

In a nutshell, four main research findings emerge from the empirical analysis, opening new trajectories for further research.

The first finding clarifies the processual nature of WH sites' participatory governance. Through the elaboration of three main steps - inception, formalisation, and openness - (paragraph 6.2) the finding suggests that WH sites' participatory governance gradually evolves. The openness phase envisages broad participation of civil society in decisions concerning WH sites' management, relying on a stable and lasting inter-institutional collaboration (Costumato, 2021). This collaboration is managed by public authorities and bodies holding stewardship of WH sites which must be achieved in the two earlier phases. However, this processual and gradual interpretation does not aspire to normatively establish whether the governance of a WH site may be more or less participatory. In fact, the literature on participatory governance already provides several scales that can also be adapted to investigation of WH sites (Arnstein, 1968; Wilcox 1994) (see Chapter 1). Conversely, it aims to unveil contextual factors that may enable or hinder the enactment of participatory governance in WH sites. The three stages follow the standard procedure contained in the WH OGs and for this reason,



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its adoption can be generalized and extended to further research on WH sites, beyond the local context.

The second finding advocates a polycentric approach towards WH sites' participatory governance. The polycentric approach recognizes the contributions that several members of civil society – from citizens to indigenous communities – could bring to the development of a WH site for this latter being adherent to the needs and peculiarities of the local social context (paragraph 6.2.1). More specifically, it embraces the conceptualisation of a diffused heritage governance (De Cesari, 2020) (see Chapter 1) and emphasizes the role of civil society by conferring decisional autonomy to participating members under the guidance of a centralised coordinating system. The extrapolated model in this thesis (Figure 36), intercepts societal actors standing in the organisation and implementation of WH participatory initiatives as members of future decisional units. Consequently, these actors are officially organised under the coordination of a stable SC. Ideally, a polycentric participatory model would strengthen the contribution of participation in shaping a WH site as a societal common good to be taken care of. In fact, decisional units of a polycentric system could expand or vary their components over time, favouring a more inclusive, adaptive, and widespread connection between WH sites and society.

Thus, combining both participatory and polycentric governance perspectives, is it feasible to envisage new multi-scalar decisional models whereby devoted communities, users and other stakeholders can autonomously decide on some issues concerning the care and enhancement of WH sites? Further, how do such models nestle into institutional superstructures, commissioned by legislation to heritage governance? And how could these models affirm the understanding of WH heritage as a common good imbued with public values?

The third finding clarifies the relationship between participatory processes, emerging public values, and WH sites (see paragraph 6.3).

In this thesis, public values are employed as a vehicle to understand how the participation of diverse civil society representatives in public decisions contributes to addressing societal requirements and challenges in a collective rather than individual direction (Jørgensen and Bozeman 2007; Grüb and Martin, 2020; Ostrom, 1990). Likewise, for WH sites, this research has demonstrated that detected public values suggest how participatory processes tied to a WH site would benefit the community, by shaping a WH site identity as a *common* good in its local context.

To be more specific, the empirical analysis revealed three main functions that public values could cover. The latter could serve as outcomes of participatory processes, highlighting a series of realistic improvements that a WH site would bring to its local context (such as urban area improvements, awareness, social networking, etc.) (instrumental sphere). Public values act also as principles (such as mutual esteem, openness, collaboration, etc.) that public administrators should



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pursue to ensure balanced and stable management of a WH site (institutional domain). Finally, they convey subjective feelings (such as sense of identity, belonging, pride, etc.) (intrinsic sphere) that prompt individuals to participate and in turn generate the progressive chain of actions defining participatory processes tied to a WH site. Most of the public values captured are immaterial and transitory and therefore hard to discern. The empirical exploration carried out in this thesis provides two paths toward public values detection. Firstly, public values are embedded within the perspectives of the actors who are engaged in participatory processes. Hence, they can be detected by interviewing participating players (see Annexes 1, 2, and 3). Secondly, the research revealed that public values change depending on the participatory mechanisms adopted (Bobbio, 2004) (see paragraph 6.2.2). Realistically, the investigation of the WH Arab-Norman serial site proves that:

- participatory initiatives notably contribute to fostering participation in decisions concerning the enhancement of WH sites, particularly through mechanisms of co-governance and direct authority;
- the more civil society representatives hold decisional control over the participatory process, the more intense and varied is the typology of public values generated by the process;
- public values within the instrumental and institutional spheres correlate predominantly with participatory mechanisms aimed at shared achievements among participants;
- public values in the intrinsic spheres correlate predominantly with participatory mechanisms that make room for participants' subjectivity and individual interests.

In order to expand the body of knowledge regarding the correlation between public values and participatory mechanisms, it is crucial to investigate participatory processes at the micro-level, addressing WH studies on little-explored issues.

The fourth and final finding deals with the conceptualisation of the *WH relational buffer zones* (see paragraph 6.4). This novel concept sees WH buffer zones and in-between areas as relational and value-oriented spaces due to their ability to unfold participatory processes. In this perspective, WH buffer zones serve a broader function: not only are they mere static preservation devices, more importantly they serve as preferential proactive areas. This helps to investigate the participatory governance dynamics of WH sites.

In fact, the spatial proximity of the buffer zones to WH properties makes its residents more susceptible to potential changes that a WH site may present. Consequently, they are more interested in participating in the creation and development of a WH site either to benefit from it, or to negotiate more convenient conditions.



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8.3 Contributions, limitations, and pathway for future research

The diversity of the empirical findings provides a series of valuable insights both in terms of theory and methodology, as well as some insights for WH policy makers.

In regards of the contribution to theory, both the concept of WH *polycentric participatory governance* and of WH *relational buffer zones* strengthen the interpretation of heritage as a “processes of engagement and the construction of meaning” (Waterton & Watson 2015, p.1), whilst also highlighting the crucial role of public values (Clark, 2016; Clark & Lennox, 2019; Díaz-Andreu, 2017; Jones, 2017) in enriching WH interpretation as a social construction (Adell et al., 2015; Beeksma & De Cesari, 2019; Dormaels, 2016; Waterton & Watson, 2013, 2015). More precisely, both notions emphasize the fabric of social relations and values that may develop around a WH site, resulting from participatory processes. Hitherto the literature on heritage public values has polarised scholars: there are those who look at public values only from a heritage managerial perspective, specifically focusing on the capabilities of cultural organisations to address societal needs; and those who embrace the notion of the subjectivity of public values conveyed by a wider community (Díaz-Andreu, 2017; Jones 2017; Olivier, 2016). This research has proved the legitimacy of combining the two approaches, which were previously conceived separately. This way, public values may convey the perspectives of multiple actors in a WH participatory process, including authorities, managers, and civil society representatives.

On one hand, this pluralistic approach to public values’ analysis has clarified their multifaceted functions in WH sites’ participatory processes (as outcome, principles, and drivers). On the other hand, it has allowed the researcher to enrich the content of each public values’ domain (institutional, instrumental, and intrinsic) (Clark, 2016) both through actors’ statements (from interviews) and typologies of values acquired from public administration studies (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007). In particular, public administration studies contribute to expanding the WH public values’ institutional sphere, by stressing a climate of openness and collaboration between citizens and public authorities or between public administrators.

Moreover, looking at the correlation between social expectations and interests conveyed in WH sites’ participatory processes and public values, pave the way for new research agenda on WH sites as commons (Cerreta & Giovane di Girasole, 2020) (Figure 37) with several shortcomings to be overcome. A new research agenda on WH sites as cultural commons should investigate how to reconcile “exclusivity and inclusivity” of WH sites by looking at communities’ regulatory frameworks, these being one of the main shortcomings. A further area of concern is how public values, captured on a local scale, would relate to the global common value that WH sites hold being recognized as a *common heritage of humanity*. Assuming that this research approach would be



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extended on a comparative scale among different contexts, the challenge of how to reconvey highly fragmented information in every analyzed WH site to a unity would arise.

The main limitation of this contribution concerns the focus on a single environment and the risk that detected public values' typologies may be a poor representative of a broader reality. While providing novel insights to extract public values from qualitative data (see Chapter 3), the developed methodology still would need tightening to reduce any subjectivity associated with interviewees' statements.

However, the greatest effort of this research was firstly to reveal the crucial role of public values dimensions in WH sites' participatory processes. These inputs open a wide horizon for further research in different WH contexts in order to both enrich public value typologies, and to clarify their function in WH phenomenology.

A further theoretical contribution of this thesis relates to the issue of WH participatory governance.

From the extensive body of literature, the growing challenge emerges of implementing WH sites' participatory forms of governance (see Chapter 1, part 1). At the same time, a connection between participation in WH site's governance and enhancement initiatives is recognised and is based on the similarity between participatory mechanisms adopted for the organisation of enhancement initiatives and those of decision-making arenas. It also gains strength in the flourishing of public values that advocate for a polycentric governance approach to include actors and dynamics of participatory enhancement initiatives into the institutional fabric of WH site's governance.

Lastly, this thesis also demonstrates how this institutional fabric is becoming ever more scattered in the inner dynamics of local public administrations, especially within municipalities of urban contexts, such as the analysed setting of Palermo. Although the functioning of the postulated polycentric model is barely discussed, it underscores the relevance of conceiving WH sites' participatory governance as a diffuse and territorially branched phenomenon and strives to trigger novel research in this sense.

Turning to the methodology, the *Heritage Participation Matrix* represents an analytical device in the field of heritage studies. Built upon three theoretical strands (heritage studies, political and social science) the *Heritage Participation Matrix* has proven to be a valuable tool both for collecting data from multiple sources (fieldwork, official documents, local press etc.) and for correlating them to more generic concepts. The core contribution of this matrix concerns the faculty to detect a variety of participatory mechanisms, seldom explored in WH studies, to reconstruct the entangled chain of events through which WH participatory processes unfold, and finally to interpret public value changes in parallel with participatory mechanisms. One of the greatest challenges encountered in its application was the retrieval of direct data to select a certain mechanism over another. The researcher



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struggled to discover detailed information on the initiator of a participatory process, category of participants to public assemblies etc. This inconvenience was exacerbated by the outbreak of the pandemic and the consequent inability to enter relevant offices. A similar paucity of details has been identified in the reviewed literature, consequently drawing scholars to focus more deeply on the micro-dynamics that feature WH sites' participatory processes. This would allow full understanding of both implementation methods and societal purposes. In addition, the *Heritage Participation Matrix* is a suitable tool to systemise detailed information on WH sites' participatory governance, filling some of the gaps, and enabling a comparative analysis (at the macro-level) among multiple WH sites. Its use should be further tested in ongoing participatory processes to validate the method and the comparability of collected data among different WH sites. Moreover

Finally, the current investigation offers stimulating insights for WH policymakers. To decrease the discrepancy between practices and policies, these findings suggest partial revision of the WH procedure regulations. In fact, the WH nomination hinges on the quest for specialised and technical knowledge to firstly identify a WH site, and to subsequently draw its OUV (see Chapter 1, part 1). This procedure requires sharp political advocacy among local and national authorities, initially to truly include the proposed site in the national Tentative List and then to advance the candidacy in the WH list. This process can take many years, and it requires an investment of resources – both human and financial – which responsible local authorities struggle to acquire. In this framework, it is challenging to devote additional resources to implement broader participation in decision-making. For this purpose, the OGs must integrate a detailed strategy into the nomination procedure, mitigating its highly political nature and providing local authorities with the appropriate knowledge to nurture WH sites participatory governance that would be inclusive and adaptable to local changes.



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ANNEX 1

Arab-Norman WH site governance structure correlated participatory initiatives

BEFORE THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

Narrative reconstruction

1. [...] From 2011 to 2013 we define the nine monuments that could be part of the serial site, setting aside others due to their state of conservation. At this point, we submitted a pre-dossier to the UNESCO National Commission and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage. From this moment onwards, we establish a constant dialogue to obtain the final text in 2014. During this process, we coordinated several participatory meetings with some cultural associations and economic actors to receive their requests, proposals and observations” (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
2. [...] I tried several times to assemble the governance of the WH Aeolian Islands and other sites. But each time, the process failed to succeed, because one mayor opposed the other. This situation occurs often in Sicily, but also in other parts of Italy [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
3. [...] One of the main problems for the WH Aeolian Islands is to find a coordinating body. Some deficiencies that have been dragging on for years, have not been addressed at all [...] the site had a serious infringement action by UNESCO. It was in the blacklist ready to be deleted because of the lack of a governance structure and of natural reserve on Lipari [...] (Interview with the President of *Legambiente Sicilia*, 05/08/2020).
4. [...] Our main task, instead, is that to ensure WH site enhancement. We have to implement a series of initiatives to promote the Arab-Norman WH importance. We follow what UNESCO has been recommended for many years, that heritage enhancement has to take place within a more broaden perspective of sustainable development based on community involvement. It is necessary to spread how WH heritage can contribute to community well-being [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
5. [...] The SC, which includes representative of the institutions, has a decision-making function and therefore it rules on the activity plan that we (as foundation) arrange [...] the other task of the SC is to evaluate and verify the activities we carry out [...] the SC



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meets two-three times a year basically; once to approve the activities of the previous year; then to propose the new plan and sometimes in the middle of the year to evaluate ongoing initiatives [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).

Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic - Instrumental

6. [...] The WH UNESCO recognition, especially for the city for Palermo, has generated a value in terms of reputation that, I believe, can be estimated in a decade of work [...] It created in the collective imaginary the idea that finally Palermo city, whose historic centre was almost off-limits until 20 years ago, was finally ready to welcome a global acknowledgment for both the city and its cultural heritage [...] through the WH recognition a recovery process of the public spaces surrounding the monuments has started [...] If you go today to visit *San Giovanni degli Eremiti* or *San Cataldo* and compare the urban environment around with that in a video of 4 years ago, it looks completely a different place! 4 years ago, there was a car park illegally managed around. Today you find an accessible square, a small garden with benches [...] a space that reminds us we are looking at a WH site [...] (Interview with the responsible for *CoopCulture Palermo*, 21/05/2020).

Institutional

7. [...] In concert with the SWHF, the ANISA/Palermo association has scheduled a dozen meetings to promote the Arab-Norman serial site of Palermo, Monreale and Cefalù [...] (Interview with the Head of ANISA/Palermo association, 21/09/2020).
8. [...] Concerning the participatory process for drafting the WH candidacy, we have involved representatives from schools, business, and associative world to define together some parts of the WH management plan [...] we keep involving them, sometimes, for the organisation of some events [...] (Interview with the communication and marketing responsible for the SWHF, 7/09/2020).
9. [...] On some territorial portions – mainly Buffer Zones level 1 and 2 - the municipal administration had to carry out a series of interventions to protect the monuments so that they could be candidates for UNESCO as WH sites [...]. The UNESCO also requires us to animate the areas around the monuments and to involve residents and other local actors. So, since 2015 I have been working with some neighbourhood that are close to some iconic monuments such as the Royal Palace and the *Zisa Castle*[...] In a moment of economic crisis for Palermo, traders in *Corso Vittorio*, merchants in *Ballarò* realised that the WH recognition would be an opportunity



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not to be missed. An opportunity for revitalisation. They understood that by standing together and creating a network they could overcome this moment [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).

10. [...] In the nomination dossier, the municipalities made the commitment to implement a series of works and administrative procedures that would align selected sites to the required standards [...] not just the heritage properties but also the surroundings have to comply with certain standards [...] We – as municipal administration – have undertaken to renovate the whole area. [...] We have established the ZTL in the historic centre, which roughly corresponds to the perimeter of the Buffer Zone. I can assure it has not been an easy task. In some cases, both myself and the mayor risked a lot. However, we have tried to explain to citizens and residents that competing for the UNESCO WH status was, in some way, a pretext for improving citizen's life quality and the urban environment. We should have implemented these initiatives in our electoral programme. The WH-Unesco push us to do so [...] (Interview with the Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Cefalù, 12/08/2020).

11. [...] The main problems we encountered during the WH nomination were related to the interruption of some daily routines for citizens. In our municipality (of Monreale) we experienced in a smaller way what Palermo's administration experienced in larger districts. Our shopkeepers in the city centre were daily protesting in front of the city hall against required changes in urban mobility. In the end, we managed to reach a dialogue, and as councillor I will always thank the shopkeepers. From a limitation they have become a resource. They supported us to succeed with the WH nomination [...] (Interview with the Ex-Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Monreale, 25/05/2021).

12. [...] The choice to give voice to citizens was a priority for the Municipality of Palermo. Sometimes decisions taken by the public administration do not suit people living in the territory, such as traders, residents, or other people [...] That's why public administration is no longer organized according to a pyramidal model, where leaders decide, and people bear the consequences (of the decisions). Nowadays we follow the opposite logic: citizens propose, and the Administration seeks to find a solution to the problem [...] (Interview with one official of the Municipality of Palermo, in charge of carrying forward participatory strategies until 2018, 15/10/2020).



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13. [...] was involved in the Patecip@attivi project almost at the end. I managed the citizen's workshop, by organising 8 town assemblies based on 8 different topics (sport, tourism, mobility, school, etc.) and addressed to 8 different urban districts. So, what was the point? The point, of course, was to give citizens a voice and then integrate their ideas into the future planning of the municipal administration. I did that for the touristic sector. Overseeing tourism planning, that was a blessing for me [...] to schedule future touristic initiatives based on both needs and desires. One of the main outputs of this experience has been the submission to the City Council of the deliberation proposal to approve the regulation for a shared management of the commons (*beni comuni*) between citizens and public administration (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).
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14. [...] We believe that cultural associations are able to mobilise the interests of society (especially in Palermo context) and for this reason they have to be involved in the enhancement of the WH serial site. Year after year we have been thinking of developing some activities to make these actors feeling part of a wide-ranging enhancement project [...] our aim is to bring smaller local associations such as *Associazione Maredolce* with larger organisations such as the *FAI* and get them to participate in our initiatives [...] a very fruitful system of connections is being created and we would like to strengthen and renew it yearly through a dense programme of activities following the WH management plan [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
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15. [...] Concerning the dioceses, the respective bishops have accepted to collaborate for the WH candidacy and are always open to dialogue, also because we have an excellent relationship with the SWHF, its president, the staff, the secretariat etc. [...] We have maintained a certain decisional autonomy to preserve the liturgical life of the Cathedral (of Monreale) whose commitments do not always coincide with those of the other Cathedrals (Palermo and Cefalù). In this sense we keep our freedom while being always available [...] Now we all know each other among the institutional members of the SC, and during the work for the WH nomination we have been able to set a good atmosphere. Moreover, the president of the SWHF has an open-minded and inclusive personality. So, it is a pleasant relationship [...] (Interview with the parish of Monreale Cathedral, 06/11/2019).
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16. [...] The investigation and verification phase for gaining the WH recognition was very thorough and demanding. The President of the SWHF has done a great coordination job. He is a passionate and dedicated person. I have to admit it [...] (Interview with the parish of Cefalù Cathedral, 08/08/2020).
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17. [...] Since the beginning we have been working on programmatic lines to increase the serial site. Of course, the Municipality of Palermo was the leading player [...] this was the last stage I followed. But I am sure that some of these projects are being implemented because the President of the SWHF is a clever person. I could experience the enthusiasm he put into his work [...] (Interview with the Ex-Councillor for Culture and Tourism, Municipality of Monreale, 25/05/2021).
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18. [...] At a certain point of the WH candidacy, both the municipalities and the archbishops – four in all – realised that they could not risk a failure and at the same time they truly wanted to obtain the recognition. Thus, they reach an agreement towards a more structured governance for the WH serial site [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
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19. [...] I am of the opinion that participation should be achieved directly by going into the field [...] It cannot be taken for granted that a UNESCO WH recognition will lead to this sort of local economic development. Instead we partially experienced it here and it happened because we try to directly involve town's local business entrepreneurs, associations [...] So, in addition to the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, I set up a permanent table with several local players, such as schools, parishes, third sector associations, cultural associations, shopkeepers and traders to work together [...] As the number of participants increased, the participatory tables were split up by theme. As a result, additional thematic tables were created, such as the one for street art [...] I must admit that the whole city reacted wonderfully. Due to the WH recognition people look at the monuments they see every day with different eyes. They feel proud, much important and try to enhance the Arab-Norman path by proposing spontaneous initiatives of all sorts (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020)
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20. [...] One of the things that I would like to do in the future for the governance of the WH serial site is to establish a council of associations to institutionalise some debates not only on UNESCO WH but also on sustainable development in general. It is worth understanding how the heritage scattered over the territory, as many small, dispersed forces, can contribute to territorial development if managed within a coordinated strategy [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).
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21. [...] Approaching the General Assembly of State Parties to the WH, during which the Palermo Arab-Norman would be proclaimed a WH site, the issue of governance was the last obstacle to overcome [...] at that point all the institutions involved, from the Municipalities to the Archbishops (the serial site includes 4 of them) realized no one could cause a potential failure of the WH
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candidacy and they really want the recognition. So, there was a real mutual commitment to find an agreement and as a result the governance structure was created [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).

22. [...] What did the Municipalities do? Each of them, for its own part, has issued internal acts to carry out initiatives within their municipal territories. Then they confederated and have established the managing entity for the whole serial site that is the first one to be compliant with the new UNESCO management recommendations, in Sicily [...] (Interview with the Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Cefalù, 12/08/2020).
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AFTER THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

Narrative reconstruction

23. [...] The technical committee consists of technical referents belonging to the SC' institutions. They are convened for a specific issue to be solved or organized. As an example, when we (as a foundation) have to do an open-air event and we need to close some areas of the city we set up a service table with the head of the municipal police to define all the security aspects [...] (Interview with the communication and marketing responsible for the SWHF, 7/09/2020).
24. [...] There is not a single ticket to visit the WH Arab-Norman serial site. Each managing body decides opening and closing schedule without considering the needs of those who visit the monument. For examples visits at churches are often interdicted for weddings. We are notified shortly before or not notified at all. Tourist's groups suddenly see the chance to visit the monument denied. In addition, the lack of a single entrance card exposes visitors who want to visit all the monuments within the serial site to high costs [...] (Interview with a private tourist guide in Palermo, 18/04/2020).
25. [...] One option would be a public-private partnership with a single ticket for the integrate WH circuit to have adequate income and carry on the planned activities. But we know that the single ticket is a project that cannot get off the ground in any way! There is an incredible resistance from the involved institutions [...] (Interview with the communication and marketing responsible for the SWHF, 7/09/2020).
26. [...] Everything started because we (as school) had to implement the alternation school-work project just when the Arab-Norman site gained the WH status [...] in agreement with the SWHF we have structured the project [...] the SWHF was in charge of the first training part. Students attend round tables at the level of the Municipality, in presence of invited authorities, conferences about territorial development [...] Then they went on the field [...] they visit the various WH properties with an expert who guide them [...]. (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
27. [...] Meetings for teachers usually were organised as follow. The president of the SWHF discussed about the UNESCO organisation, how the WH Arab-Norman nomination was developed etc. Then I introduced the monuments, their history some curiosities and so on [...] I also included these lectures within the *Panormus* project (the school adopts the city) [...] (Interview with the Head of ANISA/Palermo association, 21/09/2020).



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Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic

28. [...] Let's say we worked on two skills: humanities and computer science [...] each class has made its contribution over the years. So, the project started with a class whose students now are at the university and was continued by younger classmates [...] the product was always re-elaborated by the following classes [...] (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
29. [...] Q: What was the students' reaction?
A: Very positive! They say: "how nice is to see and discover things that we didn't know before". Very often we don't know relevant historical parts of our city (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
30. [...] The Arab-Norman imaginary contest is open to all [...] it leaves room for free creativity [...] some participants submit video, other drawings photos to express their feelings and then every year we award the best works [...] I have to say there is a strong will to re-imagine the city [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020)

Instrumental

31. [...] The interventions to carry out were the most varied: lack of street furniture near the WH site; poor lighting system of the WH properties; the rehabilitation of decayed areas; the removal of some elements hindering the visibility of the monuments; signage entrance to the city (that was quite difficult because of the huge amount of access roads to the city) [...] Then the lack of dedicated information points. We opened a Visitor Centre that provide information exclusively for the WH Arab-Norman serial site [...] We also dealt with training. We did a training course both to the municipal office and to the tourist collaborators working on the municipal tourist information centres [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).
32. [...] The website was restyled last year. The *Palermo* Welcome portal has been translated into six languages; it shows several thematic itineraries; it answers all the questions that a tourist may ask [...] In recent years I have also addressed several calls for interest to tour



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operators and associations in the city, by funding small projects (20/30 thousand euros each) that could be sustainable over time. The idea was to provide financial help to tourist proposals that can be commercialised in the future [...] The work has been remarkable because we received so many applications to the point of establishing an ad hoc evaluation board [...] at the end we promoted in our website a real online touristic guide made of different types of itineraries based on architectural style of monuments, emotional and sensorial experiences in the city [...] We have achieved a double result. As Municipality, we get the possibility to promote some private initiatives in our website. Before this occasion it was forbidden. Private actors, instead, benefited from the promotion on our website. The preconditions for participation were that of being legally recognized (such as an association) and in compliance with the payment of municipal taxes [...] Another relevant output was the creation of a new network based on a good competition. Indeed, every year we invited the 5/6 winners to dialogue together around the same table[...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).

33. [...] Following the UNESCO WH recognition, the Municipality of Cefalù has established the regulation for the SIBAC. This acronym stands for integrated system of cultural and environmental heritage of Cefalù [...] It consists of linking the city's cultural and environmental heritage with the payment of a single ticket. The City Council already has established which municipal properties include and the common fees [...] So it is a single offer package to encourage tourists who come to Cefalù to visit the WH Cathedral to linger. By the way the Church has established its *Pulcritudinis* itinerary inside the Cathedral [...] (Interview with the Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Cefalù, 12/08/2020).
34. [...] Students started creating a website [...] the following year they created an app by working with a software engineer [...] But clearly, being an app for tourists, they need to implement the English part [...] They also do a training at the UNESCO Visitor Center where they learned to welcome tourist and provide appropriate information. It was a chance to enhance communication skills [...] the following year they focused on the access to the several monuments for people with disabilities [...] they also create an interactive map by adding other buildings [...] (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
35. [...] Students do their training at our Visitor Center as field activity [...] and when we organise some events, they are involved for the promotion campaign. Among several activities, some students (from *V. Emanuele* high school) have created an app for the WH Arab Norman serial site [...] we modified some aspects, but it is available [...] (Interview with the communication and marketing responsible for the SWHF, 7/09/2020).



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36. [...] Orientation value for students in my opinion is fundamental [...] These activities allow students to get more open to the territory and the future university experience. I mean it orients them in some way [...] for example a girl who participated in the app's creation (three years ago) choose heritage studies for her university career (heritage restoration). She is so excited to work and explore this field[...] We definitely influenced her choice in same way [...] (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
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Institutional

37. [...] The SWHF (as OS) receives an annual contribution. This contribution should be paid by several members of the SC – the Region, Monreale and Cefalù Municipalities and Federico II Foundation- and not only by the Municipality of Palermo. However, only we paid the amount every year. The Region has never allocated targeted resources in the budget. The Federico II Foundation sometimes also provides a percentage of ticket sales. As established by the Protocol of Understanding, the resources allocated by the Municipality of Palermo, amount to about 200,000 euro per year (about 0.30 cents per inhabitant): With this amount, the SC has carried out several activities through the OS, such as the publication of the nomination dossier, the UNESCO nights and other outreach initiatives. They also do a lot [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020)
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38. [...] The Municipalities such as Monreale and Cefalù are quite large but with very limited resources in the last few years. Therefore, making the city welcoming for a WH site required a considerable economic effort for us [...] As Tourism Councillor, I could not withdraw funds from my budget since it was very limited: just 20 thousand euro, nothing! [...] (Interview with the Ex-Councillor for Culture and Tourism, Municipality of Monreale, 25/05/2021)
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39. [...] The UNESCO WH recognition for us has been an assumption of responsibility and serves, first of all, to improve the quality of life [...] The Municipality of Cefalù only this year has emerged from financial distress. So, we have taken all the commitments related to the WH nomination in a quite risky way, since the Municipality was in full financial distress. At that time, it was difficult to spend even 100 euro. Imagine investing on culture! But we won this challenge! Today the budget of the Municipality of Cefalù is restored just by the tourist tax. Until last year, we collected a few million euro. So, it is a revolving match. All this will be reinvested to enhance the public environment of a city with a WH recognition. It becomes a benefit, first of all through place's care. We have rearranged some areas between the pier and the docks, we care of green and flowers. All these actions may seem obvious, but they are not. The first challenge that a WH city must overcome is not only that of being attractive to visitors. It should also make its residents live better.
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Just when we improve citizen's quality of life by educating them to the idea of good and safe living, we are ready to welcome visitors [...] (Interview with the Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Cefalù, 12/08/2020).

40. [...] Why politics? Because as long as the administrations share the same political line, they manage to dialogue. However, when political divergences arise, there are some repercussions within the SC. Politics should get out of these activities [...] When I was contributing as a councillor, I used to remind that we have to work for citizen's benefits, by setting a part political ideology that changes over time. [...] I always thought of acting for the itinerary and not for a single monument. A well-connected route would have bring new opportunities for funds and benefits [...] I also argue that part of these funds (to realize the route) should have come from the State, from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism [...] (Interview with the Ex Councillor for Culture and Tourism, Municipality of Monreale, 25/05/2021).
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41. [...] In my opinion there is a weak link between the WH sites, the SC (notwithstanding the competent and passionate members) and the needs and potentialities of the territory. In the last meeting we kept talking about WH signage. However, it is a good point to be discussed, I believe we need to go one step further. [...] We should work more on an integrated planning [...] We should strengthen correlated project's proposals. As an example, from the Cathedral of Cefalù we could develop many other cultural routes [...] and some of these routes could also across Palermo and Monreale [...] As a consequence, we should get additional funds for further projects developed by young people. [...] (Interview with the priest of the Cathedral of Cefalù, 08/08/2020).
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42. [...] In my opinion the basic criticality is that the WH recognition and its enhancement tools are not yet adequately exploited [...] The connections (network) among sites is still not well implemented [...] The *Zisa* Palace and *Ammiraglio* bridge are still less visible in this path [...] the connection between Palermo and Monreale is in a dramatic situation [...] and I noticed that we are still struggling on this, after three years. There are some ideas about but little concreteness [...] (Interview with the President of *Legambiente* Sicilia, 05/08/2020).
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43. [...] Concerning both SC and TC meetings, they would be open, but we never advertised them [...] we try through strengthen participation through event planning [...] for example, we agreed with the SC to open some of the monuments (often unknown to the most) to be added in the WH serial site, before officially including them [...] So last September we involve several tourist guides, the FAI association, social cooperatives to organise some visits to these monuments. It was a great success. This process strengthens local
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community awareness both of the monuments and the enlargement project before implementing it [...] (Interview with the communication and marketing responsible for the SWHF, 7/09/2020).

44. [...] One of the things I would like to do in the future when we will update this Protocol of Understanding is to officially include a council of associations... but I am always worried that this update might reopen a dispute on everything with the other members. But sooner or later we should address it [...] (Interview with the President of the WHSF, 12/11/2019).

45. [...] A: So between the school and the SWHF an automatic collaboration mechanism has been created in the context of the school-work alternation project?

Q: Absolutely yes. We stipulate an agreement. Over the years I've been in charge of relations with them. They know me, they know the way we work in our classes.

These conditions created a virtuous relationship between us and them. (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).



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ANNEX 2

Cassaro Alto sub-unit

BEFORE THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

Narrative reconstruction

1. [...] The first step was to make pedestrian the so-called WH buffer zones. The Parliament Square in front of the Royal Palace was finally free from all cars. Before it was parking only for regional deputies [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020)
2. [...] Almost 10 years ago in collaboration with the Regional Centre for Planning and Restoration and the University of Palermo, we (Legambiente) organized the initiative “Save the art, breathe clean! [...] We monitored Corso Vittorio Emanuele when it was still open to vehicular traffic [...]it was crazy for both the smog and dangerous vibrations [...] (Interview with the President of *Legambiente Sicilia*, 05/08/2020).
3. [...] I have to admit that the Mayor, despite his flaws, already many years ago advocated this change. I’ve been here at the Cassaro for forty years and I remember that, as early as the 1980s, he tried to interrupt the traffic on Saturday for organizing some coffee concerts [...] Attempts often hindered by some citizens who did not want to give up car comfort [...] (Interview with manager and salesman of Zacco Library, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association).
4. [...] Following the *Corso Vittorio* closure, we –almost 60 traders of the area – end up with a common problem [...]that small trade activity that we did before we could no longer do [...] we could not welcome our customers who could no longer reach our stores [...] (Interview with *Zacco* library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020)
5. [...] When the road was closed, residents and traders started protesting [...] I have to admit one part of local traders were favourable, the other opposed [...] (Interview with the President of the Cassaro Alto Association, shop owner and resident in the Cassaro Alto area, 3/08/2020).



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6. [...] The website dedicated to participation, unfortunately, did not register a large turnout, I suppose because communication about it was not enough. Maybe a lot of citizens do not know the online portal. Moreover, I have to admit that usually, citizens are interested in using these portals or social media pages (such as Facebook or Twitter) to fight against the municipality rather than being propositive about possible solutions. As local administrators, we have notices citizen's reticence in collaborating. But we also realized that once decisions are taken, people positively respond [...] (Interview with one official of the Municipality of Palermo, in charge of carrying forward participatory strategies until 2018, 15/10/2020).
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7. [...] Initially we felt some doubts about this change [...] but we recognized it was a very important achievement for the whole area to be part of a WH UNESCO site for not collaborating. We know also that the needs of a school could not affect the process [...] In the end, the pedestrianization contributed to the growth of our school for sure [...] it was positive [...] (Interview with a teacher from *Vittorio Emanuele II* high school, 17/06/2021).
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8. [...] I remember that meetings with the Municipality of Palermo (together with the Mayor, the Councillor of Culture etc.) have been constant, continuous, and repeated [...] During the meetings we gave our contributions and ideas. However, when we show up to be in favour of the *Cassaro Alto* closure we have been strongly criticized by the opponents [...] (Interview with the coordinator of the territorial *Officine Albergheria, Capo, Cassaro* and the Arab-Norman itinerary, 17/09/2020)
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9. [...] The Movement is a non-profit association and was established on February 8, 2014. The members are free citizens, some of which are civil servants, freelancers, some belonging to national unions and apolitical associations. The main aim is to create a socio cultural and political space where citizens stay in touch, share their idea, skills and experiences to plan future choices, based on critical perspectives [...] (Interview with the former president of the *Movimento Civico Association*, 20/10/2020)
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10. [...] During the meeting in the Regional Library, those who were most sensitive to the discussed issue participated, such as local traders and residents [...] there was not a common representativeness [...] everyone spoke for himself [...] (Interview with the coordinator of the territorial *Officine Albergheria, Capo, Cassaro* and the Arab-Norman itinerary, 17/09/2020)
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11. [...] The traders from *Cassaro Alto* and employees of the Regional Central Library as well as a fierce representation of residents took part to the assembly. Residents fear that their property could be devalued as a result of the pedestrianization of the area. There
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were about 100 participants. Among these, some hoteliers notice the difficulty to bring in their customers. The atmosphere is tense, with plenty of speeches and discussions [...] (Interview with the former president of the *Movimento Civico* Association, 20/10/2020)

12. [...] During a SC meeting at *Palazzo delle Aquile* some traders started strongly protesting. It was necessary to lock the palace's gate since they try to break [...] (Interview with the Councillor for Culture, Municipality of Cefalù, 12/08/2020).

Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic

13. [...] After the (second world) war and the schooling spreading in Italy, most of the 19th-century libraries across *Corso Vittorio Emanuele* managed to maintain its identity, turning into second-hand bookstores accessible to many families, suffering war poverty [...] (Interview with manager and salesman of *Zacco* Library, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).
14. [...] We wanted to make the institutions understand putting a barrier upstream and downstream the axis, is worthless [...] They should make understand why was the *Cassaro Alto* axis closed (pedestrian)? Because it is part of the UNESCO Arab- norman path [...] our tradition, our history” (Interview with President *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area, 22/12/2020).

Instrumental

15. [...] This represents an important moment. I started managing the Palace three years ago as general director. Already at that time, it was clear that the Palace did not meet the minimum common-sense standards for welcoming visitors, [...] Let's imagine recommendations by UNESCO! [...] Having public reception and the entrance at the back was the root cause of all negative symptoms. An a-historical entrance that affected the urban setting of the Palace for the city [...] It was not just a matter of accessibility and use, it was a sacrilege. Thus, overturning both the entrance's position and the role of the Palace through an intense programming activity it seemed the only way to regain historical, cultural and urban dignity [...] (Interview with Head of the Federico II Foundation, 31/07/2020).



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16. [...] In Palermo heritage properties along Corso *Vittorio Emanuele* (*Cassaro Alto* axis) have benefited greatly from the WH recognition [...] About 10 years ago, we monitored the axis that was still open to the traffic [...] both the smog and the traffic vibrations were very dangerous for the monuments such as *Porta Nuova* [...] The closure to the traffic first, and the pedestrianisation later, enhanced the area [...] (Interview with the President of *Legambiente Sicilia*, 05/08/2020).
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17. [...] The pedestrianisation was one of the consequences related to the WH UNESCO recognition [...] and it was a good result for the (touristic) visits [...] (Interview with a private tourist guide in Palermo, 18/04/2020).
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18. [...] Our mission is to shape a city with a tourist vocation. It means a city that is able of welcoming people. For this purpose, we need a cultural and anthropological inversion. Some citizens (in Palermo) have to change their wrong habits [...] They have to respect the city. They have to be welcoming to tourists [...] It is not enough that some monuments have been declared UNESCO WH site. We have to be able to create a pleasant experience for the visitors [...] [...] (Interview with the coordinator of the territorial *Officine Albergheria, Capo, Cassaro* and the Arab-Norman itinerary, 17/09/2020).
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Institutional

AFTER THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION: social coalition and collaboration

Narrative reconstruction

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19. [...] I gathered some of the traders along the axis, saying: let's form an association so that we can sit, talk, and work with the institutions. I must admit that the response has been positive. Today they are almost all associated, except for three of them” (Interview with President *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area, 22/12/2020).
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20. We were many acquaintances here. But we hadn't been friends like we are now. So, everyone looked at his own, at most we knew each other and exchanged a few things with the neighbors. But there was never a collaborative relationship” (Interview with a member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner, 22/12/2020).
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21. [...]The first year, I was almost afraid, thinking "but who's going to come?" Instead, the event that lasted only one day was quite well attended[...] (Interview with President of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area, 22/12/2020).

Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic

22. [...] For example, one of the earliest events were dedicated to the ‘Arab-Norman food [...] I was thrilled to see even elderly restaurateurs get help from their grandchildren to do some web researches and see what spices were imported in the Frederician period [...] The schools brought students to learn about the history of Frederick II [...] The students acted as guides [...] professors participated in the jury. This was the first cultural collective event of a long series [...]”(Interview with President of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area, 22/12/2020).
23. [...] Why the *Via dei Librai*? I discover that April 23rd is the UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day, and the *Cassaro Alto* axis is historically dedicated to editors. How not to remember this! And how to do it? Organizing a book fair. So, we made sure that all the publishers returned symbolically and physically to the *Cassaro*. I have made some plaques indicating where the editors' stores used to be, replaced today by other stores [...], just to remember what we have had. [...] (Interview with President of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area, 22/12/2020).
24. [...] My impressions on the typology of attendees depict a large group of Palermo's citizens who have crowded the Cassaro during the initiative. But we also welcome Sicilian and other tourists and not only who stayed in Palermo in the days close to Easter (April 23rd is a date often close to the religious feast) have decided to stop to attend the *Via dei Librai*. [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).
25. [...] Has the creation of the UNESCO route and the birth of these initiatives brought the citizen closer to the Cassaro alto, in addition to tourists? The participation of Palermo citizens is great. Before citizens had an almost snobbish attitude, they didn't come here. Now it's the opposite. Citizens who come here have the habit of lingering. Some of them, when they see the Cathedral, exclaim I haven't been here in a long time! But is the Cathedral closed? Can we visit it? Our Cathedral is really beautiful! [...] (Interview with the President of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area).



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26. [...] The development of second-hand book's business along the Cassaro was very flourishing, especially in the '50s. My dad was one of those having a wooden stand to sell second handbooks! Today we continue functioning due to remaining schools along the Cassaro [...] To celebrate our historic booksellers we created the *Via dei Librai* event [...] it allows me to know wonderful (contemporary) editorial realities in the city [...] Today historical libraries along the Cassaro are becoming a landmark for book's exhibition and presentations. It is so exciting. As booksellers, we have changed radically! (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

Instrumental

27. [...] Although many people are used to buying books on Amazon or at the supermarket, we continue to work today [...] Students on their way out of school often pass through here so, fortunately, we manage to sell something. In 2015 we lived on this little, but still, we lived [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

28. [...] The number of souvenir stores has increased, yes! But the bookshops, the military articles, the puppeteer, the bars already existed in Corso Vittorio are still here. Moreover, bars have maintained their identity, they have not turned into pubs or nightclubs, as has happened in the Vucciria district or in other areas of the city center that have become places for nightlife [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

29. [...] Slowly we have increased in number, reaching a maximum number of about 60 associates. In addition to protecting our rights as an association, we have obtained some benefits in dialogue with the Municipality, such as the granting of public land, improvement of street furniture from benches to 'lighting. At the same time, we are committed to providing our contribution [...] (Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).

30. [...] What pleases me most is that a mechanism of shared dialogue has been sparked off. So, when I proposed to get together, to hold an assembly, members rarely back down. Rather, they listen passionately to the story of the street where they work or live and they welcome proposals. [...]. (Interview with the President of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, shop owner and resident of the *Cassaro Alto* area).



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31. [...] Sure! In addition to the Cassaro Alto association, a series of proximity associations such as *Ballarò Significa Palermo*, Cassaro D'Amare collaborate. Together sometimes we organize more extensive events beyond the area of Cassaro Alto, reasoning in synergy and exchanging favors” [...]Interview with the Zacco Library manager, member of the *Cassaro Alto* Association, 10/07/2020).
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32. [...] Several measures have been taken, positively contributing to the climate, environment and health of citizen [...] (Interview with the President of *Legambiente Sicilia*, 05/08/2020).
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33. [...] During the meetings at the Regional Library, everyone spoke for themselves [...] Then the *Cassaro Alto* association was created to contribute to the enhancement of the historic centre. And only by standing together could we catch this opportunity [...] (Interview with the coordinator of the territorial *Officine Albergheria, Capo, Cassaro* and the Arab-Norman itinerary, 17/09/2020).
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34. [...] Something that continues to thrill me when I mention it is the wonderful reaction of the traders along *Corso Vittorio*. At that moment one shop out of two was closed, if not more... the traders understood, in a moment of deep economic crisis for Italy, and also for Palermo, that the WH recognition was an opportunity not to be missed. It was an opportunity for redemption and re-launch and that, by joining together, through networking, they could overcome this moment [...]This is an extraordinary fact [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).
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35. [...] Our association – *Cassaro D' Amare* – was established spontaneously. It was created on the wave of the new associations for the *Cassaro Alto* and *Via Maqueda* pedestrianisation [...] as group of traders we decided to create the association to regenerate this section of the Cassaro axis as well. We decide to start from requesting the pedestrianisation, due to the smog and the massive traffic here [...] while the other areas experienced a clash with the administration, we did not because we follow an already created standard [...] Now I am in constant contact with the administration to make the *Cassaro Basso* area more appealing [...]The WH recognition indirectly has exerted an indirect influence on the creation of our association. We are not officially part of the Arab-Norman WH path [...] but we are experiencing some positive side effects related to tourism growth over the last years [...] (Interview with the president of the *Cassaro D'Amare* association, 8/09/2020).
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Institutional

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36. [...] If we want to offer a good product, we need substantial funds that we (as associated traders) don't have! [...] So we need further support. For example, one year the Municipality contributed financially; another year the Sicilian World Heritage Foundation, etc.
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Unesco is also an integral part of the area and therefore collaborates [...] (Interview with President Cassaro Alto Association, shop owner and resident of the Cassaro Alto area).



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ANNEX 3

Danisinni sub-unit

BEFORE THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION: the exclusion

Narrative reconstruction

1. [...] An obvious fact is that no noble residences were built here [...] It remains a poor area for those who were compelled to live outside Porta Nuova. It is a poor area where, however, there are farmers who cultivate the land and these lands are very productive, as well as irrigated because of the river's water [...] (Interview with the president of the association *Insieme per Danisinni*; 23/07/2020).
2. [...] In our area, *Zisa* and *Danisinni* over 70%, perhaps even 80 - 90% of the young people after finishing middle school do not continue their studies. And this is a great social and economic burden. It is also linked to the opportunities of crime [...] (Interview with the General Coordinator of the Association *Inventare Insieme – Centro TAU*, 23/07/2020).
3. [...] She (A.S.T.E.S. Sicilia representative) attended several meetings and struggled to get the *Danisinni* included in the WH Arab-Norman itinerary, otherwise, they would have been excluded. She met the referent, the coordinator of the UNESCO table. She brought the maps; she showed them an itinerary, and they were astonished because they said: "it had been missed"[...] Well, in the end, we succeeded to be included and that it was a big driver for the whole neighbourhood" (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
4. [...] The natural Arab-Norman transit (from the *Cassaro Alto* to the *Zisa Castle*) with its specific places, such as the emir's house, and other places referring to the water's use in the Arab period would have been ignored [...] When we met the UNESCO table representative we brought the maps, we showed them the itinerary (in *Danisinni*) [...] They were stunned, admitting that they missed it [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
5. [...] During a ghettoization process, both exclusion (from others) and self-exclusion coexist. Here (in *Danisinni*) both kinds of exclusion were quite marked, even for the geophysical component of the neighbourhood, which is in a depression, outside the transit routes. Thus enhancing the neighbourhood meant to enhance the walking path, which is the Arab walkway [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).



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6. [...] *Danisinni* is the natural Arab-Norman walkway. It is the transit route from the *Cassaro Alto* area to the *Zisa Castle*, with some specific assets such as the house above the cave, the emir's house that recall the Arab period [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic

7. [...] We have made the waters of the Papiroto river resurface and we have planted the Papyrus, just to give this connection with the Unesco itinerary [...] these symbolic actions were for us a **recovery of memory**, of a root, of history, but at the same time the base for future planning: if you put down roots you can't open up to the future [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
8. [...] Today when I participate to some conferences and assemblies, I realize that many social actors working in Palermo area have passed through *Danisinni*. They have passed through and then left because, at that time, we were not organised to welcome them. Today, instead we are beginning to attract these resources thanks to the courage gained from such a relevant recognition (UNESCO WH) for our expectations (Interview with a member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 21/05/2020).

Instrumental

9. [...] The WH recognition has not produced economic benefits for us. It has improved our visibility from a perspective of prestige. *Danisinni* is not more the marginalized district [...] it is more [...] (Interview with a member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 21/05/2020).
10. [...] We started to implement several bottom-up actions to raise awareness and enhance the district. But first of all, to re-emerge (*Danisinni* community) in the imaginary of totally unknown context [...] (Interview with a member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 21/05/2020).
11. [...] We have succeeded in including *Danisinni* in the WH Arab-Norman itinerary and this has been a great driver for development [...] a driver because from the beginning our community has reacted [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
12. [...] We could enhance *Danisinni* as a natural oasis [...] the bio pond with papyrus has this meaning: look at the history with a glance to the future [...] we can still build a genuine context [...] inspired to the countryside of Palermo since we still have hectares of land [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

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13. [...] Many actions have been activated from below to promote an unknown context [...] Among the actors in this process, there is certainly the Municipality [...] we started some conversations in the *Danisinni* square and cultural initiatives [...] the slogan we chose was "the district welcomes the city". For us the slogan had a double meaning, that is, "we welcome you and we open up! [...] (Interview with member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 21/05/2020).
14. [...] The initial stage of this process left to the local community [...] in some moments we felt a sense of fatigue that led to greater decay. So, people were getting disappointed [...] When the administration apparently shares but does not support the process, you find yourself crushed. You create an illusory expectation [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

AFTER THE WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION: inclusion, collaboration, and competitiveness

Narrative reconstruction

15. [...] You can't imagine the mistrust when we arrived. Firstly, we had to clear the almost collapsing kindergarten and the surrounding space that was full of everything (she mentions several animals) [...] After cleaning up the space, the children began painting posters along the railing of the kindergarten [...] Even the garbage bins were painted [...] the residents then also opened their homes where the kids were previously confined to get the murals on the house walls [...] We organised the Cultural Thursdays in summer, in the *Danisinni* garden, we bring in theatre performances and talks. A new world has opened up [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).
16. [...] Between 2015 and 2016 we started talking about the UNESCO WH itinerary [...] so we try to give visibility to the neighbourhood through a tale made of varied conversations, such as the garden book connected to the topics of the Arab culture [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
17. [...] In our vision, for example, the farm is an enhancement space for *Danisinni* neighbourhood. Here people can meet or learn from the local inhabitants to the rest of the city! [...] A place where children come from other neighbourhoods, to spend a morning picking some vegetables [...] All this generates culture, encounters, and new projects (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
18. [...] Before the *Rambla Papireto* project, I competed in the *BUM Polmoni Urbani* competition. On this occasion I was able to borrow ten thousand meters of land from my colleague. Now in this space lies the farm [...] Unfortunately we didn't get the funding from BUM [...] Then I stepped away a bit and I didn't want to get involved in the neighbourhood anymore, because it's not easy [...] But the mayor then called us to be part of a huge public assembly in *Danisinni* [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).



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19. [...] The *Zisa* Castle is the Arab-Norman most excluded monument from the Arab-Norman itinerary [...]there is not even a free shuttle that goes around the historical centre and then arrives at the *Zisa* [...] It is isolated, the tourist does not know how to get there (Interview with a private tourist guide in Palermo, 18/04/2020).
20. [...] The project (for creating the WH route) exists, it's called Trough *Danisinni*. We have also registered the website, but if I don't get funding to make it happen, it will remain in the drawers (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).
21. [...] The *In-Transito* project started when the Municipality of Palermo introduced a tourist tax also for tourist rentals and non-hot structures [...] To implement the project, the Municipality chooses the district of *Ballarò* and *Danisinni* [...] It selects *Danisinni* to connect the *Cassaro Alto*, *Palazzo Reale* with the *Zisa* Castle, the monument of the WH Arab-Norman itinerary, located just outside the historical centre [...] (Interview with a member of the *SiHost* association, 21/10/2020).
22. [...] There is an agreement between the Municipality of Palermo and Airbnb [...] The municipal ordinance establishes that a percentage (10%) of the tourist tax is retained by the collector. In this case to Airbnb portal automatically collected the tax at the time of booking. Airbnb has decided to transfer a part of this amount to the Municipality, to be invested in a participatory project. [...] In the first year and a half, the tourist tax has produced around 800 thousand euros of paid taxes. 80,000 euros were left to Airbnb, which decided to transfer 40,000 euros to the municipality on condition that they were reinvested (Interview with a member of the *SiHost* association, 21/10/2020).
23. [...] Regarding the *In-Transito* project, Airbnb chose *BiPart*, a company that carries out participatory projects around the world. They are real experts who explained to us how the participatory project must be carried out, what are the steps to follow. They trained us, perhaps briefly, in three meetings organised at *Moltivolti* coworking (Interview with a member of the *SiHost* association, 21/10/2020).
24. [...] We had several very pleasant meetings with the technicians of the Municipality of Palermo that appointed some architects to follow the project. We had several meetings and round tables [...] I was impressed by the efficiency of the administration offices. The staff was available, skilled, and knowledgeable[...] and willing to follow the methodology and not to snob it [...] (Interview with a member of the *BiPart* company, 10/11/2020).
25. [...] In September we invited Airbnb to make their annual Italian meeting in Palermo. In collaboration with the *S. Agnese* parish we organized something more peculiar [...] we did a bike ride, shopping in *Ballarò*. Then we went back to *Danisinni* to cook inside the houses. About ten families were involved to cook together [...] and then have a social lunch in the farm. This occurred after a few



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preliminary visits during which Airbnb operators visited the neighbourhood. And the resident families started to manifest a minimum of interest (Interview with a member of the *SiHost* association, 21/10/2020).

26. [...]Residents were trained. They embraced the project because they trust it [...] Trust that has allowed these steps[...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
27. [...]The tables were about 10/12 ...from each table came out a project [...] Out of these projects 10, 3 were selected to be posted on the website [...] The tables' purpose was to allow all the participants to express their ideas, on how one project could be carried out rather than another We, as facilitators, sought to keep the schedule. There was also the management of the budget for the projects. We already knew that the *Danisinni* project had to fit into a budget of 20,000 euros [...] (Interview with a member of the *SiHost* association, 21/10/2020).
28. [...] We presented our project idea, it was an itinerant kitchen (on a motorcycle) around the *Danisinni*, to create a micro economy and to create work for people [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
29. [...] We presented the project for the WH route [...] the idea was to make *Danisinni* a resting place on the route from the Cathedral to the *Zisa* Castle, with a visit to the social museum, the farm, and the murals. This is already there. However, many tourists who stop at the farm do not walk to the *Zisa* Castle[...] Finally, the *Caravanseraï* association has proposed an open serigraphy workshop [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).
30. [...] There is no organized tourism towards the *Zisa* Castle. The crosswalk of the Arab-Norman route would need to be built, because saying that this route exists isn't the same as saying that it can be accessed[...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).
31. [...] The *Zisa* has been left completely out. We have often talked about it, even with the mayor, and years ago we asked for some tables to discuss how to include the *Zisa* [...] Nothing has changed since the UNESCO recognition. The 'before and after' have not generated any intervention [...] reflecting on the territory there is not even a bar in front of the *Zisa* Castle [...] (Interview with the General Coordinator of the Association *Inventare Insieme – Centro TAU*, 23/07/2020).

Public Value Dimensions

Intrinsic



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32. [...] It seems to me the greatest thing on earth what they are doing (second 0:06) [...] All these colours bring *Danisinni* to life. They involve all the children in doing several activities. And it's a very nice thing at least they have something concrete to do (second 0:47) [...] (*Danisinni* Residents, documentary video on *Rambla Papireto* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFYQe8Ca_bc Accessed online on 20/10/2021).
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33. [...] In 2019, we created a fracture with the local administration when it communicated that the kindergarten would be demolished. As a result, those who were collaborating with the Municipality, for example the academy of fine arts, perceived this choice as a break of the ongoing regeneration process. The Centro Tau, that is a powerful partner in the field of work rights for both *Danisinni* and *Zisa* districts, supported our cause until the Mayor understood it [...] So in June we're going out to bid to renovate the kindergarten. Its recovery means renovating the urban network in *Danisinni* where we can take care first of the locals and then, slowly, of the travellers who pass by [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
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34. [...] Our macro-project for *Danisinni* (we hope in the short and medium term) is to offer a unique tourist experience in Palermo. It enhances everything we have created over the years at *Danisinni*, something unique in their specificity [...] So the priority idea is not to make a tourist feel like a visitor but a guest in a common home [...] today (the institutions) know that our community is able to dialogue and to tackle even a dispute [...] we also know our ability to propose feasible projects (and not ideal) [...] (Interview with a member of the association *Insieme per Danisinni*; 23/07/2020).
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35. [...] The idea (starting from tourism development) is to convey to young people that in the near future they can get a job according to their expectations and inclinations [...] Many have chosen a professional school and want to be involved in food service, hospitality and more [...] (Interview with a member of the association *Insieme per Danisinni*; 23/07/2020).
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Instrumental

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36. [...] The Academy, which is non-profit, decided to involve three youth associations in the *Rambla Papireto* project. We want to implement a didactic operation for the academy students [...] The *Neu* association worked on doing a network campaign to continue our action and we decided to implement the social circus in *Danisinni* [...] This decision came together with the parish and the residents, because we noticed that the children liked very much the social circus classes they had taken [...] the most important thing
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we try to do is to put *Danisinni* in communication with the city. Because the neighborhood suffers from isolation [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).

37. [...]The project *Rambla Papireto* fits well with what we were doing. The project starts to involve us, the Academy, also some young artists, animators...we reach such an agreement to host the circus tent inside the farm-garden area. This was an important step in the *Rambla Papireto*. It symbolizes the collaboration between different people, professionals, artists etc. [...] We started to create murals along the public square, something important for making *Danisinni* more welcoming [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

38. [...] The approach that we adopted can be resumed in a slogan: "*Danisinni* welcomes the city". It was a slogan with a double message: we welcome, and we open up! In a ghettoization processes there are those who are excluded, but there are also those who exclude themselves,. Here, this dynamic of self-exclusion was quite evident, maybe for the geo - physical nature of the neighbourhood, which is in a depression, outside the transit routes. We decided to enhance and foster new interactions for the *Danisinni* people by recovering the walking path, which is the Arabian walkway [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).

39. [...] *Rambla Papireto* had a good echo and the *Teatro Massimo* contacted us to organize Opera Camion in *Danisinni* [...] This then turned into *Elisir di Amore in Danisinni* [...] The great thing was that the *Teatro Massimo* offered a teacher, who came every Wednesday. Me and the priest also took part to the choir to involve local people, although it was difficult [...] Everyone came to watch the Opera with a great interest to participate in the square [...] Shortly after came the *Piano City* initiative performing a concert in the square and everyone participated [...] Finally together with the *Teatro Biondo* we founded the school of theatre, named *Danisinni Lab* [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).

40. [...] We founded the association "Social Museum in *Danisinni*", including two artists of asemic art being the main collection [...] the Museum also hosts a theater school. So, we do performances. We've done three productions. The last one is about the *Triunfi of Santa Rosalia*, where we have also involved the people of the neighbourhood in interviews and as actors in the short movie *Rosalia ai Danisinni* [...] We strongly believe in training children who can be the real resources for change in *Danisinni*. [...]for example, some kids enrolled in the art school after attending our courses; one guy wanted to be a dancer... and we took him to a dance school where he was accepted for free. We consider individual life projects one-by-one and try to evolve them in relation to the context from which they come [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).



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41. [...] We have understood that culture is the only means to improve *Danisinni* [...] From this new path we have got some positive things and it is evident. The situation is much better than before, but we are still at the beginning [...] today we gain more visibility. I hear good things about the neighbourhood, and this is the result of a hard work that we are carrying on with a strong commitment and great difficulty. But this trajectory in recent years has seen a new light [...] (Interview with the President of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 23/07/2020).
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42. [...] An important step forward is the renovation of some houses that will become the *Borgo Sociale* at *Danisinni*: at the first floor we will open the hostel for social tourism where people from around the world can stay. We want to promote an alternative form of tourism, for those who want to immerse in the *Danisinni* context, get in touch with residents, eat in their houses, and know the context [...] (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
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43. [...] The idea of the mobile kitchen around *Danisinni* arises from the aspiration to create a micro economy, for allowing local people to work [...] create a micro economy means to look at the emergency ... it is a tool to ensure that people can have a decent standard of living and engage in the care of the self and others to be welcomed (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
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Institutional

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44. [...] Between 2015 and 2018, consultation tables were very frequent. At least every two months we used to review the situation [...] For properly planning, it was necessary to discuss in a circular table, not a vertical one! But a circular one where all the partners had an equal voice and the ability to discern the results of synergy, not the result of the single political actor. Well, slowly, the mayor has understood this! (Interview with St. Agnes parish, 19/04/2021).
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45. [...] *Danisinni* I guess is one of the greatest job satisfactions! It was a wonderful experience! [...] (Interview with the President of the UNESCO Arab-Norman task force, Municipality of Palermo, 17/07/2020).
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46. [...] It's been a very hard year and a half [...] For example the *Danisinni* portal was supposed to include the social museum, our artistic direction etc [...] In the end they registered the domain and created the site just by the parish... From there the first break began because I would have liked to recognize a role of artistic direction [...] I focused more on on the museum association to organise theatre performances [...] After a while we get back on track. At least together, we're a more motivated working group, and as a group we're able to bring forward more ideas [...] (Interview with a Professor from the Academy of Fine Arts, 30/07/2020).
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47. [...] There is apathy among people here. And perhaps it is also our responsibility because sometimes we cannot keep some promises done so far ... and we have deluded them ... now it's a little different [...] for example, for the realization of documentary *Rosalia* at
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Danisinni everyone has participated, even the most distant person [...]so the problem has never been the lack of participation but the result of participation [...] (Interview with the President and member of *Insieme per Danisinni* association, 23/07/2020).



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ANNEX 4

La via dei librai initiative

Via dei Librai editions	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Duration	April 23, 2016	April 22-23, 2017	April 21-23, 2018	April 26 - 28, 2019	April 23-27, 2020 (online) September 5-6, 2020 (in situ)	April 22-26, 2021 (online) September 3-5, 2021 (in situ)
Topic	UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day at Cassaro	La <i>Via dei Librai</i> e the <i>Cassaro</i> identity	The reading City	The knowledge City	The International City	The community City
Organizing Committee	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> Association.	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> association; <i>Via Dei Librai</i> Committee; Municipality of Palermo.	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> association; <i>Via Dei Librai</i> Committee; Municipality of Palermo; Palermo, Italian capital of culture; <i>Ballarò Significa Palermo</i> ; <i>Ballarò Significa Palermo</i> ; Ars Nova.	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> association; <i>Via Dei Librai</i> Committee; Municipality of Palermo; Sicilian Region; Ars Nova, <i>Ballarò Significa Palermo</i> .	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> association; <i>Via Dei Librai</i> Committee; Municipality of Palermo; Sicilian Region; Ars Nova; <i>Ballarò Significa Palermo</i> .	<i>Cassaro Alto</i> association; <i>Via Dei Librai</i> Committee; Municipality of Palermo; <i>Ballarò Significa Palermo</i>
Main local partners & patronage	Municipality of Palermo; <i>Confcommercio Palermo</i> ; World International Sicilian Heritage; Ars Nova association; Albergher & Capo Project; <i>Editori allo scoperto</i> ; Biondo Theatre; Library and archive system of the Municipality of Palermo	University of Palermo; <i>Piazza Marina</i> e surroundings; Wish; 'Albergheria e Capo Insieme'	'Albergheria e Capo insieme'; Siciliando; University of Palermo; Regional councillorship for cultural heritage; Municipality of Palermo; WH Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale; Federico II Foundation.	University of Palermo; Federico II Foundation; Città che legge; <i>Teatro Massimo</i> ; Municipality of Palermo; Regional Gallery <i>Palazzo Abatellis</i> ; Archive and Library System – Municipality of Palermo; WH Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale;	Sicilian Region; Regional Gallery <i>Palazzo Abatellis</i> ; <i>Polo Regionale per l'Arte moderna e contemporanea</i> ; Regional Archaeological Museum <i>A. Salinas</i> ; <i>Centro Regionale inventario, catalogazione e documentazione</i> (CRICD); Istituto Cervantes, Institut Français, Paloline, <i>Le Muse Associazione Culturale</i> , Real Teatro Bellini, <i>Città che legge</i> ; Teatro Massimo; WH Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale.	Unchanged from the previous edition
Main national/international Patronage	-	UNESCO Italian Commission; Reading Book Centre, MIBACT	UNESCO Italian Commission; Reading Book Centre, MIBACT; 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage; Rai Teche.	UNESCO Italian Commission; Reading Book Centre, MIBACT; Il Maggio dei Libri 2019; Rai Teche.	UNESCO Italian Commission; Reading Book Centre, MIBACT.	UNESCO Italian Commission; Reading Book Centre, MIBACT; Il Maggio dei Libri 2019; Sicilian Region.
Sponsors	-	Gesap, 'Falcone and Borsellino' airport; <i>Confcommercio Palermo</i>	Gesap, 'Falcone and Borsellino' airport; <i>Confcommercio Palermo</i> ; Photograph stampatori digitali SRL; VM Agency; La Repubblica.	<u>Main Sponsors</u> : WH Palermo Arab-Norman and the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale; Sicilian World Heritage Foundation; <u>Further sponsors</u> : Gesap, 'Falcone and Borsellino airport'; <i>Confcommercio Palermo</i> ; Photograph stampatori digitali SRL; VM Agency; La Repubblica;	<i>Confcommercio Palermo</i> ; Photograph stampatori digitali SRL; La Repubblica;	Gesap, 'Falcone and Borsellino airport'; <i>Confcommercio Palermo</i> ; Photograph stampatori digitali SRL; <i>Balata sicilian experience</i> ; <i>Le Terrazze del Sole</i> , Palermo; La Repubblica;
Selected participants	65 exhibitors	63 exhibitors	60 exhibitors 120 contributors	55 exhibitors	Reduced number due to the pandemic	44 exhibitors



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Public visitors	More than 30.000 visitors	More than 70.000 persons	<u>Special participants:</u> Regional Centrla Library; Regional Gallery <i>Palazzo Abatellis</i> ; <i>Polo Regionale per l'Arte moderna e contemporanea</i> ; <i>Teatro Massimo</i> ; Palermo municipal Library	About 80.000 visitors	About 100.000 visitors	More than 120.000 online followers (Facebook, Instagram)	More than 50.000 visitors More than 150.000 online followers (Facebook, Instagram)
	Cassaro Alto axis	Cassaro Alto axis; Villa Bonanno	<u>Additional locations:</u> Biblioteca Comunale, Regional Gallery <i>Palazzo Abatellis</i> ; 3 literary corners; courtyard of the Cathedral of Palermo.	Unchanged from the previous year	Online	<u>Additional spaces:</u> <i>Centro sperimentale di cinematografia di Palermo</i>	

Source: own elaboration

Notes: Information in the table have been retrieved from multiple online sources:

- The *via dei Librai* official web site <https://www.laviadeilibrai.it/chi-siamo/> Accessed 05/2022
- *Ballarò Significa Palermo* co-organizer website <http://www.ballarosignificapalermo.it/> Accessed 05/2022
- *Cassaro Alto* Association website <https://cassaroalto.it/> Accessed 05/2022
- *PalermoToday* and *Repubblica Palermo* local magazines.