

Restoring the Past, Reshaping the Present:
Exploring the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions of
archaeological cultural heritage in Bulgaria

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Chapter One

Introduction

For the last couple of decades the European Commission (EC) has drawn and followed specific policies on cultural collaboration between its member states. A significant part of the outlined policies has also been the funding of archaeological research and heritage preservation, conservation and restoration. Following the above mentioned collaboration policy the EC and, respectively, the European Union (EU) promote ideas of common heritage, which belongs to the whole of the European community in the realms of the EU. Generally, funding of archaeological projects (including research and heritage management) falls under the umbrella of EC's cultural programmes (e.g. Raphael 1997 – 1999, Culture 2000, Culture 2007 – 2013). With consideration of the policy of these programmes, archaeological cultural heritage is treated as common and pan-European in the realms of the European Union.

In Bulgaria, a relatively recent member-state of the EU, the introduction of European funding for various purposes has, among other things, resulted in increased conservation and reconstruction processes of archaeological heritage. This could be best observed with the introduction of funding oriented towards regional development and regional economic growth. After its inclusion in the Union in 2007, the Bulgarian member-state has been receiving funding from two European programmes – Operational Programmes “Regions in Development (2007 – 2013) and “Regions in Growth” (2014 – 2020), as well as partial funding from the European Regional Development Fund (2007 – 2013; 2015- 2020). A large part of these funds, aimed at regional economic growth, has been and is being used for the reconstruction of immovable archaeological heritage. Tourism development and its contribution to regional economic growth are often used as main arguments for the justification of the majority of these reconstructions.

Despite the fact that none of the above mentioned regional development programmes are directly connected to the EC's, and respectively EU's cultural policies, the treatment of archaeological heritage under their funding is supposed to be carried out with consideration to all European and international legislation. This legislation, in the form of various legally binding treaties and advisory charters, is signed and ratified by most of the member-countries of the EU. The Bulgarian member-state has signed and ratified different European and international preservation, conservation and reconstruction treaties and documents long before its official inclusion in the EU. Nevertheless, most of the archaeological preservation and reconstruction projects carried out with the implementation of EU funding fail to meet the standards set by legally binding treaties. Often the conservation processes result in a complete reconstruction of the archaeological site or monument, without them being based on any scientific and archaeological evidence. The use of construction material that is either new or different from the original further complicates the matter, turning restorations into reconstructions, while at the same time having no regards for their authenticity. These reconstructions, termed "hypothetical reconstructions" (e.g. Pehlivanova 2015, Krastev 2015) because of the lack of any scientific background supporting their original outlook, have been a subject of debates on a national, as well as international level. The issue has been repeatedly voiced over the last few years by different stakeholders - heritage advisory bodies (Declaration of ICOMOS Bulgaria), public NGOs (www.bta.bg¹) academic archaeologists (Gergova 2014) and architects (Declaration of the Chamber of Bulgarian Architects). A main concern that all of the above mentioned institutions and individuals have raised is the loss of authenticity and irreparable damage done the archaeological immovable heritage.

Almost a decade after the inclusion of the Bulgarian state within the EU and upon the completion of the first Operational Programme "Regions in Development" (2007 – 2013), a total of 46 archaeological sites had ended up being subjects of restoration/reconstruction projects. These practices are still being carried out under the second programme "Regions in Growth" (2014), which has an end date in 2020. Owing to the duration of the programme, a full list of the archaeological sites approved for restorations has not been presented yet. However,

¹ http://www.bta.bg/bg/live/show/id/0_7zv8l8xg/

it is expected that their number will be close to the one of “Regions in Development” programme (46 restored archaeological sites so far).

A huge part of the sites’ restorations continue to entering into a conjecture. Therefore, a concern over what is being perceived as damage and destruction of archaeological cultural heritage continues to be expressed by various stakeholders’ groups.

Purpose of the current study: whose heritage? Beyond ownership of the past

The general purpose of the thesis is to explore and document the experiences of stakeholders that are involved in archaeology and have expressed a dissatisfaction related to the practices of Bulgarian heritage reconstructions. This dissatisfaction goes beyond the violation of European and international legislation that these reconstructions are a result of. The legislation has been and is being overlooked by policy-makers, many of whom are part of the national cultural policy sector. The experience of dissatisfied individuals, whose involvement in heritage management projects is important, is of an utmost significance. Since its documentation can present their perspective, it also aims at unraveling the reasons for their dissatisfaction. This serves as ground for the development of a wider discussion on the subject of hypothetical reconstructions and the consequences of this practice. Moreover, the dissatisfaction, as well as media and academic attention paid to this phenomenon are still on-going, which makes the issue contemporary and relevant.

In order to explore other reasons for the general dissatisfaction experienced by individuals primarily involved with the archaeological discipline, the following research question is outlined:

What are the reasons behind the negative experience of Bulgarian “hypothetical reconstructions” by individuals who are actively involved with archaeology?

The unravelling of those reasons is important, since it presents the opportunity to compare them to the official argument supporting these restorations, made by the executors of these projects (e.g. regional municipalities, the Ministry of Culture, religious institutions). The conduction of hypothetical reconstruction practices is often justified by both the projects' executors and by policy-makers. Therefore, the gathered data and documentation of experiences of dissatisfied stakeholders could be used to look for the reasons behind this negative experience and publically expressed discontent. By doing so, a balanced approach towards the exploration of this phenomenon could be achieved. This is based on the assumption that two main sides are explored in the thesis. The first one, representing executors and policy-makers is generally satisfied with the realisation of the projects. The stand that these stakeholder take upon is traced and observed by examining project proposals and policy-makers' statements. The second side represents individuals and institutions involved in archaeology. They are mainly expressing dissatisfaction with the completed restoration projects. This dissatisfaction, however, is harder to observe, since it addresses subjective components, such as authenticity (Domicelj Am 2009, 153). Therefore, the obtainment of primary data coming from dissatisfied stakeholders allows for an overall, balanced exploration of the phenomenon.

It is important to note that the purpose of the thesis is not the conduction of a stakeholder analysis. While such analysis would undoubtedly be helpful at a later stage, the current thesis has a more specific goal. It rather aims at the exploration and documentation of the hypothetical reconstructions' phenomenon by an in-depth exploration of one of two opposing arguments.

On a larger scale, the European community is another distant, but also theoretically involved stakeholder. Its involvement has been mainly established by the EU's and EC's cultural strategies, claiming archaeological cultural heritage within the realms of the EU as common and pan-European (e.g. Niklasson 2016), which has also been legalised by the Valletta Convention (1992). Further complicating this involvement is the funding coming through the regional development Operational Programmes, which is used for the majority of the conducted

archaeological reconstruction projects. While this subject greatly exceeds the scope of the current thesis, the inability, or rather the decision not to follow the outlined cultural and legislation policies of the EU and EC of the Bulgarian member-state will be briefly considered in the discussion chapter.

In order to find a satisfactory answer to the research question, the subject will be approached through a qualitative case study methodology. Detailed and in-depth information has been gathered in the form of interviews, documentation, and visual material. The case study is meant to serve as an illustration of the overall issue of the practice of hypothetical reconstructions and the complex connection between these practices and the affect they have on stakeholders actively involved with the archaeological discipline.

With the goal in mind to illustrate the issue, I chose the case study of the Yailata archaeological reserve as an example of a recent hypothetical reconstruction carried out with EU funding under Regional Development programmes. The Yailata archaeological reserve has received wide media coverage and has been the subject of national and international debates since the start of the project in 2008. A number of interviews have been carried out with participants who were directly involved with it and openly expressed their dissatisfaction through media interviews, academic articles and conferences on a national level.

The scope of this thesis covers experiences of stakeholders who did not have any practical role in the reconstruction processes carried out at the Yailata archaeological reserve, and who generally perceive these processes as “damaging”. In this sense the approach is oriented mainly towards a specific target group and the study does not involve policy-makers. However, their perspective and overall stand could be observed through their involvement in decision-making processes regarding the conduction of these specific conservation practices. Thus, the study allows tracing the experiences of individuals actively engaged with the archaeological discipline, but whose roles remain as ones of external observers.

Structure of the thesis

A central aspect of this thesis is formed by the case study, which is used to illustrate, and further explore the occurring phenomenon. As such, the case study is used as a tool, which operates within an established theoretical framework. Therefore, following the outlined framework in the second chapter, the hypothetical reconstructions' phenomenon, together with the case study, are then presented and examined. The obtained data and the respectively produced results are then outlined, in order to allow for the presentation of a wider discussion on the topic. This is achieved by answering the research question, which is also a main goal of the thesis.

Following this structure, Chapter two provides an overall literature review on European and international legislation of archaeological heritage preservation, conservation and reconstruction. The on-going debate in heritage management of reconstruction practices will be presented, together with a brief discussion on what constitutes a restoration project and what differentiates it from a reconstruction one. Furthermore, the historical development of conservation practices in Bulgaria will be explored. This is mainly done by following an already set framework of historical development of preservation practices of architectural and archaeological cultural heritage, outlined by Kandulkova (2007). Firstly, the period between the establishment of the first laws regarding the protection of immovable heritage in the Bulgarian state and the end of the Communist period (1888 – 1990) will be considered. The second period focuses on the post-Communist period, mainly outlined by the beginning of decentralisation of this practice and the creation of the distinction between architectural and cultural (archaeological) heritage.

Moreover, examples of hypothetical reconstructions carried out with EU funding after 2007 will be explored. The focus will fall on archaeological heritage sites directly connected with funding from the programmes “Regions in Development (2007 – 2013) and “Regions in Growth” (2014 – 2020), as well as European Regional Development Fund (2007 – 2013; 2015- 2020). Since the latter programme is still on-going, the outcomes of the former are explored in depth and considered throughout the analysis.

The third chapter introduces hypothetical reconstructions in a greater detail, and also presents the case study of the Yailata archaeological reserve. The Yailata makes a suitable case study for the current thesis for numerous reasons. Firstly, apart from being ascribed as an archaeological reserve in 1989, it is also part of a European network of protected sites Natura 2000. As such, the reserve is of both national and European natural and cultural significance. This is important since this makes the site a subject of a complicated and strict legal framework which generally goes against alterations of built heritage. Secondly, the wide media attention has made its reconstruction recognisable and a subject of national and international debates. This made it easier to find interested participants, who were able to observe the processes there closely. Lastly, the nature of the archaeological remains chosen for the reconstruction process – the fortress – is a representative example for the usual choice for reconstruction made by policy-makers and municipality officials.

Chapter four deals with an in-depth exploration of data and methodology. The choice of qualitative case study methodology is justified, together with presentation of data obtained from interviews. The methodological tool (NVivo software) is introduced. This computer software is used for coding analyses of the interview data and visual information.

Further into this chapter, the produced results are presented in the form of qualitative nodes (or codes). The underlying themes of the different nodes are evaluated within the same chapter, and later on discussed in-depth in the following Chapter five.

The fifth chapter begins with a proposed answer to the research question. It continues with a wider discussion of the topic, considering different values associated with cultural heritage in general and then further looking into the Bulgarian case. It considers issues of authenticity and differences in the perception of national and European heritage.

Chapter six gives an overall summary and conclusion of the thesis. It also aims at presenting different ideas that could serve as potential solutions to the previously posed issues. Finally, it considers the study's limitations, offers a recommendation for practitioners and gives grounds for further research.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

Constructing Archaeological Restoration and Reconstruction practices

The practice of reconstruction of built heritage in the realms of heritage preservation and conservation has had a long history and has been a subject of debates for years (e.g. Jameson 2004, Molina-Montes 1982, Ruskin 1996). Some scholars have discussed the philosophical (e.g. Stanley-Price 2009), historical (e.g. Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996) and ethical (Richmond and Baker 2009) aspects of archaeological reconstructions, with the topic remaining controversial and often open to interpretation. With the completion of literature review on the conservation practices of restoration and reconstruction I intend to discuss how exactly heritage restorations can turn into reconstructions, and what the difference between the two is. In order to set the issue into perspective, I aim at discussing these practices on both international and national scales.

This chapter, therefore, is comprised of two parts: the first part discusses how restoration practices are conducted on an international level, mainly focusing on the European context. I will define and differentiate between restorations and reconstructions, discuss the historic and philosophical development of the practices, and consider European legislation. The second part of Chapter two discusses the same topics, but narrowed down to a national level, with a focus on Bulgaria. The purpose of this chapter is to set the context in which the phenomenon of Bulgarian hypothetical reconstructions occurs, by tracing the development of conservation by restoration/reconstruction practices, both worldwide and in Bulgaria.

Restoration and reconstruction: conservation practices in international context

A lot of editorial volumes published over the years give a good overview on current stage of the subject, here I will discuss a number of them (i.e. Jameson 2004, Stanley-Price et al. 1996, Richmond and Bracker 2009). These volumes could be seen as a representative sample that provides a set of main key points in the theoretical development in the field. By doing this I not only attempt to explore the previous research on the matter, but also to look further into possible reasons that typically underline archaeological heritage reconstructions. The act of simply reconstructing the material fabric is often connected to issues such as contemporary interpretations of the past, public perception, and multivocality of shared heritage. However, in order to get a better understanding of these, I will first discuss what is actually defined as reconstruction of built heritage in the archaeological conservation realm.

Defining reconstructions

Evidence for the desire to reconstruct architectural buildings can be traced back to the Antiquity period, or as Molina-Montes (1982, 484) puts it, this desire is “probably almost as old as architecture itself”. Nevertheless, a straightforward and undisputable definition of the practice is hard to find, especially in academic contexts. According to Jameson (2004, 2), *“depending on the point of reference and experience of the experts involved, reconstructions are sometimes synonymous and functionally overlap with restorations”*. The main similarity that Jameson finds between reconstruction and other such preservation and restoration practices is that they involve new construction of components of the cultural landscape (Jameson 2004, 2). Thus, it could be argued that in Jameson’s opinion restoration and reconstruction are often interchangeable terms, depending on the context and expertise of the professional who is applying them.

An advocate for conducting reconstructions as means of preservation and conservation in certain cases is Catherine Woolfitt (2007). Woolfitt sees reconstruction processes as a suitable

way of conserving vulnerable original fabric, but notes that this should be done in extreme cases (Woolfitt 2007, 508). She uses the definitions provided by English Heritage in 2001, which are also based on the Burra Charter (1999). These definitions differentiate between three conservation approaches:

Restoration - returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material;

Reconstruction – returning a place to a known earlier state’ distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material into the fabric;

Recreation – speculative creation of a presumed earlier state on the basis of surviving evidence from that place and other sites, and on deductions drawn from that evidence using new material (Woolfitt 2007, 505).

Generally, the process of *anastylosis* is the preferred practice of restoration by the Venice Charter (1964, article 15). It is defined as “*the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts*”, and aims at reconstructing a monument through a minimum of conservation work done by using entirely existing material (Woolfitt 2007, 505). In this sense, restoration and reconstruction could also be interchangeable terms. The Burra Charter (1999), however, while initially developed for Australian context, makes a clear distinction between the two by the “introduction of new material into the fabric” (article 1.8), which is deemed as reconstruction. Therefore, if the Australian distinction was to be applied worldwide, many restoration practices would be deemed reconstructions instead.

Nevertheless, Woolfitt warns that restoration and reconstruction practices, in spite of what defines them, should never be carried out on speculative basis. Moreover, restorations are difficult to conduct without the introduction of new materials, which further complicates the explicit definition of restoration and/or reconstruction.

Stanley-Price (2009, 33), does provide a clear distinction between the two. He defines reconstructions as representing “*in many respects an extreme example of restoration*”.

Furthermore, he differentiates between two other such practices: (1) reconstruction of historical buildings after natural disastrous events or war actions and (2) recreation of buildings known to have existed in the past but which are recreated later in time on purely conjectural basis. The processes are usually carried out based on documentation of the previously existed monument which is the case with reconstruction following a natural disaster (1), or they are based on often sparse literally and pictorial evidence (2). The intentions of reconstructing these types of buildings often differentiate from the desire to reconstruct archaeological monuments as part of conservation or other planning.

The so framed definition (as discussed by Stanley-Price (2009)) of reconstructions narrows the scope of the discussion to archaeological heritage monuments that have been chosen to be conserved by reconstruction. This given definition compliments the observation provided by Woolfitt (2007) that when new material is introduced (even in extreme cases) it turns restoration practices into reconstruction. This type of archaeological heritage conservation, the one that chooses a specific type of a site and introduces new materials in order to conserve it, is also fairly widespread in the Bulgarian context. The majority of the completed restorations, funded by EC's Operational Programmes are a subject of the introduction of entirely new materials, which defines them as reconstructions. A good example of this is the Antique fortress at Yailata, which is discussed in detail in Chapter three.

Historical and philosophical development

In order to understand why the topic of reconstructing built heritage is so controversial, it is worth to briefly follow the historical and philosophical development of reconstruction practices. I will look at different literature and demonstrate how opinions on what a reconstruction is and how it should be carried out changed and continue to change over time. By doing this I attempt to illustrate the complex relationship between the simple act of reconstructing the material fabric of a monument and the ideas and motivations that often inspire it.

In order to keep the discussion relevant, I will look at the development of this type of conservation practices in three general time periods. The first one covers the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. With the general start of formation of nation states, built heritage became the focus of romantic reconstructions, and this will be discussed in a following subsection. This discussion is important, since it not only shows how difficult the definition of reconstruction and restoration could be, but also further draws a parallel between this practice and the practice of romantic restorations that took place in Bulgaria in the 1930s.

The second time period covers the years prior to, and after World War II. During this time numerous charters and conventions have been drawn in order to establish international guidelines, which define cultural heritage and form a conservation ethos for its protection. The third period deals with more contemporary views on cultural heritage that occur after the 1980s, and deal with issues such as public involvement, interpretation of the conservation ethos and critique on the traditional heritage management approaches.

The second part of this chapter takes the discussion of philosophical and ethical principles on a national level. It also deals with three main periods. The first one looks at the development during the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s. Different traditions of restoration and reconstruction are considered, producing two very different, but simultaneously existing models.

Following this, I will trace the development during the years between 1950s and 1980s. This period is difficult for observation on a national level. During the years between 1944 and 1989 the Bulgarian state was under a Communistic political regime, which followed specific cultural strategy, mainly serving the ruling political ideology at the time (e.g. Savova – Mahon Borden 2001). This will be discussed in more depth in the second part of this chapter, when a review of the national context of heritage conservation will be presented.

Finally, a more contemporary period of conservation development will be considered. This period starts in the 1990s and is still ongoing. This is generally the time when interdisciplinary discussions on heritage start being introduced and subjects like public involvement and interpretation are being considered. This also relates to the period when heritage preservation

and conservation is starting to be more widely discussed in Bulgaria, too, so a comparison could be made.

Development in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century

With the beginning of architectural conservation practices, two opposing schools of thought regarding architectural and archaeological reconstructions emerged in the 19th century. These were best represented by two leading figures - Eugene Emmanuel Viollet-de-Duc and John Ruskin – who upheld very different positions on the matter. The former saw ruins as something to be reestablished in order to return architectural buildings to their pristine (e.g. Viollet-le-Duc 1996, 314-18) and to be cherished as new constructions. The latter, however, was a voracious advocate for preserving the original state of ancient ruins (e.g. Ruskin 1996, 322-23) and to leave them as undisturbed as possible. Ruskin's ideas remain to a large extent adopted in modern heritage management approaches, having respect for the original material and attempting to apply nondestructive methodology, which aimed at preserving the original, even though often deteriorated state of the monument.

Viollet-de-Duc's philosophy, instead, was incorporated in a trend named "romantic restorations" (Stanley-Price 2009), which was adopted by Western European countries in the 19th century, and applied to some of their built heritage. Both Viollet-de-Duc and Ruskin felt nostalgia for the past. Nevertheless, while the former seems to have chosen to bring the past back to life by visually reconstructing it, the latter praised it by preserving it authentic in terms of fabric.

A prominent example of Viollet-de-Duc's philosophy is the Carcassonne castle, restored by Viollet-de-Duc himself in mid- 19th century (Fig.1). The project was conducted in the spirit of romantic restoration practices, and the restoration was "aimed beyond the mere accuracy of an archaeological reconstruction" (Guix 1988, 18). Rather, Guix finds the reason for its restoration in conveying the French nation its first monument of military architecture and bring a specific historical narrative, which resembled Viollet-de-Duc's own "national spirit" (Guix 1988, 18).



Fig.1. Restored towers at Carcassonne in the spirit of “romantic restorations” (www.carcasonnecastles.info)²

The example of the Carcassonne castle shows exactly how complicated the definition of a reconstruction is. According to its restorer, Viollet-de-Duc, that is an example of a romantic restoration, bringing the castle to its primer glory (Guix 1988, 22). However, if considered by today’s standards, and especially by the Venice Charter, it would be deemed a reconstruction owing to the introduction of new material and its hypothetical nature of reconstruction (Venice Charter 1964, article 15). Moreover, according to English Heritage, for instance, this type of romantic restoration would be defined as a recreation instead (Woolfitt 2007, 505).

During the 19th century, and generally until the end of the 1940s, romantic restorations were generally widespread and a main inspiration behind their conduction was the desire to evoke national pride and to glorify the past. However, views on restorations as conservation practices have changed a lot over the years, and the period between the 1930s and 1970s saw the drawing of different charters and treaties, directed at creating internationally accepted guidelines for the protection and conservation of cultural and archaeological heritage.

² www.catharcastles.info/carcassonne.php

1930s – 1970s: towards the creation of a conservation ethos

The period after World War I saw the creation of numerous charters with international significance, aimed at the protection and conservation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Many of these also focus on restoration practices in an attempt to outline general ethical principles. Therefore, I would briefly like to discuss two main charters and a convention that were drawn during this period, and as a result completely changed the way cultural heritage is being treated.

As early as the 1930s, international charters on heritage conservation practices start being introduced. The first charter of an international significance that focuses specifically on restoration practices is the Athens Charter (1931). Setting out guidelines for restoration and conservation of monuments, the charter has received an international appraisal in the years before and after World War II.

In 1964 another charter was drafted starting from the Athens Charter, and further expanding the ideas behind built heritage restoration. Discussed in depth in a following section of the current chapter, the Venice Charter (1964) became one of the most influential documents in heritage preservation. It is more explicit in its definition of restoration and reconstruction, placing the focus on historic monuments, but this time including the surrounding landscape and urban and rural settings (Venice Charter 1964, article 1).

The year of 1972 marked one of the biggest changes in the conduction of heritage management with the introduction of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. This treaty, which is legally binding for the signatory countries, defines cultural heritage as belonging to all nations of the world. It places the responsibility of heritage preservation and conservation with the state controlling the territory where it is found, obligating it to draw and adopt a general policy that aims at heritage protection (World Heritage convention 1972, article 5). As such, it creates international legislative guidelines, not only aimed at the preservation of heritage with outstanding universal value, but of all cultural and natural heritage. The protection of these

remains a responsibility of the many different State Parties (World Heritage Convention 1972, article 11).

As it could be seen from the brief discussion above, the period before and after the World War II was focused on defining cultural heritage, as well as on shaping international guidelines for its protection. Once these general ground rules were set and accepted on an international level, diversification on how cultural heritage is being perceived and treated began. This stemmed from academia, or from various intra- and inter-disciplinary approaches.

1980s – present: contemporary views on restoration and reconstruction

Issues like public involvement and interpretation and formulating the conservation ethos seem to be the focus of such academic discussions. Stone and Planel (1999), for instance, provide a wide-ranged discussion on the importance of “reconstructed sites” – sites, constructed with the aim to serve as tools for studying the past based on contemporary interpretations of that same past. The essays are written for a European context and are oriented towards promoting multivocality and recognition of a shared past, with a priority given to communication with the public.

Jameson (2004) provides a further discussion on the topic in an editorial volume on involvement with the public in heritage conservation management. Despite receiving critiques for justifying reconstructions (e.g. Stanley-Price 2009, 35), the volume provides the reader with insights on the relationship between public interpretations and the physical reconstruction of the past.

Furthermore, reconstructions are often discussed in the context of a growing academic conservation ethos. Examples are two combined volumes of work (Stanley-Price *et al.* 1996 and Richmond and Bracker 2009). Stanley-Price *et al.*'s volume is designed to serve as a teaching tool in a context of a conservation ethos that addresses the concept of “world heritage” which

is also of “universal value”. According to Stanley-Price (1996, xii) conservation is a Western concept and as such requires historical and philosophical assessment in order to provide professionals and practitioners with better understanding of the matter. Examples of reconstruction practices form a significant part of this assessment.

The volume by Richmond and Bracker (2009) aims at forming an ethical code using critical theory from a variety of different fields (Richmond and Bracker 2009, 2) and contributing to an already set line of theory. Reconstructions are discussed as extreme examples of restorations (e.g. Stanley-Price 2009, 33) and looked at in the framework of international charters and guidelines.

Overall, looking at the published volumes on heritage studies from the period after the 1980s, a general concern with the diversification of heritage management could be noticed. The introduction of intra-disciplinary approaches and involvement of the wide public seem to be a significant part of this diversification. As a result from this, the period also sees the creation of more and new international charters and treaties, which form the basis for the formation of an internationally approved conservation ethos. Both this conservation ethos and international legislation will be discussed in more detail in the following section of the chapter.

Conservation ethos

Predominantly, in the realms of heritage management restoration and specifically reconstruction practices are guided by charters and treaties, which while not legally-binding, are strongly encouraging (Stanley-Price 2009, 35). Thus they form an unofficial conservation ethos which is generally agreed upon and accepted by heritage professionals.

Many charters and international documents are concerned with the subject of restoration and/or reconstruction (e.g. Venice Charter 1964, Nara Document of Authenticity 1994, Krakow Charter 2000, The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites 2007, Riga Charter on Authenticity and Historical Reconstruction in Relationship to

Cultural Heritage 2005). However, not all of them are ratified by the Bulgarian state, apart from the below considered Venice Charter and the Nara Document of Authenticity.

The Charter of Venice (1964) has been established as a guideline for the principles of restoration and reconstruction on an international scale. It addresses both reconstruction and restoration practices in articles 9 through 13 and article 15. I would like to pay a closer attention to articles 9 and 15:

The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument (article 9).

All reconstruction work should however be ruled out "a priori". Only anastylosis, that is to say, the reassembling of existing but dismembered parts can be permitted. The material used for integration should always be recognizable and its use should be the least that will ensure the conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form (article 15).

It is clear that both articles are wary of the practices. Restorations seem to be acceptable only if detailed evidence for the structures is provided and reconstruction is generally ruled out, with the exception of anastolysis.

While not legally-binding, the many international charters have built upon one another over the years in order to provide a better understanding and a more informed practice of heritage management. They form a conservation ethos that is mostly noninvasive and aims at causing as little alteration as possible to both tangible and intangible heritage, but also at communicating the conservation and, subsequently, the presentation of this heritage with the public (The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites 2008, 1).

Here I would like to firstly present some generally agreed upon principles on reconstruction, as summarized by Molina- Montes (1982, 486) and Stanley-Price (2009, 41). The first three principles had been observed by Molina-Montes, and the following four – by Stanley-Price.

1. “Restoration (in this context, also reconstruction) attempts to conserve the materiality – the material aspects – of the monument”;
2. “The monument has a double value: a historical value and an aesthetic value”;
3. “It is necessary, in restoration (also reconstruction) to respect both aspects and so as not to falsify either the historic or the aesthetic document” (Molina- Montes 1982, 486).
4. “A reconstructed building – if based primarily on excavated evidence – must be considered a new building (reconstruction as a creative act)”;
5. “Reconstruction of one or more buildings is to be considered only if the values (including the landscape value) of a site will be better appreciated than if the buildings are left in a ruined state (the ruin as a source of inspiration or as a memorial)”;
6. “The surviving evidence for the former building must be fully documented in such a way that this record is always available in the future (a scientific and ethical obligation to record for posterity)”;
7. “The surviving evidence for the former building, or for different historical phases of it, must not be destroyed or made inaccessible by the very act of reconstructing it (a scientific obligation to allow (built) hypotheses to be verified or rejected)”;
8. “The evidence – its strengths and its limitations – for the reconstructed form must be interpreted clearly to all visitors (an ethical obligation not to mislead or misinform the public)”;
9. “Buildings that have been wrongly reconstructed in the past could, on a case-by-case basis, be preserved as they are (reconstructions as part of the history of ideas) (Stanley-Price 2009, 41)”.

These principles are the result of academic discussion and are in no way obligatory or legally-binding for heritage managers. However, I consider them valuable guidelines for the scope of

this thesis and they will serve as basis for later discussion when evaluating and considering the Bulgarian case study.

Most of the so far mentioned conservation charters support the idea of preservation of cultural values associated with built heritage (such as aesthetic and historic values). Since the process of restoration is invasive in nature, it is generally considered the subject of a specific operation, a one that involves specialists and researchers. These principles are in fact so crucial for the built heritage's preservation that serve as a basis for the creation of heritage conservation legislation. This statement is better observed in the following section.

International and European legislation

Heritage professionals have been working on the creation of international legislation on the protection and preservation of archaeological cultural heritage since the end of World War II. The issue of restoration and reconstruction of tangible archeological heritage also forms a part of this international legal framework. International charters and declarations establishing guidelines for the architectural restoration date back to the first part of the 20th century, a prominent example of which is the Charter of Athens (1931), a product of the International Congress of Restoration of Monuments. Nevertheless, conventions and treaties which are legally-binding for the State parties that ratified them were established only after the 1970s. While treaties such as UNESCO's World Heritage Site Convention (1972) and the Valletta Convention (1992) are presenting unified standards for the countries that have signed and ratified them, this is rarely the case with charters and documents. Despite the fact that the various charters and documents produced after the start of the 20th century are created by professionals in the field of heritage management, they remain advisory in nature. In addition, many of them vary in their interpretation of what reconstruction and restoration practices are (Stanley-Price 2009, 34-35) or are only applicable in certain contexts. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the official legislation on the matter and the numerous advisory

documents that could be, in certain cases, overlooked by policy- makers, funding agents and/or agents carrying out the restoration/reconstruction processes.

On an international scale, the convention that sets the standards for protection and conservation of natural and archaeological cultural heritage sites is UNESCO's World Heritage Convention (1972). It addresses the practice of restoration and reconstruction of archaeological buildings under article IID (86):

In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.

As such, the practices of restoration and/or reconstruction are rarely justified and generally discouraged worldwide.

On a European level, the treaty signed and ratified by most of the European countries is the Valetta Convention (1992). The main focus regarding conservation and protection of the archaeological heritage falls onto the idea of preservation *in situ*, and therefore does not directly address the issue of restoration and/or reconstruction. Nonetheless, the arguments given for practicing preservation *in situ* as a preferred practice for conservation are also indicative for the practices of reconstruction and restoration. It could be argued that the overall idea of the Valetta Convention is for any interference to be as non-intrusive as possible. While this is generally addressed in the many articles of the Convention, here I want to mention a few which I think are illustrative of the overall idea of noninvasiveness. These are the articles 2 (ii), 3(ii) and 5 (v).

(...)Each Party undertakes:

The creation of archaeological reserves, even where there are no visible remains on the ground or under water, for the preservation of material evidence to be studied by later generations (article 2 (ii));

To ensure that excavations and other potentially destructive techniques are carried out only by qualified, specially authorized persons (article 3 (ii));

To ensure that the opening of archaeological sites to the public, especially any structural arrangements necessary for the reception of large number of visitors, does not adversely affect the archaeological and scientific character of such sites and their surroundings (article 5 (v)).

The preservation of the scientific value of the concerned archaeological heritage seems to be a priority for the Convention, together with the concern to leave the tangible heritage intact for the opportunity to be studied by later generations. While the prioritization of preservation *in situ* has been questioned in recent years and tends to be criticized (e.g. Willems 2012), it is still a main legislative key point for the European countries which have signed and ratified the Valetta Convention. This nondestructive and noninvasive philosophy also seems to be discouraging for the practices of reconstruction and restoration, since those would (more often than not, irreversibly) alter the tangible heritage. Furthermore, this would inevitably affect the scientific value of the archaeological heritage, which is largely stressed on by numerous articles in the Convention.

Overall, it could be concluded that international (and specifically European) legislation together with the conservation ethos form an overall framework for conservation practices. This framework is widely accepted as all-embracing among professional heritage practitioners. While complex and multi-layered, it follows several main principles, discussed above. These serve as a basic framework, in the light of which Bulgarian conservation practices will be discussed in the following part of this chapter.

Exploring restoration and reconstruction in Bulgarian context

Historical and philosophical development of conservation practices

Extensive publications on the principles of conservation and preservation of archaeological heritage in national context are generally missing from Bulgarian literature. A prominent exception is a doctoral thesis by Yordanka Kandulkova (2007), the main focus of which is the investigation of the historical development of protection of architectural heritage in Bulgaria. The thesis discusses the issues of restorations and reconstructions (also termed romantic reconstructions, *romantichni rekonstrukcii*) of historical and archaeological buildings by investigating their practical and theoretical development. One of the main aims of this doctorate research is to set a basis for comparison between Bulgarian and European theoretical development of restoration practices and to examine them as a part of the European cultural policy development (Kandulkova 2007, 2).

Kandulkova proposes a chronology for preservation and conservation practices of cultural heritage in Bulgaria, which is comprised of three periods. The first one starts 10 years after the official formation of the Bulgarian state, lasting until World War II (1888 – 1944). The second coincides with the communist period in Bulgaria and dates 1945 – 1991. The final period starts in 1991 and is still ongoing (Kandulkova 2007, 2). For the purpose of this thesis it suffices to follow Kandulkova's structure, and then review the reconstruction practices in the present period after 1991.

1888 – 1944: development in the early years of the Bulgarian state

A main argument that Kandulkova supports is that Bulgaria is not only living up to the conservation and preservation standards and traditions developed in other European countries, but also contributing to the European preservation strategy in the years since the official creation of the Bulgarian state (1878) up until the World War II (Kandulkova 2007, 30). She follows the development of two very different approaches towards restoration practices. The first one (1) is termed "archaeological restoration" (*arkheologicheska restavratsiya*) and respects the original fabric, following the policy of preserving its authenticity. Authenticity, according to Kandulkova is explained explicitly as preservation of the original fabric, an

argument that is generally still supported by Bulgarian academics (e.g. Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015). This approach to restoration is also said to be in sync with the other European developments in this realm at the time. The second (2) approach closely resembles the principles of “romantic restorations” and is also termed so (*romantichni restavracii*). The romantic restorations that Kandulkova discusses are to a large extent influenced by the above described Viollet-de-Duc’s ideas (Kandulkova 2007, 60). Often these are almost entirely based on hypothesis and lack detailed scientific study. Kandulkova justifies these practices by saying that they were, in a way, needed and in demand by the public and policy-makers alike. According to Kandulkova (2007, 7) after being a part of the Ottoman Empire for nearly 500 years (1396 – 1878), national identity and self-determination were distorted and somewhat even distant concepts for people who defined themselves as Bulgarians. Even though Kandulkova’s observation is somewhat contradictory, since it is difficult to talk about national identity in the context of Europe before the 18th century, she makes the point that these led to difficulties recognising and appreciating historical and archaeological heritage. This, she argues, was of a significance in the years prior to World War II. Furthermore, she also stresses that romantic restorations were, despite a few prominent examples (e.g. Veliko Turnovo), rarely practiced in the time before World War II (Kandulkova 2007, 31)

A concluding remark that Kandulkova (2007, 32) makes is that the Bulgarian practices of conservation and reconstruction of cultural heritage are a product of a century-long tradition. Moreover, they are “European” in their nature, following and developing according to European standards of the time. She observes that these practices are also incorporated in the present stage of cultural heritage preservation (Kandulkova 2007, 32). Therefore, it could be concluded that prior to the start of World War II, generally two kind of restoration practices were being conducted in Bulgaria: reconstructions that more often than not entered into conjecture, and restorations, which were following the then internationally outlined conservation ethos.

1945 – 1989: cultural heritage management under Communism

During the years between 1945 and 1989 Bulgaria was ruled by communist governments. This new political regime brought a lot of changes that affected governmental policies, and this was also the case with the management of the cultural sector.

Generally, information about the way archaeology and heritage management were dealt with during this time period is scarce. In academic literature cultural policies are mainly discussed in relation to overall analyses of the Communist regime. An example is a doctorate dissertation by Borden Savova-Mahon (2001) on the politics of nationalism under Communism in Bulgaria. In her PhD dissertation, Borden Savova-Mahon discusses the general cultural policies of the Bulgarian government (then, Politburo) which were attuned to the Communist ideology. Two main periods of different cultural policies could be distinguished during that time – the first one, starting in the 1940s had lasted until the 1980s (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 144-172). The second one, beginning in the 1980s (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 190) signified a crisis in the Bulgarian communist politics and lasted until the fall of the regime.

During the first period (1940s – 1980s), the Bulgarian state was generally presented as part of the Slavic world and Slavonic culture, and hence, closely related to Russia (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 144-172). This means that any Slavic heritage was largely stressed upon by the Politburo. This was mainly portrayed through the language connection: the Bulgarian language was seen closely related to the Russian language. From this, it was also generally concluded that the Bulgarian people, by thus being overwhelmingly Slavs, were directly related to Russians (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 146).

Generally, during this period new architectural styles were introduced - ones that conformed to the Communist agenda. Not much literature is present regarding reconstructions of archaeological heritage, with relation to the pan-Slavic ideology. However, reconstructions still occurred, serving different agendas of the Communist ideology.

For instance, a leading political strategy of the Bulgarian Communist Party was to portray Turkey as the natural enemy of the Bulgarian people (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 152). This served a specific agenda of the Party, and for its purposes Bulgarians were portrayed as long-suffering under the “Turkish yoke” (that Borden-Savova Mahon considers a myth) which

occurred when the Bulgarian territory was part of the Ottoman Empire (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 152). This myth was further represented in the reconstruction of the city of Plovdiv (Newby 1994, 222). In this context, the long struggle of the Bulgarians against the Turks was deliberately chosen as the central theme for the interpretation of the expensively conserved and reconstructed city (Graham et al. 2000, 192). The (largely hypothetical) reconstruction of major monuments around the city was used to stress upon the differences between the national (Bulgarian) and the other (Turkish), thus serving the Communist agenda. A parallel was made between the communists as ancestors of the Second Bulgarian kingdom (1185 – 1396) and the Turks as inheriting the Ottoman Empire, and as such, even representatives of capitalism (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 152-3).

The second period (1980s) saw the raise of new cultural policy, aiming at separating the Bulgarian culture from the pan-Slavonic ideology, and therefore creating a policy of cultural nationalism (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 190). Buildings with introduced “new” architecture and depicting Bulgarian symbols were being constructed, mainly in the capital (Borden-Savova Mahon 2001, 192). That left little space for restoration of archaeological heritage, and it is indeed difficult to find records of these in academic literature. In fact, after the fall of the communistic regime a coherent national cultural or heritage preservation strategy has not been outlined by the democratic governments.

1990 – 2016: contemporary views on conservation practices

In general, published volumes on cultural heritage preservation from this time period in Bulgarian literature are scarce. The topics of archaeological heritage and its management are also rarely mentioned in academic literature.

Instead, the issues of heritage preservation and protection are mainly discussed in relation to economic development and/ or architectural technicalities and mainly in the form of short articles and conference papers (e.g. Jordanov 1998, Rangelova and Traykova 2015).

A historical and archaeological discussion on the topic has been started by Bozhidar Dimitrov, the director of the National Historical Museum, in 2008 with a newspaper publication of his article “Every town (with) its own fortress” (*Vseki grad sys svojata krepost*) (Dimitrov 2008). Shortly after the official inclusion of the Bulgarian state into the EU (2007), Dimitrov advocated that the country should incorporate a more European image with regards to its archaeological cultural heritage. While Dimitrov’s unofficial cultural strategy will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Five, it is important to note that after 2007 and the introduction of European funding, more restoration projects than ever before have been conducted in Bulgaria, many of which deemed “hypothetical reconstructions” (defined as such by Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015, and Stoyanov 2014, and heritage management institutions like ICOMOS Bulgaria). The introduction of new materials made these reconstructions, and the lack of scientific evidence defined them as hypothetical. Nevertheless, there are constantly being approved by the responsible institutions, like the Ministry of Culture. This tension is at the heart of the current thesis, and the way hypothetical reconstruction projects are justified and executed will be explored in detail in Chapter three.

However, in order to get a better understanding of the legislative framework that allows for this to happen, the definition of archaeological heritage reconstructions and the laws that accompany them will be outlined in the following section.

Defining reconstruction in contemporary Bulgarian context. Legislative framework

In Bulgarian legislation protection of archaeological heritage falls under the country's general legislative framework of cultural policy. The year 1890 marks the beginning of official legislation on cultural heritage and after 1911 first attempts at restorations have already been made (Kandulkova 2007, 12).

In recent times, the main law concerned with cultural policy and protection of heritage is the Cultural Heritage Law (*Zakon za kulturnoto nasledstvo*) (Ministry of Culture 2012), first ratified in 2009 and then modified in 2012. Archaeology and all the related practices to it (e.g. excavation projects, heritage and museum management) are listed and governed by this legislation's framework. According to the Cultural Heritage Law, the Ministry of Culture is the main body responsible for the management of cultural heritage, organizing and controlling all activities related to it (articles 14.12 and 14.13).

Chapter 8 of the Cultural Heritage Law is devoted to Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Values (*Konservaciya i restavraciya na kulturni cennosti*) which is considered in detail under articles 163 – 171. However, an explicit definition of what constitutes conservation or restoration is not given. Instead article 163 vaguely states that “ Conservation and restoration, as well as adaptation of cultural values is a systematic process of activities which are aimed at preventing the destruction [of cultural values], stabilization of their condition, and facilitation of their interpretation and perception while preserving their authenticity”³ (my translation).

It is interesting to note that restoration is not included as merely a method of conservation, but rather as a prioritized process on its own even for built heritage. Other types of conservation processes are not explicitly mentioned. Moreover, preservation *in situ* is not discussed anywhere in the articles concerned with conservation and restoration, despite it being the preferred method of conservation outlined by the Valetta Convention (article 4 (ii)).

³ 'Консервация и реставрация, както и адаптацията на културни ценности е системен процес от дейности, които целят предотвратяване на разрушаването, стабилизация на състоянието им, както и улесняване на тяхното възприемане и оценка при максимално запазване на автентичността им'.

Another remark that deserves a close attention is the definition of reconstruction and the way it is approached by Bulgarian legislation. The term reconstruction is not directly addressed in the Cultural Heritage Law, and nor is restoration explicitly defined. The lack of a specific definition means that often it becomes hard to distinguish between restoration and reconstruction conservation practices. This could be observed in a statement made by the vice-minister of culture (www.standartnews.com)⁴, in which she addresses a number of archaeological sites that were reconstructed in the period between 2001 and 2009. When addressing the conservation projects (at Tsari-Mali grad, Pernik, and Preslav), the vice-minister refers to them as restorations, further arguing that they were “restored on the basis of surviving engravings and photographs, as well as still standing similarly constructed buildings in neighbouring countries”⁵ (my translation). The blurring of the lines between restoration and reconstruction procedures is evident, and is possibly to a great extent dictated by the lack of clear definition of either of these conservation practices in the legislative documents. It, therefore, becomes difficult to grasp the difference and the potential outcomes of both these practices on a national level.

By law, a collaboration in the creation of restoration/reconstruction projects between architects and archaeologists is compulsory (Zakon za kulturnoto nasledstvo 2012, article 169(2)). Even though that is a good approach towards the diversification of experts involved in the restoration itself, the law does not include the involvement of other professionals, such as heritage managers or the wide public. The main decision of approval or disapproval of projects, however, is made solely by the Ministry of Culture, making this institution a crucial agent in the process. Therefore, despite the somewhat diverse and inter-disciplinary approach that is foreseen in the projects’ creation, the final approval/disapproval of conservation procedures is still restricted by the decision of a single institution. As a result, this creates an imbalanced perspective on how a restoration/reconstruction project should be carried out.

⁴ [http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-](http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html)

[analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html](http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html)

⁵ „Съществуват стотици гравюри, дори фотографии – много крепости са разрушени (...). Някои паметници имат прекрасни аналози в съседните страни, запазени до покрив, и това е добре известно на авторите на проектите.”

Concluding remarks

Exploring the subject of heritage preservation and conservation on international and national scale, several concluding observations can be made. During the years following the 19th century the topic of restoring built heritage has been a subject of various discussions. Even nowadays, it is often difficult to draw a clear line between restoration and reconstruction, depending on the geographical context. Therefore, a conservation ethos has been developed in the form of various charters and academic principles, which often serve as a basis for legislation. A part of this legislation is the Valletta Convention (1992), drawn for a European context, which still sets the general framework in which conservation practices are to be conducted.

On a Bulgarian level, it could be observed that already in the 1890s, just several years after the official establishment of the Bulgarian state, laws for the protection of cultural heritage have been drawn. The majority practices of restoration projects at that time, and until the 1930s, fully conform to standards in heritage preservation set by leading European specialists. However, another simultaneously existing trend could be observed, and that is the practice of romantic restorations. Paralleling the Western European romantic reconstructions from the 19th century, this practice is entered into conjecture in order to restore built heritage that enhances national glorification. It continues to be practiced during the Communist period, serving the political agendas of that time.

After the 1980s, a general trend towards diversification of what constitutes heritage and how it should be perceived can be noticed in heritage literature. Cultural heritage is once again the subject of various debates, but this time they are occurring more and more often on a global scale, discussing issues such as public inclusion and multivocality. In Bulgaria, however, even after the 1990s and the end of the Communistic regime, a trend towards the practice of one-sided, and often hypothetical reconstructions can be noticed. These violate international legislation and do not comply to the conservation ethos. Nevertheless, these restoration projects are being approved by the State, and are still ongoing. The reasons for this are complex and multi-layered, mainly lying in the national legislation itself, which do not clearly define

restorations and/or reconstructions, therefore allowing for blurring of the lines between the two practices.

The realization of these hypothetical reconstructions has its consequences, and they are quickly felt among archaeological experts and heritage managers. Their dissatisfaction with the practices has been voiced over through various media platforms and academic articles.

By the presented review and outlined theoretical framework in Chapter two, it seems safe to conclude that while the occurrence of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgaria is not an entirely new, or strictly contemporary phenomenon, the completion of such projects has dramatically increased after 2007. In order to observe the tension between the approval of these projects, and their violation of international legislation, it is worth to closely explore the phenomenon as it occurs nowadays, and look at already completed “restorations” of archaeological sites. Furthermore, to further illustrate this, the restoration project at the Yailata archaeological reserve will be presented and discussed in Chapter three. This will serve the purpose of a small-scale context, in which the issue can be examined and further discussed, as well as in which the data used in this study is introduced.

Chapter Three

Hypothetical reconstructions.

Introducing the Case Study of the National Archaeological Reserve “Yailata”

Exploring the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions

A great interest in the practice of restoration of archaeological cultural heritage could be observed in Bulgaria shortly after the country's inclusion as a member-state of the EU in 2007. The completion of restoration projects has mainly been made possible by the introduction of funding from various programmes of the European Commission, most of them oriented towards regional development (Operational Programmes “Regions in Development” 2007 – 2013 and “Regions in Development 2014 – 2020). Within these programmes, projects related to restoration of archaeological heritage fall within the tourism sector, and are generally expected to bring economic growth to different regions (e.g. Operational Programme “Regions in Growth” 2014, 216). While not solely funding the restoration projects, the Operational programmes are still the main funding bodies. Other funding also includes donations from private parties, the Ministry of Culture and religious institutions.

Different beneficiaries (e.g. Operational Programme “Regions in Growth” 2014, 236), or executors are appointed for the conduction of the restoration projects. Among these, regional municipalities represent the majority of creator and executors of these projects.

The first Operational Programme, “Regions in Development” was completed in the period between 2007 and 2013, and its successor, “Regions in Growth (2014 – 2020) is still ongoing.

After the end date of “Regions in Development”, 72 archaeological sites have been the subject of restoration projects. More reconstructed archaeological sites are expected to be completed by the end of “Regions in Growth”. Often, the monuments have been fully reconstructed, and in several cases the projects had added new construction either to the monuments themselves, or in close proximity (e.g. Fig.2, Fig.3, and Fig.4). These actions were supposed to enhance the touristic interest, and hence to induce economic growth for the regions in question.



Fig.2. Krakra fortress after restoration (photograph by museumpernik.com)



Fig.3.

Peristera fortress after restoration (photograph by peshtera.bg)



Fig.4. Restored fortress at Tsari Mali grad (photograph by carimaligrad.com)



Fig.5. Reconstructed fortress at Kaliakra (photograph by the author)

This practice, however, met a lot of criticism from the academic realm and the public alike (e.g. Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015, Stoyanov 2014). The criticism is mainly induced by the physical characteristics of the monuments after the restoration has ended. In addition to a hypothetically reconstructed general outlook, criticism has considered the fact that whether the correct height of these monuments was known before their reconstruction took place. Therefore, the completed reconstruction of many of them has been denounced by many. Instead, most of them are a subject of construction in accordance and comparison to buildings

from the same historic periods, instead of being based on scientific research (www.standartnews.com)⁶.

The introduction of new building materials together with the conjectural raising of archaeological heritage buildings was seen by many as destructive for the monuments' authenticity (e.g. Krustev 2014). Despite being labeled as restorations in their official project reports, academics determinately term them "hypothetical reconstructions" (Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015). They would also be defined as reconstructions according to the Venice Charter (1964, article 15).

According to professionals and many representatives of the public these types of reconstructions are damaging to the Bulgarian built archaeological heritage (Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015, Declaration BNK ICOMOS 2014, Declaration of the Chamber of Architects Bulgaria 2014, www.sofiazanas.com⁷). A main concern is the destruction of authenticity, which seems to be highly valued by these stakeholder groups. At the same time the question of "lost" authenticity is rarely openly discuss by policy-makers, who instead reason these hypothetical reconstructions as economically and socially beneficial (e.g. Rashidov 2015). The issue of authenticity often seems to be in the heart of the debate.

The question of authenticity has been a subjective and debatable concept on an international level both before and after the introduction of the ICOMOS Nara Document of Authenticity (1994) in Japan. According to some, the concept of authenticity is highly dependable on the cultural context within which it is discussed (Jokilehto 2006). However, the debate over authenticity of archaeological heritage is happening within the same cultural and national context – the one of Bulgaria. As such, the concept of authenticity that is ascribed to cultural heritage is important and will be more extensively discussed in Chapter five.

⁶ http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html

⁷ http://sofiazanas.blogspot.nl/2016/02/blog-post_24.html

In order to explore this phenomenon in depth, a case study of a hypothetical reconstruction funded by the EC's Operational Programme "Regions in Development" and conducted by Kavarna municipality has been chosen as a representation of other reconstruction projects. As such, the following presented case study closely observes the reconstruction of the Antique fortress at the Yailata archaeological reserve, in the region of Kavarna.

Introducing the case study

Several reasons make the Yailata archaeological reserve a good case study through which the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions could be observed. The extensive publicity that the restoration project there received during the years has helped to draw more attention to Yailata. With the time this has allowed the involvement of many different people, both archaeological experts and members of the public, to contribute with various opinions on the matter. The discussion has since been ongoing on a national, as well as on an European level, which brings more participants to the table and further diversifies the perspectives on the issue.

The implementation of funding from the European Commission, as well as its inclusion in Natura 2000 makes the Yailata archaeological reserves not only a national, but also a European cultural heritage site. All of the other projects discussed in this thesis have been carried out with European Commission's funding coming from Operational Programmes "Regions in Development" (2007-2013) and "Regions in Growth" (2014-2020). As such, they have all been officially approved by both the Ministry of Regional Development and Ministry of Culture. Naturally, all of the parties involved – the executors of the projects, the ministries, the archaeological experts and the wide public – are stakeholders of the presently discussed archaeological heritage. However, the current study does not offer a full stakeholder analysis, but aims at documenting the experiences of just one of the involved parties.

In this chapter I introduce the site of Yailata and briefly touch upon the historical development of the archaeological research conducted there. This is done in order to give a clearer idea of the nature of the site and the restoration activities that took place there. Furthermore, I also present the restoration project itself, and discuss its goals and outcomes. The chapter ends with concluding remarks.

Yailata: archaeological background

Yailata archaeological reserve is located around 2km south of Kamen bryag, Dobritch Region. It has been ascribed a national archaeological reserve in 1989. Yailata area's national and European cultural and natural significance is substantial. The archaeological reserve holds evidence for numerous archaeological periods of occupation.

Generally, three main occupational phases have been detected. The earliest one dates back to the 5th century BC (Salkin and Toptanov 1987). This consists of a Thracian sanctuary and a number of necropolis (Minchev 2013,250). Despite an extensive research of both those periods in the 1980s, little has been published on them.

A better studied historic period is the Late Antiquity/ Early Byzantine occupation phase. Dated to this phase are the remains of a fortified town, of which some stone and brick houses have been excavated. Another remnant is a small gate close to the Western wall (Minchev 2013, 250). Opinions on the precise dating of the site deviate. According to the original excavation publications (Salkin and Topalov 1987) the town and fortress have been built between the end of the 5th - the beginning of the 6th century AD, although later researchers date the fortress differently (e.g. Minchev 2013, 250). The fortress surrounding the living area is still standing and has been the main subject of restoration in 2008.

The latest occupational phase dates back to the 10th century, when a small church was built that is still in use today. Some restoration work has also been carried out there after 2008 with

the goal of conserving it from future destruction, owing to partial destruction after an earthquake activity (Investment project 2008).

Despite the well-recognised occupation periods, documentation and publications on the archaeological research carried out at Yailata are scarce. This further complicates the conduction of any restoration/reconstruction projects. Since the excavation process of the Late Antiquity occupational phase came to an end in the early 1990s, a few short articles have been published on archaeological finds at the Yailata archaeological reserve. All of the published articles tend to be brief and discussing partial issues in relation to the site, either sticking to just one of the represented time periods or focusing on a narrow area of research.

A slightly better studied period, the Late Antiquity, was also the subject of the restoration project. The level of research of the reconstructed Antique fortress has not, however, been explicit. This can be observed when considering the fortresses' physical appearance and characteristics as described by Minchev (2013, 249-251).

Minchev goes into an in-depth discussion of the state of the Late Antiquity fortress, describing its physical appearance among other things. He determines that before the restoration project the fortification was quite well-preserved, and the walls reached about 4m. in height and 2.60m in width. Moreover, four rectangular towers were in existence which ranged from 2.90m to 3.90m in length, and from 4.45m to 5.15m in width. Three staircase were also documented by Minchev (2013, 250) as reaching between 1.2 – 1.3m in width. Having this idea in mind it seems safe to conclude that the Late Antiquity fortress at Yailata was well visible with most of its original fabric preserved before the restoration that was carried out in 2008 (fig.7). This observation is important and I will get back to it when discussing the official report, since the lack of visibility is given as one of the main reasons for conducting restorations at Yailata (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008, 2-3).



Fig.6. The Yailata fortress, on its vantage point overlooking the Black Sea, before restoration work began (Stoyanov 2014,15).

The restoration project: goals and outcomes

Project's aims and justification for restoration

The restoration project at Yailata, officially termed “A project for restoration and partial regeneration” was composed by the regional Kavarna municipality and approved by the Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Regional Development in 2008 (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008, 2-3). A further project for the emergency conservation of the rock church “St. Constantine and Helena” was approved in 2011 (Investment Project 2011). Extensive media and academic coverage on the project’s destructive results did not start until 2013 and 2014, after its completion (Stoyanov 2014, 14).

The initial project report for restoration and regeneration of the Late Antiquity/ Early Byzantine fortress contains five brief sections which focus on the aims and justification of this project (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008). Apart from simply restoring the fortress, it also aims at regenerating it (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008). The term

“regenerating” is used in the sense to make the site more easily accessible and interesting to the public. The general goal of regenerating the Antique fortress at the Yailata archaeological reserve is also given as a main justification for the conduction of the project. Below I would briefly discuss the content of the project and, what is given as, the general idea behind it.

The first part of the project deals with a brief historical overview of the fortress. The overview is not backed up by scientific or archaeological references, and seems to be the product of observations by the creators of the project. Furthermore, a note is been made that a previous partial restoration project has been completed in 2005 which used almost entirely the original fabric (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008, 3). The minimal introduction of new materials and the usage of almost completely authentic materials made this restoration acceptable by international standards and conservation ethos. While the official report of this restoration conducted three years prior to the second one was difficult to obtain, in the 2008 report it is described as “successful” and with “preserved authenticity”⁸ (my translation). Three years seem to be a short time for the fortress to be in a need of a new restoration or conservation project. Therefore, it is interesting to discuss the justification behind the conduction of the 2008 restoration project, given by the official report.

The reasons mentioned as justifications for this conduction are twofold: (1) there is not enough visualization of the monument (fig. 7), and (2) a potential restoration would make the monument more attractive to tourists in general (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008, 3). The second justification seems to be living up to the goals of Operational Programme “Regions in Development” (2007-2013) which aims at tourism promotion, despite that a specific tourist strategy is not explicitly discussed. However, the first one seems difficult to sustain given that the fortress has already been previously documented as well-preserved. The geographical position of the antique fortress at Yailata makes it well visible from numerous locations. The original building is still standing, at points reaching the height of 4 m.

⁷ Използвани са минимален брой нови блокове, като е останало недовършено възстановяването на кула номер 1. Формиран е убедителен стъпаловиден силует със запазена автентичност на паметника.



Fig.7. A view of the Yailata fortress after the conducted restorations (photo by the author).

With accordance to the above given reasons for restoration and regeneration, the report further outlines the plan of action.

The restoration of towers N.1, N.2 and N.4 and the reconstruction of the staircases is introduced, despite it being explicitly mentioned in the report that there is no evidence for the original heights of the walls, or the original length of the staircases (fig. 8). Furthermore, from the measurements listed for the Western tower-gate (fig.9), it seems that the original height of the gate has been hypothetically concluded (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008). Clear distinction is said to have been made between the new and authentic material (fig.10), in accordance with the Venice Charter (1964). However, the main used materials listed in the project seem to be limestone from another region and concrete (Project for restoration-partial integration 2008) which both are different from the original, authentic fabric. Moreover, the crude addition of these materials to the original fortress does not correspond with the aesthetics of the building (fig. 10).



Fig.8. Staircase after the restoration, showing the difficulty to observe evidence for the original height or length (photo by the author).



Fig.9. Restoration of the Western tower gate (photo by the author).



Fig. 10. Observing the distinction between the new and authentic fabric (photo by the author).

From the so far discussed project plan it seems that the restoration activities that had taken place at Yailata often do enter into conjecture, assuming measurements and the general outlook of the fortress. The introduction of an entirely new material further turns this project into a hypothetical reconstruction. This is evident when considering how not only after, but also during the conduction of the project some stakeholder groups have expressed their dissatisfaction with the “restoration” project at Yailata.

Outcomes of the restoration at Yailata and following critique

The project met a lot of criticism from the public, media and professionals alike. On a national level the media paid a close attention to the ongoing process, with archaeological experts denouncing the project a result form a “corruption scheme” (Gergova 2015). In a further

response the “Citizens Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage” (GIOKIN) was formed and authored an official letter to the European Commission’s Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy (Appendix 1). Main concerns that the NGO raises are with regards to outdated and destructive restoration techniques, aesthetical disfigurement, and impossibility to carry on further scientific and archaeological research (Appendix 1). The reply from the European Commission’s Acting Head of Unit Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy (Appendix 2) is not reassuring, restating that it is every state’s responsibility to implement the funding, and that the Yailata project has been approved by the according monitoring national institution (NIICH).

On an international level the debate has gone beyond the issue of legislation. Stoyanov (2014) raised the concern that the practice of hypothetical reconstruction of Yailata, while perhaps the most prominent one, will not be an exception from the rule. A number of international experts have given their opinion on the Yailata restoration project, listing it as outdated, incompetent and causing irreparable damage (International Expert Opinions) (Appendix 3).

As a result, ICOMOS Bulgaria came out with an official statement, denouncing the practices at Yailata as “hypothetical reconstructions” and expressing concern that this practice is still ongoing and even becoming a standard for practicing restorations on national level (ICOMOS Bulgaria National Committee Declaration 2014). Further, the declaration raises concerns regarding loss of authenticity, irreparable damages done to the national heritage and the violation of European legislation and conservation principles. It also calls for the ceasing of these practices and changes in the national legislation.

Concluding remarks

From the so far presented brief review on the Yailata’s archaeological background and the project report, a number of observations can be concluded. First, while there are several well-

known occupational phases at the Yailata archaeological reserve, the site itself is not well researched. The archaeological research that has been conducted at Yailata has been sporadically, or not at all published. Nevertheless, a restoration project was set in action, overlooking the possibility to conduct a more explicit scientific research beforehand.

Second, the arguments given as official justifications for the project's conduction do not seem to be strong enough. Two major arguments supporting the conduction of the restoration were explicitly stated in the report. The first one, concerning the issue of visualization was shown to be lacking good grounds. This is due to the specific character of the antique fortress: it was already high enough to need additional construction. Furthermore, a restoration using the authentic fabric of the fortress had already been carried out in 2005, as stated in the report from 2008. This makes any need of further restoration unlikely in the short period of three years.

The second main argument is given with regards to tourism attraction. However, the lack of a detailed scientific research at the site also leads to a lack of a coherent or explicit archaeological narrative. However, it is questionable whether there is evidence for an actual touristic interest. The interest is rather assumed, instead of researched by the creators of the project, and no official records of touristic attendance were found by the author. The lack of a coherent archaeological narrative complicates the presentation of the site and makes the restoration, with the sole purpose of attracting tourists, controversial.

Having this in mind, it seems safe to conclude that the desire to restore the antique fortress at Yailata for solely regional development benefits was a driving force behind the restoration process. While this seems obvious and in accordance with the goals set out by the Regional Development Operational Programmes, it also means that it became a reason for important arguments against the conduction of the restoration to be overlooked. The fortress was well preserved and any potential conservation by restoration or reconstruction of the physical fabric was not needed. Furthermore, the restoration entered into conjecture. The Ministry of Culture, which is in the role of an advisory body and has the power to control the process, has not expressed any concerns with the restoration. Neither has the European Commission, which can

be clearly seen in the reply given to GIOKIN by the EC's Directorate-General of Regional and Urban Policy (Appendix 2).

A general sense of dissatisfaction, however, has remained with different stakeholders. It is important, and relatively easy due to the media and academic attention, to explore their reasons for dissatisfaction and negative experience of the hypothetical reconstruction carried out at Yailata. This is especially curious to observe, since despite that the hypothetical reconstructions are in violation with the international and European legislation, the advisory and legal bodies are not taking any actions against them. This exploration presents the opportunity to draw conclusions about the overall phenomenon through closely examining the case study.

Therefore, the following chapter introduces the data and the methodology used for its analysis. The produced results are presented and evaluated in Chapter four and deal with some of the main reasons for this dissatisfaction.

Chapter Four

Methodology, Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

For the purpose of the current study, a qualitative research has been conducted. Three interviewees, who closely observed the restoration/reconstruction process at Yailata participated in the current study. The decision to approach these specific individuals in connection to the study is justified in the current chapter. First, however, the chapter introduces the methodology by giving a brief overview of the chosen approach, and the methodological tool in the form of computer software. Then, it presents the data collection process and analysis. Finally, the obtained results are discussed and evaluated in the form of categorised codes.

Methodology

The methodology that I chose to use in order to explore the research question is qualitative case study. This specific type of qualitative research has been described as a “detailed, intensive study of particular, contextual and bounded phenomena” (Luck *et al.* 2006, 104). A main goal of such methodology is to explore a phenomenon, or a topic of interest in depth (Baxter and Jack 2008, 544). This takes place via a case study. Despite the fact that the phenomenon remains the main point of focus, the case used as a tool for obtaining data, and drawing general conclusions about the phenomenon. By using a case study approach, the researcher is further

allowed to develop a theoretical framework that explores and/or explains the phenomenon (Hennink *et al.* 2011). The further exploration of the phenomenon through a discussion of stakeholders' experiences is a goal of the current thesis, and makes the qualitative case study approach especially appropriate.

The key approach that I have chosen to guide the current study is the *instrumental case study* approach, as pinpointed by Stake (1995, 2000). Below I will briefly outline what defines the instrumental type and what makes it an appropriate choice for the current study.

According to Stake (1995) the instrumental case study approach is used to accomplish something more than simply understanding a particular situation. Instead, it provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory that later serves for an explanation of a phenomenon. The case itself is of a secondary interest and plays a rather supportive role, facilitating the understanding of something else – usually the phenomenon itself. The case study is used as a part of a whole; often looked at in depth, it is documented in detail and helps pursue external interests (e.g. Stake 1995).

I chose this particular methodology carefully and in accordance to the previously outlined research question:

What are the reasons behind the negative experience of Bulgarian “hypothetical reconstructions” by individuals who are actively involved with archaeology?

Generally, with the conduction of a qualitative research case study approach the issue in question is not explored through one lens, but rather through many different lenses by using a variety of sources (Baxter and Jack 2008, 544). In this thesis, the different data lenses that explore the phenomenon come from interviews, visual material and a review of academic literature. The participation of interviewees with different backgrounds and level of archaeological expertise diversifies the data and gives a variety of personal perspectives on the same phenomenon. Evaluating and discussing the gathered data I aim to provide a detailed exploration of Bulgarian hypothetical reconstructions and find a possible explanation for their conduction. Ideally, this explanation will be, at least to a certain extent, applicable to other

cases of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgarian context funded by the EC Operational Programmes “Regions in Development” (2007-2013) and “Regions in Growth” (2014-2020).

Data collection process and analysis

Participants

The data in the current study comprises of three in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The participants in this research are actively involved with the archaeological discipline by being either professionals or interested in the subject of archaeology. Moreover, all of them have observed the restoration process carried out at the Yailata national archaeological reserve. They have voiced their opinion on the matter in media interviews, as well as through academic articles. Below I provide some brief information on all of the participants, explaining how they came to be direct observers of the Yailata restoration. I will also justify their involvement as participants in the current study.

The first interview was conducted with Dobri Dobrev, a professional archaeologist. In the years between 2002 and 2011 Dobrev was the main curator and director of the Archaeology department of the History Museum in Kavarna, Dobritch municipality. He was also the curator of the Yailata national archaeological reserve. In 2014 he was appointed as a director of the archaeological department of Dobritch Regional Museum, as well as exercising the position of a vice-director of the Dobritch Museum (Appendix 6/Appendix 7,1). Dobrev was supposed to be involved in the creation of the Yailata restoration project in accordance with the Cultural Heritage Law (article 164), since he was appointed as the main archaeologist managing the archaeological reserve during the time when the restoration project was launched (2008). Despite his expertise on the subject, he was not involved in the discussion leading to the creation of the project.

The second interview was conducted with Professor Diana Gergova, who specializes in Thracian archaeology, heritage management and cultural legislation. Her active involvement with ICOMOS Bulgaria further makes her a good representative for the group of heritage managers. Through her expertise she participated in several conservation and restoration projects (Appendix 8/Appendix 9, 1). Gergova's involvement with the Yailata restoration project is direct through her involvement with Bulgaria ICOMOS's Declaration in 2014, and her expert opinion has been sought in a number of media interviews.

The final participant is Vlado Rumenov, a public figure, activist, and a professional artist (Appendix 10/Appendix 11). Rumenov is also often involved with the artistic restoration of icons. From 1985 onwards he was a member of the archaeological researching team at Yailata, however, he does not identify himself as an amateur archaeologist. Furthermore, Rumenov is one of the founders of GIOKIN (Citizens Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage), and an author of the official letter of complaint to the European Commission's Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy (Appendix 3), which has been discussed in the previous chapter.

A main departing point for the choice of the above described participants was the fact that they were all directly linked with the Yailata archaeological reserve. Some, like Dobri Dobrev and Vlado Rumenov, were observing closely the Yailata restoration process. Diana Gergova, on the contrary, mainly voiced her professional opinion on the matter through the media and academia. Overall, the professional expertise and archaeological knowledge of the participants were valuable components for the purpose of this study. In the developed questionnaire I tried to balance the questions between national (Bulgaria) and regional (Yailata) scale.

For the purpose of data analysis I first transcribed the interviews in Bulgarian, and then translated them in English. This was needed because the format of the computer software employed for analysis does not support Bulgarian language. However, since every translation is also a subjective interpretation, in the appendix section I am attaching the English, as well as the Bulgarian version of the interviews.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire developed for the interviews was composed of 17 questions (Appendix 5). Five of those are opening and closing questions provided to get more background information on the participants, as well as to introduce and close the discussion subject. Overall, there are 5 opening and closing, and 12 core questions, dealing with three major topics: the state of restoration at Yailata (3 questions), experience of restoration projects on a national level (5 questions) and perception and association with European cultural heritage (4 questions). The questions regarding restorations on national scale and perception of European heritage and sense of belonging were created in the context of the previously outlined theoretical framework in Chapter 2. They aimed at outlining the processes of restoration and the overall experience on the matter. A similar approach was undertaken regarding the questions dealing with European sense of belonging and perception of common European heritage. These questions aim at exploring the personal perception of stakeholders having prior knowledge in archaeological conservation and restoration theory and legislation framework, and therefore, providing an informed opinion on the matter.

Finally, the three questions concerned with the restoration project at Yailata aim to cast light upon the issue of the restoration process in question. Because of the familiarity with the archaeological reserve, the participants managed to give detailed information on the conduction of the project. Their answers led to the production of new data which will be presented in the following section.

Data analysis: coding and NVivo software

After obtaining of the data, a computer-based qualitative methodological tool was used to analyse it. This tool is the NVivo software, used for the coding of data, as well as for visualizing the relationship between the sources and concepts more clearly.

Qualitative coding was used as the main research tool for the current data analysis. The codes or concepts are usually being developed in order to pinpoint underlying themes in the data (in

this case, interviews). They are essentially topics discussed by participants and identified through reading the data. Usually, two types of codes are distinguished – deductive and inductive (Hennink *et al.* 2008, 218). Deductive codes usually originate from the researcher and could be outlined as topics in the interview guide, and for this reason also developed first. Inductive codes, however, could only be identified after careful examination of the data, since they are usually raised by the participants themselves. As such, they hold valuable insights about the issues of importance mentioned by the participants. Often, these are different from the assumptions that had been anticipated by the researcher and as such lack any possible input from the researcher themselves (Hennink *et al.* 2008, 218-9).

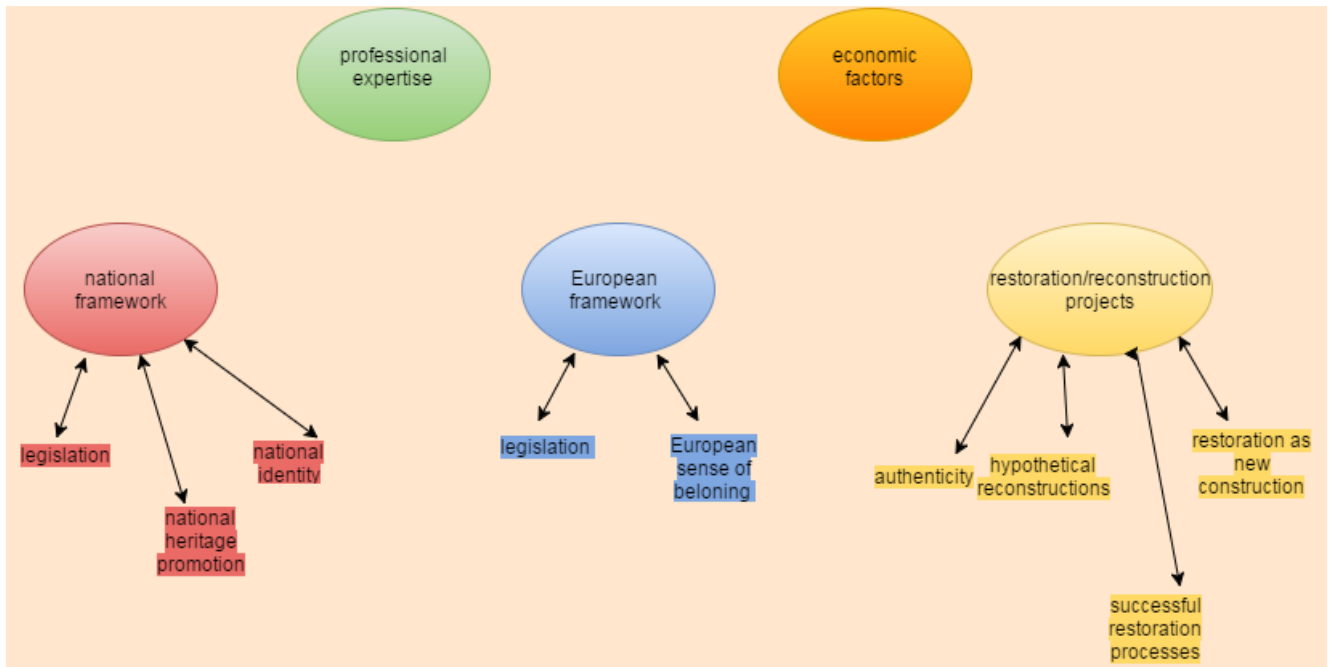
The codes, both inductive and deductive, are organized into concepts and/or categories. A category generally outlines a main topic that has been discussed and keeps on reoccurring during an interview. For example, in the present study the code “national framework” is a concept, since the interviewees have mentioned different aspects of the overall theme of the national framework (Table 2). The concepts are distinctive, and more detailed fragments of the discussed categories that the participants have stressed upon. An example given within the context of the thesis would be “national identity”. This concept falls within the national framework category, but is more specific and discusses a certain issue (Table 2). When presenting the results in the following section, the concepts will be presented within the outline of their categories.

Using the NVivo software five main categories were outlined, with distinctive concepts emerging from some (Table 2). The categories’ main underlying themes that were discussed during the interviews are as follows:

- (1) Economic factors and implementation of funding (inductive);
- (2) European framework (deductive and inductive);
- (3) national framework (deductive and inductive);
- (4) restoration/reconstruction projects (deductive);
- (5) professional expertise (inductive).

The concepts emerging from some of those categories are further presented in Table 2. Most of those were deductive, but some were also inductive and brought upon by the interviewees themselves. These will be presented when the different categories are discussed in detail. Therefore, the following section of this chapter deals with presentation of results as produced by the NVivo software and further evaluates the formation and importance of the above outlined codes and categories.

Table 1. Data analysis. NVivo coded categories and associated concepts.



Presentation of results

In order to present the qualitative results in a comprehensive way, three tables have been produced with the assistance of the NVivo software (Table 2, Table 3, Table 4). By entering the transcribed interviews into the system, the software codes the data and presents codes, which are usually later distinguished into categories and concepts by the researcher.

Within the tables the categories and their associated codes are represented by the same colour. As such, the economic factors and the implementation of funding (1) are designated by orange, the European framework (2) - blue, the national framework (3) - pink, the restoration/reconstruction projects (4) by yellow, and the professional expertise (5) – green.

Table 2. Codes distinguished in the interview with Dobri Dobrev

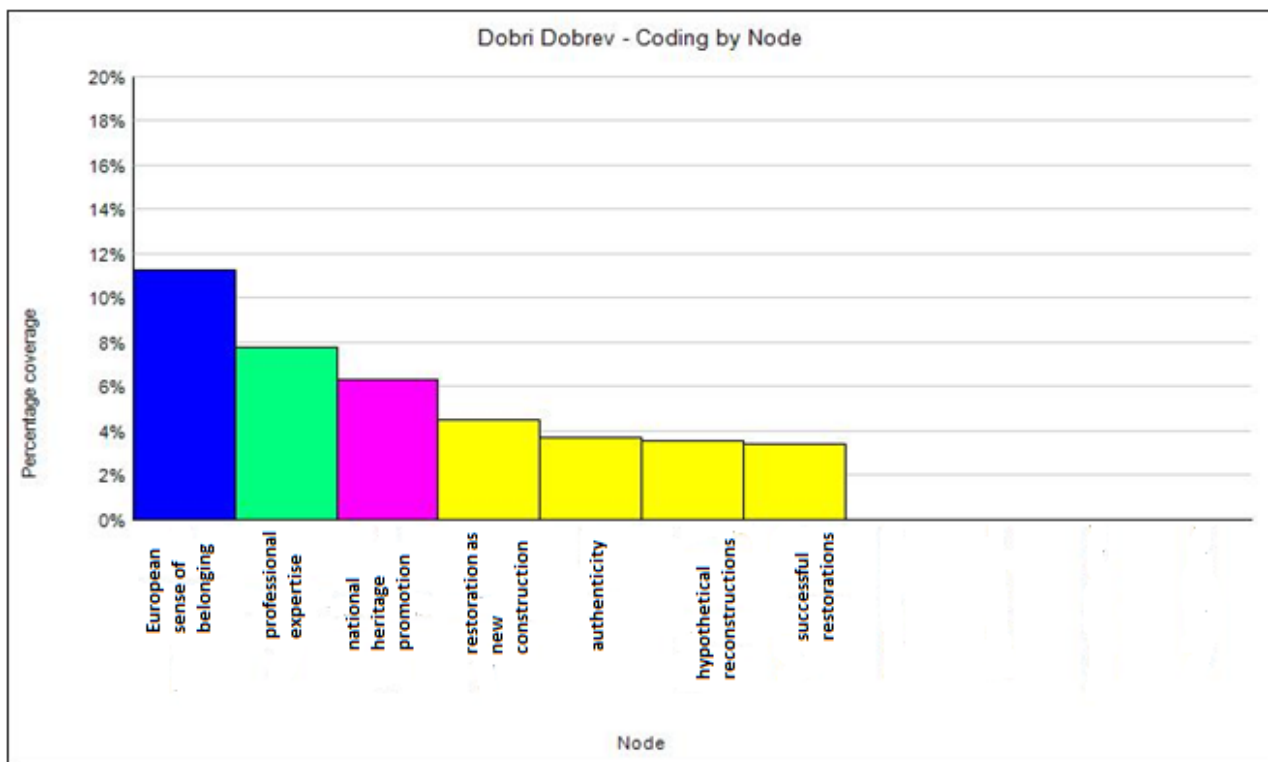


Table 3. Codes distinguished in the interview with Diana Gergova

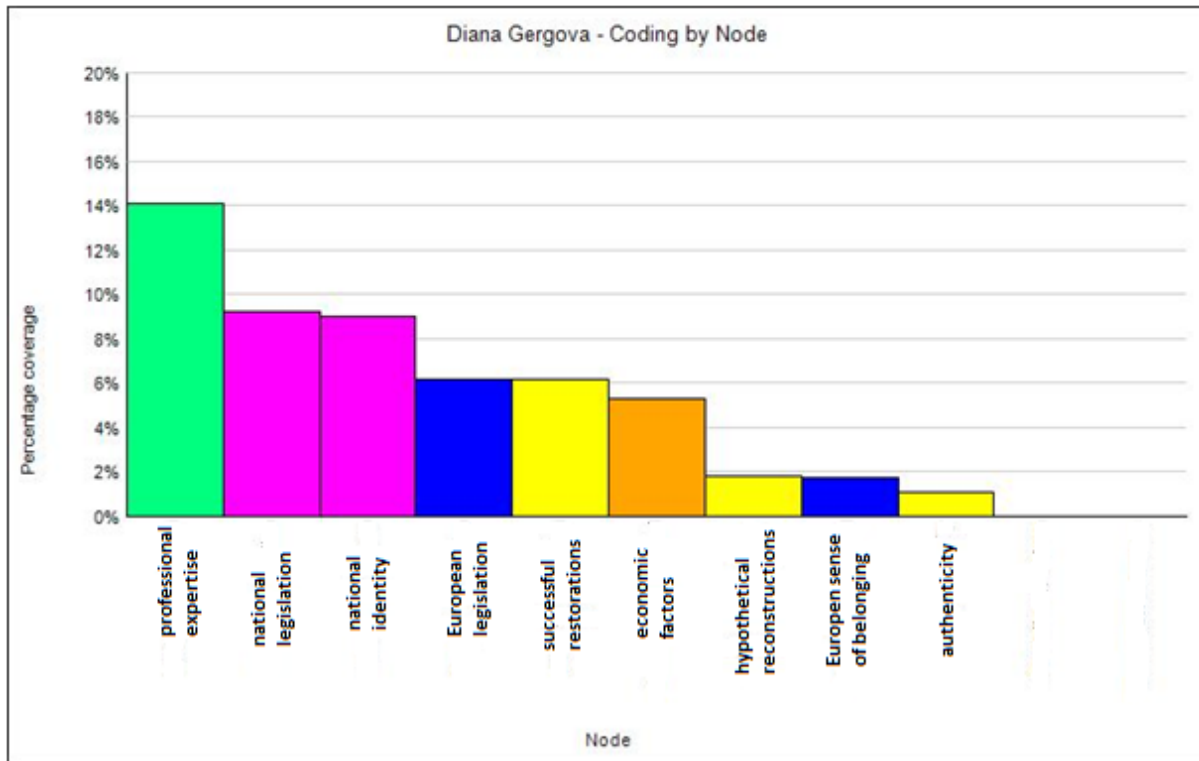
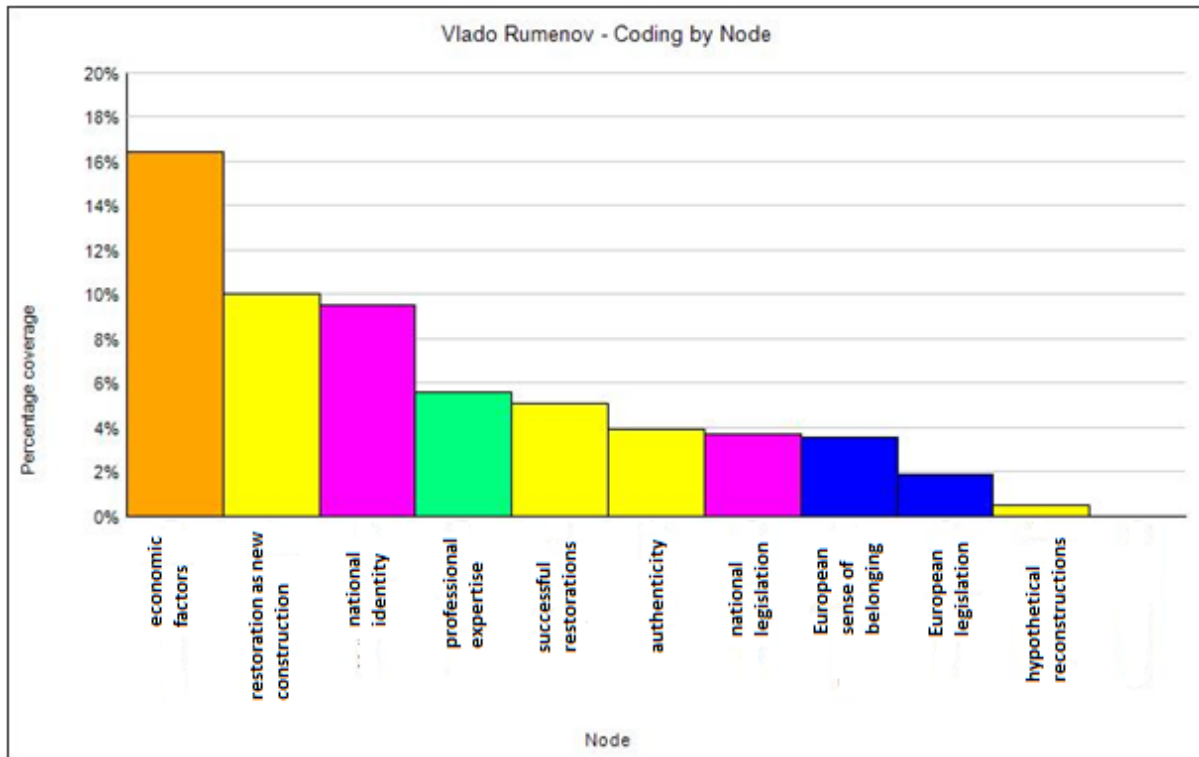


Table 4. Codes distinguished in the interview with Vlado Rumenov



Evaluation of results

Before interpreting the results, I would first like to outline the way different nodes have been discussed by the participants. As can also be seen from the interviews' transcripts (Appendix 5, Appendix 7, Appendix 9) and the above presented tables (Table 3, Table 4, Table 5), each interviewee stresses specifically one distinctive concept. These concepts are mainly discussed on a general, national scale. However, in order to keep a balanced presentation I will discuss the categories in general and the different concepts emerging from them.

Finally, the conclusions that stem from the results' evaluation will be briefly discussed, setting the grounds for a discussion platform in Chapter five.

Category 1: economic factors

The first inductive category that emerged as a result from the obtained data was the one of "economic factors". They were heavily stressed on by Rumenov, comprising of around 17% of his interview.

Rumenov sees a main reason for the conduction of restoration projects as entirely economic in nature. In his opinion,

... in this manner a lot of money could be incorporated from the state and from European funding. According to the information that we have gathered, between 50% and 80% of the funding that has been meant for this [restoration projects], that are coming from Europe and are being implemented by the Ministry of Culture, actually reach regional level, the municipalities and their mayors (Appendix 9).

Rumenov misspeaks and considers the Ministry of Culture the primary agent behind the implementation and re-direction of funds for restoration projects, instead of the Ministry of Regional Development. The general impression that funds are being mishandled, however, seems to be applicable to both the Ministries of Culture and Regional Development, and perhaps even to other executors of such projects, like municipalities and religious institutions. It

should be stressed that this perception creates a feeling of general distrust, regardless of whether such accusations are truthful or not.

The idea of corruption and “wrongful” implementation of funds is mentioned several times by Rumenov. He claims that the amount of material that was documented as used for “restoring” in the official reports is grossly overestimated. He hints at the possibility of funds not being accordingly implemented. Something similar, but not as extreme, is discussed by Gergova, who claims that the restorations, are, in fact “constructions for millions” and the exclusion of experts is a deliberate choice:

Predominant approval in a purely administrative manner, no creative discussions of low quality projects for hypothetical restorations which, in practice, foresee entirely new construction for millions. The projects are approved and carried out by municipalities and the experts are in fact eliminated from them and substituted for construction companies. These construction companies have usually already written the projects according to what municipalities have agreed upon and the funding has been accordingly redirected (Appendix 7).

Economic factors and the implementation of funding were not discussed by Dobrev. Rather, he stressed on other factors and his answers were generally sticking to the format of the questionnaire.

Naturally, economic development and regional growth are main goals of the Regional Development Operational Programmes. However, Rumenov and Gergova explicitly talk about the municipalities benefitting economically by implementation of European funding. A concern for a similar kind of “corruption scheme” is raised by Rumenov in relation to Yailata. The general perception that a misuse of funds exists seems to be connected to the significance that executors put on regional economic growth in relation to heritage restoration projects.

Category 2: European framework

Legislation

The issue of European legislation was explored in several questions (Appendix 4). Since the European legislative framework is being violated, mainly by not following the standardization outlined by the Valletta Convention (1992) the opinions of the participants were sought. The participants had contrasting opinions on the matter. While Dobrev felt like the issue is mainly on a national (even regional) scale and violating national legislation, Rumenov and Gergova both discussed the management of heritage on a European level. Both felt that the rising level of bureaucratisation among other European countries, as well as within European institutions is having a negative effect on heritage management. Gergova ascribed this to the exclusion of expert opinion in the creation of management planning (Appendix 7). Rumenov, however, discussed the effect that the level of European bureaucratisation has on Bulgarian national level:

And the worse thing is that despite that we write about those things [“stealing” of financial funding], the European magistrates want evidence, because the governmental reports are brilliant, naturally, they cannot find the gap there – everything has been documented to the last detail and the European administration is even more strict than ours [national] – they say “alright, everything here is okay, what is your problem? – here, finish your work”... (Appendix 9).

The different issues that arise from the overly administrative side of heritage management have been extensively discussed within academic writings (e.g. Graham *et al.* 2000, Fairclough 2008). The issue is closely related to the exclusion of archaeologists from the projects, something already mentioned by Gergova and outlined as an inductive code (“professional expertise”). Furthermore, the specific bureaucratisation of heritage management practices within European institutions has also been a subject of discussions (e.g. Niklasson 2016). However, in this case the issue is further complicated, since the funding does not follow any official cultural policy or a heritage management strategy (European or national) and is rather oriented towards regional development. As such, the criteria that the projects need to meet are different from what they would have been under heritage management policy. Nevertheless, legislation is still being violated, since physical destruction of cultural heritage occurs. This point will be further expanded on in Chapter five.

European sense of belonging

As a regional expert, Dobrev seems to be paying the most attention to the issue of “European sense of belonging”, a concept embedded in the interview questionnaire. It is interesting to note that when discussing the Bulgarian role in a common European heritage framework, he seems to feel that Bulgarian heritage is underrepresented, and perhaps even underappreciated in European context:

It is European. And we are even downplaying the significance of what we have. Another approach is needed. Everything that reaches Europe should be represented in another way and we have to know what is here [Bulgaria] and what we are talking about. And they need to value it [heritage] and control what is happening [with it] ... Promotion of certain sites from time to time is not what should be known and communicated as important for this country and for the geographical area in general. And I do not mean one or two time periods, I mean everything (Appendix 5).

Despite the vague wording, during the interview Dobrev was being clear in expressing his dissatisfaction with the lack of promotion of Bulgarian heritage and its place in a common European framework. While specific cases of “promotion of certain sites” were not discussed, it seems safe to assume that Dobrev felt some sites and archaeological periods were underrepresented in the way heritage was promoted on a national, as well on a wider geographical scale. The issue of national promotion of heritage has also been identified as an inductive code, which is evaluated below. Dobrev associated himself and felt a personal connection to archaeological heritage in a close proximity to his geographical area of research – which is, Late Antiquity sites in the region of Dobrudzha (modern day Northern Bulgaria and Southern Romania) (Appendix 6). Dobrev, however, felt no connection to any cultural heritage perceived as “European” outside that region. The idea of “European sense of belonging” seemed to be applicable to Bulgarian heritage as a part of a wider European framework, something that should be “valued” and “taken care of”. However, nothing perceived as “European” could be identified as something that he, personally, felt any association with.

The issue of “European sense of belonging” was touched upon, but not extensively discussed by the other two participants. However, their view on what part of Bulgarian heritage is perceived as European and belonging to a European cultural heritage were similar to Dobrev’s. Rumenov, for instance, sees Bulgaria as a “small part of European culture” (Appendix 10). He further goes on stating:

We have a constant interchange - material and cultural with Europe. There are many monuments as well, which are of a national and international significance. When we are talking about Thracian tombs we can find exceptional things (Appendix 9).

He also feels a personal connection to the cultural heritage in Northern Greece and Macedonia. He further explains that it is because they are “nearby geographical areas, so it is evidence for ethnic territories, and Bulgarian” (Appendix 9).

As an international scholar Diana Gergova feels connected with archaeological heritage from various places in Europe. Nevertheless, the national heritage that she feels belongs to the European community is similar to the one mentioned by Rumenov:

... relates to our prehistoric monuments as well, even more so the Thracian ones which already give evidence for the relationship between different parts of Europe, provide us with a proof for the existence of one Proto-European civilization. I will not discuss the Roman epoch due to the unification of culture, but after that we see the existence of Christian monuments, Medieval Bulgaria. In each and every one of Bulgaria’s historic periods we can look for monuments which are from European and World heritage significance. The problem is that we are doing nothing about it (Appendix 7).

The uniqueness of certain national traits associated with Bulgarian heritage is seen as contributing to a common European culture. Mentioned by the participants are the Thracian and Medieval periods, which are considered inherently Bulgarian, but not, for example, the Roman period, owing to the cultural unification. European archaeological heritage outside Bulgaria, however, is rarely perceived as something that the participants identify with, unless it

is in a close geographical proximity. As such, Bulgarian archaeological heritage contributes to the European culture, but does not really share it.

Category 3: national framework

Three different concepts have been distinguished under the category of national framework. These are the codes for national identity, national legislation, and promotion of national heritage. While the first two are deductive codes and correspond with questions from the initial interview guide, the last one is an inductive code and is closely related to the already outlined issue of European sense of belonging. All three of them will be evaluated here.

National Identity

The interviewees have distinctive opinions on the relationship between archaeological cultural heritage and national identity. Gergova, for example, feels that heritage

... plays a crucial role as a uniting tool for the Bulgarian people, not only because of the rich history of the country, but also because of the participation of contemporary people of different ethnic or religious background in its research and preservation (Appendix 7).

The diversification of heritage perception by the inclusion of people from different backgrounds (others than Orthodox Christian or ethnically Bulgarian, which is the majority of the population in Bulgaria) seems to be also crucial for the diversification of what is perceived as “Bulgarian”. Archaeological heritage is seen as a “uniting tool” for the community and is enriched by the participations of people from different backgrounds.

A different view on the archaeological heritage – national identity relationship is upheld by Rumenov. He also sees archaeological heritage as a tool, however, as a tool “for the direction of the public’s opinion on the matter”. He further goes on to explain:

Actually, it is being played on the string of Bulgarian nationalism and chauvinism, and the Bulgarian public is not educated enough in order to know what is valuable and what not. So, when you say to them “These people over there [other European countries] have castles and fortresses, and we here do not, but actually we do, let’s construct them, and the more fully constructed they are, the more valuable they become”, and the Bulgarian public answers “Yes, of course, bravo, wonderful!” it is impressed. And I just said this, a short while ago, it is really good that people are paying attention to us, they invite us over in the media, because it is through the media that our opinion and arguments reach people with different views, we get the chance to explain why we are not happy with it, what are we criticising (Appendix 9).

Rumenov sees the reconstruction of heritage as connected to a feeling of nationalism among the public. The reconstruction of archaeological heritage is both a result of a general feeling of patriotism, and a tool for the creation of national pride. The reconstruction of something that is seen as “valuable” and uniquely Bulgarian, despite it having analogues in other countries (i.e. fortresses and castles) further enhances a feeling of patriotism. A similar conscious strategy for the hypothetical reconstruction of archaeological sites, mainly medieval, has been employed in the years after the creation of the modern Bulgarian state and the World War II, right before the change to a totalitarian political regime (Kandulkova 2007). During this period (1898 – 1944), however, it was aimed at the creation of national identity within the newly-formed state. Rather, Rumenov’s observations hint at the idea that the sense of national pride is used as a tool for swinging the public opinion’s in favour of the reconstruction of certain archaeological sites.

Unlike the other two interviewees, Dobrev does not see any correlation between archaeological heritage and its restoration and the construction of national identity:

No, no... I am trying to look for such a relation, but no (Appendix 5).

While seemingly contradictory, it is possible for the two models to exist simultaneously. Archaeological heritage could be used as a tool for both diversification (Gergova) and unification (Rumenov) of what is perceived as inherently “national”. A similar approach has been observed by Kandulkova (2007) in the years before 1944, when two models for the

restoration of archaeological heritage are said to have existed. The first one was following the outlined in European and international context standardization and conservation ethos, which aims at preservation of authenticity and keeping the restoration as closely to the original as possible. The second one, aiming at establishment of national identity by enhancing national pride and rooting it in the past, was rather favouring the hypothetical reconstructions of archaeological sites where traits perceived as inherently national were deliberately enhanced. Having this idea in mind, it could be argued that both models trace their roots to the past, and a certain level of continuity of these models could be observed in contemporary heritage management practices. Nevertheless, in the contemporary case of hypothetical reconstruction practices, the idea of certain level of nationalism seems to be used as a justification for their conduction, rather than resulting from them.

National legislation

The concept of national legislation and its relation to reconstruction processes was explored during the interviews in accordance with the outlined literature review in Chapter 2. This was mainly done because of the expressed dissatisfaction with the decentralisation of the Cultural Heritage Law and the power given to regional authorities and municipalities expressed by different expert organisations and NGOs (e.g. ICOMOS Bulgaria). At the same time, this power is centralised on regional level and leaves experts out of the decision-making processes. Both Gergova (Appendix 7) and Rumenov (Appendix 9) pay special attention to the subject. Gergova explains the system of projects' conduction as follows:

...the results from such conservation and restoration practices are extremely negative, with very few exceptions. The reasons for this could be found in the national legislative framework. Restorations are often interpreted as new construction, restoration experts and their private businesses cannot apply for these projects on their own, since their capacity is not enough and could only be found with big construction companies, which are expected to hire restoration experts. In this way the values are turned upside down because instead for the restoration experts to be in control of these restoration practices, they are being used. Another problem is

the centralisation of power in the hands of the owner's institution, or in those of the cultural policy-makers; in this way extreme destruction is brought onto heritage monuments (Appendix 8).

Rumenov sees the main weak spot within the current legislation with the lack of involvement of a “strong institute” of experts who should be monitoring the restoration processes, namely the NIICH. Many other Bulgarian experts support this view and feel like there is not involvement and exercised control from the Ministry of Culture and NIICH in the development of restoration projects (e.g. Gergova 2015). Moreover, the funding is mainly allocated by the Ministry of Regional Development and the responsibilities for restoration projects fall entirely in the hands of regional authorities and municipalities. Thus, often the archaeological cultural heritage is not treated in accordance to the outlined national cultural policies, but is rather viewed as a commodity.

Dobrev does not specifically mentions national legislation, but rather focuses on the promotion of national heritage, which is detailed in the following subsection.

Promotion of national heritage

The inductive concept concerning the promotion of national heritage is closely related to the European sense of belonging that is discussed by Dobrev. However, this concept could be viewed from a different perspective than the one outlined in the evaluation of the “European sense of belonging” concept. In the framework of common European heritage Bulgarian heritage is seen as contributing to the European culture, rather than sharing it, owing to its “unique-ness”. The question of what is seen as typically uniquely Bulgarian remains. Dobrev, for instance, stresses on the idea that certain types of sites are “promoted” more often than others. While he never explicitly mentions which, a certain trend of presenting archaeological heritage from one period over another could be noticed in the practice of Bulgarian heritage management. This was mostly done in accordance with a certain prevailing national myth (e.g. Savova-Mahon Borden 2001, Graham *et al.* 2000, 192), which represents the Turks as the

Bulgarian natural enemy. This makes certain type of archaeological heritage more Bulgarian and representing more Bulgarian traits, hence more desirable for presentation or restoration. This idea would be more extensively discussed in Chapter five.

Category 4: restoration/reconstruction projects

Four different concepts emerged from the category for restoration and reconstruction projects. This issue has been extensively discussed by all of the participants, often with repetitions and emphasis on reoccurring themes. The concepts will be individually evaluated in the following subsection.

Successful restoration projects

The conduction of successful restoration projects was an issue that formed an essential part of the questionnaire. All of the participants were able to give examples of successfully conducted restorations, meaning, restorations that were in line with the international legislation and conservation ethos. Rumenov even discussed a project that personally impressed him, a conduction of anastolysis on a temple located in Northern Bulgaria (Appendix 9).

Gergova and Dobrev also pointed at different restorations producing satisfying results and preserving the authenticity of the monuments: Horizont fortress (Appendix 5), Sveshtari tomb, Shumanets and Dyadovo tells (Appendix 7). Most of these restorations, however, were a result of an interdisciplinary collaboration between different experts. As Gergova puts it:

The issue is that often after the realization of these restoration projects they remain under the supervision of incompetent regional institutions which are not only indifferent, but are also not knowledgeable enough to know what to do; that is when destructive processes take over as regular practices. During the conduction of these projects I have personally worked alongside teams which follow the set out international framework [on conservation and restoration] (Appendix 7).

This observation circles back to the argument, given by Gergova and Dobrev, that the exclusions of experts in the initial creation of the projects makes it difficult to achieve successful and balanced restorations of archaeological heritage.

Restoration as new construction

Restorations carried out under the Ministry of Regional Development are also often seen as entirely new constructions by the interviewees. Dobrev, for example, states that:

In the majority of cases restoration and conservation processes are not really happening; we are rather talking about construction. All of them... for the majority of projects that are ongoing in Bulgaria we are talking about construction. And we are not even discussing construction next to the cultural heritage, but construction on top of this cultural heritage, which is brutal” (Appendix 5).

This perception is mainly owing to the introduction of new materials to the original fabric of the monuments – a point made by Rumenov (Appendix 9). Gergova (Appendix 7) rather discusses the new construction as not well constructed and “falling apart”. This type of “new” construction is often viewed as an outright destruction of the archaeological heritage and is deemed unacceptable by the interviewees.

Hypothetical reconstructions and authenticity

The concepts of hypothetical reconstructions and authenticity are closely intertwined, since often the one is explained through the other. For instance, while hypothetical reconstructions are perceived “extremely negatively” (e.g. by Gergova), they are also described as “destruction of monuments’ authenticity, as well as a destruction of the chance for these monuments to later be scientifically researched” (Gergova, Appendix 8). Dobrev supports this view by stating:

Restoration is something else. This thing with the hypothetical [reconstructions] cannot be applied... how, one does not know how it used to look like, but they construct... this is new construction. Unfortunately on top of an authentic building, quite often (Appendix 5).

A main key point in the negative perception of hypothetical reconstructions is not only the destruction of the physical fabric of the monuments, but also the loss of authenticity. With the loss of authenticity there is a feeling that cultural heritage is being “falsified” (Rumenov, Appendix 9).

Authenticity is an important aspect of what defines heritage and has been a subject of academic debates on an international level for years. There is no definite answer to what constitutes authenticity, and it has been often described as flexible and changing; it is not frozen in time, but is rather dynamic (Domicelj Am 2009, 153). However, the participants in the current study seem to define authenticity through the preservation of monuments’ original fabrics. The introduction of new construction is seen as destruction to archaeological heritage. Authenticity and its role in the restoration of Bulgarian archaeological heritage will be discussed in-depth in Chapter five.

Category 5: professional expertise

From Gergova’s transcript and the produced results it can be seen that she extensively discusses the subject of professional expertise on numerous occasions (Appendix 7). A member of ICOMOS and an archaeologist involved with heritage management, she feels that the exclusion of experts in the creation and approval of projects is a crucial deficiency. The issue of involvement of professional archaeologists was briefly mentioned in the interview guide as a closing question, but Gergova stressed on the importance of an inter-disciplinary involvement in the creation of restoration projects. Therefore, her point was considered an inductive code and as such provided valuable information to the analysed data.

Gergova illustrates her point clearly:

The inclusion of archaeologists is compulsory, but it is not enough. There should be discussions in a broader circle of experts, such as archaeologists, restoration practitioners, project managers, on every project. Just the inclusion of a single archaeologist is not enough – one person could be wrong about something, or they could be pressured by the project managers (Appendix 7).

This key point is also mentioned by Dobrev in his discussion of involvement of professional archaeologists:

It is not about it being important, it is obligatory, they [archaeologists] need to be in the core of these projects and in the core of everything – they need to be there long before the realisation of the project, so they can control the process. Because the people that are carrying out the project, as well as the people who are creating it are not specialists. Especially regarding the actual carrying out of the project, we are talking about construction businesses which need to be controlled! Usually, in these projects restoration experts are included, but many other professionals are also needed, who can give another, diversified opinion on the matter (Appendix 5).

The issue of professional expertise was also mentioned by Rumenov, in connection to a systematic conduction of the restoration projects (Appendix 9). He states that it is:

Of an utmost importance and it is even in the official legislation (Cultural Heritage Law) that the involvement of an archaeologist is obligatory, and this archaeologist must be the initial researcher (Appendix 9).

The lack of involvement of archaeologists in decisions made in heritage management is an issue often stressed upon by different scholars and experts within the archaeological discipline. However, in this case both Gergova and Dobrev are concerned about the lack of involvement of professional expertise in general. Gergova stresses the importance of the involvement of interdisciplinary researchers – project managers, restoration practitioners – not simply archaeologists. Dobrev further explains this by stating that the actual process is one of a “construction”, which needs to be controlled. The absence of a balanced, expert opinion in the

creation of restoration projects carried out by municipalities and regional authorities seems to be a main problem leading, more often than not, to the physical destruction of archaeological heritage.

The case study: how is the restoration project at Yailata archaeological reserve perceived by the interviewees?

So far in this chapter the results from the conducted data analysis have been presented and evaluated. The variety of participants' backgrounds is important for the current study, since it provides diversified opinions on the matter. Before observing which and how many of the discussed concepts are actually being applied in practice in the discussion part of the study, I will briefly outline the way the restoration project and its results are perceived by the participants.

During the interview, it was clear that Dobrev feels a personal connection to the Yailata site, having been a main curator of the archaeological reserve for 12 years. He was not involved in the initial discussion for the creation of the project, but he was also not allowed to see the official report which at the time was in store at the Regional Museum of Kavarna. When addressing the restoration process he refers to it as an outright "destruction of immovable cultural heritage" (Appendix 5). A main problem he sees with the loss of authenticity, and the process is further described as a "manipulation" conducted by the government officials in charge.

When discussing the project, Gergova gives a detailed explanation of the way the process was developed, claiming that "the issue is quite specific for projects of this kind".

The issue is quite specific for all projects of this kind. The agreement that is reached between the administration on different hierarchical levels during the initial discussion of starting such a

project. The absolute exclusion of experts - those are the archaeologists – in the formulation of the project, its official approval, which is happening independently from the clear contradictions with international and Bulgarian conservation ethos. This is further enhanced by the conduct of an impressive number of violations which concern not only the authenticity of the archaeological fabric, but also the natural environment; the lack of adequate reaction from the respective institutions, which tend to ignore the received signals for violation (Appendix 7).

Here she again gives the exclusion of experts as a main reason for the violations, alongside bureaucratisation and lack of monitoring, which should be done in accordance with the legal framework.

Described as a “prominent example of bad practice” the Yailata reserve also holds a personal significance to Rumenov. He does not see a reason for the conduction of the restoration of the fortress, claiming that clearing of the surrounding vegetation would have been enough to solve the visualisation issue.

He rather explains the restoration as a part of a “corruption scheme” intended for “stealing of funds”. A reason for that he sees in a deviation in practice from theory that has been outlined in the official report:

... in the project it says that these iron poles need to be 20mm in width, I measured them – they are 12 mm wide, 8 mm of iron is missing, and it has been documented as done. Many other things... this is easy to observe, but other things – whatever has been written. The stones that are used at Yailata are supposed to be made of local limestone (...) So the answer to this question – why are these things being done is economic – so that financial funding could be stolen (Appendix 9).

Out of all participants, Rumenov seems to be the most opinionated regarding the economic factors when addressing the issue. This is possibly owing to his extensive involvement with GIOKIM and his numerous attempts to get the Ministry of Culture or the European Commission involved in what is perceived by him as a destruction of archaeological heritage. Nevertheless, his opinion on the matter speaks of a clash of economic and cultural values ascribed to

archaeological heritage. This, together with the issue of exclusion of experts and the destruction of heritage due to loss of authenticity seem to be main reasons for the dissatisfaction of participants in relation to the Yailata reserve. All of these issues will be further addressed in Chapter five, when an attempt at creating a theoretical framework based on the Yailata case study will be made.

Chapter Five

Discussion

As previously discussed in Chapter four, the obtained results in the context of the Yailata case study will be used for the construction of a framework, which will be used for the construction of a framework, within which an explanation for the occurrence of the phenomenon could be sought. Therefore, the following chapter sets a discussion platform within which the subject of Bulgarian practices of hypothetical reconstructions is evaluated - and then fitted into a wider context. First and foremost, however, an answer to the initially posed research question is given. Following this, a clash of specific values ascribed to archaeological heritage by different stakeholder groups is observed and discussed in depth. The conclusions drawn from this observation serve as basis for a wider discussion; one that explores the issue on, but also goes beyond national level and is mainly concerned with cultural messages conveyed by the way archaeological heritage is being managed.

Evaluating the phenomenon: heritage values and hypothetical reconstructions

The dissatisfaction with hypothetical reconstruction practices of experts and others actively involved with the discipline of archaeology is connected, but not restricted to the violation of international legislation. While the transgression of legislation is an issue by itself, it could be argued that the articles outlined in treaties and charters are open to interpretation, and are even treated as such by national government officials. An example could be given with a popular argument given by representatives of the Ministry of Culture (e.g.

www.standartnews.com⁹). According to this statement, voiced by the vice-minister of Culture, the Venice Charter allows for reconstructions of archaeological heritage in extreme circumstances, which could also be caused by weather anomalies. Because of the temperate-continental climate that is typical for the geographical position of Bulgaria, the archaeological heritage is exposed to amplitudes in the weather during the seasonal change, which causes its deterioration. Therefore, this popular argument states that the reconstruction of archaeological monuments is a needed conservation technique, which prevents heritage from destruction due to the extreme differences in weather conditions. Nevertheless, at the same time, no strategies for preservation of the original fabrics are being introduced. This example shows how conventions and treaties for heritage preservation could be misinterpreted in order to fit different goals; in the current case, the goals of the Operational Programmes.

The restoration practices, however, have consequences and these are quickly felt and vocalized on a national level by various stakeholders. The majority of experts, as seen by the interview data and from the analysis of academic literature seem to feel that archaeological heritage is being falsified, and in extreme cases, even destroyed. An explanation for this general feeling could be given with an occurring clash of values between experts and policy-makers and the executors of the regional development Operational Programmes. In order to illustrate this point better I would first like to discuss the notion of cultural and economic values separately, and then observe the occurring clash.

Ascribing values to cultural heritage

From an anthropological perspective, value refers to the qualities and characteristics, actual or potential, which can be observed in things and objects (Mason 2008, 99). Nowadays, the notion of value has become a guiding idea in heritage management and conservation practices.

⁹ http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html

Heritage’s attached and recognised values can range from monetary and economic, to historical, scientific and educational. Depending on what values are associated to cultural heritage, and by whom, the conservation, preservation and visualization practices of the heritage in question could be decided upon by project and heritage managers.

Various scholars have created different classifications of heritage values over the years (e.g. Reigl 1902, Lipe 1984, Frey 1997). Some of the different types of values in these models are overlapping, and others are just analogous. Generally, however, economic and cultural values are the two primary value metacategories in most of these studies (Mason 2008, 103).

For the purpose of the current study I use the typology created by Mason (2008). This decision was made based on the fact that this specific typology clearly differentiates between the two main value categories: (socio)cultural and economic (Table 1).

Table 5. Heritage values classification, as outlined by Mason (2008, 103).

<i>Sociocultural values</i>	<i>Economic values</i>
Historical	Use (market) value
Cultural/symbolic	Nonuse (nonmarket) value
Social	Existence
Spiritual/religious	Option
Aesthetic	Bequest

Following the above outlined typology, I will briefly present the characteristics of the sociocultural and economic values, and discuss them in relation to the Bulgarian case. This allows me to better illustrate the observed clash of values.

Economic values

The ascription of economic values to heritage is unavoidable and necessary for its management. This type of valuing is one of the most powerful ways in which society identifies and decides on a relative value of objects and things (Mason 2008, 106).

Economic values could be of use (market) value and non-use (nonmarket) value (Mason 2008, 107). To make a distinction between the two is important, since non-use values overlap to a great extent with sociocultural values. They are the ones that are difficult to express in terms of price, but still can be classified as economic values, because individuals would be willing to spend resources on them (for instance, tourism). These include existence value (individuals value a type of heritage because they appreciate its existence, even though they do not directly consume it), option value (the option to consume a certain type of heritage in the future), or bequest value (to preserve a type of heritage for future generations) (Mason 2008, 106-107).

Use values are market values and can be measured by price. Those are the values of material heritage referring to goods and services that result from heritage in the form of admission fees or wages (Mason 2008, 106).

Both use and nonuse values are being ascribed to reconstructed archaeological heritage by the executors (beneficent) of the programmes. In the official report for the OP “Regions in Growth” (2014-2020) (Operational programme “Regions in Growth” 2014, 234) these are listed as the Ministry of Culture, religious institutions, municipalities and other organisations. Since market and nonmarket values are indistinguishable, they are both projected onto the reconstructed heritage. However, a certain level of imbalance could be observed.

Despite the fact that different agencies can be executors of the programmes (e.g. the municipalities, the Ministry of Culture, etc.), for the interests of the programmes the archaeological heritage in question is first and foremost seen as a means of achieving a higher touristic interest, and hence, economic growth. Therefore, in order for economic growth to occur, the tourists taken into account are simply seen as consumers, instead of individuals who associate values to the reconstructed heritage. Non-use values such as existence and bequest

values cannot be taken into consideration, since they cannot be measured. Even the option value presents somewhat of an issue, since the programmes are restricted by deadlines and time limits, and potential future tourists are not a secure source of immediate economic growth. Therefore, while use and nonuse values are equally represented as economic values, it seems that market values are still the crucial values being projected onto the reconstructed archaeological heritage.

This issue is further complicated by the role of the agents that execute the programmes. Within the projects, they hold the role of influencers – the agents (individuals and organisations) who have the power over management of the projects (Kennon *et al.* 2009, 9). Since they are responsible for the relocation of funds and decision-making, they also exclusively influence which values to be represented in connection to the archaeological heritage. While the participation of influencers is crucial for the implementation of heritage preservation projects, it is important to achieve balance between their opinions, and those of the other parties involved.

Since this has not been achieved in the Bulgarian case, the focus is deliberately put on economic values by the programmes' executors. Heritage is mainly seen as an economic commodity that needs to boost regional economy. The exclusive power upheld by the beneficiaries do not allow for diversification of the represented values. Needless to say, this conventional approach causes tension within other stakeholder groups who associate different values (e.g. archaeological professionals and heritage managers). Therefore, the following section discusses the nature of this tension.

Sociocultural values

Having in mind the results from the interview data and literature analyses, I can conclude that mainly sociocultural values seem to be ascribed to the reconstructed heritage by individuals

actively involved with the archaeological discipline. Two very important values ascribed to it seem to be the cultural/symbolic and historical ones.

The cultural/symbolic value describes a crucial part of the very notion of heritage. There are different subtypes of the cultural value: political, ethnic or other, and these are generally used to build cultural affiliation (Mason 2008, 104). Because of these shared characteristics, cultural/symbolic values could be used as a tool for communication with and through heritage. For example, according to Mason (2008, 104), political values could be manifested symbolically and have the potential to be interpreted both positively (contributors to civil society), or cynically – as political tool used to enforce specific national or political ideology. Some of the cultural characteristics can also be used to stimulate ethnic-group identity (Mason 2008, 105). This is an important remark, and I will return to it when discussing the outcomes of hypothetical reconstructions.

A subtype of historical value – the educational/academic value seems to be of an utmost importance to the stakeholders who express dissatisfaction with the occurrence of hypothetical reconstructions. This importance mainly lies in the potential to gain knowledge from the historical record embodied in the archaeological heritage (Mason 2008, 104). As such, the educational/academic value is also scientific. The concern that hypothetical reconstructions could lead to falsification of the original fabric and thus prevent further scientific research has been raised not only by interview participants (e.g. Dobrev, Appendix 4; Gergova, Appendix 5), but also Bulgarian academics (Krustev 2014).

In general, the individuals dissatisfied with the conduction of such projects are the ones who have the appropriate level of specialised education or knowledge to perceive the historical and cultural values as important. Those are academics, heritage managers, and people actively involved with the archaeological discipline. Despite that they represent a small minority, their input is crucial for the truly successful completion of the restoration projects. As such, they represent potential enablers within the projects that are conducting hypothetical reconstructions. Enablers are important agents (people or organisations), who have the resources to enable the project team (Kennon et al. 2009, 15). They possess the critical

knowledge or are well familiar with the interests of a specific community and can influence the conduction of a project in a way that satisfies all of the involved stakeholder groups.

The exclusion of professional expertise was a crucial node that resulted from the interview data. Stressed upon by Dobrev (Appendix 4) and Gergova (Appendix 5), it seemed to be a main reason for their dissatisfaction with the projects executed under the EC's Operational Programmes. As main enablers, who have the critical knowledge to understand and communicate the importance of sociocultural (mainly historical (academic/scientific) and cultural/symbolic) values, the interviewees felt the exclusion of professional experts as damaging to the reconstructed archaeological heritage.

For the conduction of the European funded projects the involvement and approval of an archaeological expert is compulsory, according to the national legislation (Cultural Heritage Law 2012, article 169). However, the expertise of a single person is often not enough to give a diversified opinion. Moreover, a single person could be easily swayed in one direction or another with accordance to various power relations. In order for a balanced and diversified heritage management plan to be constructed, the multi-disciplinary of many experts is needed. Therefore, it is understandable why the exclusion of professional experts is given as a main reason for dissatisfaction from the interviewees.

Exploring the clash

Despite being technically rightfully implemented, since they are initially approved under the regional development Operational Programmes, the projects are entirely focused on economic growth and touristic attraction. Therefore, they pay little to no attention to the sociocultural values associated to the archaeological heritage. Adding to the debate, some scholars argue that the reconstructions do not attract more tourists. The partially hypothetically reconstructed buildings, for example, do not offer a coherent archaeological narrative that could be presented

to the public (Krustev 2014). The fully reconstructed castles, towers and fortresses resemble new construction to such a great extent (Pehlivanova 2015), that they are in fact stripped of their historical and cultural values.

This clash could be observed in the results from the interview data. The “economy” node has been discussed extensively by Rumenov (Appendix 6). While he discusses it in the context of economic fraud directed by the beneficiaries (e.g. municipalities, the Ministry of Regional Development and even the Ministry of Culture), this is because the economic values associated with the archaeological heritage is what drives these projects.

An interesting role in this clash is taken upon by the Ministry of Culture. The Ministry and its institutions and government officials are all enablers to the projects, owing to their expertise knowledge, and at the same time executors of some of the projects, as could be seen by the official European Operational Programme’s report (e.g. Operativna programa regioni v razvitie 2014 – 2020, 233). As such, they could take upon the role of an advisory body, or even offer a middle ground for discussions between the other project beneficiaries (e.g. municipalities) and the archaeological and heritage experts regarding the conduction of restoration projects. Nevertheless, judging by the different statements given by Ministry of Culture officials (www.standartnews.com¹⁰), and even by the Minister of Culture himself (Rashidov 2015), it seems that the Ministry shies away from taking upon these roles. Officially, the Ministry of Culture sees no legal violations within the implemented projects and approves of their completion.

An issue arises from this firm position - the Ministry also oversees the existence of sociocultural values applied to the archaeological heritage under reconstruction. As such, by theoretically being both an enabler and an influencer, in reality the Ministry ignores the first and focuses on the second of these characteristics. Thus, the stand taken by the Ministry of Culture further contributes to the imbalance in the values that are being associated with archaeological heritage and leads to actual violation of international and European treaties

¹⁰ http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html

Authenticity

The clash of economic and sociocultural values is one of the most frequently observed in heritage management (e.g. Graham *et al.* 2000). While these values are always intertwined in the perception of heritage, the imbalance between the two could lead to misrepresentation, or even damage of archaeological cultural heritage (Mason 2008, 104). This has been discussed above in relation to the Bulgarian case of hypothetical restorations through illustrating how different stakeholder groups associate a variety of values to the reconstructed archaeological heritage. However, this clash could also be observed in another way, and that is through the issue of authenticity.

Consideration about the disregard of archaeological heritage's authenticity by the executors of EC's Operational Programmes have been raised by Bulgarian academics (Krustev 2014, Pehlivanova 2015) in recent years and have been the subject of media coverage and debates (e.g. www.bnr.bg). The concept of authenticity has also been extensively discussed by the interviewees, and the node for "authenticity" was reoccurring during the interviews.

The clash of economic and sociocultural values is one of the most frequently observed in heritage management (e.g. Graham *et al.* 2000). While these values are always intertwined in the perception of heritage, the imbalance between the two could lead to misinterpretation, or even damage of archaeological cultural heritage (Mason 2008, 104). This has been discussed above in relation to the Bulgarian case of hypothetical restorations through illustrating how different stakeholder groups associate a variety of values to the reconstructed archaeological heritage. However, this clash could also be observed in another way, and that is through the issue of authenticity.

The concept of authenticity in relation to cultural heritage has been widely discussed before and after the creation of the Nara Document of Authenticity in 1994. Overall, it is accepted that, as Larsen and Marstein (1994, 9) put it, "conservation is not only about keeping the material, but also recognizing its spirit, this non-physical essence and authenticity of the heritage and its relation with the society". Moreover, article 10 of the Nara Document (1994)

states that authenticity “appears as the essential qualifying factor concerning values. The understanding of authenticity plays a fundamental role in all scientific studies of the cultural heritage, in conservation and restoration planning”. As such, authenticity is seen as a concept of the utmost importance and its appreciation is seen as a crucial factor for understanding other values associated with cultural heritage.

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The main argument is that archaeological buildings are being “falsified” and damaged, mainly through a loss of authenticity, which occurs when the original fabric is being damaged or replaced by new materials. Authenticity, however, is a somewhat problematic concept, mainly because it is not static and could change over time: it is flexible, and not frozen in time (Domicelj Am 2009, 153). It is also open to interpretation: Jokilehto (2006, 36), for instance, argues that it is necessary to accept that different cultures may have different ways of expressing themselves about various issues, such as truth and/or authenticity. Following this line of argumentation, it could be held that the subjective nature of the concept of authenticity allows for various perception of its value from different stakeholder groups. Therefore, if we accept that authenticity is a fluid concept, what makes it plausible to assume that disregarding such a subjective idea when reconstructing an archaeological building leads to heritage destruction?

Despite a general agreement on the importance of authenticity in relation to cultural heritage, the concept is still hard to explicitly define due to its flexibility. Therefore, article 11 of the Nara Document expresses the following conclusion:

¹¹ <http://bnr.bg/euranetplus/post/100563718/kampania-za-avtentichnost-na-kulturnoto-nasledstvo>

All judgments about values attributed to cultural properties as well as the credibility of related information sources may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. It is thus not possible to base judgments of values and authenticity within fixed criteria. On the contrary, the respect due to all cultures requires that heritage properties must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong.

Jokilehto (2006) broadens the discussion on diversity and uniqueness and their relation to the appreciation of authenticity. However, it seems evident that in the Bulgarian case intercultural differences of cultural expressions occur additionally. While we can observe dissatisfaction with “loss of authenticity”, which is directly connected to the preservation of the original fabric of buildings among Bulgarian academics and heritage practitioners, the issue of authenticity once again seems to be overlooked by the agents conducting the reconstruction projects. Whether it is deliberately ignored or simply not recognized as such is difficult to conclude, even though there are indicators for both. For instance, it is unlikely to expect consideration for heritage’s authenticity from executors of projects such as regional municipalities or the Ministry of Regional Development owing to a possible lack of specialized knowledge on the subject. However, authenticity of the original fabric does not seem to be a consideration of the Ministry of Culture either, despite the fact that the Ministry as an agency and its governmental officials are supposed to be familiar with this concept. Even though it is possible that the Ministry of Culture ascribes another definition to the concept, or sees authenticity as something more than simply the physical preservation of the original fabric, this has not been explicitly discussed by the officials representing the institution. A notable exception could be found in a statement made by the vice-minister of culture (www.standartnews.com¹²), in which she claims that the majority of the national cultural heritage from the Antiquity and Middle Ages is “barely there” and “99% of what is remaining are just the foundations”, which means that it is not authentic. While this statement cannot be interpreted as an official statement by the Ministry, because it shows Petrunova’s personal opinion on the matter, it seems that authenticity is not regarded as

¹² http://www.standartnews.com/mneniya-analizi/za_spasyavaneto_na_kulturnoto_nasledstvo_ili_za_kozhata_na_edin_direktor-290538.html

a valuable concept that needs to be preserved by at least some of the archaeologically educated agents executing the restoration projects.

Following this observation, it seems safe to conclude that the disregard of authenticity as a part of the archaeological cultural heritage only further enhances the already established clash of economic and sociocultural values. While authenticity is not usually considered a cultural value in itself (e.g. Jokilehto 2006), it is also a nuanced concept that “recognizes the material’s spirit, this non-physical essence and authenticity of the heritage and its relation with the society” (Larsen and Marstein 1994, 9). The inability or, rather, the unwillingness to recognize sociocultural values ascribed to heritage or the concept of authenticity that exists in relation to tangible cultural heritage seem to be interconnected. They all result from the imbalance of values that are being associated to heritage by the influencers who are responsible for the implementation of the projects. The emphasis that is being put on economic use leaves no space for diversification of values and disregards the more nuanced, social, cultural and emotional aspects that are often ascribed to cultural heritage by various stakeholder groups.

Concluding remarks

A way to resolve this issue could be the introduction of open discussions, involving all of the above mentioned agents and/or their representatives, as well as archaeological experts and heritage managers. Despite the fact that projects are being conducted under the umbrella of EC’s Operational Programmes for regional development, the executive agents should be better familiarised with the concepts of authenticity and sociocultural values. This could help against what is perceived as destruction of archaeological heritage by the above mentioned experts, and could aid in preventing the transgression of legislation. Hypothetical reconstructions can, indeed, be interpreted as falsification of heritage when they do not follow a carefully outlined heritage management strategy, which is simultaneously diversified and balanced.

A non-represented group in this study is the public. As yet another major stakeholder, its opinion on the matter is crucial for the holistic understanding of the here presented issue. While a lot has been written on the subject of public archaeology and its involvement with heritage, in the context of the current study I would like to discuss the main role of the public as a cultural heritage stakeholder. As a mass and direct consumer of heritage, both on a local and international (touristic) level (e.g. Holtorf 2013), the public is a stakeholder group that uses heritage to construct social recognition (Smith 2006), and stimulate ethnic-group identity (Mason 2008), among other things. An example of how important the public's involvement in heritage management is, is discussed by Paul Shackel (2004, 4). Shackel stresses how the lack of engagement of communities with interpretation of the past could lead to a gap in academic presentation of the past as an undisputed reality. When not considering the initial public attachment to a landscape or another type of heritage, different interpretations of that heritage can be imposed. These are often then either internalised by the same public, which originally attached their own values to this type of heritage, or fall into a disconnection with the public. Therefore, in order to avoid this and achieve a more balanced approach to the archaeological heritage management, a platform for discussion on the issues of heritage values and authenticity that only involves beneficiaries of the projects and academic/heritage management representatives is not enough for an explicit diversification of archaeological heritage perception. Rather, an involvement of as many stakeholder groups as possible is needed, and the public is a crucial one.

Since the issue occurs on a national level, an overall documentation of public' interests on such a big scale would be difficult. However, the nature of the projects, which are aimed at regional development and conducted by regional municipalities, presents an ideal opportunity to include the opinions of people situated in these regions. Since restoration projects of archaeological sites are managed by the regional municipalities, the carrying out of full stakeholder analyses prior to the creation of the projects could be a reasonable measure. This, of course, would require the inclusion not only of experts and the public, but of any other interested parties that feel connection to the archaeological cultural heritage in question. With the inclusion of such parties at initial stages of the projects a more balanced approach can be

achieved. Furthermore, the thus created strategy allows for the involvement of as many stakeholder groups as possible, which is required for the truly successful conservation by restoration of the archaeological heritage.

The inclusion of the public in potential discussions, however, is important for more reasons than simply diversifying the projects and their management plans. Since cultural heritage, especially the visible archaeological heritage is also a tool for communication, the representation of certain archaeological periods and misrepresentation of others could lead to the creation of incoherent archaeological and historical narratives. This could already be observed in the Bulgarian case of hypothetical reconstructions, and therefore will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Evaluating the by-product: perception of archaeological cultural heritage

Setting the scene: heritage and group identity construction

The link between heritage and identity has been the subject of extensive studies over the last few decades by various disciplines and through inter-disciplinary approaches (e.g. Graham *et al.* 2000, Volkan 2001, 2003, Logan *et al.* 2016). The literature on the topic greatly exceeds the scope of the current study, but a few points that are relevant to the Bulgarian practice of hypothetical reconstructions will be made in this section.

As shown above, owing to the different values ascribed to heritage, it can be used as a tool for political, social or economic uses. The uses and abuses of heritage and its relation to power structures have been extensively discussed by Graham *et al.* (2000). In the Bulgarian case, for instance, it is clear that mainly economic values are being ascribed to the reconstructed archaeological heritage, and therefore it has been used with the goal of economic growth and

regional development. However, there is another side to heritage, and that is its role in the creation of collective constructs of identity, such as class, gender, ethnicity and nationalism (Graham *et al.* 2000, 40).

A well-studied example is the growth of nationalism in Ireland in the 19th century, which underpinned the then growing political movement seeking independence from Great Britain (Graham *et al.* 2000, 40). This movement sought continuity with a distant age, before the British invasion, creating a national narrative of a predominantly rural Ireland, which cultural significance was defined by landscapes and iconic sites, such as Celtic monasteries and Iron Age hillforts and megaliths (e.g. Graham 1994). This conflation between heritage and identity is also enshrined in the Constitution of the Ireland (1937), which claims the Irish cultural identity and heritage as an entitlement and birthright of every person born on the island of Ireland. As such, operating within the structure of the state, the notion of individual identity creates civic responsibility, as well as social entitlement to recognition of group identities (Russel 2010, 31). Russel uses the example of Ireland's heritage ideological foundation to illustrate the reduction of complexity in the manifestation of heritage, when decisions relative to national consciousness and identity need to be made. This could result in an absolutist, essentialist interpretation of heritage, since it is based on ethnic or national structures. According to Russel (2010, 32) it could result in fragmentation of the heritage sector, leading to multiple identities, or groups of identities within the state competing for limited resources, which mainly rely on arguments concerning authenticity.

Russel's (2010) observations in regards to Ireland illustrate how the relationship between a national narrative and its deep embedment in a state's cultural heritage strategy could affect the overall perception of this heritage. As such, the national narrative also becomes restrictive to the way group identity is constructed through heritage representation.

Nevertheless, such assumed perception of heritage and a restricted construction of national identity could be achieved in other ways as well. This point will be expanded and discussed in the following section.

Reconstructing heritage, constructing group identity

An interesting parallel of the above given example could be drawn with the so far discussed case of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgaria, even though the Bulgarian phenomenon has followed an unexpected path and does not strictly follow the same line of argumentation as Russel's. Rather, the process of incorporating and presenting strictly national characteristics within heritage management in Bulgaria at the current stage is reversed. The persistent trend of reconstructing only archaeological sites from certain historical periods has coincided with a popular belief of how heritage should be represented and even perceived. This belief generally promotes traits, which can be regarded as nationalistic in nature. As such, a by-product results from the practice of hypothetical reconstructions. This by-product directly influences a specific group identity construction, which seems to be, to a great extent, nationalistic in nature.

After 2007 and the inclusion of Bulgaria in the EU, most of the funds for heritage management have been provided by EC's programmes concerned with regional development. Upon the completion of the first implemented programme, "Regions in Development" (2007 – 2013), the relocated funds for touristic development came up to more than 82 million euro (Ministry of regional development report 2011, 16). Many of these funds were implemented in the reconstruction of archaeological sites and monuments around the country. In comparison, the Ministry of Culture, within whose governance archaeology is managed, does not have a specific fund relocated for either archaeology or archaeological heritage management (www.ncf.bg¹³). Adding to this is the fact that the Bulgarian state had not had outlined and, therefore, does not follow a coherent cultural strategy, which means that none of the cultural sectors are being officially prioritized. Therefore, the EC's funding for touristic development is not being directed towards the completion of a specific national cultural strategy. Rather, the executors (e.g. regional municipalities) are fully responsible for the creation of projects, and do not have to follow a certain cultural strategy.

These factors lead to the occurrence of a certain trend within archaeological heritage management on a wide, national level, which seems to be explicitly focused on the restorations

¹³ <http://ncf.bg/page.php?p=88&s=90&sp=231&t=0&z=0>

of archaeological sites and monuments that often enter into conjecture and result into hypothetical reconstructions. Because of the span of these projects and their uniformity they create a trend in archaeological heritage management that could be observed on a national level. Hypothetical reconstructions are becoming a norm in the way archaeological heritage in Bulgaria is being preserved and conserved.

An unexpected by-product that results from this trend, however, is the creation of strictly nationalistic ideas that become associated with the reconstructed heritage. Much like with the example of Ireland, an essentialist, unconditional interpretation of heritage is occurring, but this time stemming from the practice of archaeological heritage reconstruction itself, instead of the theoretical embedment of nationalism within the state's legislation or cultural strategy. In other words, the reconstructions themselves are not conducted with nationalistic aims in mind – in fact, they are created mainly for economic benefits. However, the choice of reconstructed archaeological sites and the nature of the projects themselves lead to the general broadcast of nationalist ideas.

This can be observed first and foremost in the fact that the majority of reconstructed archaeological sites and monuments date back to the Antiquity and Middle Ages periods. The focus of the completed projects is oriented towards the reconstruction of fortresses and towers from these archaeological periods. Upon the completion of the “Regions in Development” (2007 – 2013) programme, 61% of the funded sites and monuments were dated back to these periods (Operational programme “Regions in Development” 2011, 2-16). An explanation to this occurrence could be sought in the very goals of the projects: the reconstruction of already visible and known archaeological monuments could result in a quicker implementation of the provided funds. These typical archaeological structures remaining from the Antiquity and Medieval periods include fortresses and towers, and owing to their frequency and size, they are the preferred choices for reconstruction.

However, the choice of reconstructing these types of monuments carries out certain historical and archaeological narratives. Usually, a projection of what is often considered as truly Bulgarian is constructed on the medieval period and its archaeological remnants. An example is

a theory, discussed by Curta and Kovalev (2008) in an editorial volume. Curta and Kovalev aim at presenting how often in literature, both Western and Eastern European, the medieval period (450 – 1450) in Eastern Europe is represented as the “other Europe” (Curta and Kovalev 2008, ix). The tribes of Avars, Bulgars, Khazars, and Cumans are more often than not treated as beyond the horizon of European history, as “exotic” and “foreign” (Curta 2008, 2). However, this also transforms into a tool of self-determination (Curta and Kovalev 2008, ix), and the component of the Bulgars becomes unique and exalted for the population inhabiting this geographical territory already in the Middle Ages. This idea also seems to remain prevalent during the Byzantine rule during the 10th and 11th century, as can be seen by the example given by Curta and Kovalev (2008, ix), in which an anonymous apocrypha written in Byzantine Bulgaria in Old Church Slavonic propagated the Bulgarian past of just a few centuries earlier as a romantic and glory period that has come to an end.

Therefore, it could be argued that the highlighting of medieval (and even antique) archaeological heritage further enhances the perception of what constitutes a crucial Bulgarian identity component (the Bulgars) as an “other”. The “other” is in opposition to the rest of Europe and thus, unique. In a way, this “other”-ness, also seen as a tool of self-determination, prevails and, at least to an extent, constructs the Bulgarian identity.

An interesting observation is that the trend of reconstructing heritage from the Antiquity and Middle Age periods coincides with an unofficial heritage management strategy outlined by Bozhidar Dimitrov (2008), a Bulgarian historian and media personage. The slogan chosen from Dimitrov for his unofficial heritage campaign is “Vseki grad sys svojata krepost” (Every town with/should have its own fortress), and the strategy envisions the complete reconstructions of Medieval towers and fortresses in regions across the country. Dimitrov sees this campaign as not only oriented towards tourism development, but having primarily an educational purpose (2008). In his article, Dimitrov mentions around 30 fortresses and towers which could be a subject of “quick” reconstruction practices and could thus fulfill the above summarised goals. Many of these have already been reconstructed as part of the EC’s operational programmes.

Dimitrov gives several key reasons as to why these types of archaeological monuments should be subjects of reconstructions. These could be summarised as follows:

- Reconstruction is a frequently conducted practice in Western Europe (examples are given with Italy and France). The reconstructed medieval castles, and their towers and fortresses are of great interest for tourists and thus contribute to the regional economic development of these countries.
- Fortresses and towers are frequently encountered on the territory of Bulgaria, unlike archaeological monuments from other archaeological periods, such as Thracian tombs, Roman amphitheatres, etc. This makes them easier to be presented to the public.
- The listed monuments are memorable and impressive to the viewer.
- They are inherently “Bulgarian”, hence could be used as an educational tool to provoke patriotism, a specific target of which are younger generations.

Despite specifically attributing these characteristics to monuments from the medieval period, in the examples of fortresses that Dimitrov gives as suitable for reconstructions, he also lists such type of monuments that date back to Antiquity (2008). Hence, it could be concluded that within the framework of this heritage campaign monuments from the Antiquity and Middle Ages periods share the same characteristics and could be treated uniformly. Their reconstructions have common goals: tourism development and educational purposes.

The strategy that Dimitrov promoted back in 2008 is nationalistic in nature, since it is exclusively aimed at the emphasis on traits that are being described as national, inherently Bulgarian, provoking patriotism. The above presented heritage campaign is unofficial and published as a personal opinion rather than as an academic piece of work. Nevertheless, it has received a great deal of public and academic attention over the years. This is mainly owing to Dimitrov’s position of a renowned national historian and a public figure. The slogan “Vseki grad sas svojata krepost” has been discussed within various media, as well as being criticized by academics (Krustev 2014). Owing to this attention, the heritage campaign has become intertwined with the actual practices of reconstructions. Similar perception is also experienced by the interviewees, outlined in the node of “national identity”. An example is Rumenov

(Appendix 6), who described heritage as a tool, used for swinging the direction of the public's perception. He further connected reconstructions with the feeling of extreme nationalism and claimed that they are deliberately being aimed at the creation of a nationalistic sense of belonging. Whilst the evidence actually point to a lack of nationalistic set of ideas behind reconstructions, and that they are simply a bi-product, these are nevertheless felt among the interviewees. Despite the fact that the participants have different explanations for the occurrence of these nationalistic ideas, they are nonetheless being projected. For instance, Gergova (Appendix 5) also argues that there should be a diversification of the way archaeological heritage is being perceived and experienced. In her opinion, this is possible by the involvement of people from different ethnic backgrounds, who can also contribute to the creation of what is being perceived as "Bulgarian".

As a result, factors such as excessive funding of reconstructions and lack of diversification in the way archaeological heritage is being represented lead to the creation of a practice that coincides with Dimitrov's heritage campaign. The campaign is aiming at having a social and educational impact on both the tourists and the public, even though neither of these sociocultural values had been initially considered within the creation of the projects. Therefore, the practice of hypothetical reconstructions, officially conducted with one goal in mind: economic development, is resulting into the projection of sociocultural messages which are narrow and one-sided. Since these messages also happen to be nationalistic in nature they further affect the creation of group identity that is being associated with cultural heritage.

Thus, going back to Russel's (2010) observation of how embedded nationalistic ideas could prevent the diversification of cultural heritage representation, conclusions could be made regarding the Bulgarian case. The one-sided representation of cultural heritage (i.e. medieval and antique monuments) could easily allow for certain messages to be carried out and embedded in the perception of that heritage. Coincidentally, in the case of hypothetical reconstruction of archaeological heritage in Bulgaria the ideas that are being projected also happen to be nationalistic in nature. As such, they not only have the power to affect group

identity construction, but can also narrow down the components that have the potential to construct the identity.

The distant stakeholder: the European community and its intended perception of cultural heritage

The above analysis discusses the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions and its consequences on a national level, mainly by observing the contradictions occurring between directly involved stakeholders. However, another distant, yet active stakeholder in this context is the European community. The involvement of the European community is occurring on two levels. The first one is theoretical, mainly influenced by the general policy of the creation of pan-European identity, that has been drawn and carried out by the European Commission since the 1970s. The second one is more practical: the European community is a directly involved stakeholder, simply because the funding for the restoration projects is mainly coming from the EC. In order to illustrate this argument and unravel the consequences that hypothetical reconstructions could potentially have in European context, the European Commission's involvement will be discussed below. Following that, a general conclusion about the European and Bulgarian perception of cultural heritage will be made.

Academic background on pan-European perception of cultural heritage

In her recently published PhD study, Elizabeth Niklasson (2016) supports the view that EC's funding of archaeological projects is often closely intertwined with the creation and spread of certain archaeological narratives. These narratives are political in nature, being a product of

their own time and created with certain ideas in mind (Plucennik 1999). A large part of the narratives associated with projects funded by the EC or the EU, according to Niklasson (2016,16) focuses on the construction of European-ness and establishment of a common European belonging. This policy of European integration and its archaeological justification is approached in a number of ways (Niklasson 2016, 19):

- By the creation of the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta Convention) in 1992;
- The establishment of European Journal of Archaeology and European Association of Archaeologists;
- The start of multiple cooperation initiatives (Niklasson 2016, 19), an example of which could be given with EUROHERIT (2015 – 2020), a project that deals with the question of what makes European heritage pan-European.

The question of a potential success, regarding the creation and prolonged existence of “harmonised” (Niklasson 2016, 18) archaeological practice and theory, or European archaeology/archaeology of Europe remains open to debate. It has been discussed in length in a few academic discussions over the years (e.g. Kristiansen 2008, Kristiansen *et al.* 2014). Nonetheless, the European cultural strategy which aims at European integration also includes the majority of archaeological projects, which receive funding from the EC/EU cultural programmes. Moreover, this strategy seems to be seeking justification for itself in archaeological narratives (Niklasson 2016, 19).

A key component in the formation of this cultural strategy is the idea that all national cultural heritages, belonging to different member-states is considered European in nature. According to the Maastricht Treaty (1992, article 3), drawn by the EC, the Union shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe’s cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced. Furthermore, considering the Valetta Convention’s legal framework (1992), every country should aim at preserving its heritage; however, the responsibility of protection of this heritage rests not only within the State in question, but with all European countries. As such, legal management of national heritage is a responsibility, left in the hands of individual

member-states. However, its definition as “common European” and, especially, the ratification of the Valletta Convention creates a framework within which a unified European cultural strategy operates.

A way to achieve a construction of common European roots in the past is through archaeological meta-narratives. Prominent examples of such narratives, discussed by various scholars (e.g. Grohn 2004, Holleland 2008, 2011), mainly and currently center around the Bronze Age period, which has often been described as “The First Golden Age of Europe”. Vast literature on the topic of the construction and de-construction of European-ness from an academic archaeological perspective has been produced (e.g. Graves- Brown Jones 1996, Holleland 2008, Kristiansen 2008, and Suchowska-Ducke *et al.* 2015). The majority of scholars are focused on the creation of a certain type of a European Bronze Age identity (e.g. Kristiansen 2014). This identity is often projected onto the contemporary unification of Europe through the European Union. Despite it facing some criticism, mainly by scholars stating that this projection is no longer happening, (e.g. Holleland 2008), its occurrence is not restricted to the archaeological discipline, but goes further into the political realms and is often used for the promotion of common heritage.

Following this discussion, it is evident that that in certain cases archaeological meta-narratives intertwine with cultural policy on European level, in order to justify a common European belonging. This is often manifested through representation of shared ownership of European heritage. Moreover, this also forms the main theoretical paradigm that sets the idea of pan-European-ness, through which the theoretical involvement of the European community could be observed.

Observing the direct involvement of the European community

A crucial component of European cultural strategy’s composition, is a concept termed European Added Value (EAV), which is applied to European cultural heritage (Niklasson 2013). EAV is a main tool in the creation of the European community. While the EAV is a vague concept and

lacks definition (Niklason 2013, 54), it generally applies to pan-European, multicultural, cooperative, visible, knowledge generating, awareness raising actions. It has been first adopted by the European Committee (Council of Europe), and after the Maastricht Treaty (1992) it became applicable to the policy of the European Union. The application of EAV is adopted as a strategy and contributes to the sense of European-ness as it is mostly used in heritage related activities, in which archaeological heritage is also included; it is also central for identity building and is deliberately used by European policy makers (Niklasson 2013, 58). In this line of reasoning it is inherent to the European archaeological heritage, but is also used as building block for the creation of a European sense of belonging. Usually, different values are being ascribed to heritage by the EC, and hence, to a certain extent by the general policy of the EU. Therefore, EAV is a compulsory component of what constitutes pan-European heritage.

In the Bulgarian case, EAV is not being ascribed to, or respectively, approved for the restoration projects that lead to hypothetical reconstructions. The reason for this lies in the fact that these restoration projects do not go through the cultural sector, but are instead funded by the programmes for regional development. Therefore, violations within the projects themselves do not occur – they are approved under Operational Programmes for regional development, and they follow the outlined project goals. Nevertheless, the projects are in violation with the Valletta Convention, and would also be deemed unsuccessful under European cultural policy management, if only due to the lack of ascribed EAV. Unfortunately, while the European community is an involved stakeholder through the funds flowing from the EC, it is not an active one. Since decisions and approval of the restoration projects go through the Directorate-General for the Regional and Urban Policy, and not through the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, the policies and strategies for cultural heritage preservation and appreciation developed by the European Commission are not fully applied to the Bulgarian restoration projects.

In order to achieve a balanced representation in the restoration of archaeological heritage, involvement of as many stakeholder groups as possible is required. In the case of Bulgarian hypothetical reconstructions, the European community is not being considered. Generally, the

European community is represented by the European Commission, which has drawn specific cultural policies for heritage management. Despite that these policies are facing some critiques (Niklasson 2016), they still form an official framework within which the majority of European heritage management is being conducted. Therefore, as long as heritage management projects are being handled by programmes oriented towards regional development, the European community cannot be openly involved in the conduction of these projects. This is occurring despite the fact that Europe as a whole is by default involved in the restoration projects through the EC's funding.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have discussed different reasons behind the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstruction, and the consequences that stem from them. First, this was done in national context, mainly by observing a clash between the values to cultural heritage. The clash between economic and sociocultural values is common in the realm of heritage management, but in the Bulgarian case it is also unintentionally affecting national identity construction.

Furthermore, I considered the involvement of the European community and its role as a distant stakeholder of the Bulgarian reconstructed heritage. While the European community is not being directly influenced by these practices to the extent that the Bulgarian community is, its involvement is indisputable. This is happening on a theoretical, but also on a practical level owing to the main funding body of the restoration projects, the European Commission. The open involvement of this stakeholder will most likely not occur, as long as the projects are being funded by Operational Programmes for regional development, and therefore, aimed at economic growth.

The final chapter presents the overall conclusion of the so far discussed arguments. It summarises the main key points of this study and brings a closure on the topic of hypothetical

reconstructions. It also provides recommendations for practitioners, limitations of the study and grounds for further research.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The purpose of the current thesis was to explore and document the experiences of stakeholders involved with archaeology, who express dissatisfaction with hypothetical reconstruction practices in Bulgaria. The vast media and academic coverage of restoration projects, termed hypothetical reconstruction, was the main driving force behind this thesis. By documenting this experience I further aimed at discussing it in the context of the phenomenon, in order to find reasons behind this dissatisfaction.

Having obtained qualitative data through interviews, and by further evaluating this data in the context of the relevant literature on the topic, I have reached several key findings. These not only explore the phenomenon, but further explain how this type of heritage management is affecting identity construction on a national level. Moreover, the thesis also brings the discussion to a European level, considering the role of the European community as a stakeholder. In order to illustrate this, I will briefly summarise the key points below.

The practice of hypothetical reconstructions is violating European legislation, as well as several international charters which construct a worldwide accepted conservation ethos. Among these charters is also the Venice Charter (1964), as well as the Valletta Convention, both of which have been signed and ratified by the Bulgarian state. The causes behind the violation are complex and multi-layered, but two main reasons that dictate these practices could be found. First, in Bulgarian legislation, namely in the Cultural Heritage Law (2012), no clear definition of restoration practices is given. Furthermore, a distinction between restoration and reconstruction practices is not provided, thus blurring the lines between the two conservation practices, which leaves space for the introduction of new material to the original fabric. The second reason has to do with the goals of the Operational Programmes that are the main funding bodies for these projects. Having entirely an economic goal in mind, these programmes

are approving the projects, since they are supposed to bring growth to regional economy. This means that any sociocultural values that are usually ascribed to heritage are removed from the original project proposals, which, upon completion of the projects, causes dissatisfaction with archaeological experts and individuals who ascribe these values to archaeological cultural heritage. Therefore, this leads to a clash between the economic and sociocultural values ascribed by different stakeholder groups.

While the sociocultural values remain highly underrepresented in the originally drawn project proposals, an attempt is later made for them to be incorporated in the already finished reconstructions. This coincides with the reconstruction of primarily medieval and antique fortresses and towers, which are the preferred choice of the restoration projects. While these are most likely favoured due to their size and visibility, the towers and fortresses, as well as the preferred time periods convey messages which are very often nationalistic in nature. This is best illustrated by unofficial heritage strategy, adopted and promoted by Dimitrov (2008). Dimitrov's strategy is nationalistic in nature, provoking patriotism, as well as recognition and enhancement of inherently Bulgarian traits. It is also meant to project educational and cultural sociocultural values, thus creating a specific, nationalistic perception of heritage. This perception is further responsible for affecting the creation of group identity on a national level. In a way, this is an accidental by-product of the hypothetical reconstruction phenomenon.

The practice, however, is further affecting the European community, which is involved in these projects both by the main funding, and theoretically, by the cultural policies that have been adopted by the EC.

The observation of these main key points is useful not just in the realm of archaeological research, but could also find a practical application. This will be discussed in the following subsection, which deals with the research significance and recommendations for practitioners.

Significance of the research and recommendations for practitioners

The current research is important for *two main reasons*. First, the study sets a general discussion platform that allows for the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions to be approached, evaluated and further discussed. Second, it draws attention to the creation of a trend in Bulgarian heritage management. This trend does not aim at, but nevertheless tends to project nationalistic in nature messages. It has the power to affect group identity creation, and does so in a specific, nationalistic way. Therefore, a heritage trend that promotes nationalism is observed.

These observations can be practically applied. Furthermore, in order to deal with the voiced dissatisfaction that accompanies hypothetical reconstructions, I briefly discuss several recommendations below.

A main aim of the thesis is to outline and stress on the importance of the involvement of as many stakeholder groups as possible already in the initial stages of conservation projects' creation. The involvement of archaeological experts, heritage managers and the wide public is of an utmost significance, but is not enough. Every stakeholder group that feels connection to the heritage in question should be preferably included. This also applies to the example given with the European community, whose open inclusion is also important for numerous reasons. Therefore, the conduction of stakeholder analyses prior to the creation of project proposals should be a crucial component for the approval of such projects.

Since restoration projects funded by the EC's Operational Programmes are being approved and conducted on a national level, it will be difficult to conduct stakeholder analyses within such a wide scope. However, the regional management of these projects by the municipalities gives an opportunity for the conduction of such analyses on a *regional level*. This would also allow for the creation of a more explicit documentation of ascribed values and the achievement of a better balance in their representation through heritage.

Tackling the problem on a national and European level seems to be more difficult. Nevertheless, a way to do so could be the drawing and following of appropriate legislative

strategies. *On a national level* this could be achieved by first introducing a clear definition of restoration practices, and distinguishing those from reconstructions. This could prevent the introduction of new materials, and would comply with the already ratified standards of the Venice Charter (1964). Another problem, indirectly connected to the issue of hypothetical reconstructions is the lack of an officially outlined cultural strategy by the government. However, the discussion on this topic is vast, and therefore difficult to fit in the scope of the current thesis.

On a European level, taking into account the legislative nature of the Valletta Convention (1992) could be a good approach that would restrict the conduction of restorations that enter into conjecture. By considering its outlined definition of European heritage as common, and the preferred choice of conservation *in situ* (which also advocates for generally non-invasive practices) the practice of conservation by restoration would not need to be applied to so many archaeological sites. This could also change the focus of conservation from fortresses and towers to other types of built heritage. As a result, diversification in heritage representation could be achieved, which could also diversify the nationalistic trend of heritage perception that is occurring. Taking it a step further, this practice could also expand the concept of what is being perceived as inherently Bulgarian and hence, the creation of group identity on a national level.

Limitations

A main limitation of the current study exists. Since only three participants were included in this study, it can be argued that the data sample is restricted. While they were deliberately chosen based on their different academic backgrounds and approach to archaeology, the inclusion of more participants would have provided more diversified opinions on the matter. It would have been interesting to observe whether the inclusion of more interviewees, who are involved with archaeology, would have yielded different or more detailed results.

Furthermore, in order to further expand and better explore the hypothetical reconstructions phenomenon, inclusion of policy-makers and executors of the projects could have been proven useful. Their position on the matter for the purpose of this study was instead gathered through academic and media coverage of the subject. Therefore, by documenting and including their experiences it is possible to get a more explicit illustration of their stand on the matter.

However, owing to time restriction and the outlined scope of the thesis, the inclusion of more participants was not made possible. Therefore, the so far drawn conclusions are based on observations considering a limited sample of expert participants, and an unofficial heritage strategy adopted by the policy-makers.

Concluding remarks

The practices of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgaria receive mixed reviews from involved stakeholders. On one hand, they are allowed and conducted by enablers, such as the Ministry of Culture, and conducted by influencers, such as the executors of the projects. On the other, they are also condemned by archaeological experts and individuals engaged with archaeology. At the same time, while fulfilling the goals of the Operational Programmes that are funding them, and executing the approved restoration projects, they are also violating European and international legislation, and not complying with worldwide accepted conservation ethos. This is the result of a clash of economic and sociocultural values. Hypothetical reconstructions, however, are contradictory for more than just legislation violation. The factors of assumed economic values prior to the creation of the projects, the later addition of sociocultural values, and the nature of preferred for reconstruction medieval and antique sites all add up and result into the creation of a general heritage trend. This trend having the power to affect group identity and projecting primarily patriotic ideals is aimed at invoking nationalism.

While neither the trend itself, nor its nationalistic nature have been initiated by the executors of the restoration projects, they still occur. The trend further alienates the reconstructed archaeological sites from the general policy adopted by the European Commission, which promotes all European heritage as common. As such, by using European funds meant for regional development, Bulgaria as a member-state of the European Union is actually producing a narrative that promotes exclusiveness of heritage. This idea of segregated and one-sided perception of the archaeological heritage is in contradiction with European cultural policies, but more importantly, has the power to shape national group identity creation.

As such, the practice of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgaria has the potential to affect group identity creation through the one-sided perception of certain type of archaeological heritage.

Abstract

After 2007 and the inclusion of Bulgaria in the European Union, European funding has been introduced on a national level through a variety of programmes. Partial funding coming through two regional development programmes is being relocated towards conservation of archaeological heritage. So far, 72 archaeological sites have been conserved by restoration, and restoration projects are still ongoing. Nevertheless, the majority of these restorations are being deemed unfit by academics and international experts. Some of them were termed “hypothetical reconstructions” and have attracted extensive media and academic attention over the years. Many have expressed the opinion that the completion of restoration projects executed under the regional development programmes leads to a destruction of heritage.

The aim of the current thesis is, therefore, to explore the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions by looking for particular reasons for dissatisfaction, expressed by people involved with archaeology. A qualitative research using a case study methodology was carried out, and three participants were interviewed. The case study focuses on the “Yailata” archaeological reserve, where a fortress and a rock church were subjects of restoration activities. By discussing the differences between restoration and reconstruction, and looking at the official project reports from Yailata, a theoretical framework is created through which the qualitative data is evaluated.

The produced results set a discussion platform, which considers not only the violation of international legislation, but also a by-product resulting from hypothetical archaeological heritage reconstructions. The relationship between heritage and its power to construct national identity is discussed in relation to the practice of hypothetical reconstructions in Bulgaria. Furthermore, the involvement of the European community as a stakeholder is considered.

The thesis is aimed at academics, heritage practitioners, and anyone who is interested in the phenomenon of hypothetical reconstructions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: GIOKIN's Letter to the Directorate-General of Regional and Urban Policy

Mr Marek Teplansky

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

Administrative Capacity Building and South-East Europe

Head of Unit: avenue de Beaulieu 1/Beaulieustraat 1

1160 Bruxelles/Brussel Belgique

16 May 2014

Dear Mr Teplansky,

The “Citizens’ Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage” (GIOKIN) was established in mid-March in Sofia in response to the multiplying cases of damage and destruction inflicted on historic and archaeological sites in Bulgaria as a direct result of the chaotic and uncontrolled implementation of the European Union Operative Programme “Regional Development” (for the development of the tourist potential of “cultural and historical attractions”).

We have started to assemble documentary evidence (including photodocumentation) demonstrating how the unmonitored implementation of this programme through massive and crude physical reconstruction and employing outdated methods of reinforcement and conservation has already damaged and disfigured a number of historical archaeological sites in contravention of both Bulgarian cultural heritage legislation and the various international conventions for the preservation of cultural heritage which have been ratified by Bulgaria. We have also begun to forward this assembled dossier about the significant irregularities accompanying the management and operation in this programme in Bulgaria (which has been provoking an increasing public outcry and has attracted the severe criticism of prominent Bulgarian scholars and heritage professionals) to the relevant Bulgarian authorities and ministries but their response has been so far non-existent or muted.

Thus we feel compelled to present our concerns to the European Commission as funder of this programme and to request that the unwelcome outcomes of its implementation be subjected to an urgent assessment by an independent international or joint Bulgarian-international expert team and that any further extension of the programme in Bulgaria receive rigorous EC monitoring in order to meet the standard EU regulations of transparency and public accountability.

We are ready to assist the work of such an expert team, working towards these aims also in close cooperation with the Bulgarian section of ICOMOS. We have already started assembling Bulgarian and international expert opinions concerning the various types of damage to historic

European heritage in Bulgaria caused as a result of the aforementioned programme which along with the other assembled evidence will be forwarded to the relevant departments in international bodies such as the Council of Europe, UNESCO, Europa Nostra and so on.

We also use this opportunity to draw your attention to perhaps the most controversial of the projects funded by the above programme, the so-called “National Archaeological Reserve Yailata: Ancient Gateway of Dobrudzha” project of the Municipality of Kavarna, Project No BG161PO001-3.1.03-0031-C0001 ((it is indeed worth noting that it was due to the high concentration of wind turbines and villa settlements in protected areas under Kavarna municipality’s jurisdiction that the European Commission opened an infringement procedure and filed a claim against Bulgaria at the EU Court of Justice few months ago). The project envisages the restoration and partial reintegration of the early Byzantine fortress and reinforcement of the “St. St. Constantine and Helena“rock church in the archaeological reserve, supposedly intended to develop its tourist potential. Instead during the first phase of this project the rock church in the reserve was disfigured through the application of badly executed and outdated restoration and conservation methods, attracting widespread condemnation and notoriety.

However, despite various serious irregularities in implementing this particular project and the lack of any ecological and other impact assessments (as the reserve is also a protected area in the European network Natura 2000, the centrepiece of EU nature and biodiversity policy), the second phase of this project, a massive and intrusive “restoration and reintegration” of the

Byzantine fortress in the reserve is already under way. Early assessments of the initial work (which started before various procedural requirements had been met) indicate that the effects of this second phase of the project are expected to be extremely destructive and to inflict irreparable damage not only to the site (where the archaeological investigation is far from being completed but will be impossible from now on) but also to the biodiversity of the adjacent areas. Despite the fact that approved text of the project stipulates that no heavy machinery will be used on the

territory of reserve, its destructive use has been observed and recorded in the reserve area. What is more, the heavy machinery has been moving about the reserve on access roads illegally constructed for its movement in a protected area – both in theory banned under Bulgarian legislation. Indeed the Dobrich Regional Historical Museum (as the archaeological reserve area is situated in the Dobrich region) has issued a formal statement, declaring that the realization of the aforementioned project is in direct contravention of Bulgarian cultural heritage legislation (and the international cultural heritage conventions signed by Bulgaria) in a number of spheres, including the quoted illegal construction of access roads and use of heavy machinery in the reserve/protected area.

It is a matter of extreme concern to us that despite our continual signals to the relevant Bulgarian authorities about all these major irregularities, we have received no response regarding this escalating onslaught on the Yailata archaeological reserve. Thus we are writing to you in the hope that the European Commission may be able to initiate a procedure to force an expert discussion and reappraisal of the aims, means, and what we see as major irregularities in the approval and implementation of this project. We are ready to assist such reappraisal and discussion with the extensive documentation we have assembled and which has not been easy to obtain, despite the procedural requirements that all project documentation should be clearly and publicly accessible.

We attach in a PDF format a photodocumentation of the progress of the project in pictures and some of the international expert opinions we have collected concerning the damage inflicted by the project on the archaeological reserve area. We will also be sending a scanned and signed copy of this letter.

We look forward to your response and attention to this urgent matter.


Dotsent Dr Iva Doseva, Art Historian

Miss Anelia Nikolova, Historian

Mr Vlado Rumenov, Conservator-Restorer

Representatives of the “Citizens’ Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage”(GIOKIN)

Appendix 2: Official reply to GIOKIN's letter

 Ref. Ares(2014)2544785 - 31/07/2014

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

REGIONAL AND URBAN POLICY

Administrative Capacity Building and South-East Europe

Bulgaria, Accession Negotiations

Brussels,

REGIO E3 EB/sd (2014)2807498

Dear Dr Doseva,

Dear Miss Nikolova,

Dear Mr Rumenov,

Subject : **The "Citizens' Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage and EU OP 'Regional Development'¹ in the Sphere of Cultural Heritage in Bulgaria"**

Reference: **Your e-mail of 16 May -registered Ares(2014)2111430**

Thank you for your e-mail of 16 May 2014 informing us of the newly established "Citizens' Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage" (GIOKIN).

The Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy took note of your overall concerns regarding the implementation of projects on historic and archaeological sites under the Operational Programme Regional Development (OPRD), as well as, specifically, the case of the national archaeological reserve at Yailata.

The issues raised in your e-mail, as well as similar allegations previously submitted to the Commission Services, triggered an in-depth examination and required some extra time for the appropriate conclusions to be drawn.

As you may know, in the framework of shared management projects selection and implementation are the responsibility of the member states that have to make sure that the principles of sound financial management are respected and that the financial interests of the European Union are not compromised. Therefore, with a view to establish the state of implementation of the projects in question and to verify the facts regarding their preparation and selection, we have immediately contacted the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, which is the Managing Authority (MA) in charge of the aforesaid operational programme, providing the co-financing for these projects.

The Managing Authority confirmed that, systematically, all projects concerning restoration and conservation activities on cultural sites under Priority Axis 3 of the OPRD had been agreed by all competent institutions in Bulgaria - the National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage and the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water Respectively.

Dotsent Dr Iva Doseva, Art Historian

Miss Anelia Nikolova, Historian

Mr Vlado Rumenov, Conservator-Restorer

The "Citizens' Initiative for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage and EU OP 'Regional Development' in the Sphere of Cultural Heritage in Bulgaria (GIOKIN)

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Appendix 3: International Experts Opinions

International Expert Opinions

Regarding Project No BG161PO001-3.1.03-0031-C0001, “Restoration and Partial Reintegration of Early Byzantine Fortress and Reinforcement of the Rock Church of SS Constantine and Helena in the National Archaeological Reserve “Yailata”, Bulgaria

Professor Tina Wik

Restoration and Conservation Architect, Responsible Architect Örebro Castle, Professor of Sustainable Architecture, Dalarna University, Dalarna, Sweden

As I can see, there is man-made damage to the church besides the inappropriate support. They have not even been able to place the support without destroying the church!

Works on this site should be stopped immediately and a seminar should be organized, discussing what should/could be done, what is the aim, what has been done and how can this be corrected.

I believe it is very important that the authorities focus on the aim and the responsibility and experts on how to reach it.

Peter Riddington

Conservation and Restoration Architect, Director of Donald Insall Associates, Architects and Historic Building Consultants, London, United Kingdom

The images...are concerning and ...on the face of it there are some real worries there.

The crude steel work installed at the church of “Sts Constantine and Helena” surely cannot be the final repair of this monument... one would have thought that given the sophisticated nature of conservation these days a more discreet and sensitive approach for a permanent repair could have been employed.

In the case of the “repair” of the Yailata Fortress in effect, what appears to be being undertaken is actually a crude rebuilding employing ill matched materials. Most disconcertingly this appears to be a rebuilding of an historic monument the significance of which is largely enshrined within its ancient materials and it is this fabric that appears to be being replaced. This process will result in a major, if not terminal, loss of significance if this approach is universally applied. Given how sophisticated modern conservation and repair techniques are it seems, on the face of it, both unnecessary and regrettable that a truly significant historic monument might be replaced by what amounts to a crude modern facsimile.

Professor Osama Hamdan

Conservation and Restoration Architect, Professor of Conservation, Al Quds University, Jerusalem

Brief expert comment on the ‘quality’ of the so-called ‘reintegration’ and ‘restoration’ work on a 5–6th century Byzantine fortress on the Black Sea coast

The pictures are terrible!

Cultural heritage conservation is a science and requires a multidisciplinary approach. What is happening now in so-called conservation projects in Bulgaria is... superficiality and incompetence dealing with an archaeological or historical site without taking into consideration its value. Archaeological and cultural sites contain memory, identity, culture and civilization. They are invaluable.

It is necessary that international donors institutions and agencies understand that working on cultural heritage is not the same as resurfacing a road.

The so called intervention of conservation on the fortress should first of all ask a basic question: why you have to rebuild?

Such reconstructions were in used in the 19th century, but the present methodology in restoring a cultural heritage try to preserve the original information that the heritage still hold and can transfer to future generation.

In case reconstruction is really necessary, its extensions and nature should be defined on the bases of a very thorough historical, archaeological, technical, technological, static etc. research. In any case, the present philosophy of conservation is to avoid reconstructions. There are many other ways to enhance (presentation and interpretation) cultural heritage for tourism purpose, spending less money and reaching better results.

Professor Beatrice St. Laurent

Professor of Islamic Art & Architecture, Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts, USA

After looking at the images of the EU-funded so-called restoration/conservation projects of both the rock church and the 5th-6th century Byzantine fortress, I would like to make a few comments.

First, it would seem that these projects are not following UNESCO guidelines for major restoration and conservation projects. The materials and methods employed certainly do not adhere to normative procedures in use today.

Second, I would not call these projects restorations but rather renovations and re-building programs that actually denigrate the structures themselves. Why in this day and age would you try to rebuild these structures? This type of 'restoration' adheres to 19th century norms that have long been out of code for contemporary projects. In addition the stone used in the wall reconstruction bears no resemblance visually or qualitatively to the original material such that it is a truly bad renovation.

Dr Mahmoud Hawarit

Curator for the Islamic Collections of the Middle East, The British Museum, London, UK

Judging from the photos sent from the Byzantine fortress, it is a similar case to the 'restoration' work at the fortress of Ochrid. It looks as they're in the process of rebuilding the exterior walls of the fortress, and one wonders to what height! Also they're using cement instead of mortar. Besides, this restoration (sometimes called maximalist) method is quite out of date now, while modern (minimalist) methods strive to carry out minimal intervention at monuments and focus more on stabilisation and prevention of deterioration of fabric and masonry. However the reconstruction of monuments can be achieved in their interpretation whether on-site signage or published material.

As for the rock church...the brown pointing of the cracks looks hideous, and perhaps they should have used mortar that blends with the rock.

Anyway it does not look that UNESCO guidelines have been employed in the restoration works. These require that restoration should not be done for the sack of it, but part of studying, interpreting and presenting the monuments

Appendix 4: Interview guide and questionnaire

Opening questions

1. Can you tell me about your previous education and specialised area of research?
2. Can you give me any specifics regarding the environment that you usually work within? (e.g. open space, office, etc).
3. Is your expertise usually used for consultancy for preservation/ restoration projects?

Core questions about the observed state of restoration/conservation in Bulgaria

4. In your experience, have you been a part of, or observed a restoration/ conservation process with result that you feel positive about?
5. When considering the overall state of restoration/conservation of cultural heritage (e.g. monuments, archaeological sites) what is the general impression that you are left with as a professional?
6. How would you define “hypothetical restorations”?

7. In your experience, how often have you observed such practice regarding different conservation projects?
8. Have you noticed any changes in the way conservation or restoration practices are being carried out after 2007 (inclusion of the Bulgarian member-state in the EU).

Core questions about the Case Study of the Yailata archaeological reserve

9. How familiar were you with the state of the Yailata archaeological reserve before the beginning of the restoration project back in 2013?
10. Would you say that you see the restoration project at Yailata as an extreme case of conducting conservation and restoration practices?
11. To what extent do you perceive the Yailata reserve as authentic after the restoration activities that took place there in 2013?

Questions regarding the perception of European heritage and European sense of belonging

12. In your opinion, to what extent is tangible cultural heritage responsible for the creation of national identity?
13. Do you perceive any of the national tangible or archaeological heritage as “European” or belonging to all Europeans?

14. Do you associate yourself or feel any connection to immovable archaeological heritage that is situated in another European member-state?

15. Are you interested in any research from your specialization that is being carried out in another European country?

Closing questions

16. Do you think that an involvement of archaeologists is necessary in conservation projects?

17. In what way should the monitoring of archaeological conservation projects should be happening (national, regional, other level)?

Appendix 5: Interview with Dobri Dobrev

I: My first question is whether you could tell me something about your professional education or your main area of research?

D.D: Generally, in the period from 2002 to 2011 I was the main curator and director of the Archaeology department of the History Museum in Kavarna and was responsible for the historical and archaeological reserve Yailata. From January, 2014 I was appointed as a director of the archaeological department of Dobritch Regional museum, as well as vice-director of the Regional Museum. My main research interest lies in the archaeology of Late Antiquity.

I: Could you give me any details regarding the environment that you work in; what I mean is whether it is an office, or is there more fieldwork involved?

D.D: We mainly work in the field. That is also the aim. And since at the regional museum we also have a new team, a new museum policy, we are working throughout the region. We are trying to fulfil the project which is connected to every one of the municipalities that we are connected to; Balchik, Dobritch municipality, soon we are about to contact Tervel municipality, so in general we are working outside of the Museum building. We do not get the opportunity to do desk-related/office work often.

I: Would you say that your expertise and knowledge are often used in certain consultative cases; mostly restoration processes?

D.D: Yes, when someone seeks out for us, because in majority of cases they [policy-makers] can turn to other experts in the region. If not, they usually turn to the Dobritch Regional Museum, i.e. to us. Mainly to the archaeological department in the regional museum.

I: And would you say that in your experience you had observed some kind of conservation or restoration process which you can determine as having successful results, or can you give me an example of such a practice?

D.D: Yes, for satisfying results I can give the example of the Horizont fortress, the Late Antiquity dated fortress Horizont at Balchik, even though things could be added [the restoration could be bettered]. But in comparison to all the other projects that I have witnessed, it is well restored.

I: Would you say that the restoration team has managed to preserve some kind of authenticity?

D.D: Yes, yes. There are no crude additions [to the fabric].

I: And could you provide me with a general impression that you have as an expert regarding the different restoration processes that we are discussing and which are currently ongoing?

D.D: In the majority of cases restoration and conservation processes are not really happening; we are rather talking about construction. All of them... for the majority of projects that are ongoing in Bulgaria we are talking about construction. And we are not even discussing construction next to the cultural heritage, but construction on top of this cultural heritage, which is brutal.

I: During our conversation earlier I did ask you this question, but could you define what hypothetical reconstructions are to you, i.e. do you personally ascribe any meaning to this term?

D.D: No, it cannot be defined as a restoration. Restoration is something else. This thing with the hypothetical [reconstructions] cannot be applied... how, one does not know how it used to look like, but they construct... this is new construction. Unfortunately on top of an authentic building, this is quite often the case.

I: And have you noticed any general changes in the manner that these things are conducted after 2007, have you got such observations?

D.D: As far as I know, the manner is the same. And in its core it is concerning exactly this – the [new] construction on top of immovable cultural heritage.

I: Regarding the Yailata archaeological reserve, my question is quite broad. I know that you personally are well familiar with the site before its restoration, you have worked there, [the reserve] was a main focus in your work, but to what extent would you say that you perceive it as authentic after what has happened and the end process in 2013?

D.D: I do not perceive it as authentic. What happened at the rock church, what happened with the Early Byzantine fortress... is something awful. They [policy-makers] destroyed immovable cultural heritage, in the case of the Early Byzantine fortress, while, luckily, the rock church remained outside of their manipulation.

I: Yes, I do have a few questions which are perhaps slightly more archaeological, or maybe slightly more theoretical, you can answer them as you see fit, according to your personal opinion. To what extent do you think that the material cultural heritage is playing a role in the construction of the national identity? Do you think that there is a relation between the two, or...?

D.D: No, no... I am trying to look for such a relation, but no.

I: Yes, that is alright. My next question is also slightly more theoretical – as an expert, or perhaps on a personal level, do you perceive some part of the Bulgarian material cultural heritage as European, or perhaps owned by all Europeans?

D.D: It is European. And we are even downplaying the significance of what we have. Another approach is needed. Everything that reaches Europe should be represented in another way and we have to know what is here [Bulgaria] and what we are talking about. And they need to value it [heritage] and control what is happening [with it].

I: Meaning, you think that it is not appreciated or promoted enough...

D.D: Yes, yes, yes! Promotion of certain sites from time to time is not what should be known and communicated as important for this country and for the geographical area in general. And I do not mean one or two time periods, I mean everything.

I: And what if we turned the same question around - do you perceive any specific time period of European archaeology or European cultural heritage as something that you associate with? I mean, something that...

D.D: No, the lines are blurred.

I: And to what extent are you interested in research from your main research interests that is being conducted in other European countries?

D.D: We do follow up what is happening where, more or less, but in general we tend to concentrate on that which is happening here [Dobritch region] or around us; and more likely in the surrounding museums... There is nothing more than that. For example, we are interested in which the Late Antiquity sites are and what is happening in North Dobrudzha, in the region, i.e. in Romania. Which also serves for later comparisons, since this border between the two countries is there just for convenience, of course. We are talking about the same thing.

I: To what extent do you think that the involvement of experts and specifically, archaeologists in the carrying out such conservation and restoration processes is actually important?

D.D: It is not... It is not about it being important, it is obligatory, they [archaeologists] need to be in the core of these projects and in the core of everything – they need to be there long before the realisation of the project, so they can control the process. [This is happening] because the people that are carrying out the project, as well as the people who are creating it are not specialists. Especially regarding the actual carrying out of the project, we are talking about construction businesses which need to be controlled! Usually, in these projects restoration experts are included, but many other professionals are also needed, who can give another, diversified opinion on the matter.

I: Alright, and lastly, in what way in your opinion should these processes be monitored, meaning, could you address a hierarchical level of monitoring? Regional, national, or higher?

D.D: Higher, as well as national and regional. Yes, control should be imposed everywhere, on every step with the creation and carrying out of such projects. Because it is most

convenient when a project is being carried out, for example in the Dobritch region, for it to be controlled on a regional level. But it depends. The fact that it is on a regional level does not intervene with that systematic checkups to be conducted. This is a preventative measure, just in case that something is happening on regional level. And monitoring from European institutions is welcomed. Yes, so everybody there could be careful of what they are doing.

I: Yes, thank you very much, that was my final question. Thank you for your time.

D.D: Thank you too, unfortunately I was rather brief when answering your questions.

Appendix 6: Interview with Dobri Dobrev [Bulgarian]

И: Първия ми въпрос е дали бихте могли да ми кажете нещо повече за професионалното си образование или сферата на вашите проучвания с които се занимавате?

Д.Д: По принцип от 2002 до 2011 година бях уредник и завеждащ отдел археология в Исторически музей Каварна и отгожарях за исторически и археологически резерват Яйлата. От януари 2014 съм завеждащ отдел археология на регионален музей Добрич и заместник- директор на регионалния музей. Интересите ми са основно късно-антична археология.

И: Бихте ли могли да ми дадете някакви подробности за сферата, т.е. самата обстановка в която работите; като имам предвид дали е повече офисна среда или пък теренна?

Д.Д: Основно сме на терен. То това е и целта. И тъй като в регионалния музей в момента влезе нов екип, нова политика на музея и затова сме да го наречем плъзнали из цялата пблост. Опитваме се да реализираме прокета свързан с всички общински звена с които сме свързани, с Балчик, с община Добричка, скоро ще говорим с община Тервел, така че основно сме извън сградата да го кажем. Много малко имаме възможност да сме на бюро.

И: Бихте ли казали, че вашата експертиза и вашите знания са често използвани в определени консултативни сфери, за реставрационни процеси най-вече?

Д.Д: Да, когато някой се обърне към нас, защото в много случаи могат да се обърнат и към други специалисти ако ги има по места. Ако не обикновено се обръщат към

регионален музей Добрич, т.е. към нас. Основно към отдел археология в регионален музей.

И: А бихте ли казали, че в опита който имате досега сте наблюдавали някакъв консервационен или реставриращ процес, чиито резултати можете да определите като задоволителни според Вашите представи или можете ли да ми дадете такива примери?

Д.Д: За задоволителен резултат мога да дам пример само с крепостта Хоризонт, късно-античната крепост Хоризонт в Балчик, но и там има какво още да се добави. Но спрямо всички останали проекти които съм виждал тя е, да речем най-добре изпълнена.

И: Т.е. реставраторите са запазили някакъв вид автентичност?

Д.Д: Да, да. Няма груби изпълнения.

И: А можете ли да дадете някакво цялостно впечатление което имате като професионалист за различните реставрационни процеси за които говорим и които се случват?

Д.Д: То в повечето случаи не се случват реставраторски и консерваторски процеси, а говорим за строителство. Всички... за повечето от проектите които се случват в България говорим за строителство. И то не строителство до, а говорим за строителство върху културни ценности, което вече е бруталното в случая.

И: Аз Ви зададох този въпрос малко по-рано при наш разговор, но можете ли да определите какво са хипотетични реставрации, т.е. Вие придавате ли някакво значение на този термин?

Д.Д: Не, то не може да бъде определено като реставрация. Реставрация е друго. Това с хипотетични няма как да бъде приложено...как, ти не знаеш как изглежда и строиш... това си е ново строителство. За съжаление върху автентични зъбери, доста често.

И: А да сте забелязвали някакви основни промени по начина по който тези неща се правят след 2007 година, ако имате такива наблюдения?

Д.Д: Доколкото знам принципа е един и същ. И основно става дума точно за това – за строителство върху недвижими културни ценности.

И: А що се отнася до Яйлата, въпросът ми е доста общ. Знам, че Вие сте доста добре запознат със самия обект преди неговата реставрация, Вие сте работили там, било е нещо с което основно сте се занимавали, но до каква степен го възприемат като автентичен след това което се случва и крайния процес след 2013г.?

Д.Д: Не го възприемам като автентичен. Това което се случи на скалната църква, това което се случи на ранно-византийската крепост... е нещо ужасно. Унищожиха недвижима културна ценност, в случая със ранновизантийската крепост, докато със скалната църква просто за щастие манипулацията им е извън нея.

И: Да. Имам няколко въпроса които са може би малко по-археологически като насоченост, или по-скоро малко по-теоретични, можете да отговорите на тях както намерите за добре и каквото е Вашето лично мнение. До каква роля според Вас материалното културно наследство играе някаква роля при изграждането на национална идентичност? Мислите ли, че има някаква взаимовръзка, или...?

Д.Д: Не, не... Търся я, но не.

И: Да, добре, Следващия въпрос е малко по-теоретичен също – като професионалист, или може би чисто лично възприемате ли някаква част от материалното културно наследство на България като Европейско, или може би принадлежащо всички европейци?

Д.Д: То си е Европейско. И даже ние го омаловажаваме това, което имаме. Трябва друг подход. Трябва да е това, което стига до Европа да се представя по друг начин и ние трябва да го знаем, какво има тук и за какво става дума. И да го ценят, и да контролират това, което става.

И: Т.е., мислите, че не е достатъчно ценено или рекламирано...

Д.Д: Да,да,да! Реклама на конкретни обекти от време на време не е това, което трябва да се знае за тая държава и за тия земи като цяло. И не става дума за една- две епохи, то става дума за цялото.

И: А ако същия въпрос го обърнем наобратно, възприемате ли някаква част от епохата на Европейската археология или Европейското културно наследство като нещо, с което Вие се асоциирате? Т.е. нещо което...

Д.Д: Не, тя границата се размива.

И: А евентуално до каква степен сте заинтересован от проучвания от сферата на Вашата специализация, които се случват в други европейски държави?

Д.Д: Ние горе-долу следим къде какво става, но като цяло сме концентрирани върху това, което става само при нас и около нас; и по-скоро в съседните музей... Няма нищо по-мащабно от това. Примерно следим кои са късноантичните обекти и какво се случва в Северна Добруджа, в района, т.е. в Румъния. Което се и сравнява по-късно, понеже тая граница между държавите е условна, разбира се. Ние говорим за едно и също.

И: А до каква степен смятате, че включването на професионалисти и най-вече на археолози във провеждането на тези консервационни и реставрационни процеси е всъщност важно?

Д.Д: То не е...не става дума за важно, то е задължително, те трябва да са в основата на проекта и в основата на всичко – да присъстват много преди реализацията, за да контролират този процес. Защото хората които ги изпълняват, и хората които ги подготвят по принцип сега не са специалисти. Особено при изпълнението става дума за строителни фирми, които трябва да се съблюдават какво правят! Обикновено във тия проекти, които се реализират тук има реставратори, но са нужни и много други специалисти, които да гледат под друг ъгъл на нещата.

И: Добре, а последно, по какъв начин според Вас следва да се проследяват тия процеси, т.е. бихте ли ги определили на някакво ниво? Регионално, национално, по-високо?

Д.Д: И по-високо, и национално, и регионално. Да, трябва да има контрол навсякъде, на всяка една стъпка. При подготвяне и реализиране на такива проекти. Защото най-удобно е когато се реализира един проект, например в Добричка област, контрола да

се извършва на местно ниво. Но пак много зависи, много зависи. Това, че е на местно ниво, нищо не пречи системно да се извършват и централни проверки на това какво се случва. За да не би случайно например нещо да се е случило на място, на областно ниво. А пък проверките които са от някои европейски институции са желателни. Да, за да може всички там да стоят леко... да внимават какво правят.

И: Да, благодаря Ви много наистина, това всъщност бяха всичките ми въпроси. Благодаря за времето, което отделихте.

Д.Д: И аз благодаря, нищо че за съжаление отговорих кратко на въпросите Ви.

Appendix 7: Interview with Diana Gergova

I: Could you tell me more about your previous education and research area?

D.G: An archaeologist, professor. I am working in the area of Thracian archaeology, heritage management and cultural legislation.

I: Could you give me some details regarding your working environment? Is it office-related, or is there more fieldwork involved?

D.G: Mainly in the field, but also in a university environment, National University of Poland, as well as a member of ICOMOS Bulgaria.

I: Would you say that your expertise is often used for consultation in conservation and restoration processes?

D.G: I have been a participant in the carrying out of different projects regarding conservation and restoration works. Personally I have been responsible for the creation and application of new excavation methods in order to achieve better preservation of monuments, and predominantly Thracian tombs in their natural environment. I have also worked for the protection and exhibition of prehistoric objects, which are of a crucial importance for the understanding of Europe's and Mediterranean's prehistoric past, while at the same time are extremely attractive for the public, or at least for the people involved with cultural tourism. Unfortunately, this is not the practice in Bulgaria, or more specifically, it is not being done anymore.

I: In your experience, have you been a part of or have you observed conservation or restoration projects that you personally perceive as satisfactory or positive?

D.G: Yes, of course. Such sites are the tomb at Sveshtari, the tomb under Shushmanets tells, the Dyadovo tell, Nova Zagora and others. The issue is that often after the realization of these restoration projects they remain under the supervision of incompetent regional institutions which are not only indifferent, but are also not knowledgeable enough to know what to do; that is when destructive processes take over as regular practices. During the conduction of these projects I have personally worked alongside teams which follow the set out international framework [on conservation and restoration].

I: Having in mind the general state of conservation/restoration processes and their results, what is your overall impression and expert opinion on them?

D.G: If we are talking about Bulgaria the results from such conservation and restoration practices are extremely negative, with very few exceptions. The reasons for this could be found in the national legislative framework. Restorations are often interpreted as new construction, restoration experts and their private businesses cannot apply for these projects on their own, since their capacity is not enough and could only be found with big construction companies, which are expected to hire restoration experts. In this way the values are turned upside down because instead for the restoration experts to be in control of these restoration practices, they are being used. Another problem is the centralisation of power in the hands of the owner's institution, or in those of the cultural policy-makers; in this way extreme destruction is brought onto heritage monuments. Of an utmost importance is the destruction of churches, because of the crucial role in decision-making that is given to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church; not less important is the destruction caused on all monuments from national, as well as world heritage importance.

I: How would you then describe the term "hypothetical reconstructions"?

D.G: Extremely negatively. This is a destruction of the monuments' authenticity, as well as

I: How often have you observed the conduction of such practices?

D.G: In Bulgaria they are a mass occurrence which is also highly disturbing and made possible by the national legislative framework and the way that European funding is being used – through administration, and not through the creative teams.

I: Have you noticed any major changes in the way these conservation and restoration process were being conducted after 2007?

D.G: Yes. Predominant approval in a purely administrative manner, no creative discussions of low quality projects for hypothetical restorations which, in practice, foresee entirely new construction for millions. The projects are approved and carried out by municipalities and the experts are in fact eliminated from them and substituted for companies. These companies have usually already written the projects according to what municipalities have agreed upon and the funding has been accordingly redirected.

I: How familiar were you with the general state of Yailata archaeological reserve before the beginning of the restoration project there in 2008?

D.G: That was one of the very well studied in archaeological relation site.

I: And how would you describe the issue with the restoration at Yailata archaeological reserve?

D.G: The issue is quite specific for all projects of this kind. The agreement that is reached between the administration on different hierarchical levels during the initial discussion of starting such a project. The absolute exclusion of experts - those are the archaeologists – in the formulation of the project, its official approval, which is happening independently from the clear contradictions with international and Bulgarian conservation ethos. This is further enhanced by the conduct of an impressive number of violations which concern not only the authenticity of the archaeological fabric, but also the natural environment; the lack of adequate reaction from the respective institutions, which tend to ignore the received signals for violation.

I: To what extent do you perceive the Yalata archaeological reserve as authentic after the restoration processes there in 2008?

D.G: There is nothing authentic left there. At the same time the new construction is already falling apart.

I: In your opinion, what role does the material/ tangible cultural heritage have in the creation of national identity?

D.G: It plays a crucial role as a uniting tool for the Bulgarian people, not only because of the rich history of the country, but also because of the participation of contemporary people of different ethnic or religious background in its research and preservation.

I: Do you personally perceive any part of the national material cultural heritage as European or being owned by all Europeans?

D.G: Of course. This relates to our prehistoric monuments as well, even more so the Thracian ones which already give evidence for the relationship between different parts of Europe, provide us with a proof for the existence of one Proto-European civilization. I will not discuss the Roman epoch due to the unification of culture, but after that we see the existence of Christian monuments, Medieval Bulgaria. In each and every one of Bulgaria's historic periods we can look for monuments which are from European and World heritage significance. The problem is that we are doing nothing about it.

I: Do you personally associate yourself with material/ archaeological heritage that is located in another European country?

D.G: Yes. With the megaliths in Ireland, with monuments in South Italy, Greece and Northern Black Sea coast, with Western Asia Minor, with Caucasian architecture, etc.

I: Are you interested in any research from the area of your specialization conducted in another European country?

D.G: I do work with a lot of colleagues who come from different European countries and Japan. The issue lays mainly in the insuperable complications which are to be found in the system that deals with an effective and professional preservation of cultural heritage. As of the way heritage is being managed – I think that the problems, even though more disturbing on a Bulgarian national level – are not restricted to our case. This is mainly because of the growing administrative and bureaucratic trend to exclude the expert opinion; this is a problem that the whole of Europe is facing.

I: Do you think that the inclusion of professional archaeologists is needed for the conduction of conservation/restoration processes?

D.G: Until recently it was regulated by the Cultural Heritage Law. Currently, I have been told that this article has been dropped out – personally I had not have gotten the time to check when this took place. The inclusion of archaeologists is compulsory, but it is not enough. There should be discussions in a broader circle of experts, such as archaeologists, restoration practitioners, project managers, on every project. Just the inclusion of a single archaeologist is not enough – one person could be wrong about something, or they could be pressured by the project managers.

I: Finally, in what way do you think that the conservation and restoration projects and their results should be monitored (on a regional, national, other level)?

D.G: By a professional and, if possible, independent from the administration teams - on a regional, as well as national level. They should be in possession of the power to put an end to different kind of violations in time, and not in the way that this is done now – everything is being brought up to court and while decisions have been made, the monuments have either collapsed, or have been completely reconstructed.

Appendix 8: Interview with Diana Gergova [Bulgarian]

И: Бихте ли ми разказали за Вашето предишно образование и сфера на проучвания?

Д.Г: Археолог, професор д-р на историческите науки. Работя в областта на тракийската археология, опазване на наследството и културното законодателство.

И: Можете ли да ми дадете някакви подробности за средата в която обикновено работите? (офис, на терен, т.н)

Д.Г: Преди всичко в терена, но също в университетска среда, Държавен университет Полша, както и в ИКОМОС.

И: Бихте ли казали, че Вашата експертиза е често използвана за консултация в консервационни или реставрационни процеси?

Д.Г: Участвала съм в изготвянето и реализирането на проекти за Консервационно-Реставрационни Работи. Самата аз съм работила върху създаването и прилагането на нови методи на разкопаване с оглед по- ефективното опазване на паметниците и преди всичко на тракийските гробници в тяхната естествена среда. Работила съм и върху опазването и експонирането на праисторически обекти, които са от изключително значение за разбирането на праисторията на Европа и Средиземноморието, като същевременно са изключително атрактивни за масовия посетител, или поне за почитателите на културния туризъм. За съжаление това в България не се прави, или по- скоро е минало.

И: Във Вашия опит, били ли сте част от, или наблюдавали ли сте консервация или реставрация на обекти, чиито резултати може да определите като задоволителни или позитивни?

Д.Г: Разбира се. Такива обекти са Свещарската гробница, гробницата под могилата Шушманец, селищната могила при с. Дядово, Новозагорско, и др. Проблемът е, че след осъществяването на тези проекти, те остават под управлението на некомпетентни местни органи, които не се интересуват, а и не знаят какво трябва да направят, поради което деструктивните процеси и некомпетентната намеса вземат превес. В тези проекти съм работила с екипи, които абсолютно работят съгласно установените международни норми.

И: Вземайки под предвид общото състояние на консервационните/ реставрационни процеси и резултати, какво е цялостното Ви впечатление като професионалист от тях?

Д.Г: Ако става въпрос за България, резултатите от тези Консервационно-реставрационни работи са изключително негативни, с много малки изключения. Причините са заложи в самото законодателство. Реставрацията е приравнена със строителството, реставраторите и техните фирми не могат самостоятелно да кандидатстват по проекти, тъй като се изискват обороти, които са във възможностите само на големи строителни фирми, които се очаква да наемат реставраторите. Така е обърната ценностната система, защото вместо реставраторите да контролират изпълнението, те стават пионки. Друг проблем е абсолютизирането на институцията на собственика, или на управляващите наследството, при което се нанасят изключително големи щети на паметниците. На първо място поражението е върху църковните храмове поради предвидената решаваща роля на БПЦ, и пак на първо – са всички категории паметници не само от национално, но дори и от световно значение.

И: Как тогава бихте определили „хипотетични реставрации“?

Д.Г: Изключително отрицателно. Това е унищожаване на автентичността на паметниците, както и на възможностите за каквито и да е изследвания в интерес на опазването им .

И: Колко често сте наблюдавали провеждането на такива практики?

Д.Г: В България те са масово и изключително тревожно явление, породено именно от законовите разпоредби и начина на използване на европейските фондове, които минават през администрациите, а не през творческите колективи.

И: Забелязали ли сте някакви основни промени в начина по който консервации или реставрации са провеждани след 2007 г?

Д.Г: Да. Одобряване по чисто административен път, без творческо обсъждане, на некачествени проекти за хипотетични реставрации, които предвиждат на практика ново строителство за милиони левове. Проектите минават през общините, а специалистите са де факто елиминирани и заместени от фирми, пишещи проекти в договорни отношения с общините и при вече направени предварителни уговорки за разпределението на средствата.

И: Колко запознати сте били със общото състояние на археологическия резерват Яйлата преди началото на реставрационния проект там през 2013 г?

Д.Г: Това беше един от много хубавите и добре проучен в археологическо отношение обект.

И: Как бихте определили проблема с реставрацията на Яйлата резерват?

Д.Г: Проблемът е характерен за всички проекти от този тип. Предварителното договаряне между администрациите на различни нива при съгласувателните процедури. Пренебрегване на изследователите- археолози в изготвянето на проекта, неговото формално одобряване, независимо от явните противоречия с международните а и български норми, извършване на забележителен брой нарушения, засягащи не само автентичността на археологическото структура, но и на природната среда, липсата на адекватна реакция от страна на институциите, независимо от подаваните сигнали за нарушения.

И: До каква степен възприемате резервата Яйлата като автентичен след реставрационните процеси там през 2013 г?

Д.Г: Там вече няма нищо автентично. В същото време новото строителство вече се руши.

И: Каква роля играе материалното (tangible) културно наследство в изграждането на национална идентичност?

Д.Г: Играе огромна роля като обединител за населението на България, не само заради богатата история на страната, но и заради участието на съвременните хора, дори и когато са с различна етническа или верска принадлежност, в неговото изследване и опазване.

И: Възприемате ли някаква част от материалното културно наследство на България като европейско или принадлежащо на всички европейци?

Д.Г: Разбира се. Това засяга дори праисторическите ни паметници, да не говорим за тракийските, които вече отразяват взаимоотношения между различни части на Европа, свидетелстват за зараждането на една протоевропейска цивилизация. Прескачам римската епоха, поради унифицирането на културата, но следват паметниците на християнството, на средновековна България. Във всеки един от периодите от историческото развитие на България, има паметници, които са от европейско и световно значене. Проблемът е, че ние не правим именно за тях нищо.

И: Асоциирате ли се по някакъв начин с материалното/ археологическо културно наследство, което се намира в някоя друга европейска държава?

Д.Г: Да. С мегалитите в Ирландия, с паметниците на Южна Италия, Гърция и Северното Черноморие, със Западна Мала Азия, с архитектурата на Кавказ и т. н.

И: Заинтересувани ли сте от проучвания от сферата на Вашата специализация, които се провеждат в друга Европейска държава?

Д.Г: Работя с много мои колеги от различни европейски страни и Япония. Проблемът е в непреодолимите за сега пречки за ефективно и професионално опазване на наследството. Що се отнася до управлението на наследството – мисля че проблемите макар и най-тревожни у нас, не са само наши. Заради нарастващите чиновнически, бюрократични тенденции да се изземват професионалните компетенции, това е проблем и на цяла Европа.

И: Смятате ли, че включването на професионални археолози е нужно в провеждането на консервационни/ реставрационни процеси?

Д.Г: До скоро то бе дори регламентирано в Закона за културното наследство. Сега ми казаха, че тази клауза е отпаднала – не съм имала време да проверя кога е станало това. Участието на археолозите е задължително, но не е достатъчно. Следва да има обсъждания в по- широк професионален кръг от археолози, реставратори, проектантите, на всеки проект. Един археолог сам може и да греши, а може и да не е в състояние да удържи натиска на проектантите.

И: По какъв начин следва да се проследяват процесите и резултатите на консервационни или реставрационни проекти? (регионално, национално, друго ниво)

Д.Г: От професионални и възможно най- независими от администрацията – местна и централна, екипи – на регионално и национално ниво, с правомощия навреме да предотвратяват нарушенията, а не както е предвидено сега- всичко да се отнася към съда и докато се взимат решенията паметниците или са се разпаднали, или са изградени наново.

Appendix 9: Interview with Vlado Rumenov

I: Could you tell me something more about your previous education; I know that you are a professional artist?

V.R: That is my profession, as well as my vocation. I graduated in 1976 from the National Art Gallery [Bulgaria], that is pretty much it. From 1985 I have been a participant in the archaeological researching team at Yailata, at Kamen bryag and later on I have worked with many Bulgarian archaeologists, including Gerogi Kitov, etc. I have also worked with Dr. B.P., the current vice-minister of culture and in this framework I am also familiar with Yailata.

I: Absolutely. And to what extent is your expert opinion used in consultations regarding restoration or conservation processes?

V.R: Ours, you mean my personal expertise or the one of artists in general?

I: Yours, I mean personally yours.

V.R: No. I am professionally involved with restoring religious icons. So I do not uphold any professional qualities of an archaeologist and cannot be an expert in this area. Whether I have the needed skills is another question, but I do not have the right to give an expert opinion.

I: Yes, yes. And do you know certain people [from your professional sphere] who have been taking participation in such projects?

V.R: Well, yes, many of my colleagues are organised to give opinion on the matter... whether this is official or not is another thing.

I: To what extent then... I mean, I know that you are associated with the restoration project that happened at Yailata...

V.R: Yes.

I: Do you have an overall opinion on projects that have been carried out on other cultural heritage sites?

V.R: I do, yes. Many, actually, but now I will only mention two, because the topic is too extensive otherwise... one of them is the fortress Trayanova vrata, which is just above the tunnel [Sofia], you know where it is... I do not know when exactly it has been restored, because the project has been carried out a long time ago... I know what the project is like, and I am also familiar with the the person who led it, G., she is architect G., who at some point denies her involvement with the project, since she is being pushed by policy-makers to carry out a project, which is... She does not think that it should be carried out. Eventually, it has been carried out and the results are disastrous, it is already in need of another restoration, because... [you should] keep in mind that the fortress is re-created in a manner that exceeds enormously what has been determined by archaeological research. That has been done with the help of small red bricks which are pretending to be Roman, but are actually rather new because it is quite clear where they have been laid, and also because the middle section of the fortress is entirely made of concrete. The fortress is covered in chemical salts [which are the bi-product of this construction]. These bricks have cracked, no, not just cracked but falling apart and they are getting worse with every winter, because the water freezes and further cracks them. Currently, this fortress is in a need of a new restoration, and the old restoration project just finished last year. The other site that is quite impressive, I have seen it when I was a kid, and I have seen it later on, is the fortress Hisarlyka. What I remember is that it [the fortress] used to be between 30cm and 60cm [in height]. At the moment there one can observe a huge, entirely constructed fortress with towers... arches... who found the evidence for these arches? Who knows how tall what sections of this building were taller than others? And in a similar manner, it has been constructed with the use of red bricks which are everywhere. Especially, there no evidence for the material that has been used is provided, where it came from or how was it constructed... Meaning that the original material cannot be seen anywhere. The author of

this project, the one who takes on the project... That is architect F. Architect F. is the one who takes upon this project which has one been denied [by architect G.]. This also happens at the Yailata fortress, there we also have an architect who objects to the project completion, because they do not find it morally justified. Architect F. is the courtier architect of B.D. [director of the National Historic Museum], and policy-makers. He is an extremely intelligent person, very nice, very... sociable, well-spoken...quite an interesting companion. On the other hand he... We went to him for an interview and he showed us a restoration miniature of a temple... I cannot remember which one was it... it does not really matter, it is located in Northern Bulgaria next to some gas mining sites... it does not matter. So this temple has been destructed after an earthquake and has collapsed on the ground, so [the original material] is there. Painstakingly, this man and his team managed to return every stone to its place and this thing is actually ready for a complete restoration. So this is an extremely achievement in restoration techniques, not a single fake stone has been put in this construction, this is an enormous achievement. So on one hand we have this thing, this work of his, on the other we have the atrocities that he creates by faking different fortresses. In conclusion, he can and knows how to do a good job, but somehow he managed to slip and get himself involved in projects that work purely for the implementation of European funding. This is exceptional, the thing I saw, this monument... it is about 40m long and around 15m wide, and the roof is even there, everything is in its place. Such a thing should be respected. I cannot say anything bad for him.

I: Meaning that he is a professional in his area of specialisation?

V.R: Absolutely. Architect Y.F. So there are many well preserved sites, everywhere. Of course, other practices persist, too, last year I came across Geamistopolis, which is located near Balchik [Varna], it is very small, Byzantine quarters. And it is innovative, very civilised. The construction comprises only of fallen off original material (V.R. most likely means anastylosis).

I: Are you familiar with the term “hypothetical reconstructions”?

V.R: Well this is what has been done by B.D. This is a hypothetical reconstruction that is being constructed in this way.

I: Do you have any explanation as of why is this practice occurring?

V.R: I do, yes, I do. It is very simple – because in this manner a lot of money could be incorporated from the state and from European funding. According to the information that we have gathered, between 50% and 80% of the funding that has been meant for this [restoration projects], that are coming from Europe and are being implemented by the Ministry of Culture, actually reach regional level, the municipalities and their mayors. I even have a strong evidence in favour of one element of this, even though there are many more [elements], but there is a lack of documentation. Next to Yailata fortress there is a rock church... inhabited cells, there are around 110 cells carved into the rock, it is not clear when have they been carved... it does not matter, really, there was some live there and lastly have been used during the Middle Ages as a living space. And one context of these 110 caves has been pronounced for a church, a temple. It has to be mentioned that it is oriented West-East. It does not matter. It is called “Konstantin and Elena” and during an earthquake it started to crack and it was under threat of disappearing, literally. It is related to the restoration project at Yailata, in the original plan it was supposed to undergo restoration as well. They came up with these horrible iron poles...

I: Yes, I have seen them, I have photographic documentation.

V.R: Ah, you know about them. They are just so ugly, I am sure there is an engineering way to achieve the desired effect [not to be ugly] and furthermore, where the stone has been cracked they managed to put it back together with the help of these red stuff, and I do not understand why they did not make them white. Anyway, in the project it says that these iron poles need to be 20mm in width, I measured them – they are 12 mm wide, 8 mm of iron is missing, and it has been documented as done. Many other things... this is easy to observe, but other things – whatever has been written. The stones that are used at Yailata are supposed to be made of local limestone. The limestone [however] comes from a company that is close to [the current prime minister], from near Ruse – Basarbovo. And the stone from Yailata I am familiar with, I can recognise it with my eyes closed, I took a piece of it and put it in some hot water – there are additions in the limestone. So the answer to this question – why are these things being done is economic – so that financial funding could be stolen. And the worse thing is that despite that we write about those things, the European

magistrates want evidence, because the governmental reports are brilliant, naturally, they cannot find the gap there – everything has been documented to the last detail and the European administration is even more strict than ours [national] – they say “alright, everything here is okay, what is your problem? – here, finish your work”...

I: You said that you were well familiar with the Yalata state before the implementation of project in 2008, what part of this has been scientifically researched – has there been any research carried out after the restoration process, or...?

V.R: No. They stopped the archaeological research shortly after the acts of 1989 [fall of the Bulgarian Communist Party]. I cannot tell you which year was the last one, maybe a year or two after that the research kept on going, almost entirely at the necropolis. There are three necropoli, one of them is just below Yailata, the other ones are in the South end, one of them is in the North of the village [Kavarna], smaller, but it looks like it was situated lower [than the first one]. So these necropoli are almost completely, I mean, with certainty the one where the sanctuary is, is almost entirely researched and documented, so it starts to blur around the lines. Almost nothing was found there, out of 120 tombs only 120 artefacts – some nails, beads... knife, a frame. The only thing that have been researched, let’s say, a third perhaps, it was the fortress. More needs to be researched there, and the other thing that is still unexplored is the terrace which is situated south from the fortress, there was a village once there, and this of course will take a hundred years to research and document. I will say this again, instead of giving money for the restoration atrocities, if there were European funding for archaeological research, these 40,000 sites in Bulgaria, if they were to be archaeologically researched and conserved, simply conserved, well then the cultural tourism will be flourishing... in the matter of seconds. However, it is hard to steal from archaeological projects. It is possible to steal [funding] from construction, concrete, since they are using concrete, iron... The fortress at Sozopol is constructed with iron and concrete, I do not know if you have ever been there...

I: Not recently, but I have heard a lot about it...

V.R: Yes, iron and concrete, they can be seen everywhere and a some stones could be seen on top of it.

I: And this is currently an ongoing process?

V.R: Yes, of course. B.D. is doing as he pleases.

I: And he is connected to this process?

V.R: He is from Sozopol.

I: I do have a question which says “To what extent do you perceive Yailata archaeological reserve as authentic after the restoration in 2008”?

V.R: Well, it is not authentic, naturally, is not authentic. I do not see the point in this restoration, because the arguments made for its conduction was that the walls cannot be seen well in the surroundings... But after they cut off the vegetation which resembled a jungle... The fortress was hard to be seen because everything was covering it... but after the vegetation was cut off everything was easy to observe. After this it was supposed to be taken care of, so it does not go back to the initial state of being covered by vegetation. So I do not perceive it as authentic, of course, this is my personal view on the matter, I am an advocate for a lost cause, still on the other hand I managed to turn Yailata in a prominent example of a bad practice. Currently, when bad practice [of restorations] is being discussed, Yailata is often mentioned. This is something on itself. The worse thing is that there are others... There is one here, in Sofia region, Tsari-Mali grad. This one is an absolute fiction, but a private businessman funds the project and he is the one talking to some archaeologists and architects. Another thing, Peristera, which is conducted by Dr. B.P. What one could see there is impressive, the walls, the towers, some really strange things... I can provide you with pictures so you can see it by yourself. The vice-minister of culture, Dr. B.P. She is the consultant and the leading archaeologist of this restoration. What do you expect from the state in this situation?

I: Why do you think special attention is not being paid to authenticity in the conduction of these projects? Do you think that the reason is entirely economic, or maybe there is something else that...?

V.R: It is mainly this. And it is being used as a tool for the direction of the public’s opinion on the matter, which is supportive of these intentions and becomes critical to our views.

Actually, it is being played on the string of Bulgarian nationalism and chauvinism, and the Bulgarian public is not educated enough in order to know what is valuable and what not. So, when you say to them “These people over there [other European countries] have castles and fortresses, and we here do not, but actually we do, let’s construct them, and the more fully constructed they are, the more valuable they become”, and the Bulgarian public answers “Yes, of course, bravo, wonderful!”, it is impressed. And I just said this, a short while ago, it is really good that people are paying attention to us, they invite us over in the media, because it is through the media that our opinion and arguments reach people with different views, we get the chance to explain why aren’t we happy with it, what are we criticising. Therefore, we need education we need to start this at the schools, to educate the children and young people. Because they just do not have the understanding, the basic education about things that are actually playing out in favour of the political agendas. The goal is for the people to remain with as little education as possible, to remain unintelligent... so they can agree with the imposed views.

I: I am really interested in asking you a few more questions regarding the European funding and European strategy, since the European funding is the main financial source... I think that you already answered this question, but to what extent do you think that the material cultural heritage influences the formation of national identity? To what extent, because [heritage] is something that is visualised, something that is perceived...

V.R: It is important, it is important... It is a very serious component in the formation of national identity, but we need to form an authentic, a legible national identity, a self-awareness that is built upon historic facts, and is not faked, it is not just been blown up like a balloon, which makes people be unnecessarily patriotic... Moreover, if we are talking about culture, we cannot expect cultural tourism if this is the product that has been supplied. It is very important, of course, but at the same time the educational system is also important; when studying History these things should be discussed in the programme. Because, I don’t know, you are probably familiar, but most of the people your age do not know that the tower of Baldwin in Turnovo, such tower does not exist. Everybody knows that it does not exist. It is a copy-paste of the Cherven [tower], which before 10 November [1989] had the same things, but they were based on a political argumentation, a megalomaniac argumentation and things were being done without the right of a public

opinion, of course. I am not even sure to what extent the historic records agree on the fact that Baldwin ever reached Turnovo, I do not think they are quite on the same page on that. So, when one starts discussing the tower of Baldwin, where Baldwin was imprisoned and then later on ended his life by jumping of it, and therefore we [Bulgaria] have overpowered the Latin Empire and how great we are... But wait, these are not the facts.

I: Do you think that some part of the material cultural heritage could be defined as European?

V.R: Yes, of course. Well, in my opinion all of it, because Bulgaria is a component, a small component of the European culture. We have a constant interchange - material and cultural with Europe. There are many monuments as well, which are of a national and international significance. When we are talking about Thracian tombs we can find exceptional things. For instance, I cannot come to terms with the fact that Sevtopolis was flooded. Because another such thing does not exist. A Thracian city, a capital, it does not exist. An entire city – its name is known, its ruler is known, and for someone to flood this – well, this is an atrocity... I still cannot make up my mind about the idea to pump out all of the water, everything at the bottom is out of context, but at least there are plans and documents [of the city]...

I: Do you personally associate yourself with any material heritage which is European? Which is in an European context? Which is located in another country? Do you consider any of that heritage as something that you relate to?

V.R: Perhaps the cultural heritage in Macedonia, perhaps in Northern Greece. More or less, that is. [The one] which is in the nearby geographical areas, so it is evidence for ethnic territories, and Bulgarian.

I: Yes, I understand. Do you think that... To what extent is the involvement of professional archaeologists important for the restoration process?

V.R: Of an utmost importance. Of an utmost importance and it is even in the official legislation (Cultural Heritage Law) that the involvement of an archaeologist is obligatory, and this archaeologist must be the initial researcher. I will also tell you why is this important. There is a small door at the West side of Yailata which has been secondary used, it served the purpose of a small temple and inside of it there was a burial, most likely of a

priest of some kind, with a stone wall built around it. There was the restoration plan. After the restoration was conducted I went there but this thing was gone – the stone wall, as well as the grave itself. And I say to them “Where is it?”, and they say “This thing does not exist”. “Could you please hand me the project?”, I ask. It is on the project, but it is not there in reality. It is not an exceptional monument, of course, not something with an incredible value, it is all a matter of principles. So this thing has been used from the local community as a temple, they were Christians, some kind of a priest was buried there, etc., this is part of history. And all of this happens because there was an archaeologist involved, not the researcher, from the Varna Museum, who no one knows if has actually been there before. Apart from this some friends of ours, because we had representatives of the public there constantly, and they were responsible for documentation and taking photographs. And then they sent me a ton of photographs, because in the process there are Roma people involved which are not specifically trained for the job, and there must be specially trained workers, since this is a specific job. So the Roma workers – they went there and took parts of the original fabric, and then they just use them as filler in the foundations of the fortress. What are we even discussing here? I did write to several newspapers, tried to make noise around the matter, but could not achieve anything.

I: Yes, this does sound as a practice which has been outdated 200 years ago. I do have one last question. Do you think that these restoration and conservation processes should be monitored on a regional, national, or perhaps [on a higher level] – e.g. the European Union?

V.R: In my opinion it should be on a national level, I do not know how would this be done on a European level, who will be responsible for such monitoring, most likely no one would do that, so this should be done by НИИКН (National Institute of Immovable Cultural Heritage), this institute, or agency, it should have the rights to exercise the power to say “no, do not do that, this is not how it should be done...”. And in general, whatever this institute considers should be exercised with the power of an official legislation. Because when the law is weak, such atrocities occur. There must be a strong institute which should [figuratively] stop the hand of the minister before he stamps a document. Therefore, this is one of the key knots of this practice, the reputation of НИИКН (NIICH). It is one of the special knots. There are experts, good willed people, and honourable people with have a special attitude, just like us, towards the problem. Therefore, in the Cultural Heritage forum

there is a group of young architects with ideas, with understanding, with a special affinity towards their job... Archaeologists, too, of course. And by the way, Dr. B.P. before becoming a vice-minister of culture was the director of the National Archaeological Museum and I went up to her to get her help in relation to Yailata, so she can help us with the things that were taking place at this site. As I told you this before, we know each other personally; very well, we worked together for a long time, just... Absolutely normal relationship. But it seems like things depend on personal moral and political interests. And she was appointed for this post by the ruling party and the former Minister of Culture. Everything comes back to politics and money.

Appendix 10: Interview with Vlado Rumenov [Bulgarian]

И: Бихте ли ми казали нещо за предишното си образование, знам, че сте художник по професия?

В.Р: И по професия, но по-скоро по призвание. Завърших 1976 година в Националната Художествена галерия, горе- долу това е в общи линии. От 1985 година се включих към археологическото проучване на екипа на Яйлата на Камен бряг и в последствие работих с много български археолози, включително със Георги Китов. И така нататък, както и с доктор Б.П., настоящия заместник-министър на културата и по тази линия така, може би и по отношение на Яйлата съм запознат.

И: Абсолютно. А до каква степен се използва Ваша експертиза в консултациите за реставрационни или консервационни процеси?

В.Р: Наши, имате предвид мои или на художниците като цяло?

И: Ваши, лично Ваши.

В.Р: Не. Аз сум професионално реставратор на живописни икони. Така че в никакво качество на археолог не мога да бъда експерт в тази област. Дали имам общите умения, това е друг въпрос, но аз нямам това право на експерт.

И: Да, да. А познавате определени хора, които са участвали в подобни проекти?

В.Р: Ами да, много от колегите те са организирани да коментират... дали официално вече тези неща.

И: До каква степен тогава... Т.е. знам че Вие сте тясно свързан с реставрационния проект на Яйлата...

В.Р: Да.

И: Имате ли поглед върху проектите по други национални културни богатства...

В.Р: Имам, да. Много, но сега ще спомена само два, защото тя е дълга приказка иначе... единия е крепостта Траянова врата, която е точно над тунела, Вие знаете къде... не знам точно кога е реставрирана, понеже проекта е бил изпълнен много отдавна... Знам и проекта какъв е, а познавам и калпака, тя е архитект Г., която в един момент се отказва от авторство, тъй като е притискана от властите да осъществи проект, който не е... Тя не смята че е коректно да бъде осъществяван... в крайна сметка той се осъществи и това на финала което е в окаяно състояние, вече се нуждае от реставрация, защото... значи имайте предвид цялата крепост е разгъната много над това което е констатирано археологически помощта на едни червени тухлички с претенция да бъдат Римски, които са по-скоро нови плочки, защото твърде ясно се вижда къде са, и защото средата на крепостта е циментова. Цялата крепост е във бели стичания на соли. Тези тухлички са се напукали, не напукали ами разпукали и се влошават през зимата, тъй като влагата която е там замръзва и ги пука. В момента вече тази крепост има нужда от реставрация, а беше открита миналата година. Другия обект който много е впечатляващ, него също съм го виждал като малък, а и съм ходил по-късно, това е крепостта Хисарлъка. Това е което помня, сигурно е било някъде между 30 и 60 см. В момента оттам стърчи една огромна, изцяло завършена крепост, със зъбери, със сводове... арки... откъде са изведени тези арки? Откъде знае кой къде там откъде започват възходяванията? И по същия начин е изпълнена с тези червени тухлички, които са навсякъде. Специално там няма никаква сигнала за материала, откъде е и как е конструиран... Т.е. оригинала не може да се види никъде категорично. Авторът на този проект поема проекта... Това е архитекта Ф. Архитекта Ф. е този, който поема отказаното авторство. Това се случва и на яйленската крепост, там също имаме автор, който се отказва защото и от него се изискват неща, които той не намира за морално да изпълнява. Архитект Ф. е придворния архитект на Б.Д. (директор на Националния Исторически Музей) и на властта. Той е много интелигентен човек, много симпатичен човек, много...така, разговорлив, сладкодумен... много интересен събеседник. От друга страна той... ние ходихме при него за едно интервю и той показва една възстановка на един храм... не мога да се сетя чии беше храма... няма значение, той е в Северна България до едни газови находища... няма значение. Значи

какво става там, този храм се разрушил в следствие на земетресение и е изпаднал в земята и всичко е там. С къртовски труд този човек с екип успяват да наместват всяко камъче кое къде е, и всъщност това нещо е готово във всеки момент да бъде вдигнато. Значи това е едно изключително постижение на реставрацията, там няма нито един фалшив камък, което е едно нещо, което е гигантско постижение. Значи от една страна е това нещо, тази му работа, от друга страна имаме безумията които върши фалшифицирайки различни крепости, т.е. той може, той е способен на добра работа, но се е плъзнал по наклонената плочка за да може да се усвояват пари. Изключително нещо е това, което видях, този паметник...той е към 40м дълъг или нещо такова, широк е около 15м, и е с покрива там, всичко му е там. Достойно е за уважение. Не мога да кажа нищо лошо за него.

И: Т.е. той е специалист в областта в която се занимава?

В.Р: Абсолютно. Архитект Ю.Ф. Така че страшно много запазени обекти, навсякъде. Разбира се има и други практики, миналата година попаднах на Геамистополис, който е до Балчик, много е малко, то е такава, казармица, Византийска някаква. И е много иновативно, много културно. Качено е само това, което е намерено и изпаднало.

И: Запознати ли сте с термина хипотетични реконструкции?

В.Р: Ами това е, което се прави от Б.Д., това е хипотетична реконструкция, която се прави по този начин.

И: Имате ли някакво Ваше обяснение появата на тези реконструкции?

В.Р: Имам, да, имам. Много е просто – защото по този начин могат много повече пари да се усвояват от държавата и от европейските средства. По наша информация между 50% и 80% от парите за тази работа, които постъпват от Европа се вливат от Министерството на Културата и Министерски съвет до кметовете и останалите на регионално ниво. Дори имам категорично доказателство само за един елемент, въпреки че имаме информация за много други, обаче няма документи. До Яйлата, до крепостта има една скално-пещерна... общежитие, има около 110 копани и открити килии, тука не е ясно кога са копани...няма и значение, имало е живот в тях и последно са използвани пред Средновековието като селище. И в един контекст от тези 101

пещери е обявен за църква, за храм. Трябва да се спомене, че тъй като такава е разположението гледа на запад. Няма значение. То се казва „Константин и Елена” и при едно земетресение беше започнало да се пука и имаше опасност да изчезне, буквално. Има връзка с реставрацията на Яйлата, беше планирано и то да се реставрира наоколо. Там се измислиха едни ужасни жезла...

И: Да, виждала съм ги, имам снимков материал.

В.Р: А, знаете ги. Те са просто толкова грозни, сигурно има начин инженерно да се постигне ефекта и освен това там където се е пукнал камък е замазано с едни червени неща, които какъв ти е проблема да ги направиш бели. Както и да е, по проект тези жезла пише, че трябва да са 20 мм на дебелина, аз ги измерих сам – те са 12 мм, 8мм жезло го няма, а е отчетено като изпълнено 20. Колко други неща... това се вижда, но другите неща – какво е писано. Камъните, които са използвани в Яйлата би трябвало да са местен варовик. Варовика (обаче) е от фирма от приближен на сегашния премиер-министър от Русенско – Басарбово. А яйленския камък, преди 100 години, познавам, със затворени очи мога да кажа кой камък къде е, взех едно парче и го потопих в топла вода – има добавки във варовиковия материал. Та отговора на въпроса защо се правят тия неща е икономически – финансово да се крадат пари. И лошото е, че независимо че ние пишем за тези неща, от Европа ни отговарят – добре де, хубаво, дайте доказателства, защото държавните отчети, те са брилянтни, естествено, там не могат да намерят дупка никъде – всичко е изпипано и европейските чиновници са по-големи чиновници от нашите – те казват добре де, тука всичко си е окей, какъв ти е проблема – ето, работете си...

И: Казахте, че сте били доста запознат със статуса на Яйлата преди изпълнението на проекта през 2013, каква част от цялото нещо е била проучена – има ли проучвания след реставрационния процес, или...?

В.Р: Не. Спряха проучванията някъде малко след събитията през 1989та година. Не мога да Ви кажа коя година последно имаше, може би един-два сезона имаше проучвания, почти изцяло на некропола. Те там са 3 некропола, единия е под Яйлата, а пък другите са в Южния край, единия е малко на север от крепостта, до светилището който е, и още един който е в покрайнините на селото (Каварна), по-малък, но е бил

изглежда разположен по-долу. Та тези некрополи за почти изцяло, т.е. със сигурност този който е със светилището, той е почти изцяло проучен, така че започва съвсем да се разсейва откъм крайщата. Там не беше намерено почти нищо, от 120 гроба излязоха 120 артефакта, пиронче, мънистенце... ножче, някаква рамка. Единственото което се проучи, да речеме, една трета може би, се проучи крепостта. Остава още да се проучва от нея, и другото което изобщо не е проучвано, това е тази тераса, която е южно от крепостта, там е имало селище, което разбира се е работа за 100 години. Аз пак казвам, вместо да се дават пари за тези безумни реставрации ако има европейски планове по които да се отпускат средства за археологически проучвания, тези 40,000 обекта в България ако се проучат археологически и да се консервират, само консервират, че културния туризъм ще се изсипе тука като.. за секунди. Обаче от археология не може да се краде. Може да се краде от строителство, от бетон, понеже ползват бетони, цименти, желяза... Созополската крепост се строи със железобетон, не знам дали сте ходили там...

И: Не съм, но съм чувала доста за нея...

В.Р: Да, железобетони има, стърчат отвсякъде и един ред камъчета са само разхвърляни отгоре.

И: Тече като процес в момента?

В.Р: Да, разбира се. Б.Д. си прави каквото си иска.

И: А той е свързан със този процес?

В.Р: Той е от Созопол.

И: Имам въпрос, който гласи До каква степен възприемате резервата Яйлата като автентичен след реставрацията през 2013?

В.Р: Ами не е автентичен, естествено, не е автентичен. Аз не виждам смисъла от тази възстановка, защото тя беше аргументирана с това че зидовете не се изявяват достатъчно в околността... Но когато изсякоха всичката растителност, която бече като джунгла... Тя крепостта не се изявяваше, защото всичко я закриваше... но когато се изсече тая растителност и всичко си излезе прекрасно. После трябваше да се

поддържа, да не буренясва. Така че не я приемам като автентична, разбира се, това е една моя гледна точка, аз водя една загубена битка, но от друга страна успях да превърна Яйлата в знаково понятие за лоша практика. В момента когато се говори за лоша практика предимно се споменава Яйлата. Това само по себе си е нещо. Лошото е че има и други такива ... Тук има една в Софийско, Цари-Мали град. Това е една абсолютна измишлиотона, само че там някакъв частник дава пари и той се разбира с някакви археолози и архитекти. Друго нещо, Перистерата, което е дело на заместник-министъра на културата. Там са едни чудеса, едни зъбери, едни кули, някакви странни неща... Мога да Ви пратя снимки да ги видите тия работи. Заместник-министъра на културата Д-р Б.П. Тя е консултант и завеждащ археолог на тази възстановка. Какво искате от държавата при това положение?

И: Защо мислите не се обръща внимание на автентичността при изпълнението на тия проекти? Мислите ли, че е чисто икономическа причината, или има и нещо друго, което...?

В.Р: Главно това е. И се използва за да се насочва общественото мнение, което да подкрепя тези намерения и да дава отпор на нашите виждания. Всъщност се свири на тънката струна на национализма и на шовинизма в българина, който е достатъчно необразован за да не си дава сметка кое е стойностно и кое е ценностно. Нали като им се казва онези там имат замъци и крепости а ние тука нямаме, а пък имаме, дайте сега ще ги построим, и колкото са по до зъбер и керемидата, толкова са по-ценни, и българина вика да, разбира се, браво, прекрасно, отива, възхищава се. И аз както преди малко казах че е много хубаво и важно, че започнаха да ни отразяват и да ни канят и нас медиите, защото вече чрез медиите до хората с различни ценности стигат и тези наши мнения и нашите аргументи, защото ние обясняваме за какво става дума, защо не сме съгласни. Значи трябва образование, трябва просвета, трябва да се започне от училищата да се образуват дечицата и младите хора. Защото те не просто нямат усета, те нямат елементарна грамотност за тези неща, което всъщност обслужва това политическо управление - целта е хората да не са много грамотни, неинтелигентни... и накъде ги духнеш натам да отиват.

И: Много ми е интересно да Ви задам едни въпроси що се отнася до европейско финансиране и европейски подход, тъй като европейските фондове са основен финансов източник... Мисля, че вече отговорихте на този въпрос но ми е интересно до каква степен мислите че самото материално културно наследство влияе върху формирането на национална идентичност? До каква степен, защото то е нещо което се визуализира, нещо което се възприема...

В.Р: Важно е, да, важно е... Много сериозен компонент в сформиранието на националната идентичност, но пние трябва да формираме една автентична, една достоверна национална идентичност, едно самосъзнание, което стъпва на исторически факти, а не измислено, не като един балон надутото някакво нещо нали, което кара хората да се бият по гърдите ... Освен това ако се говори за културата няма да има никакъв културен туризъм ако се предлага този продукт на пазара на туризма. Много е важно, разбира се, но както е важна и образователната система в училище; там в часовете по история трябва да с говори и за този аспект. Защото не знам, Вие сигурно знаете, но повечето Ваши връстници едва ли знаят че Балдуиновата кула в Търново, такава кула няма. Всички знаят че няма такава кула, Тя е копи-пейст от Червен, която беше пък преди 10ти ноември имаше същите неща, само че бяха на политическа онсова, мегаломанска основа и се вършеха тези безобразия без да може никой нищо да каже, естествено. Там даже не знам доколко историческата наука е съгласна че Балдуин е стигал до Търново, мисля че не е много наясно. Така че, ти като легнеш на това че има Балдуинова кула, където Балдуин е бил затворен и се е метнал и си е изгубил живота, така че ние бихме Латинската империя, и нали колко сме велики... Чакай бе, не е точно така.

И: Мислите ли, че някаква част от това материално културно наследство може да се определи като европейско?

В.Р: Да, разбира се. Ами според мене цялото, защото Българи я компонент, да малък компонент, от европейската култура. Ние имаме непрекъснат обмен, всякакъв, материален и културен с Европа. Има и страшно много паметници които са от национално и световно значение. Ако говорим за тракийските паметници има изключителни неща. Например аз продължавам да не мога да се примиря с това, че

Севтополис е бил залят. Защото такава друго нещо няма. Тракийски град, столица, няма. Цял град- знае му се името, знае му се господаря, и да го залееш това, ами то си е живо безобразие... Аз се колебая какво да ми е мнението по тази идея, да се ограда и изпомпва водата, то отдолу всичко е разместено и разбутано, но поне има планове, документи...

И: Лично Вие асоциирате ли се по някакъв начин с материално културно наследство, което е европейско? Което е в европейски контекст? Което се намира в друга държава? Смятате ли, че това може да бъде Ваше наследство?

В.Р: Може би културното наследство в Македония, може би в Северна Гърция. Горедолу, не повече. Което е в близки географски ширини и така или иначе са засвидетелствани етнически територии, и български.

И: Да, разбирам. Мислите ли, че... До каква степен участието на професионални археолози е важно за реставрационния процес?

В.Р: Ужасно важно. Ужасно важно е, и то всъщност по закон съществува, трябва да присъства археолог и то проучвателя трябва да присъства. Ще Ви кажа и защо е важно, ще Ви дам пример, как се случва естествено защото това ми е много познато. Има една западна портичка малка на Яйлата, която вторично е била ползвана, била е нещо направена като параклисче беше и вътре имаше погребение, вероятно на духовник със каменно обграден двор. Имаше план за реставрация. След като завърши реставрацията и аз отидох на място, това обаче го нямаше, нито обграждението, нито самия гроб. И викам къде е, а те ми отговарят няма такава нещо. Е как да няма такава нещо питам, щото бяха още там работниците и този, който командваше изпълнението. Дайте казвам ако обичате проекта. На проекта го има, а там го няма. Не е изключителен паметник, нали, не е нещо свръхценно, става въпрос за принципи. Значи това нещо е било използвано от местната общност за параклисче, те са били християни, някакъв духовник е погребан и т.н., това си е част от историята. И всичко това се случва защото имаше назначен един археолог, не проучвателя, от Варненския музей, който я е ходил преди, я не е ходил. Освен това наши приятели, защото непрекъснато имаше представители на публиката които документираха и снимаха ми пратиха маса снимки, защото се работи с цигани, а трябва да се работи със специално

обучени работници, защото това е специална работа. Какво правят циганите – отиват, и от зидовете които са в крепостта от сградите взимат камъни и ги мятат за пълнеж долу в основите на крепостта. За какво говорим. Писах по вестници, вдигах шум, нищо от това не постигнах.

И: Това звучи като практика остаряла с поне 200 години. Имам един последен въпрос. Мислите ли, че тези процеси на реставрация и консервация би следвало да се наблюдават на регионално, национално ниво, може би, или от Европейския съюз?

В.Р: Според мен трябва да бъде на национално ниво, на европейско не ми е ясно как ще стане и кой ще тръгне да контролира, по-скоро няма, и това би трябвало да бъде НИНКН, този институт, бил той агенция, бил той институт, и той би трябвало да има правата да казва не, стой, това не е така... И въобще това което той определя да бъде със силата на закон. Защото когато той е слаб се получават всички тези безобразия. Трябва да има един силен институт който да задържа ръката на министъра преди да сложи печат. Значи, това е един от възлите на цялата практика, статута на НИНКН. Това е един от специалните възли. Има експерти, има добронамерени хора, почтени хора които са с отношение като нас към проблема, има млади хора. Значи във форум КН има една група млади архитекти, идеи, с разбирания, с афинитет към работата.. Археолози има, разбира се. А между другото Д-р Б.П., която преди да стане заместник-министър беше заместник директор на националния археологически музей, и в това й качество съм ходил при нея за съдействие за Яйлата, да помага за безобразията които се вършат на този обект. Аз както Ви казах ние се познаваме лично, много добре, работил съм с нея маса време, ние сме абсолютно на ти, просто ... Съвсем нормални човешки отношения. Почна да чупи пръсти, каза ама нали разбираш, аз там работя с Цонко, бившия кмет, не е удобно, някак си ако може... Нещата опират до личен морал, и политически интереси. А тя така или иначе беше назначена от ГЕРБ и Вежди Рашидов, по някакъв начин са стигнали до нея. Всичко опира до политика и до пари.

