# Culture, Innovation and Entrepreneurship: connecting the knowledge dots



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# Social Innovation for Cultural Heritage new logic in action.

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#### Track 16 - INNOVATION AND CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP – THE CORE OF A KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

#### Purpose

Italy can boast a huge cultural and natural heritage but often due to lack of resources and to management dysfunctions, many sites are abandoned. Traditionally, the model of heritage management is public, but in recent years the involvement of private profitmaking enterprises increased. However, private has naturally tended to focus on the more attractive "blockbuster sites", leaving Italy's extraordinarily widespread cultural heritage unprotected. Our work intend to contribute to this field of study by focusing on the emergence of a new logic in the cultural heritage field. Through a case study analysis we would describe the emergence of a new logic in the Italian cultural heritage field.

#### Design/Methodology/Approach

Our research deals with projects and initiatives aimed at protecting and promoting the widespread cultural and natural heritage which has been re-functionalised, preserved and made accessible to local communities and visitors. These initiatives have applied the concepts of social innovation to the management of cultural field. The research is based on a qualitative investigation using the case study approach. The collection of empirical data is carried out using a heterogeneous plurality of instruments. The methods include: document analysis, semi-structured interviews and participant observations.

#### **Originality/value**

The Italian cultural heritage is characterized by two coexistent logics: the conservation logic and the market logic. These logics did not allow the establishment of models for the efficient and effective management of cultural heritage.

We can identify a new emerging logic in this field. The participation logic is the way to find new models to manage social issues. Indeed it takes shape in the context of social innovation initiatives. Social innovation could fill the gap of welfare state fulfilling the social need to promote cultural and creative initiatives.

#### **Practical implications**

Downstream of the first phase of research we have defined the characteristics of social innovation initiatives related to the cultural heritage. We can, therefore, make a mapping of the organizations that respond to those characteristics.

In addition to this, the research aim to identify the economic impact of the social innovation initiatives object of study in term of people employed, type of contract, amount of resources necessary for sustainability, impact on community and territory.

It could become an important tool for policy makers to promote and develop new initiatives.

Keywords - social innovation, cultural heritage, institutional logic, co-creation.

Paper type – Academic Research Paper

#### Introduction

Many studies and researches have studied how organizations respond to institutional logics and how this is reflected into organizational practices and forms. Organisational forms and institutional logics are key related concepts, as a matter of fact organisational forms are manifestations of institutional logics (Thornton 2004, Greenwood et al 2009).

The research aims at understanding how do actors respond to different institutional logics and how they can influence the behaviour of organisations within a specific industry. It is worth to study the relationship among a institutional logics and their practices and the emergence of a new logic which influence a new type of organisation, both logic and organisation are mutually conditioned. Our work intend to contribute to this field of study by focusing on the emergence of a new logic in the cultural heritage field. Through a case study analysis we would describe the emergence of a new logic in the Italian cultural heritage field and we attempt to analyse how participants in the initiatives respond to institutional logic, creating new organisational forms and new managerial practices. Our research deals with projects and initiatives aimed at protecting and promoting the widespread cultural and natural heritage which has been refunctionalised, preserved and made accessible to local communities and visitors. These initiatives have applied the concepts of social innovation to the management of cultural field.

The article is organised as follows. In the first section the institutional logic approach will be developed, analysing the multiple logic which animate the Italian cultural heritage field. Then, through a case study analysis, the study will describe the initiatives object of study. Moreover, from the cases we have observed the emergence of a new logic pervading the cultural sector which influence the behaviour of actors defining new organizational forms and different practices. The paper ends by discussing the implications of the findings for institutional logic approach.

#### Theoretical background

The institutional logic approach in organizational studies is useful for understanding the behaviour of individuals and organizations within a wider system of values and beliefs (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Lounsbury, 2007). The institutional logics describe the context and influence the behaviour of economic and social players at the different levels of analysis: individual organizations, markets, inter organizational networks, geographical communities, industries and organizational fields (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

Institutional logics are the fundamental principles of society able to drive social action and represent patterns that provide the actors principles, values and assumptions, which are often embedded, to understand organizational realities (Thornton, 2004). According to this perspective, organizational forms, managerial practices and behaviours are manifestations of institutional logics and are justified by the same.

According to Friedland and Alford (1991) logics are important theoretical constructs that can explain the relationship between the actors of an organizational field by defining their behaviour. They can be considered a way to determine the impact that institutions have on the behaviour of individuals and organizations by guiding actions and practices (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Every social system is characterized by a particular logic related to material and managerial practices (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Reay et al., 2009) and significant institutions have a central logic that guides and binds individual and collective behaviours. Many studies have linked institutional logics with organisational practices, analysing their mutual conditioning (Zajac and Westphal 2004, Thornton and Ocasio 1999). By observing

institutional logics it is possible to understand organisational practices (Greenwood et al. 2011).

The current debate on institutional logics considers the institutional process as a result of coexistence and interaction of multiple logics. According to this perspective, the organizations and, more generally the society, are governed by a plurality of coexistent logics. Many institutional theorists have argued that organisational fields are organised according to a dominant institutional logic, even though more recent studies recognise that two or more institutional logics may exist at the same time (Scott, 2008; Thornton and Ocasio, 1999). In literature we can find different ways of conceptualising the relationship between multiple logics (Reay et al. 2009, Westenholz, 2011). Firstly, some authors argue that among logics there is a dominant one which guides behaviour. In this conceptualisation, different institutional logics coexist within an organisational field, challenging each other and pushing for radical or incremental changes. Logics are presented as being in competition, and secondary logics are considered drivers of change as they are used to explain shifts from one logic to another (Lounsbury 2002, Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Thornton 2002, Scott et al. 2000). Moreover, other studies present a long period of struggle among logics, where competing multiple logics co-exist for lengthy transition periods (Hensman 2003, Hoffman 1999). Finally, some studies suggest that multiple logics co-exist influencing different actors and organisations (Reay et al 2009, Reay and Hinings 2009, Lounsbury 2007, Marquis and Lounsbury 2007).

As stated above, individuals and organisations adjust their actions according to the existence of many institutional logics. Organisational forms and material practices are manifestations of institutional logics (Greenwood et al. 2009). For this reason, in order to explain the modification of organisational forms and practices within an organisational field it is necessary to analyse the relationship between logics, organisational forms and

practices. In the light of these assumptions, our concern is about focusing on the emergence of a new logic in the cultural heritage field.

#### Institutional logics in the cultural heritage field

Nowadays Italian cultural heritage has challenging a strong economic crisis and suffering a lack of resources. Italy's huge cultural and environmental heritage, situated in all of its roughly 8,000 municipalities, is undergoing a profound economic crisis. Often due to lack of resources and to management dysfunctions, many sites are abandoned and forgotten. The problems facing the public sector in safeguarding and ensuring access to cultural heritage have gradually led to the increased involvement of private profit-making enterprises in running cultural heritage sites. However, the private sector has naturally tended to focus on the more attractive "blockbuster sites", leaving Italy's extraordinarily widespread cultural heritage unprotected. Despite this alarming situation, a beacon of hope is provided by initiatives promoted by enthusiastic, expert citizens whose love of their local area has led them to set up projects aimed at safeguarding important pieces of cultural and environmental heritage which have been re-functionalised, preserved and made accessible to citizens and visitors. These initiatives have applied the concepts of social innovation to the management of cultural heritage. Traditionally, the model of heritage management is public, but in recent years the involvement of private profitmaking enterprises increased. From the review of the new institutional literature and from the empirical research we can distinguish two major coexistent institutional logic that animates the cultural heritage field: a conservation logic and a market logic.

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Characteristics	Conservation Logic	Market logic	
Organizational identity	Historical preservation	Profit	
Legitimacy	Reputation	Market position	
Authority structure	Prestige	Hierarchy	
Mission	Protection and Safeguard	Profit increase	
Focus	Preservation	Competition	
Strategy	Minimize risks	Business growth	
Logic of investment	Heritage protection	Return on investment	
Governance	Public ownership	Private management	

Source: Adapted from Thornton (2002)

The conservation logic has been traditionally the dominant logic in the field since the establishment of the law for the care and safeguard of the cultural heritage (Law n. 1089/1936). It is related to the preservation of the historical value of cultural and natural heritage. During the beginning of the year 2000 due to many changes occurred in the regulative framework the field has challenged a difficult period. Many changes occurred to the organisation of both central and peripheral structures of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage who managed a relevant part of Italian heritage. In this context and due to the lack of resources and the inability of the public to manage the cultural sites , the market logic arose. Thanks to some legislative changes public actors have allowed private actors to manage some non-core activities. The reform of the Italian Chart (Titolo V), for example, represents one of the events which signed the emergence of the market logic thanks to the clear distinction between protection and enhancement functions.

As far as concern the organisational responses to the different logics which coexist in the field object of study, we can observe different organisational forms and practices which

characterize the management of cultural and natural heritage: a public model, a private profit making model and volunteer model.

According to the public model, the State through the MIBAC (Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage), manage and take care the most relevant part of cultural and natural heritage. The look for conservation and care are crucial theme of this type of approach. The State through laws and rules manage the huge cultural heritage trying to reach efficiency and sustainability targets, but this proliferation of rules has often reached a contrary effect. As a matter of fact, public administration has been often paralyzed and did not realized promotional project aiming at creating value. Moreover, the public model suffer from coordination problems and lack of economical resources. The public model failed to manage especially the less popular and hidden sites and places, which risks to be totally abandoned.

On the other hand, due to the failure of the public model a private one has emerged. From this point of view the private profit making organization seems to be the only answer to the efficient management of the cultural and natural heritage through the creation of private-public partnership. But it does not guarantee the necessary return on investments, for this reason also this model doesn't represent a solution for the management of the abandoned heritage.

At last, the failure of the previous models fuel the rise of many volunteers initiatives who wants to save and protect Italian cultural heritage. These micro organizations operate thanks to financial donations and the exclusive use of volunteer work, but they can't be considered an economical sustainable organisational form.

To sum up, the public form has failed to manage a so widespread and huge heritage; in the same way the profit making organizations haven't considered the cultural heritage management a profitable business to take on. As stated above, our analysis reveals that there are other actors involved in the field who are trying to managing, promoting and taking care of the abandoned and forgotten Italian heritage.

#### Method

#### Research setting

Our research is based on a qualitative investigation. As the case study approach refers to an in-depth study and investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within the real-life context, we set up eleven descriptive case studies.

To define the scope of analysis we have chosen to identify and include in our study the organizations characterized by the presence of the following elements:

1. Cultural and natural Heritage: In our analysis we consider physical and natural assets that have characteristics of singularity and cultural interest, historical, artistic, archaeological, landscape (as monuments, palaces, villas, churches, industries and factories, parks, reserves, lakes and waterways, coastal areas, volcanoes and mountain peaks); are also taken into account the mixed assets. In other words those assets that have a mix between the physical and natural. Such property, owned by public, private, mixed and ecclesiastical actors, previously in a state of neglect and decay, are managed through recovery activities, promotion and enhancement by the local community.

2. Public use: The cultural or natural heritage must be recovered or converted to public use, mainly for local communities. This return to the community can be done through musealization of the cultural and natural asset and / or through the implementation of economic or cultural activities into it.

3. Paid work: the organization must provide a paid job to the people who work within it. The use of forms of voluntary work should not be exclusive or predominant.

Data collection

The collection of empirical data is carried out using a heterogeneous plurality of instruments. The methods include: document analysis, semi-structured interviews and participant observations. The research was carried out through in-depth interviews with the senior members of these initiatives in order to understand the following aspects: the origins of the idea, the features of the promoting group and forms of involving partners, the development phases of the project (obstacles, enemies and allies), the forms of assignment of the heritage site, the organisational form, the actor's relationships (make or collaboration), the type of employment created and the forms of economic-financial sustainability of the project.

Table 1 – The initiatives object of study

Centro Studi Interdisciplinari Gaiola Onlus	Askavusa - Museo delle migrazioni		
(Napoli)	(Lampedusa)		
Calabresi creativi (Reggio Calabria)	Cooperativa La Paranza (Napoli)		
Fondazione CRESCO (Matera)	Ex Fadda (Brindisi)		
Liberos (Sassari)	Farm Cultural Park (Agrigento)		
Rural Hub (Calvanico)	CLAC - Mare memoria viva (Palermo)		
Addiopizzo travel (Palermo)			

#### Findings

In this section we are going to make some considerations from the cases analysed in our study. The observation of social innovation initiatives in the cultural heritage field show that the individual actors play an active role in setting up projects that respond to both individual and social needs in a context with serious social and economic problems. As far as concern the main and common features of the initiatives it is worthy to underline, first of all, that they were not developed in contexts where a district-type approach was being pursued<sup>1</sup> (Santagata W, 2000; Sacco and Petrini, 2003). None of these cases were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The cultural district is a territorial development model, in which the first objective is the promotion of cultural heritage present in it. It is not spontaneous. The implementation of a cultural district is the final result of a project and requires an authority to define an intervention strategy for the territory, and to choose the most

set up as part of a district-oriented approach but arise as bottom-up initiatives on the basis of spontaneous processes taking place within a generally hostile environment. This aspect is extremely important and highlights the fact that it is possible to create innovation even in the absence of a favourable institutional context.

Secondly, another interesting common factor of the stories analysed in this study is the incapacity of public institutions and local players to provide support for the challenge undertaken by social innovators in the cultural field. Generally, despite some public stakeholders has played an important role, the public administration, in its various forms, has not encouraged the creation of these initiatives and, in some cases, has even hindered their development.

Moreover, another factor that characterises the environment within which promoters of social innovation in the cultural heritage field have to work is the widespread scepticism followed by envy. The development of socially innovative ideas within the cultural heritage sector therefore has to overcome this significant barrier which proves a particularly tough task during the difficulties or crises that each individual project may encounter.

In addition to this, all the initiatives in the study are micro-businesses that manage to support themselves economically and provide employment for some of the partners. Although these enterprises do not aim to join Business Angels or Venture Capital networks since they lack the necessary potential income, they try to solve a social problem – the management of cultural heritage – using an entrepreneurial approach.

Compared to technology start-ups, the characteristic feature of these enterprises is their close ties with the local area since their main aim is to take care of a part of cultural heritage and make it accessible to the community.

appropriate form of management, in which the actors, public and private, work together for the realization of the objectives. In Italy there are 13 Cultural District seven of which are promoted by Fondazione Cariplo

Another key feature of the experiences encountered lies in the capacity to combine cultural heritage conservation and cultural production. In the case studies, the restoration of abandoned cultural heritage is focused on initiatives which simultaneously aim to produce culture and reconstruct memory. In these case studies, the production of contents and the construction of the structure become community-wide processes of co-creation and sharing which are also useful for constantly enlarging the communities involved in these projects.

Moreover, it is worth to underline that according to the approach used by social innovation projects applied to cultural heritage, citizens are considered primarily as potential partners who need to be included in the initiative. Citizens retain their role and the process of involvement is not based on commercial criteria but on participation and co-design. They are not involved as consumers but as the main beneficiaries of the project.

Another features that emerges is the priority placed on the willingness to collaborate rather than to compete. Given the lack of public resources to be divided between numerous claimants, operators involved in the conservation and access to cultural heritage sites have gradually learned the importance of collaboration.

At last it is necessary say that the role of voluntary work, especially in the initial phase of these projects, is extremely important. In some cases, it might be more appropriate to term it as activism rather than voluntary work, especially when the projects are set up in contexts beset by organised crime and unlawful behaviour. A thread running through all these case studies is the capacity to turn voluntary work into paid work. Many initiatives reflect the slow but necessary transition towards more organised, stable forms of employment. The need for this transition is linked to the very survival of these initiatives which inevitably come to an end when at least some of the promoters do not get paid for the time and energy they spend. On the other hand, this transition is also an endemic requirement of projects as they expand and encourage the involvement of an increasingly larger number of citizens.

From the analyses of the case studies and their common features, we can observe the emergence of a new organisational form that respond to a minority logic emerged through interviews during the study. This logic, called participation logic, has been marginal in the past years. For the reasons already explained, it arose as a central logic especially for the creation of a collaborative spirit. All the initiatives analysed are influenced by a participation logic rather than a public and a market logics. These experiences, as a matter of fact, focus on community and promoter need, based on collaboration and cooperation. The crucial competences are the capacity to collaborate, to activate relationships, to involve local communities and to create social and economic development. The studied organizations are not following a market logic which push towards development and growth, but they are focused on openness and involvement of actors which animate the field.

	Public	Profit making	Participation/social	
Institutional logic	Conservation	Market Logic	Participation Logic	
	logic			
Aim	Historical value	Consumers needs	Community/promoter	
	protection		needs	
Relationship	Integration	Competition	Collaboration	
Skills	Bureaucratic	Commercial	Actors' involvement	
Mission/Strategy	Preservation	Efficiency,	Continuity,	
		Scalability	Community	
			embedded	
Investments	Heritage	Return on	Sustainability	
	protection	investment		

Table 3 - Organisational interpretative dynamics in relation to different institutional logics

Source: Our elaboration

#### Conclusion

We have seen that a great cultural and environmental heritage did not have the resources nor the attention necessary for its preservation and its usability. In fact, the traditional players operating in this field are guided by one of two logics (conservation and market) that even if opposed, failed both to create models of efficient and effective management and enhancement for the abandoned and minor heritage. The state of neglect of some of these sites has created, in fact, a process of physical and social degradation.

In this context the initiatives that we have analyzed above arise. The common features that we have identified lead us to establish a third logic (participation), a "third way", which determines the choices and leads to the definition of new models of management and organization. Participation logic involves, in fact, a different role of promoters / entrepreneurs, citizens and consumers, restating the dynamics and direction of the exchange.

This logic arises in the context of social innovation that, in fact, can be interpreted as a process of collective creation in which members of a community invent and redefine new rules.

The new models of management and organization that result from this logic cannot be traced to traditional business models. In fact, the adaptation of previous models for the definition of organisational and management choices do not seem to have positive results in the medium / long term. The concepts of profitability, remuneration, scalability, the search for competitive advantage, even if declined in "social version", are not consistent with what people do in these initiatives. In the cultural heritage these *social enterprises* base their existence on a cultural asset linked to the territory and on the network of relationships that is typical of that cultural context that is so difficult to replicate. In this way, the cultural heritage became the place where cultural, economic and relational skills

of the community can get together and create social innovation, making it a collective resource.

This research is the initial phase of a project that we believe should be permanent. Right in the concept of innovation, we find the motive of making necessary the continuous study of the reality analyzed. In any case, in the short term the subsequent stages to this work are three:

- Our goal is to define what are the possible models of enterprise development arising from the logic participation, how to overcome the business plan and get to new planning tools for social innovation, especially in support of the cultural and natural heritage innovation.
- 2. As mentioned, the empirical analysis that has been initiated will create a mapping of the initiatives of social innovation for the Italian cultural heritage. This tool will be useful in the development of research and will attempt to create categories to define support tools to new models of management and organization.
- 3. The mapping will also be necessary to collect information necessary to quantify the economic impact of these initiatives of social innovation in term of people employed, type of contract, amount of resources necessary for sustainability, impact on community and territory.

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