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**The Social Organisation of the Illicit Trafficking in Antiquities:
The Cases of Bulgaria and Italy**

A dissertation presented

By

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Statement of authorship

I hereby confirm that the work contained in the dissertation has not been previously presented to any University or submitted for publication. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this dissertation is the result of my own intellectual endeavour, except where due reference is made to the work of another person.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Chapter outline

Each year hundreds of antiquities are illegally trafficked around the world, while the annual profits from this trade are estimated to match those of the transnational trafficking in drugs, arms or counterfeit goods (INTERPOL, 2015; Nistri, 2009). The illicit trafficking in antiquities poses concerns for its negative impact on the survival of the cultural heritage and cultural identities of communities, countries and indeed the world, and for this trafficking often being coupled with various crimes against the art. Vandalism and the pillage of archaeological sites, museums and areas of cultural and religious interest are historically connected with the illegal selling of what is left after the spoliation. The same objects that have been illegally trafficked may also be part of money laundering schemes, tax evasion and counterfeiting operations.

While introducing the notion of illicit antiquities in section one, this chapter illustrates the momentum that the illicit trade in antiquities has gained within the criminological, legal, law enforcement and international communities (McMahon, 1997; Mackenzie, 2002a; Kind, 2011; Dietzler, 2013; UNESCO, 2013; Yates, 2014; Lambert and Yates, 2015; UNODC, 2016; Boz, 2018; EUROPOL, 2017; INTERPOL, 2018). Section two and three further highlight the rationale at the basis of this study and the relevance of the research, while sections four and five conclude by exemplifying the approach of the thesis towards its objects of inquiry along with the scope of the research. The final section outlines the structure of the dissertation.

1.2. Setting the context

A brief clarification on the terminology used is advisable as introductory explanation.

Since this study analyses the illicit market of archaeological artefacts, commonly referred to as illicit antiquities, the first consideration concerns the definition of ‘antiquity’. According to the general wisdom, this term designates those objects that have a cultural, historical or archaeological value due to their connection with the past. Per se, the expression antiquity enjoys a broad yet fluid interpretation (Brodie, 2016) and any object dating back to a period comprised between prehistoric times to the past few centuries fall within the category of antiquity. Therefore, antiquities can span from dinosaurs’ eggs to Neolithic artefacts, from Roman coins to Nigerian Nok terracottas, from Greek marble statues to medieval jewellery, from Chinese works of art to pre-Colombian steles. Legal necessity, however, has compelled the framework that regulates the protection of cultural heritage at international and European level to introduce a threshold to define what can be officially listed as an antiquity and lawfully be imported and exported. The *1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* circumscribes the meaning of antiquities to any good “more than hundred years old, such as inscriptions, coins and engraved seals” (Art. 1, letter e). The very same words are adopted by the *1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects* (Letter e) of the Annex). Moreover, both Conventions add that the “products of archaeological excavations (including regular and clandestine) or of archaeological discoveries” (Art. 1, letter c), 1970 UNESCO Convention; Letter c) of the Annex, 1995 UNIDROIT Convention) are prohibited to

be illegally exported and imported inside and outside the territory of the signatory Parties. The 1970 UNESCO Convention, nevertheless, leaves upon the single Member the obligation to designate the meaning of cultural heritage within the country's boundaries (Art. 1). Indeed, States ought to circumscribe the timeframe for antiquities in particular cases, such as the restrictions imposed for the exchange, import and export of cultural goods. In the bilateral agreement effective between Italy and the United States, for instance, the U.S. can only import antiquities comprised between the 9th century B.C. and the 4th century A.D. (art. 1 MoU, 2001). Following the example of the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the 1995 UNIDUIT Convention, at European Union level the *Council Regulation (EC) No. 116/2009 on the export of cultural goods* divides the latter in several categories inclusive of “archaeological objects more than 100 years old which are the products of [...] excavations and finds on land or under water; [...] archaeological sites; [and] archaeological collections” (Letter A, no. 1, Annex I) and “collections [...] of historical, palaeontological, ethnographic or numismatic interest” (Letter 13 (b), Annex I). Interestingly, the only treaty at European level that considers exclusively the archaeological patrimony, namely the *1992 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revised)* has discarded the indication of the date-threshold to maintain a general and all-inclusive definition. In fact, according to Art. 1, letter 3 the “[...] archaeological heritage shall include structures, constructions, groups of buildings, developed sites, moveable objects, monuments of other kinds as well as their context, whether situated on land or under water”. Given the requirements set by the international legal framework, each country part of the 1970 UNESCO Convention should introduce in its legislation a law on cultural heritage or refine the existing one following the ratification of the Convention. Both Bulgaria and Italy – the case studies of this

research – adhere to the model of the 1970 UNESCO Convention while defining antiquities. Bulgaria adopted the *Cultural Heritage Act* in 2009, which states at article 6, 1 that “surface, underground and underwater archaeological sites and objects and reserves” are considered part of the national cultural heritage, while article 47, 1 specifies that immovable cultural value shall be recognised to archaeological artefacts showing “material traces of human activity which are inseparable from the environment in which they have been created, being identified through archaeological excavations”. Moreover, the Cultural Heritage Act applies to antiquities the hundred years threshold (Art. 7, 4). The Italian *Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape* (2004) indicates at articles 2 that every movable or immovable object with “artistic, historical, archaeological, etno-anthropological, archival and bibliographic interest” are cultural heritage, including the archaeological artefacts, older than hundred years and that originate from “a) land and underwater excavations and discoveries; b) archaeological sites; c) archaeological collections” (Annex A, Letter A, 1). Considering both the legal and general definitions of the term under scrutiny, for the purpose of this study antiquity is thus understood as any object that is older than a hundred years, that is the result of human activity and that is significant for the individual, the community and the whole society, while showing value from a scientific and cultural perspective.

The second explanation considers that in the literature on illicit antiquities several expressions are used interchangeably. Indeed, tomb raiding, looting and treasure hunting are regularly understood as synonymous, although they define different activities. Looting is the act of depredation and identifies the plundering of archaeological and open religious sites. Looting is sometimes associated with robberies from museums, churches and private collections, whereas the appropriate

term would be theft. Tomb raiding, as suggested by the name itself, is a crime confined to predatory activities of burial sites. It is considered one of the earliest crimes against cultural heritage, as proved by a 12th century B.C. Egyptian legal papyrus mentioning the looting of tombs (Meyer, 1974: 133). The contemporary use of the term tomb raiding, however, has stretched the meaning to include any type of archaeological sites' looting. Treasure hunting, finally, refers to the practice of metal detecting to find valuable objects. Since jewellery and coins have historically been disposed in burial sites where not hidden underground, treasure hunting has become a very much-loved hobby. Legends of fabulous treasures may also fuel this practice. In the western Balkans, for instance, the myth that the Ottomans buried their gold treasures in the countryside before leaving the region has survived until the present days and encouraged hundreds of treasure hunters to sift through the land (I9). Treasure hunting is not illegal per se, insofar the valuable objects found are reported to the archaeological superintendence. Article 278 of the Bulgarian Criminal Code, for instance, states that whoever fortuitously discovers an antiquity or another type of valuable cultural artefact should inform the authorities within seven days, while the Italian Code of Cultural Heritage and Landscape limits the timeframe to twentyfour hours (art. 90, 1).

A third distinction needs to be drawn between art crimes and the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Art crimes are defined as “punishable acts that involve works of art” (Conklin, 1994: 2). This broad but widely accepted definition is further specified to include the most frequent crimes against art, namely theft, fakes and forgeries, frauds, vandalism, confiscation and illicit trafficking (ibid.; Tijhuis, 2006: 129-137; Chappel and Polk, 2009; Tijhuis, 2011; Passas and Bowman Proulx, 2011; Bowman Proulx, 2011). Hence, the illicit trafficking in antiquities is a specific type of

crime, although it displays a high degree of complexity. Indeed, it results of the interplay between several criminal activities, which comprises the following practices: theft from museum, private or public collections, churches and other religious areas; clandestine excavations of archaeological sites; stealing of underwater cultural objects; the illegal export and import of cultural objects, as well as the unlawful transfer of ownership; the production and use of false documents (ICOM, 2015).

Finally, a remark is due on the alternate use of illicit and illegal. Although both words single out an act contravening a rule, they have different meanings for their etymology differs. Deriving from the Latin adjective *illegalis*, illegal identifies a behaviour that is forbidden by law, whereas illicit originates from *illicitus*, that is actions forbidden either by law, by rule or custom. Hence, illegal markets are always prohibited under criminal provisions, contrary to illicit markets, which might be disapproved in the society and yet not criminally sanctioned. Illicit suggests a broader meaning than illegal and “includes the improper – that is, grey areas of what is lawful or not – and further suggests ‘the furtive or clandestine nature of acts so characterized’” (Kupferschmidt, 2009: 6). In the case of antiquities’ trafficking, illicit is better suited to characterise it, for its almost unanimous moral condemnation at international level does not mirror an almost unanimous criminalisation. To exemplify, Mongolia ratified the 1970 UNESCO Convention in 1991, however in recent years the country has suffered increasing level of looting (Shuzhong, 2001) and illicit export of antiquities due to weak national legal framework (UNESCO, 2014). Furthermore, in the market in antiquities the boundaries between legality and illegality are often ambiguous (Tijhus, 2006; Mackenzie and Davies, 2014). Archaeological artefacts are a legal commodity if their trade abide by the laws of the country from which they originate and the international standards. Auction houses are key actors in the

antiquities market and can sell archaeological artefacts provided that their provenance – that is a detailed account of the history of an object in terms of ownership and discovery – is legally ascertain. So, it is legal to sell the antiquities of a long-established and known collection, but without documents detailing “an unbroken chain of ownership” (Brodie, 2014: 63) the antiquities are considered illicit. The trade of antiquities is inherently conducive to the commerce of illicit and counterfeit objects and often, as described in more details in the following chapters, illegally obtained artefacts can be laundered into the legitimate antiquities market through sequential purchases.

1.3. The evolution of the research project

Before discussing the significance of this research, it seems noteworthy to clearly explain the motivations to undertake it and the evolution of the project, given that the personal beliefs of the researcher often influence the selection of the topic to investigate and shape the methodological outlook (Smith and Noble, 2017: 101).

In 2011, Manacorda and Chappel edited the book *Crime in the Art and Antiquities World*, which fascinated me and at the same time convinced me of the potential of applying criminological approaches to the study of the illegal market in antiquities. The book brought together testimonies from a rich environment that included perspectives on illicit antiquities by part of archaeologists, legal practitioners and criminologists. The more I approached the literature on this market, the more I realised that there was an increasing number of studies on the subject matter and, more generally, on the illicit market in cultural objects. These studies shed light on the complexity of a little considered criminal market and significantly pinpointed the

existing connections between its legal and illegal features (Tijhuis, 2006; Bowman, 2008; Davis and Mackenzie, 2015). They also identified key elements of the logistic chain of this illicit trafficking (Dietzler, 2013).

Despite the criminological recognition, compared to the extensive research of many other illegal markets – one for all, the drug market – investigation on the illicit trafficking in antiquities “lack[s] of density” (von Lampe, 2013: 7) and there is the need to foster the research on the nature and the forms it can assume. Besides, the debate on whether the illicit trafficking in antiquities falls within the concept of organised crime has been peripheral (Nistri, 2011; Dietzler, 2013), therefore I was interested in bringing the discussion on the organisational forms and the inherent characteristics of this particular transnational form of crime within the wider exploration of the nature of organised crime. In fact, an in-depth scrutiny of the illicit trafficking in antiquities appeared to me as a way to expand on transnational criminology (Friedrichs, 2007)¹, a perspective which I found essential for the contemporary understanding of the occurrence of cross-border crimes.

For these reasons, I decided to focus this project on the organisational dimensions of the illicit trafficking at issue. The organisational perspective developed from the fact that, as outlined in Chapter 2 dedicated to the literature and the theoretical underpinnings of the thesis, to the wide consensus on the transnational reach of this illicit trafficking, which is coupled with the heterogeneity of criminal offences linked to it, does not correspond a similar agreement on its architecture. The research then refined to assume a comparative stance addressing the similarities and

¹ Transnational forms of crime are addressed in criminology following three approaches. *Transnational criminology*, which is primarily interested in the analysis of cross-border forms of criminality and the transnational character of many crimes, including the illicit trafficking in antiquities; *international criminology*, which focuses on the criminological aspects of international crimes, such as crimes against humanity; *global criminology*, which looks at the effects of globalisation on crime and criminal justice (Friedrichs, 2007: 6-7).

differences of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in two countries, namely Bulgaria and Italy.

1.4. Relevance of research in illicit antiquities

Clearly, archaeologists have faced the issue of illicit antiquities well before the involvement of law enforcement agencies and criminologists. Not only have they first-hand knowledge of looted sites (Bowman Balestrieri, 2018), especially in case of ongoing archaeological excavations, they can also interpret the shifts in trends in the market. Similarly, archaeologists have the expertise to assess the originality of artefacts over excellent fakes. In the ten-year period comprised between the 1950s and the 1960s, for instance, the international market was overflowed with Cycladic figurines, of which the majority was previously unknown and came without any provenance documentation. Archaeologists have now established that these figurines are fakes, introduced in the market after modern art movements became fascinated by the simplicity of this figures (Brodie, 2005: 1056).

The debate on illicit antiquities has recently gained momentum and it is increasingly examined by criminologists, legal practitioners, NGO's and international organisations. Several reasons explain the interest towards the illicit trade under consideration: the perceived emergency that the world's cultural heritage is now facing, along with the acknowledgement that illicit trafficking is as detrimental to culture as its destruction during conflicts; the extensive and systematic looting in the past decades; and the involvement of organised crime in the market.

For centuries, the pillage of art in times of conflicts has been a consolidated practice. Only the massive damages caused to cultural heritage during World War II

brought international powers to agree on the future safeguards of historical buildings and cultural venues, as demonstrated by the signature of the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of an Armed Conflict* (UNESCO, 1954). Conflicts in Cambodia, former Yugoslavia and more recently in Afghanistan, Iraq, North Africa and Syria have nonetheless highlighted that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is intertwined with wars. To prove the point, it is worth mentioning that over the years the International Council of Museums (ICOM) has issued Red Lists to classify the endangered archaeological objects in vulnerable areas of the world. Since 2000, seventeen publications have brought to the attention of the public the problem of illicit trafficking in cultural objects worldwide, including West Africa, Latin and Central America, China, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Middle Eastern countries. The latest Red List is focused on Yemeni antiquities (ICOM, 2018).

On this background, the study of illicit antiquities has flourished. There is a general consensus by part of criminologists and archaeologists that antiquities' looting has reached a global dimension and that artefacts clandestinely excavated enter the market in unprecedented proportions (Chippindale and Gill; 2000; Brodie et al., 2001; Chippindale et al., 2001). The consequences of such systematic spoliation are widespread and harmful. In the words of Coggins, the first archaeologist to publicly draw attention on the topic at issue, looting amounts to "the wholesale destruction of the remains of a number of ancient civilisations and primitive culture" (Coggins, 1972: 263). Apart from the permanent loss of archaeological knowledge, experts warn about other problems linked to the illicit trafficking of antiquities. First, artefacts themselves can be damaged, especially when they are broken in pieces to facilitate the smuggling and the sale; second, technological advances are fuelling this criminal activity. Although digging remains at the core of looting, bulldozers, metal detectors, prop

wash deflectors (Brodie, 2003: 14) facilitate the discovery of unknown cultural goods, while cutting down the time needed to excavate. In a similar way, helicopters, deep-sea diving equipment, all-terrain vehicles have granted looters access to previously inaccessible areas (ibid.). Experts suggested how extensive looting could leave only few archaeological sites undisturbed (Bruhns et al, 2002; Brodie and Renfrew, 2005), while in some cases, sites have been destroyed (Elia, 1997). Over the 1990s and mid-2000s, for instance, the archaeological site of Rataria, situated in northern Bulgaria, has been extensively ransacked by looters and almost disappeared (Luka, 2012). On the positive side, however, it is important to stress that new discoveries still enrich the world's archaeological heritage². Third, the sale of antiquities on the Internet is universally recognised as a serious problem (INTERPOL et al., 2007), whose alarming growth poses concerns over the traceability of the purchases.

The illicit trafficking is facilitated by two intrinsic traits of antiquities, namely their availability (Borodkin, 1995; McManamon and Morton, 2000; Adler and Polk, 2002; Gerstenblith, 2007; Mackenzie, 2011) and fungibility (Renfrew, 1995; Caruthers, 1998; Chanen, 2006; Ciotti Galletti, 2004), that makes them easy targets³. In the context of this study, availability refers to the existence of a well-established legitimate market in antiquities, which allows illicit artefacts to be sold legally. The key issue, therefore, is how to differentiate between a licit and an illicit antiquity. Provenance represents the only way to prove the licit origin of cultural goods. Before the 20th century, indeed, collecting antiquities was a respectable business and encouraged by the prestige associated with the ownership of rare and valuable

² In 2016 only, in Cyprus have been discovered a 4th century A.C. mosaic, a 9th millennium B.C. village, and 3,500 years old tomb (Crew, 2016; Hadjicostis, 2016; Bohstrom, 2016), while in Cambodia archaeologists have found multiple undocumented medieval cities (Dunston, 2016; Evans, 2016).

³ Availability and fungibility are characteristics that antiquities share with numerous commodities, both legal and illegal. Money is the prototypical good to be fungible and widely available (Berg, 2018), however the same applies to illicit drugs.

antiquities (Christian, 2002; Rosenstein, 2009). Systematic collection of antiquities emerged in the early Renaissance in Rome and Italy (Rosenstein, 2009: 70) to extend across Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries (ibid.). Legislations protecting cultural heritage and prohibiting the illegal trade were initially adopted in the early 20th century (Adler and Polk, 2002); thus, artefacts discovered when the removal was considered legitimate fall within the category of licit antiquities. Problems arise when archaeological pieces surface the market without provenance, previous scholarly publication or museums' inventories (Gill and Chippendale, 1993: 623). In this case, it is extremely difficult to prove either the legal or illegal origin.

The other characteristic is the fungibility of archaeological artefacts: they are indistinguishable from others of their kinds. Consider, for instance, a number of stolen roman coins. When they appear on the market, they cannot be easily identified as illicit objects. It may be impossible to retrace the country where the coins have been found, as the Roman empire covered a vast geographical area escaping the design of contemporary national borders; they probably would not present any sign of looting activities, such as soil's trace; and it might be difficult to determine how long the coins have been in the international market. The majority of illicit antiquities share these dilemmas (Gerstenblith, 2004). Hence, it is not a surprise that the criminological literature unanimously defines the antiquities trade as a *grey market* (Bowman, 2008: 227-228), as the fungible nature of artefacts makes it difficult to differentiate between licit and illicit object, while the legal status of antiquities varies due to temporal and procedural shifts.

Based on what has been said in the previous paragraph, antiquities not only are easy targets, they fall within the criminological concept of *suitable target* (Ojedokun, 2012; Dietzler, 2013; Shelley, 2017; Fabiani, 2018). According to the routine activity

approach, suitable targets are objects, persons or places, characterised by the following features: they are concealable, removable, available, enjoyable and disposable (Clarke, 1999).

Antiquities are concealed by nature and can remain unnoticed from the moment of looting to the final purchase. Indeed, they are found underground, where they lied for centuries; if an antiquity is looted from an unknown archaeological site, the concealment is complete for no public record of the discovery will reveal the existence of the object. Moreover, the majority of smuggled antiquities have small dimensions and are fragmented, in that facilitating not only the concealement, but also the transfer from the original site to the final selling location. Again, with reference to the example of the stolen roman coins, they can easily avoid detection being hidden in pockets, bags or underneath a car seat. Antiquities are concealable for their fungible nature too, especially if they do not exhibit signs of illicit excavations or removal.

As mentioned above, antiquities are available in high number. Furthermore, they are easily removable. A shovel and a metal detector are often enough for treasure hunters, looters and tomb raiders and even thefts in churches and museums require only a good organisation, rather than professional or technical training in archaeology. Although archaeological sites are known and visible, the lack of control makes them accessible. There are several areas where archaeological excavations are suspended or have not yet started, which entails the possibility for looters to remove plenty of antiquities undisturbed. In 2014, for instance, an extended nuragic necropolis in south Sardinia, Italy, started to be targeted by looters as soon as the official excavation were stopped for a lack of funding that also entailed the absence of surveillance and illumination at night (Pinna, 2014). Artefacts are extremely valuable for all the actors involved, from looters to dealers, to collectors. As evidence demonstrate, the price of

antiquities increases after each stage in the market; looters might be paid less than one percent of the final price (Brodie, 2004: 132). Cultural goods, however, are sought in the market not just for their financial value (Stevenson, 2017), rather their intrinsic cultural and symbolic value (Nemeth, 2007; Koush, 2011). As pointed out by Conklin (1994), the significance of antiquities, in terms of economic and symbolic value, is socially construed by the interplay among the same actors, from archaeologists to collectors. Archaeologists' role in the antiquities market is ambiguous. They bring artefacts to the wider public attention, however, studies and publications on unprovenanced artefacts "might legitimize and even provide commercial support" (Brodie, 2011: 413) to the market, with the effect of promoting the demand for licit and illicit antiquities. The contemporary international art market, that capitalises on the symbolic nature of the artefacts "through the commodification and recontextualization of cultural objects" (Yates et al, 2017: 2), is the domain of collectors, museums and auction houses, which further inflate the social attractiveness and the prices of antiquities through collections, exhibitions and expensive purchases (Conklin, 1994: 33; Koush, 2011; Yates et al, 2017; Stevenson, 2017). In 2007, for instance, the Guennol Lioness was sold by Sotheby's auction house for 57,2 million dollars to a private British collector, making this statue the most expensive antiquity ever sold (Fernández, 2011). In the early 1990s, an international auction house was established in Beijing, rising the interest in artefacts. In the next three years, two hundred among auction houses and areas dedicated to antiquities selling were established, and at the same time illicit excavations, looting and antiquities trade increased throughout China (Shuzhong, 2001: 19). The above described process resembles a vicious circle: the high prices reached in the market stimulate the looting of archaeological sites, while the availability of antiquities increases the number of

objects sold illegally, which in turn amplify their values. Thus, antiquities are highly disposable.

1.5. The approach of the thesis

Despite the fact that criminological research on the illicit trafficking in antiquities is relatively new, there is a widespread consensus on several of its features. This illicit trade captures the attention of criminologists for its transnational nature, which is coupled with the complex character in terms of both typologies of crimes and actors involved. Moreover, technological, political, social and economic changes worldwide make the illicit trafficking in antiquities highly attractive to criminals – both individuals and groups, both local and transnational – who takes advantage of international mobility and legislative loopholes (Dietzler, 2013). Yet, there is an enduring challenge to characterise the dynamics of the social organisation and the organisational forms of the illicit trafficking in antiquities for its observable elements have proved to be incredibly variable.

Given that the social organisation of organised and cross-border crime is one of the key lines of inquiry in criminology, it is possible to group the literature on this topic along two main perspectives.

The first refers to the interconnections among people that result in networks of social relations, which can take the shape of groups of people that are part of the same community, such as in the case of friends or colleagues, or that of unsystematic relations of individuals who do not belong to a same group or organisation but take part in a joined activity, as in the example of a customer and seller in a shop (Best and

Luckenbill, 1994). This approach focuses on the organisation of deviants and criminals, which have been portrayed as being part of small teams, flexible gangs or well-established groups (McCord and Conway, 2002; Sarnecki, 2004). Co-offending patterns among criminals have also been researched, an approach that is primarily linked to the analysis of actors' dynamics within illicit goods trafficking. Predominantly based on studies on drug and human trafficking and smuggling, the roles of actors have been categorised depending on which criminal activities they pursue and the division of labour among their ranks (McIntosh, 1975; Best and Luckenbill, 1994; Passas, 2002; Zhang and Chin, 2003; Young, 2008). Furthermore, membership's characteristics have been analysed in terms of age, race and criminal career (Reiss, 1986; Campbell, 1990; Thornberry et al., 1993; DeLisi et al., 2004).

The second perspective applies the approach of social organisation to the criminal activities. As such, it analyses the organisational forms of crime, or in other words the patterns through which the relations among individuals and social groups are expressed. The configurations that social relations can take are numerous, from informal groups to social networks to highly structured groups. In this respect, transnational crimes have been extensively addressed in the past decades, with a particular emphasis on human smuggling and trafficking (Aronowitz, 2001; Shelley, 2010b; Campana and Varese, 2016), drug trafficking (Williams, 1998; Natarajan, 2000; Calderoni, 2012), illicit trade in motor stolen vehicles (Clarke and Brown, 2003; Bruinsma and Bernasco, 2004) and, recently, illicit cigarette smuggling (von Lampe, 2011a), wildlife trafficking (Lavorgna, 2014; Cao, 2017) and trafficking in weapons (Orlov, 2004). Organised crime groups are generally divided among hierarchies, networks and hybrid forms (Cressey, 1969; Williams, 2001; von Lampe, 2004; Albanese, 2014). Hierarchical model identifies a formal structure that display strong

leadership, a chain of authority and applies violent and coercive methods to maintain the power. Networks, on the other hand, follow an approach where criminal activities are shaped based on the social and transactional relations of the actors (Kleemans and de Poot, 2008). The argument supported by network scholars is that transnational organised crime in its contemporary form is better depicted as operating through “overlapping and interrelated social relationship” (Heber, 2009: 2). Scholars, however, highlight that the changing nature of organised crime organisational forms is an ongoing process. Therefore, the structures vary according to the nature of crime and the regions where criminal activities are perpetrated (Shelley, 1999; Williams and Godson, 2002). While examining the physiognomy of these criminal markets, studies investigate their geographical breadth and their level of complexity. As such, along with the transnational perspective scholars have developed a *glocal* point of view, which maintains that the dynamics of criminal relations at local level have an impact on the ways criminal activities are shaped globally (Hobbs, 1998; Longo, 2010). Moreover, all these studies touched upon one recurring issue within the organised crime literature, namely the connections between the activities and the shape of transnational organised crime groups (von Lampe, 2016). What emerges from these perspectives on the organisation of crime and criminals is the diversity of organisational configurations through which criminality is performed. This conceptual framework is most suitable to examine the types of social relations that occur in the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the forms of criminal association that best apply to it.

1.6. Significance and scope of the study

The objective of this thesis is to develop a better understanding of the organisational dynamics of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Studies on this illicit trade have developed only marginally along the discourse on organised crime, with little efforts to apply the approaches on the organisation of criminals, criminal activities and criminal structures. Therefore, this study provides an analytical exploration of the actors involved in the core activities related to the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the organisational structure it assumes in Bulgaria and Italy. The two countries have been selected for several reasons. First, they share similarities in terms of archaeological heritage. Both Italy and Bulgaria, in fact, have archaeological sites that span from prehistoric settlements to roman and medieval cities (Fortier, 1974; Grassigli et al., 2008; Thorpe, 2012; Pavlov, 2013; Ivanov, 2014; Luka, 2014; Augenti, 2016; Nikolov, 2016; Ivanov and Luka, 2017; IIPP, 2018). Moreover, due to the rich archaeological heritage they share the problems of illicit excavations and looting. Bulgaria has an established tradition of treasure hunters as much as Italy (Isman, 2009; Dikov, 2016c) and the selling of illicit artefacts and fakes through auctions and online dedicated websites is a common factor. Third, Italy and Bulgaria have both specialised police units dealing with crimes against the art, and with looting and antiquities trafficking in particular. Although in Italy the most known law enforcement agency in this field is the Heritage Protection Unit of the Carabinieri, also the Guardia di Finanza (the Financial Police) has a unit responsible of investigating and recovering antiquities. Bulgaria counts a specialised section in the Chief Directorate Combating Organised Crime, which only investigates the cases of illicit trafficking in antiquities where organised crime is involved, and a second specialised unit in the National Police, which deals with all the remaining cases (I4; I13). Fourth, both countries have been the objects of research and reports on the illicit trafficking at

issue. Bulgaria has been examined in a few research (CSD, 2007; Campbell, 2013; Brodie, 2015b) and several media news report. The only detailed analysis of the antiquities market in the country has been produced by the Center for the Study of Democracy (2007). In this study, the market for antiquities is described as divided between a domestic and an international component, with a focus on the laws and regulations adopted in the country up to 2007. It also delineated a sequence of activities limited to four main offences: looting, acting as middleman, trans-border trafficking and market state sale (ibid.: 181). On the media side, a well-known account of the looting of Rataria has been investigated by a journalist (O'Shea, 2009). Compared to the case of Bulgaria, the Italian market for illegally excavated antiquities has attracted far more attention (Watson and Todeschini, 2007; Isman, 2009; Marín-Aguilera, 2012; Raffiotta, 2013; D'Ippolito, 2014; Balcells Magrans, 2018). Such research, however, have been focused mainly on high-level and public cases. In particular, scholarly and investigative journalist literature has concentrated the attention on the so-called "Medici Conspiracy" (Watson and Todeschini, 2007), a three chains network of looters, collectors and art dealers responsible for supplying illicitly excavated artefacts from Italy to auction houses, museums and collectors in several countries in Europe and in the United States of America. The investigation on the network, ran by Italian dealers Medici, Becchina and Savoca and headed by antique dealer Hect (Brodie, 2012b), implicated also the Curator of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum and major antiquities dealers in the United Kingdom, United States, Switzerland and Greece. The story has been extensively investigated by journalists (Watson and Todeschini, 2007; Isman, 2009, 2011a, 2017; Vernon, 2009; French and Frammolino, 2011), media reports (Isman, 2011b; RAI, 2018; Volpe, 2018) and the academic community (Gill and Tsirogiannis, 2011; D'Ippolito, 2014;

Ferri, 2014; Gill and Tsirogiannis, 2016; Tsirogiannis, 2016). Other research has examined the figure of the *tombaroli* and their relations with the illicit antiquities market (Balcells Magrans, 2018). These studies and reports have the merit to have paid attention to an understudied illicit trafficking in Italy and in Bulgaria. However, the narrow pool of sources has the consequence of limiting the interpretation of the nature of this illicit trafficking. Indeed, they tend to address the transnational structure of the market in antiquities, while neglecting the domestic side of the illicit trafficking in archaeological artefacts. Ultimately, the aim of this research is to contribute expanding on the cumulative body of knowledge on the illicit trafficking at issue, focusing in a comprehensive way on the criminal activity per se.

How and to what extent is the illicit trafficking in antiquities socially organised in Bulgaria and Italy? What organisational forms does it present in these two countries? In order to untangle these underlying questions, several sub-theses need to be analysed, which include the understanding of the actors involved, their roles within the illicit market analysed and their relational patterns, and the identification of the elements necessary to commit this sophisticated criminal activity.

The emphasis on the social organisation allows to analyse the weight and significance of the criminal actors and activities prevailing in the transnational illicit antiquities trade; how and where artefacts are looted, transported, stored and exchanged; what are the contemporary shapes of the illicit trafficking at issue in Bulgaria and Italy; and, in turn, its complexity and level of professionalization. Indeed, the more relations among the actors are complex, the more a criminal organisation becomes sophisticated.

This research applies a comparative perspective in order to gain a more exhaustive understanding of the criminal commission process and how the illicit

trafficking in antiquities is structured. Going beyond the mere description of case studies, a comparison between Italy and Bulgaria helps achieving a deeper insight into aspects linked to the chain of illicit trafficking, both at local and transnational level. Interpreting the organisational features of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in different contexts has the potential to reach a more refined conceptualisation of the activity in its own.

1.7. Outline of the dissertation

Chapter One has introduced and explained the approach of the dissertation on the illicit trafficking in antiquities and its scope.

Chapter Two is dedicated to reviewing the theoretical framework. This study relies upon two main bodies of literature. The first analyses how social organisational paradigms have been conceptualised and applied to serious and organised forms of crime, whereas the second addresses the prevailing traits of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the way they characterise it as a complex criminal activity. By juxtaposing these two approaches, the literature review clearly highlights that systematic analyses of the illicit trafficking in antiquities through the lenses of the social organisation are still at their infancy. The chapter concludes by explicitly addressing the hypotheses inspiring this study and the research questions guiding it.

Chapter Three delineates the methodological choices and the research design. In particular, the chapter presents the qualitative perspective adopted to study the illicit trafficking in antiquities as well as the rationale of the two selected case studies, Bulgaria and Italy. Following the description of data collection methods, the chapter defines the tool used to analyse the data, namely crime script analysis. A crime script

tailored to the illicit trafficking in antiquities is also illustrated. A section is dedicated to outline the limits of the research.

Chapter Four embodies the analytical core of the research and presents the results of the study. While the first part describes the crime-commission process of the illicit trafficking in antiquities by using the crime script scheme, the second section examines the social organisation of the actors involved in the illicit trade at issue in Bulgaria and Italy.

Chapter Five concludes the dissertation by discussing the main findings of the study and further highlighting the significance of the research.

Chapter 2

The organisation of serious crime and the illicit trafficking in antiquities: A literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the scholarly literature on the social organisation of crime as it relates to serious and organised crime and on the illicit trafficking in antiquities. It is divided in four parts. The first section considers the issues associated with the understanding of the nature of serious and organised crime. It identifies the current stage in the literature on what is meant by organised crime and what are the reasons at the basis of the difficulties in describing it. It further addresses the situational approach to the study of organised crime, whose analytical methodology underpins chapter 3, which is dedicated to the process of data collection and analysis. The section also highlights how situational crime prevention ties with the theoretical framework of this research. The second part of the chapter discusses the social organisation of crime as theoretical framework for examining how social organisational paradigms have been conceptualised and applied to serious and organised forms of crime. The section follows an approach that proceeds from theories to models of organised crime. The third section address the principal features of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the way they characterise it as a complex criminal activity. The chapter concludes by explicitly addressing the hypothesis inspiring this study and the research questions guiding it.

By reviewing these bodies of literature, the chapter correlates the dynamics and the empirical manifestations of the illicit trafficking in antiquities with the multi-faceted debate on the organisation of crimes.

2.2 Difficulties in the understanding of the nature of serious and organised crime

It is a well-established fact that serious and organised crime has so far escaped the efforts to provide a unique, all-rounded and universally accepted definition of it. On the contrary, commentaries and interpretations on the meaning, the nature and the evolution of organised and composite forms of criminality are so diverse that debates on the topic have flourished within the academic and policy circles. As clearly pointed out by Longo and colleagues (2010: 15), the problem does not consist in a lack of definitions as hundreds of them have been formulated, which vary according to the legal, sociological, historical or political perspective they follow. In his endeavour to systematise the knowledge on organised crime, for instance, criminologist Klaus von Lampe collected over 170 definitions of serious and organised crime in his blog⁴.

Several reasons can explain this trend. First, a primary cause of such profusion is the complexity of the phenomenon (Shelley, 2010a). Indeed, what is labelled under the *umbrella term* (von Lampe, 2004: 108) of organised crime encompasses diverse range of activities, which include completely illegal and clandestine enterprises as well as semi-legal businesses. The production and selling of cocaine differ from the intentional tax evasion of a company pursued within a legal tax credit scheme. Similarly, the term organised crime identifies different organisational concepts ranging from the so-defined traditional Italian Mafia-like type to loosen criminal cartels. The

⁴ von Lampe, <http://organized-crime.de/organizedcrimedefinitions.htm>.

description of the American Cosa Nostra families made by Cressey (1969, 1972) reflected a highly structured, hierarchical organisation, a perspective that is often declined by scholars who recognise a shift of contemporary forms of organised crime towards flexible networks (Kleemans and van de Bunt, 1999; McIllwain, 1999; Williams, 2001; Morselli, 2009a; Benson and Decker, 2010; Malm, Bichler and Nash, 2011; Campbell, 2013).

Second, yet a consequence of the unbounded meaning of organised crime, criminological literature on the topic is extensive, although unsystematic. Studies on single criminal businesses that focus on how activities are perpetrated, such as money laundering (Gilmour, 2014), developed side by side with research on the interactions among deviant and criminal actors (Coles, 2001; Passas, 2002; Tjihuis, 2006; Tenti and Morselli, 2014). Moreover, as recently highlighted by von Lampe, a growing part of literature has included in the notion of organised crime the “concentration of illegitimate power in the hands of criminals” (von Lampe, 2016: 27). Although the concept is not new for its commonality with the definition of the Italian Mafia and its control over the territory (Arsovska, 2014; Sergi, 2017), it has nevertheless expanded to be understood as a form of “illegal governance” (von Lampe, 2016: 206). Within the academic literature, the idea that organised crime groups exercise a monopolised control over a geographically outlined territory is entrenched in the notion of *power vacuum* that criminal organisations fill (Gambetta, 1993; Fiorentini, 2000; Skaperdas, 2001: 174; Kumar and Skaperdas, 2008; von Lampe, 2016). This approach appears most appropriate in the cases of countries in political and economic transition, and weak and failed states (West, 2006; Williams, 2009; Kupertadze, 2012). Despite some common features, these two concepts originated from distinct traditions. Whilst countries in transition have been studied from a political economy perspective and

refer specifically to the democratisation process of former communist countries (Fischer and Sahay, 2000; Svenjar, 2002; Hare, 2001), the notion of state fragility is connected to the development and state-building frameworks (Osaghae, 2007; Sogge, 2008; OECD, 2010; Ingram, 2010) and encompasses different degrees of fragility. It might be the case of 'weak states', which do have a state apparatus but suffer of breaks in security and legitimacy; of 'failing states', where the incapacity of a government to gain economic growth goes hand in hand with critical relations with its citizens; and of 'failed states', which configures the collapse of the central government (Mcloughlin, 2012: 10-11). Be it a fragile state or a country in transition, they show elements that facilitate the infiltration of organised crime in the social fabric and in the economy. Criminogenic effects of economic and political changes have long been associated with increasing criminal power. Privatisation of state-owned companies and functions, and incomplete economic reforms have been correlated with growing levels of criminality and widespread corruption (Lotspeich, 1995; Rose Ackermann, 1997: 31; Los, 2003). The impact of serious and organised crime as illegal power has been analysed in several occasions, usually in the context of countries with a historical presence of organised crime activities and groups such as Italy (Sciarrone, 2010; Arlacchi, 2007; Gambetta, 1993), the Balkan region (Anastasijevic, 2006), Russia (Briquet and Favarell-Garrigues, 2010; Varese, 2011) and South American countries (Garay-Salamanca and Salcedo-Albaran, 2012). Except for Italy, the other examples either fall within the definition of transition countries or come closer to that of fragile or failed states. The common trait, however, is that organised crime takes advantage of the eroded legitimacy and functioning of state institutions and succeeds in providing security and other public services (Grossman, 1995; Skaperdas, 2011; von Lampe and Johansen, 2004). In this extreme case, illegal governance might go beyond the

provision of illegal goods and services and envisage the replacement of a government by part of “quasi-governmental structures” (von Lampe, 2016: 208).

Third, further difficulties in defining the nature of serious and organised crime arise not only from the different forms it can assume, but also from the fact that it exists on several levels – at least, domestic and global – and it adapts to the features of the country in which it operates. The emphasis on its transnational and global reach has encouraged research on organised and cross-border crime in different geographical contexts. On the one hand, scholars have paid more attention to previously less considered criminal groups. Notable examples are the last-decade studies on the Jakuza (Harnischmacher, 1997; Hill, 2003, 2004; Storti, 2004; Adelstein, 2010; Siniawer, 2012) and the increased consideration of organised crime presence in the African continent (Blum, 2016; Shaw and Reitano, 2013) and in South East Asia (Broadhurst and Le, 2012). On the other hand, criminologists have examined the diffusion of foreign organised criminal groups into a country criminal underworld. The organisation of criminal groups based on ethnicity has been investigated in many European countries, such as the Netherlands (Bovenkerk et al, 2003; Kleemans, 2004; Brady, 2007; Kleemans and van de Bunt, 2011) and Germany (von Lampe, 2002; Kinzig and Luczak, 2004; BKA, 2014). In Italy, for example, the last fifteen years witnessed the establishment of Albanese, Nigerian, Chinese and Russian organised crime (Ruggiero, 2000; Varese, 2006, 2011, 2012; Becucci, 2011; Ingrassi, 2015; DIA, 2017).

Elaborating on the multi-level nature of contemporary organised crime, scholars have coined the idea of *glocal*, rather than exclusively global or native organised criminality. The term refers to the involvement of local organised criminal actors in global criminal activities (Hobbs, 1998; Hobbs and Dunnighan, 2002; Longo, 2010:

26-27; Sergi and Lavorgna, 2016; Fijnaut, 2016). In particular, advocates of this interpretation maintain that studies on organised crime should not underrate the importance of local criminal dynamics in shaping the transnational criminal contexts. Often the actors involved in the illicit trafficking of goods are not powerful transnational organised crime bosses, rather low-level criminals or opportunistic participants who exploit “new entrepreneurial based arenas” (Hobbs, 1998: 409), including the blurring line between legal and illegal trades. Debates on the glocal, global or local essence of organised crime, however, seem to lose their priority when illegal transactions are carried out in the online domain. The Internet is exploited by groups that operate exclusively online as well as by traditional groups that use it to facilitate the commission of material crimes (Choo, 2008; Choo and Smith, 2008). Since the Internet is a space without boundaries – either physical or temporal – the fact that crimes can be committed through it and within it arises questions on to whether organised criminal activities should be considered as transnational, domestic or if an entire new category needs to be developed. A crucial, still debated issue considers whether organised crime has only broadened its scope of activities or it should be considered a new virtual type of crime (McCusker, 2006: 257; Lavorgna, 2015).

Finally, in the debate about what is meant by organised crime it should be stressed that definitions differ from each other due to the goals they endorse. As pointed out by von Lampe, “[a] lot of the confusion in the debate can be explained by the failure to realize that there are different ways to conceptualize organized crime and that each approach can lead to different understandings and assessments of the very same situation” (2016: 34). Organised crime has been studied from sociological, criminological and legal points of view. The first two disciplines look at the evolution of social and deviant phenomena over time and places and their practical

manifestations, hence their notion of organised crime detects changes in its nature before a legal crystallised definition does. In this regard, an example is set by Armao, who interpreted organised crime in terms of sequences of types that differs depending on historical and geographical situations:

“starting from organized crime in the sense of a group of individuals who are together to commit crimes of different types (such as robberies, drug-pushing, etc.), even on a transnational basis; then moving on to crime syndicates as well-structured criminal groups with different hierarchical roles devoted to the search for profits, acting first of all as entrepreneurs; and finally at the other end of the continuum mafia, as the most specialized criminal groups, also using politics (i.e. the control of a territory) to obtain politics” (Armao, 2003: 25-26).

The legal framework favours the cataloguing of fixed elements that are generally applicable to similar contexts and that permit to pursue criminal proceedings. At supranational level, both the United Nations and the European Union have made an effort to provide a legal definition, with the ultimate aim of harmonising the legislation of as many as possible countries (Calderoni, 2010). The main policy and judicial instruments are the 2000 Convention against Organized Crime and the 2008 Framework Decision, adopted respectively by the United Nations and the European Union. While the first defines organised crime through the criminal group lenses as

“[...] a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit” (UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2004, Art. 2, lett. a))

the EU Council Framework Decision closely follows it, stating that:

“‘criminal organisation’ means a structured association, established over a period of time, of more than two persons acting in concert with a view to committing

offences which are punishable by deprivation of liberty or a detention order of a maximum of at least four years or a more serious penalty, to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit” (art. 1, 1)

Therefore, the gist of these definitions lies in a model of formal, structured organisations being active over an established period of time. Apart from the legal and policy necessity that has brought the UN Convention against Organized Crime to become the primary source in the definitional debates on transnational organised crime, they have been criticised for their general nature. Calderoni, for instance, argued that the EU Framework Decision presents such vague notions of criminal group and temporal criteria to endanger the process of law harmonisation. Indeed, Member States would need to further define the meaning of structured criminal groups in the national legislation resulting in critical difference among countries (Calderoni, 2008: 274-275).

In a nutshell, organised criminality encompasses multiple, polymorphic criminal situations that span from drugs and cultural properties trafficking to financial frauds, from the infiltration in the legitimate business economy to kidnapping for ransom. Hence, the concept of organised crime is itself elusive (Paoli and Fijnaut, 2004: 41) and what to include within its definition becomes “a matter of choice and a matter of convenience” (von Lampe, 2016: 26).

The situational approach to the study of organised crime

A consolidated approach endorsed in criminology to come to a less debatable and evasive concept of organised crime is to focus on basic dimensions of it, in particular the *who* and the *how* (Clarke, 2009; Felson and Clarke, 2012). The latter

pertains to the study of the criminal activities that are carried out, while the first concentrates on the actors involved in crimes and their roles, either as perpetrators, enablers or targets of the criminal conducts (Edwards and Levi, 2008: 373)

Situational crime prevention is a criminological perspective that follows this approach by focusing on “a detailed analysis of criminal events and criminal activities” (Kleemans et al., 2012: 87) rather than paying attention to the underlying reasons why offenders acted criminally. It is a crime control standpoint underpinned by environmental criminology, that is a composite theoretical framework fundamentally concerned with the crimes per se rather than criminal behaviour (Sidebottom and Wortley, 2016: 157). As the name itself suggests, environmental criminology looks at the sets of physical, geographic, legal and social conditions that favour or hinder the creation of exploitable criminogenic effects (Brantingham and Brantingham, 1981: 7). Together with situational crime prevention, it elaborates on three “opportunity theories” (Felson and Clarke, 1998: 4), which are considered the building blocks of these approaches: routine activity theory, crime pattern theory and rational choice theory. Although they vary in the level of “aggregation at which environmental influences are examined, running from macro-, through meso-, to micro-analysis” (Sidebottom and Wortley, 2016: 161), these theories all see in opportunities the cause of crime. Routine activity seeks to explain how daily configuration of social relations generates crime opportunities and states that for “[a crime] to occur there must be a convergence in time and space of [...] a likely offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian⁵” (Felson and Clarke, 1998: 4). Crime pattern theory relates the physical and spatial distribution of crime to

⁵ According to the approach taken by routine activity theory, a capable guardian is an actor that deters a potential crime with his presence while making it more likely by his absence (Felson, 1995: 53). Capable guardians do not have to be necessarily human actors, as in the case of CCTVs.

the everyday activities of offenders and victims that may connect them, including commuting to work or using public transport (ibid.: 6; Bullock et al., 2010: 2). In other words, it suggests that offenders would be more likely to commit a crime within a familiar area because they possess in-depth knowledge about targets, possibilities and the presence or not of guardians (Sidebottom and Wortley, 2016: 163). Finally, rational choice theory focuses on the decision-making process of the offender. It assumes that the choice to commit a crime is based on a benefit that the offender is expected to obtain and that considerations on time, efforts and risks affect the offender's decision (Felson and Clarke, 1998: 7; Clarke, 1980: 138).

Drawing on the intertwined conceptual framework emerging from these three opportunities theories, situational crime prevention has developed four main assumptions (Clarke, 2009: 262-263). First, "crime is [a real] act" (ibid.: 262) that only emerge from the interaction between a motivation and a set situation. As such, distancing from traditional criminological theories that explain criminal careers in terms of social, bio-social or psychological characteristics, situational crime prevention focuses on the conditions that enable or stop a crime. Indeed, and this is the second assumption, opportunity plays a role as important as motivation in the engagement in criminal activities (ibid.: 263) and "makes the thief" (Felson and Clarke, 1998). Third, offenders "choose to commit crimes because they believe this will bring them some benefits" (Clarke, 2009: 163), either economical, emotional, pshycological or social. Fourth, all these theories states that a certain combination of cirmcumstances can stimulate crime. The broken windows theory is exemplary in this respect (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). This is a criminological theory assuming that situational factors such as external signs of vandalism, anti-social behaviours and

disorder in a neighbourhood may create physical and social opportunities that will lead people to commit more crimes and more serious ones.

Apart from a conceptual framework, environmental criminology and its cognate approach situational crime prevention offer an analytical methodology for the study of crime, including serious and organised crime. In the first place, they are crime selective, that is they focus on very specific categories of crimes. While addressing illicit trafficking, situational crime prevention would not examine the trafficking of cocaine and the trafficking of weapons simultaneously, because it recognises that each type of illicit trade presents characteristics that may or may not be shared with other typologies. The crime specificity is a general approach applicable to all sort of crimes. However, comparison between two or more sub-types of the same crime family – for instance, the illicit trafficking in wildlife and the illicit trafficking in drugs – can be advantageous in order to pinpoint similar patterns in the organisation or cooperation of cross-border criminal activities that can only be highlighted by comparing events in different settings (von Lampe, 2012). Furthermore, environmental criminology and situational crime prevention try to understand the process by which a crime is construed and perpetrated. To do this, crime has to be reduced to “tangible events, offenders, and specific settings” (Kleemans et al., 2010: 19) that can be analysed separately. This can prove challenging with organised crime for it involves a composite “interplay of complicated criminal actors, equipments, locations, and activities” (Cornish and Clarke, 2002: 42). Not only actors are sophisticated poly-criminals (Edwards, 2016), who expand their interest in a range of diverse criminal acts, but offences are often repeated over time, crystallised in a routine (Cornish and Clarke, 2002; Moreto and Clarke, 2014) and they can complement each other. Moreover, the nature and the scope of criminal organisations influence the level at

which organised criminal activities are perpetrated – local, domestic, regional or international (Cornish and Clarke, 2002: 42). Further, in many forms of organised crime the targets are either absent for these criminal activities are consensual and display degree of cooperation (Kleemans et al, 2012: 89) or not identifiable as victims, as for instance in case of frauds (Benson et al., 2009; von Lampe, 2011b). Critics argue that organised crime differs qualitatively from ordinary predatory crimes committed on the street that lie at the core of the success of situational crime prevention. Illegal markets have a multi-national nature and the illicit trafficking of goods at transnational level involve several countries. Their disruption is an enormous challenge as it necessitates the coordination of law enforcement agencies, local communities and stakeholders in each country, also in order to avoid the illegal trade displacement (Huisman and van Erp, 2013).

Nonetheless, scholars have increasingly recognised the potential of combining the study of organised crime with situational crime prevention (van De Bunt, 2003; Bullock et al., 2010; von Lampe, 2011b; Felson and Clarke, 2012; Natarajan, 2012), with a specific focus on opportunity structures that enable the use of prevention techniques in a more effective way (Kleemans et al., 2012). Examples of the concrete application of situational crime prevention to organised and cross-border crime involve the smuggling of cigarettes, organised timber theft, mortgage frauds, infiltration of the public construction industry, sex trafficking (Bullock et al, 2010), corruption (Rowe et al., 2013; Tunley et al., 2018), white collar crime (Benson and Madensen, 2007) and wildlife crime (Lemieux and Clarke, 2009; Pires and Clarke, 2011). What these studies share is the approach that deconstruct the complexity of organised crime “in order to identify the opportunity structures that are used during their commission” (Bullock et al., 2010: 8). In other words, they aim at identifying the

potential points of intervention by looking at the “immediate physical and social conditions needed for the offence and the wider social arrangements (‘facilitating conditions’) that make the crime possible” (ibid.). Then, situational mechanisms will reduce the rewards and increase the risks by strengthening formal surveillance and extending guardianship (Kleemans et al., 2010; von Lampe, 2010). For instance, to counter the illegal cigarette market von Lampe proposed to harden the surveillance at the border, perhaps with scanners and sniffing dogs, as the merchandise has to be physically transported through borders or raise awareness among property owners about the attractiveness of storing facilities for stocking excise-free tobacco and cigarettes (ibid.: 53). Moreover, all these studies broaden the level of analysis of situational crime prevention so as to be applied to organised crime. In fact, in studying criminal activities that display a high level of sophistication in terms of geography, human and monetary resources, the specificity of situational crime prevention cannot be focused on the “passengers smuggling swallowed “balloons” of cocaine on transnational flights” (Kleemans, 2014: 41), rather it unpacks the sets of events that divide a criminal venture into functionally, spatially and temporally defined episodes which may follow a sequential order (von Lampe, 2011b: 53). The opportunity structures can also be applied to the “convergence settings” (Felson, 2006: 9) of offenders: in this way, it is possible to capture the underlying process of cooperation and organisation of criminals. The settings are places where offenders share information, meet accomplices, get the illicit trafficking started (ibid.).

As for this research project, situational crime prevention becomes useful with regard to this latter approach that looks at the organisation of crime in terms of sequence of criminal events and offender convergence settings. This study, in fact, focuses the discussion on understanding the organisational features of the illicit

trafficking in antiquities, rather than on the the reasons why criminal engage in it and cooperate. Within situational crime prevention, scholars have developed an analytical approach to examine the details of a crime-commission process and, in turn, to “generat[e], organiz[e] and systematiz[e] knowledge about the *procedural aspects* and the *procedural requirements*” (Cornish, 1994: 160, italics in the text) needed to complete a crime. This dissertation uses the crime script perspective as a tool to analyse the data collected for this study in terms of specific events necessary to pursue the illicit trafficking in antiquities. As such, a detailed explanation of crime script is presented in Chapter 3 dedicated to the methodology and the research desing.

2.3 Applying the social organisation perspective

2.3.1 Organised crime, criminals and their organisation

The enquiring and understanding of the structural patterns of complex crimes and criminal organisations, both at local and global level, have long been key perspectives in criminology. The interest in the organisational forms of criminal groups emerged when scholars became concerned with the activities of gangs and disorganised neighbourhoods (Carrington, 2011) as well as with the growing presence of organised criminals in the cities (McIntosh,1975).

Literature on the organisation of crime encompasses a variety of organisational typologies, which vary from mere co-offending decisions to exploiting criminal opportunities, from elaborate criminal schemes to permanent and well-established criminal structures that exercise a monopolistic power on a given illegal market or a territory (Morselli, 2009a: 1). Despite the diversity, all of these organisational forms share the underlying notion that the more criminals cooperate, the easiest will become

the execution of a crime and the more it will add in terms of complexity (Von Lampe, 2016: 4). Although deviant and criminal acts are not necessarily committed by multiple co-offenders, the majority of “criminal activities require a certain degree of collaboration” (Bruinsma and Bernasco, 2004: 79; Morselli, 2009a). This is also the reason why criminologists have not exclusively focused on the ways crimes are organised, but also on the degrees of organisation among criminals.

Given the purpose of this research to systematise the knowledge about one specific type of criminal activity and its organisational form along with the difficulties and the challenges to univocally define composite forms of criminality, the approach hereby followed escapes from definitional issues and prefers to look at the studies that have produced a categorisation of organisational forms of crime and criminals. Indeed, one of the ways to achieve the goal of this study is to see whether among the contemporary organisational approaches to organised crime, there is one that best describes the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Therefore, the following sections focus on how scholars and researchers have approached the issue of the organisation of criminal activities and criminal actors, with a specific lens on the organisation of serious, organised and cross-border criminal acts.

2.3.2 How criminals organise

Several approaches have addressed the social organisation of deviants and criminals.

Following the seminal work of Sutherland on the organisational model of professional thieves (1937), several studies have researched the organisation of criminals, including systematic robbery (Einstadter, 1969) and burglary (Shover, 1972;

Pope, 1980), drug use and drug selling (Zimmerman and Wieder, 1977; Fagan, 1989; Esbensen and Huizinga, 1993; Zhang et al., 1999; Maxwell and Maxwell, 2000; Bellair and McNulty, 2009), juvenile delinquency (McCord and Conway, 2002; Sarnecki, 2004) as well as outlaw motorcycle gangs (Montgomery, 1976; Hopper and Moore, 1983, 1990; Quinn, 2001; Morselli, 2009b; Barker, 2014). While providing insights on single criminal markets and associations, these studies considered the underlying issue on the extent to which forms of organisation follow a centralised or a fragmented pattern of relations (McIntosh, 1976). As such, criminals have been portrayed as being part of small teams based on working contacts, adaptable gangs or well-established groups, whose affiliation fosters delinquency rates (McCord and Conway, 2002; Sarnecki, 2004: 22-25). Furthermore, membership's characteristics have been analysed in terms of age, race and criminal career. Studies on juvenile gangs, for instance, have investigated the correlation between membership to a delinquent group and the patterns of criminal careers over the years, especially in the context of prisons (Reiss, 1986; Thornberry et al., 1993; De Lisi, 2003; De Lisi et al., 2004) as well as the involvement of women in gangs' activities and violence (Hopper and Moore, 1990; Taylor, 1993; Miller and Decker, 2001; Nimmo, 2001).

Another approach to the social organisation of criminals within the criminological literature vastly relied upon the distinction made between the criminal underworld and the legitimate upperworld (McIntosh, 1975; Kelly, 1999; Galeotti, 2001; Van Duyne et al., 2002; Kupatadze, 2010). In this case, the relations between players is commonly understood in terms of belonging to criminal and deviant subcultures in contrast to mainstream, legal society. The criminal underworld is thus identified with a community that provides to its members behavioural codes, slangs, rules, recognition, criminal socialisation and opportunities (McIntosh, 1975: 24-27). It

is historically connected to the phenomenon of urbanisation and poor quarters (von Lampe, 2016: 6; Jacobs and Wright, 2006), although recent studies looked at the manifestation of organised crime groups as prominent, centralising actors in the Asian criminal underworld (Xia, 2006; Kaplan and Dubro, 2012; Lintner, 2016). Organised crime scholars have widened the dichotomy upperworld-underworld by applying it to the political and economic dimension of crime. Organised crime is a dynamic player in legitimate economic activities (Galeotti, 2001: 213). The Italian Mafias reinvest their illegal incomes into conventional businesses and financial ventures (ibid: 164; Savona, 1993; El Siwi, 2018; Transparency International, 2018), although money laundering schemes are not exclusive of traditional organised crime associations. Financial crimes as source and transfer of funds are committed throughout the criminal spectrum: financing terrorism (Reuter and Truman, 2004; Schott, 2006; Croissant and Barlow, 2007; Zdanowicz, 2009; D'Souza, 2012; Masciandaro, 2017; Teichmann, 2018) (Setiono, 2007; Walters, 2010; Madinger and Kinnison, 2011; Rose, 2014), funding maritime piracy (Kraska, 2010; Otto, 2011; Nance and Jakobi, 2012; Gikonyo, 2018) and tax evasion (Wechsler, 2001; Schneider et al.). Moreover, in transitional societies the conventional concept that criminal organised groups infiltrate the legitimate economy and social structures does not fully apply, as organised crime becomes part of it since the beginning of political and economic transitions (Baboun and Schneinost, 2002: 52). In the Czech Republic economic reforms in the 1990s “opened the door to very lucrative opportunities to invest” (ibid.: 44). The combination of a loose legal framework for the privatisation process and the demand for capital created the favourable conditions for the influx of illegal money, especially foreign capital.

The more the economic and financial dimensions present a global character the less strict remains the distinction between upperworld and underworld. Prohibited

commodities and services are brought and sold worldwide by legitimate entities, while actors constantly “prob[e] loopholes and potentials of circumventing regulations” (Van Duynes, 2002: 5). Corruption, and in general the relation between politics and organised crime, also makes the effective distinction between the two worlds minimal. It is possible to distinguish three ways through which organised crime interacts with the wider socio-political context and blurs the line between upperworld and underworld: when organised crime comes to dominate the political system by accumulating resources, controlling the effective use and threat of violence and building highly resilient organisations (Barnes, 2017); when criminalised political elites exert control on the criminal underworld or, to a lesser extent, when types of criminality are organised and pursued by the state – piracy, smuggling, assassinations, criminal conspiracy (Chambliss, 1989); and when organised crime obtain a certain public legitimacy either “nationally, locally or within a specific ethnic, social or religious community” (Galeotti, 2001: 211), thus helps shaping the internal policy-making.

Scholars have further focused on specific forms of co-offending dynamics for one of the main enquiries in the field of organised crime is to untangle social relations among criminals and how these relations shape the criminal organisations and structures (Felson, 2006: 8; von Lampe, 2016: 5). This approach is primarily linked to the understanding of actors’ dynamics within illicit trades. Studies on drug trafficking groups and human trafficking and smuggling flourished, focusing on the roles and division of labour – that is looking at the social organisation of actors (2003). Zhang and Chin, for instance, studied the working relations among Chinese human smugglers. They found that most smugglers started the business out of opportunity and base their relations on temporary, ad hoc business alliances, whereas the figure of one

smugler dominating an entire criminal group was unsubstantiated (ibid.). In a recent research on the illicit trafficking in rhino horns in Vietnam, Young (2018) highlighted that this illegal market defies the requirements sets by the international legal definition of organised crime, since the presence of formal criminal groups is negligible and primary actors are single individuals who rely on the profits to survive. Similarly, Kenney (2007) focused on the ways how Colombian trafficking networks “communicate, coordinate their activities, and make decisions” (ibid.: 233). He described a drug market that deviates from myth of cartels dominating the illicit drug trafficking; instead, “many of these groups formed flat, loosely coupled inter-organisational networks that coordinated their activities when opportunities arose. Embedded within these inter-group networks were social or inter-personal networks among participants that facilitated commerce by creating social relations based on shared identities, trust, and accommodation” (ibid: 258).

Finally, another author who has approached the types of actors’ cooperation is Passas, who considered the interfaces between legal and illegal actors. Drawing on the assumptions that in transnational cross-border crimes many criminal activities are in fact planned by or in agreement with legal actors, Passas developed the concept of *interfaces*, according to which co-offending dynamics between the different actors – either criminal or not, both individuals and organisational – involved in transnational crimes vary based on their relationships (Passas, 2002: 21-25). As such, interfaces can be *antithetical* or *symbiotic*. Whereas the first identify situations where the actors are in competition with each other, symbiotic interfaces are based on actors’ collaboration. He further specified these two broad categories in four antithetical interfaces and six symbiotic ones (ibid.: 21; Passas 2003: 24-27). The antithetical interfaces include *antagonistic* relations, when legal and illegal actors compete against each other in the

same criminal market; *injurious* relations, when an actor damages or harms another in order to eliminate the competition; *parasitical* relations, when one actor extorts another on a regular basis, yet maintains his viability (ibid.: 25); *predatory* relations, when the aim is to terminate a competing legal or illegal business. Symbiotic interfaces are detailed into six sub-types: *outsourcing*, when a legal actor pays an illegal one to pursue criminal activities; *synergy*, when independently organised activities are beneficial to other actors, without them being aware of their illegality; *collaboration*, which entails a durable relations among actors, who knowingly and willingly provide a service to participate in the commission of an offence; *reciprocity*, where actors benefit from each other's activity being aware of their illegal nature; *co-optation*, a form of relations between actors in uneven positions, who however find the contacts advantageous; and *funding*, when legitimate actors provide financial support to criminal actors and groups, either intentionally or not (ibid.: 27).

2.3.3 *Theoretical classificatory schemes: From actors to activity and structures*

Apart from the investigation of the patterns of relations among criminals within single illegal market, scholars have advanced the theoretical understanding of complex crimes by classifying the types of actors' cooperation (Albini, 1971; Cressey, 1969, 1972; McIntosh, 1975; Best and Luckenbill, 1994). The following section overviews the work of some leading scholars, who have laid the foundations to a more systematic conceptualisation of the knowledge on criminal organisation.

Historically, a primary interest within the American criminologists was to define the nature of the U.S. based organised crime. Although the need originated by the entrenched presence of criminal organised groups in the country, scholars widen the

perspective to clarify the degrees and varieties of the most harmful criminal groups, since any form of criminality relies on a certain extent of organisation.

In his book *Criminal Organization: Its Elementary Forms* (1972), Cressey proposed an approach that measured organised crime along two major variables, namely the division of labour and the roles played by members of the groups into the criminal organisation (Cressey, 1972: 11). Based on the assumption that organised crime is “rationally designed to maximize profits by performing illegal services and providing legally forbidden products” (Cressey, 1969: 71), he developed a rational model of organisation where the most successful groups are those showing a higher degree of efficiency in the division of work and a higher number of roles among the members. He conceptualised a sequence of six types of organised crime rings, with at one extreme a group lacking any roles’ differentiation and at the other extreme a formally organised group (Cressey, 1972). He further associated each variety of organisation with corresponding key positions within the sequence. Importantly, these typologies are not dissociated from each other; indeed, in Cressey’s view “the forms of organization at the lower end of the continuum can exist independently of those at the upper end, but they are also present, as subsystems, in the more rational forms” (ibid.: 20). In other words, the most organised, thus successful, criminal organisation would include all the members’ roles.

Starting from the top of the sequence, the first and most rationally organised groups are notable for they include the *commissioner*, which is a coordinating role. Commissioners – whose name derive from the *commission*, a body fulfilling legislative and arbitrate responsibilities – oversee the direction and organisation of all the activities pursued by “a confederation or a cartel” (ibid.: 23) and its sub-chapters. The presence of a commission and its members proves the existence of other

bodies in the criminal organisation that need to be coordinated by a higher authority. Cressey judged this top organisation to be best portrayed by the U.S. based Cosa Nostra (ibid.: 21 and ff). The second position is typified by three roles: the *enforcer*, the *corrupter* and the *corruptee* (ibid.: 27, 32). Often corrupted public officials are not associates of the criminal group but represent “street-level workers” (ibid.: 35), unlike the corrupter. The latter is essential for a complex criminal group for he bribes, negotiates and threatens public officials (ibid.:36) or, generally, whoever provides access to business opportunities and information. The enforcer, however, is the key function of the rational design at this level of criminal organisation. The person tasked with this role, in fact, connects who gives orders to those executing them (ibid.: 38) and maintain the integrity of the group by inflicting the punishments in case rules have been broken. The third variety of organised crime includes only corruptees and corrupters (ibid.: 44). They represent the two sides of the same coins, as the person who actually bribes or influences a law enforcement officer, a businessperson or a member of the legal society only exists as long as people in key official and business occupations accept to be bribed. The so-called *strategic planner* exemplifies the fourth type of organised crime (ibid.: 53) and his responsibility is to identify the tactics that in the long-term will guarantee the continuity and safety of the group. These might include business’ choices, but also creating positions for enforcers and corrupters or deciding whether the use of violence is advantageous or not. Finally, the last two variety of criminal organisation, and the most elementary ones, are the *tactical planner* and the *task force guide* (ibid.: 62, 68). While the former plans the actions and recruits skilled members to carry on a specific crime (ibid.: 72), the latter is the person guiding the criminal group during the commission of the criminal act (ibid.: 73). Cressey himself proposed the example of a small team of two to four pickpockets. The tactical

planner is in charge to selecting the members based on the capabilities and skills they possess that would help completing the crime. He also identifies the potential targets and oversees the allocation of money. Despite his leading function, the tactical planner is not considered the formal boss because of the temporary nature of the criminal association and because he possesses the same criminal skills of the co-offenders (ibid.: 65). The tactical planner can coincide with the task force guide when he also leads the group during the actual pickpocketing.

Cressey looks at the rational sequence in terms of development and maintains that any criminal group could eventually expand the roles, gain complexity and become more rationally organised. Consider a small group of poachers that hunt for animals, such as neo-tropical parrots. They might start as an informal group showing an elementary division of labour, including only a task force guide. Being the business economically rewarding, after a while the group might decide to assign a specific role to each member. Thus, a person might be in charge of finding other species to enlarge the business, maybe even endangered species, another might be looking for appropriate buyers, a third one could bribe a border police officer in order to export the animals or their skins abroad, while the remaining members do the actual hunt. In such a situation, a group gains in complexity and includes a strategic planner, corrupters and corruptees. It also changes its temporary nature to become a stable organisation.

As noted early, Cressey viewed Cosa Nostra as an extremely rational, yet hierarchical and rigidly formal structure (Abadinsky, 2007: 6). Although this perspective has gained strength and consensus within the law enforcement and policy circles, it has been criticised within the academic community. Two studies contemporary to Cressey's work, for instance, supported the image of organised crime

as a criminal network. Ianni' and Ruess-Ianni's extended study on the Luppolo family, part of the Italian-American organised crime in New York, found a networked structure based on consanguinity and shared cultural values (Ianni and Ruess-Ianni, 1972: 108). Similarly, in his work on the American organised crime Albinus argued that it did not resemble "rational hierarchies" (Albinus, 1971: 288), rather it was modelled as a flexible association based on ethnic and community bonds. In Albinus's perspective, organised crime in the U.S. fell within the category of "syndicated crimes", which are characterised by the provision of goods and services (von Lampe, 2016: 47-48) along with several other activities involving the use of violence and white-collar crimes (ibid.: 72).

Cressey's rational approach to classify the degrees of complexity of criminal organisations is directly mentioned by McIntosh in her *The Organisation of Crime* (1975). While applying rationality as explanation for the variety of organisational forms of *professional crimes* (McIntosh, 1975: 18), she also takes into account the social embeddedness of criminal groups and postulates that depending on the social context in which they operate, criminal groups would adjust their organisational tactics (ibid.: 29). She identifies four types of professional crime groups, namely the *picaresque*, *craft*, *project* and *business* organisations (ibid.: 28), which differ in terms of logistical sophistication and criminal complexity.

Picaresque organisations are distinctive of non-urban environments, best described as a gang with a clearly recognised leader and ranking positions. According to McIntosh pirates and brigands are the typical examples of these organisations (ibid.). They live as outlaws, although they have a two-sided relationship with the broader society. On the one hand, both brigands and pirates are often outcasted

members of their community, they rob and attack as a way of living. On the other hand, however, they find shelter by those “local residents [...] opposed to the central government” (ibid.: 30-31), who are not only willing to offer protection, yet they also hire them in order to steal from and pillage elsewhere.

Craft organisations are expression of urban criminality in non-industrial societies. Criminals are individuals who developed fraudulent skills, or crafts in McIntosh terminology, such as pickpocketing, stealing, counterfeiting and cheating (ibid.: 35), and who usually work in small groups where each person specialises in a role (ibid.: 28). A notable difference from the picaresque organisations is the routinisation of the criminal conducts. Indeed, the city setting offers countless opportunities for thieves, burglars and shoplifters: cities are trading and commercial centres where markets, fairs, religious fests and shops flourish along with wealthy inhabitants (ibid.: 35). The routine of crime is also encouraged by the existence of a criminal subculture, one where skills and techniques of crime are improved and taught among criminal groups and over time (ibid.: 36).

Project organisations are well more sophisticated than the previous two types. These criminal groups are embedded in highly developed industrial societies, whose increasing level of production and wealth as well as technical advances brought craft crimes to evolve into less routinised, yet more planned, organised and large-scale criminal projects (ibid.: 28-29, 42). Common project crimes include elaborated robberies, burglaries, frauds and extended smuggling activities. Among the technical advances, McIntosh highlights the improvements in the protection of money and valuables, and the more structured presence of the police and security companies (ibid.: 44). These conditions prompt criminals to select feasible targets and plan the criminal actions in order to minimise the chances of detection.

Finally, *business organisations* are “the largest in scale and the most permanent” (ibid.: 29) criminal groups and they present a hierarchical structure among the members. McIntosh identifies two varieties falling within the category of business professional crimes: extortion and the provision of illegal goods and services (ibid.: 50). Whereas project crimes are perpetuated on an *ad hoc* basis, the distinctive feature of business ones is the enduring and continuous nature of the criminal activities. Due to their sophistication, the higher number of participants and their co-offending strategy these organisations are able to establish a monopoly or oligopoly in illegal markets (ibid.: 51).

At a first sight, business organisations are the exemplification of organised crime. Not only are they formally structured, with a well-defined division of labour, they also enforce criminal norms, violent and forcible behaviours as well as corruption to regulate the relationships with both the members and the victims of the group (ibid.: 54). Extortion racketeering and the provision of illegal goods and services are typically associated with serious and organised crime in the academic literature (Reuter, 1985; Gambetta, 1994; Naylor, 2003; Albanese, 2014; CSD, 2016; Di Gennaro, 2016). However, the specialisation and the small criminal gangs of craft organisations are not unknown to contemporary forms of organised crime. As a matter of fact, the United Nations define organised crime as “[...] structured group of three or more persons, existing for period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences” (UNTOC, Art. 2, (a), 2004). Following this legal definition, both craft and project organisation display features that are associated with contemporary forms of organised crime. McIntosh herself highlights how the four types of professional crimes can interact with each other. Single criminal projects that are usually perpetrated by small groups can be part of a

larger business organisation (McIntosh, 1975: 64). Indeed, any transnational illegal trafficking or smuggling of illegal commodities can initiate as a project limited in time, while evolving into a stable and continuous criminal market.

	Variables	Focus	Features	Criminal Structure
Cressey	Division of labour Roles	Criminal Actor	Commissioner Enforcer Corruptee, Corrupter Strategic Planner Tactical Planner Task Force Guide	
McIntosh	Logistical sophistication Criminal Complexity	Criminal Activity	Craft crimes Project crimes Continuing criminal enterprises	Picaresque organisations Craft organisations Project organisations Business organisations

Table 1. Features of the different forms of criminal groups' organisations in Cressey and McIntosh

In their work *Organizing Deviance* (1994), Best and Luckenbill provided a two-level analysis of the organisation of deviance. After they delineate the meaning of deviance as “any behaviour that is likely to be defined as an unacceptable violation of a major social norm and elicit strong negative reactions by social control agents” (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 2-3), they suggest approaching its set-up by separating the organisation of deviants from the organisation of deviance. While the first looks at the types of relationship among deviant actors involved in deviant and criminal acts (ibid.: 11), the second focuses on the structure of deviant transactions (ibid.: 93). According to this distinction, Cressey and McIntosh differ in their analyses in that the former focuses on the criminal actors to explain the process of organisational expansion, whereas the latter connects actors and criminal activities to classify different criminal architectures.

According to the model of Best and Luckenbill, deviants' relations are arranged along an ascending sequence of organisational sophistication that, in turn, includes

five ways through which actors collaborate and commit crimes: either as *loners*, *colleagues*, *peers*, *teams* or *formal organisations* (ibid.: 12). These forms of deviants' organisation vary based on three features: first, complexity, which includes the number of actors, their level of specialisation and the roles they have and the level of stratification (ibid.: 11); second, coordination, which refers to "the degree to which rules, agreements, and codes regulating relationships are defined and enforced" (ibid.: 12); and third, purposiveness, looks at the way through which the actors specify and reach their goals (ibid.).

The least sophisticated form of deviants' relations is, of course, the *loner*. As the name itself suggests, loners are involved in deviant and criminal activities on their own and do not join other deviants (ibid.: 15). Several are the exemplifications of deviant and criminal loners. Apart from the cases of murders and rapists provided by the authors themselves, there are accounts of some art forgers working on their own (Irving, 1969; Dolnick, 2009; Perenyi, 2012). A further example of deviants behaving alone are the so-defined lone-wolf terrorists (Spaaij, 2010; Phillips, 2011; Moskalenko and McCauley, 2011; Bakker and de Graaf, 2011; Feldman, 2013; Berntzen and Sandberg, 2014; Richman and Sharan, 2015; Spaaij and Hamm, 2015; Spaaij, 2017).

Besides loners, all the other typologies of deviants' organisation involve a degree of interaction. *Colleagues* represent a stage where contacts among deviant and criminal actors are as least as possible. Best and Luckenbill choose the term colleagues by applying the analogy of teachers. Indeed, in the same way as teachers give lessons on their own in separate classrooms and meet together in order to discuss common educational problems and teaching techniques (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 24), deviant colleagues perform crime alone, although they share techniques, knowledge and justifications with others (ibid.).

Peers, on their side, is the first form entailing some degree of sophistication, for they collaborate while pursuing a deviant or criminal activity (ibid.: 32). However, they present a limited division of labour (ibid.: 33). The illegal selling of drugs, for instance, only requires the existence of who procures the substance and who sells it, who might also be the same person, and the buyer. Like Cressey's tactical planners and task force guides, peers work in informal groups where they exercise authority based on their skills and not on the presence of a hierarchical division of roles. Relationships among peers can vary from long-lasting cooperation to a very short, even unique transaction.

Contrary to loners, colleagues and peers, *teams* and *formal organisations* display higher specialisations, higher division of the roles assigned to each member and, consequently, higher levels of collaboration. Moreover, both teams and formal organisations pursue complex criminal activities to achieve designated goals: according to the authors, the primary objective is the accumulation of money and power (ibid.: 44, 53). In the authors' view, teams are small-to-medium size criminal groups showing rationality in terms of tasks' allocation and performance to accomplish a goal. Teams present several defined roles within the groups, that increase the safety, the efficiency and the monetary rewards (ibid.: 45). A team robbing a jewellery is specialised if it has at least a thief robbing the jewels, a member covering the people in the store, a driver waiting outside the shop. Teams also flourish when they share a code of conduct and temporarily rely on other criminal groups to carry on complex crimes (ibid.). What Best and Luckenbill identify as teams resembles McIntosh's craft and project organizations; in particular, they share similarities with respect to the routinisation of work and the specialisation of criminal actors.

Compared to teams, formal organisations display even greater rationality. First at all, their structure is “intentionally designed” and counts “dozens, even hundreds” (ibid.: 53) of members. The structure presents a vertical authority, that take decisions and enforce rules, resembling administrative bureaucracies. Second, members have precise, specialised roles to which correspond a duty within the organisation. In the words of Best and Luckenbill such an organisation “may have special departments for planning, processing goods, public relations, and rule enforcement, with positions for strategists, coordinators, accountants, lawyers, enforcers, and dealers in illicit goods” (ibid.: 54).

As in the case of McIntosh’s business organisations, Best’s and Luckenbill’s formal organisations are typified by organised crime. Interestingly, however, the latter two scholars do not approach the enduring debate of the hierarchy-versus-network form of organised crime. Indeed, the examples they provide range from large outlaw motorcycle gangs to American organised crime families. Although they are aware of the terminological and content disagreements (ibid.: 58), Best and Luckenbill interpret organised crime by looking at the activities that the members of an organised crime groups commit to achieve the purpose of the group itself. Specifically, they identify two types of deviant acts that are typical of organised crime, namely the provision of illegal goods and services, and extortion (ibid.: 59).

Following a classification of organised criminal activities based on the underlying relationships among the deviants and criminal actors, Best and Luckenbill approach a second level of analysis, specifically the organisation of deviance. This focuses on how criminal transactions that are carried out by criminals are structured (ibid.: 93). In turn, this perspective allows to differentiate criminal groups along the dimension of organisational sophistication.

With regard to deviance, Best and Luckenbill propose three organisational categories. The first is *individual deviance*, which involve only one actor performing a deviant or criminal role (ibid.: 94). Although the loner seems the most appropriate figure to fit into this type of deviance, the focus is rather on the criminal activity and “whether the individual’s action, taken alone, would merit a deviant label” (ibid.: 97). A pickpocket working alone, for instance, is a loner implicated in individual deviance; however, a drug user that consume in front of others, either drug users or not, is still performing a deviant act individually (ibid.)

The second form of deviance organisation is *deviant exchange*. This is defined as two actors performing cooperative deviant roles (ibid.: 94). It entails the intentionality of the deviant or criminal act, for two or more actors willingly and consciously exchange illicit goods or services (ibid.: 118). Two are the ways through which deviant exchange takes form, namely trades and sales. Whereas both share the premeditation, they differ in the reward. In a trade the actors pay an illegal service or good with another illegal service or good. For instance, a trade where drugs are exchanged with a stolen painting or with weapons (Makarenko, 2004). In a sale, on the contrary, money is the payment. Although they might be transitory, sometimes improvised transactions, deviant trades and sales are usually part of larger market. As already seen, illegal markets relate to the provision of illegal goods and services, and market-based crimes (Naylor, 2003) are characterised by voluntary transactions among any type of deviant actors, from a loner to formal organisation.

Finally, the third variety of deviance is called *deviant exploitation*. This form necessitates again the presence of two or more actors, but contrary to deviant exchange they have conflicting interests: one is the offender and one is the target (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 94). Typically, it introduces the idea of exploitation either by force

or by fraud (ibid.: 141), as in the case of predatory crimes (Naylor, 2003). The authors describe “four basic types” of deviant exploitation (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 142): *coercion*, when compliance by the victim is obtained by use or threat thereof of force, such as in the cases of robbery; *surreptitious exploitation*, described a stealthy behaviour to damage or steal the victim’s property without the latter’s awareness, as in the case of burglary; *extortion*, when an offender by force or threat of it extorts money from a victim, such as in the case of racketeering; and *fraud*, when the criminal deception results in the financial gain of the offender and loss of the victim. These four types of deviant exploitation are perpetrated with or without the knowledge of the targets and they can involve single deviant actors and single targets as much as larger groups in both roles.

Recently, von Lampe has proposed a two-fold analysis of the organisation of serious and organised crime based either on the activities carried out or on the structure as shaped by the goal of the criminal group. As for the activities-based categorisation, von Lampe suggests a distinction between *market-based crimes*, *predatory crimes* and *illegal-governance crimes* (2016: 74), while stressing the importance of the social dimensions of crime. Therefore, he pays attention to the “relational patterns between those committing crimes and those directly affected by these crimes” (ibid.), in that recalling Best’s and Luckenbill’s scheme on deviant transactions. Indeed, *market-based crimes*, which cover the provision of illegal services and goods, typically show collaborative relations between the actors involved, who intentionally seek and carry out those crimes. Similar to the deviant exchanges of Best and Luckenbill, services and goods are traded in exchange of money or other illegal goods or services. *Predatory crimes* involve the gaining of a benefit at the

victim's expense (ibid.: 75). While the concept of benefit within organised crime debates is primarily translated into an immediate monetary reward, such as in the case of thefts, von Lampe extends it to encompass any type of exploitative and harmful criminal behaviour which realises a profit (ibid.: 76). Moreover, "predatory crimes are characterised by a conflict, an antagonistic relationship between offender and victim" (ibid.), which can be carried out overtly or in a deceitful way. A theft is committed openly, contrary to some frauds or cybercrimes that are deceptive by nature. *Illegal-governance crimes* differ from the previous categories for its purpose goes well beyond monetary profit to exert authority over the criminal underworld. It does that through the imposition and enforcing of rules, the settlement of disputes between criminals and the collection of monetary contributions (ibid.: 78).

The second level of analysis presented by von Lampe classifies the structure of criminal groups according to the specific purpose they serve (ibid.: 100), or in other words how criminals organise themselves around a goal. An important implication of this way of classification is that criminal structures are not fixed in their forms, rather they can appear in different shapes. For instance, while the function of an entrepreneurial structure is to achieve "financial or other material benefits" (ibid.: 101), it can take the form of an illegal firm, of an illegal network or even an illegal market (ibid.:139). Similarly, associational criminal structures fulfil the need to create links and alliances within and a sense of belonging to the group and, at the same time, to separate it from the rest of the society (ibid.: 102). Any criminal group may present associational aspects, from a prison gang to a mafia-type organisation. Finally, quasi-governmental criminal structures have a "political nature because they are centered on the exercise of power" (ibid.: 186). These structures are typified by large criminal groups that control a well-defined territory and support not only illegal-governance

crimes, but also predatory and market-based criminality (ibid.: 103). The functions of quasi-governmental criminal group range from “[...] the regulation of behavior of subordinates, [to] the resolution of conflicts between subordinates, [to] the protection against external threats, [to] the generation of revenues through some form of taxation” (ibid.: 202). The common image associated with a quasi-governmental structure is, of course, that of the Mafia in Sicily (Gambetta, 1994) or the American Cosa Nostra (Skaperdas, 2001). Other less complex criminal groups, however, might carry out the same functions; as noted by von Lampe himself, conflict resolution and the provision of a certain degree of safety are implemented by criminal groups in Brazilian slums (von Lampe, 2016: 205).

2.3.4 The organisational features of organised crime, illegal trades and transnational crimes

As seen in the previous paragraph, criminologists started to consistently apply the social organisation approach to criminal activities and criminal structures, exceeding the actor’s perspective.

In the past decades, in particular, a number of transnational crimes have been extensively addressed, among which human smuggling and trafficking (Salt, 2000; Aronowitz, 2001; Shelley, 2010b; Kyle and Koslowski, 2011; Campana and Varese, 2016) and drug trafficking (Williams, 1998; Natarajan, 2000; Dorn, Levi and King, 2005; Chawla and Pietschmann, 2005; Kenney, 2007; Calderoni, 2012) have received the greatest attention. Other crimes that have recently emerged as object of study are the illegal cigarette market (von Lampe, 2011; Van Duyne and Antonopoulos, 2009), wildlife trafficking (Zimmerman, 2003; Warchol, 2004; Sollund, 2013; Stiles et al., 2013; Lavorgna, 2014; Cao, 2017), stolen motor vehicles (Clarke and Brown, 2003;

Wallace, 2004; Bruinsma and Bernasco, 2004), and trafficking in weapons and nuclear material (Orlov, 2004; Zaitseva, 2007).

Overall, these studies have shed lights on the characteristics of single and often understudied criminal markets, while addressing recurring themes within the criminological literature. Criminal activities are diverse, dynamic and complex. Moreover, the focus on activities highlights that various criminal groups engage in different criminal markets, thus organised crime is flexible and requires the coordination of interconnected actors. In this respect, the leitmotiv becomes the debate on the extent to which transnational organised crime is structured and the differences in configuration that it can assume.

The most widely known – and perhaps most evocative – image of organised crime is the *hierarchical model*. It displays formal features, which include a strong leadership, a pyramidal chain of authority and discipline, coercion and the fear stemming from threat thereof. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Cressey (1969) has strongly supported the image of hierarchy within the debate on the American mafia. This model is not only rational, but also rigid (Abadinsky, 2007: 6). In his overview of the historical evolution of organised crime, Albanese draws a parallel between the hierarchical structures of organised crime and that of a state's government (Albanese, 2004: 97). As in a bureaucracy, pyramidally structured criminal groups rely on an extensive division of labour along the individual part of several layers of lower ranks, each of whom has his own fixed role in the organisation (Albanese, 2014: 106). For this reason, the hierarchical approach is often referred to as the bureaucratic model. Supporters of the pyramidal model see in the vertical nature of a criminal group a competitive benefit, for this structure involves not only the ability

to exert control over the members, but also efficiently manage the allocation of human and monetary resources, and jobs. Moreover, hierarchies might show high level of resistance to law enforcement disruption unless the few top members and the leaders of the organisation are arrested (Hill, 2004).

Another paradigm of organised crime discards the institutional-like structure of organised crime in favour of the *network framework*. The literature that follows this approach emphasises that organised crime is based on social and professional relations among the criminal actors involved (Kleemans and de Poot, 2008: 75), who engage in social networking with the purpose to gain illicit goods, services, and political and economic power (McIllwain, 1993: 304; Arsovska, 2014: 6; Kleemans and van de Bunt, 1999). In addition to Albin and Ianni (1972; 1971), other scholars argued that organised crime transcends the static picture of hierarchy. Chambliss, for instance, examined organised crime in the Seattle scene and pinpointed the existence of a coalition of racketeers, politicians and law enforcement personnel. He described very fluent criminal networks where “people come and go, dominant offices shift and change, roles vary and fluctuate, but the system goes on” (Chambliss, 1978: 9). Similarly, the Vietnamese organised crime described by Silverstone and Savage operated in limited networks of small cells and even single individuals (Silverstone and Savage, 2010: 32). Advocates of the network model suggest it has several advantages when compared to hierarchies, which descend mainly from its flexible nature. Flexibility entails limited and interchangeable interactions among the participants (Morselli, 2009a: 9), which reduce the risk of police disruption. Indeed, the members of a network possess different personal and professional skills that can be used in separate criminal projects, so as to broaden the scope of their activities (Williams, 2001: 334). Moreover, offenders might work on *ad hoc* basis, without

becoming permanent associates of a criminal network. In so doing, they increase the level of concealment from law enforcement efforts (Castells, 2000), for the lack of a formal boss makes it “virtually impossible to decapitate” (Williams, 2001: 111). Flexibility also connects to the capability to quickly react to changes in licit and illicit market settings and legal environments (Zaitch. 2002; Bouchard, 2007). Flexibility and adaptability are the key characteristics that make criminal networks resilient (Ayling, 2009).

As advocate of the network perspective, in his work Williams (2001, 2010) proposed a four-type classification. *Directed networks* are “created and directed by a core of organizers who want to use it for specific purposes” (Williams, 2001: 69). The cores represent the guiding level of the group and are characterised by strong ties among the members. It is at the core level that criminal projects originate, are directed and disputes are settled. Connections are usually based on family links, ethnicity and common experience (ibid.: 72). *Transactional networks*, on the contrary, can have a more spontaneous nature for they come into shape to enhance the function of a criminal market (ibid.: 69). Key actors are relatively stable middlemen, who control the crucial transaction of the criminal network (ibid.). Williams himself compared the network organisations that developed within the Colombian cocaine market in the 1980s and early 1990s with the Southeast Asian heroin trade. Whereas the first was characterised by a core groups shaped in a directed network, the second is a typical transactional network. Directed networks, however, can be part of a larger transactional network (ibid.). *Mesh networks* differ from the former two types for they are “decentralised and ‘self-organizing’” (Kenney, 2007: 244). Independent actors, indeed, implement specific criminal actions directly without the intermediations of core groups or brokers. These networks are best portrayed by horizontal rather than

hierarchical interactions (ibid.). Finally, *flux networks* are the most unstructured and amorphous typology (Williams, 2010). Members commonly cooperate over single project and over limited period of time (ibid.).

The network framework is backed by those scholars who support the transnational nature of serious and organised crime. They argue that on a global level contemporary forms of organised crime can survive only if “decentralised and inherently dispersed” (Arsovska, 2014: 6). Specific features of transnational organised crime are its specialisation, coordination and sub-contracting (Shelley, 1999, 2006; Galeotti, 2005). As pointed out by Arsovska, Albanian criminal groups operating in Belgium are specialising in the logistical sector and are “often subcontracted by groups such as the Chinese Triads to transport people, drugs, and even guns from Belgium to the UK” (2014: 6).

However, it should be noted that the literature on organised crime, and especially its transnational form, lacks the existence of a comprehensive organisational structure that present-day criminal groups consistently assume. Although countries with an historical presence of organised crime maintain the ‘hierarchical, static, and semi-bureaucratic structure’ (Van Dijk, 2008: 148), as in the case of Bulgaria, Albania, Russia and Italy (UNODC 2002: 35; Varese, 2001), evidence dismantles this idea as obsolete when considering the several countries where organised crime flourished in the last decades. Countries such as Colombia and Nigeria are known to currently face hundreds of small and highly flexible criminal groups (Van Dijk, 2008: 148; Gnosis n. 2/2005). Many commentators present the changing nature of organised crime as an ongoing process, highlighting that the structure, the size and ethnical boundaries are flexible and vary in accordance to the necessity and nature of the crime, alliances and area of competence (Shelley, 1999; Williams and Godson, 2002). In fact,

the hierarchical paradigm survives as a recent study on archaeological looting in Cambodia has highlighted (Mackenzie and Davis, 2014: 737).

Several factors influence the shape that a criminal group may adopt, which range from the possibility to access to illegal goods, to the presence of legal and illegal competitors, to the use of violence and the ability to infiltrate the legal economy and institutions (Scholenhardt, 1999: 214). Accordingly, criminal groups vary in terms of organisation, size and types of the actors, and geographical and business scope. In a study of sixteen countries and regions, the UNODC described five main types of organisational structure showed by criminal groups: *standard hierarchy* – a pyramidal structure with a leading boss, divisions of labour and strong internal rules; *regional hierarchy* – pyramidal structures with some degree of autonomy that report to one single leader; *clustered hierarchy* – independent organised criminal groups that associate on *ad hoc* basis; *core criminal group* – horizontal structure of individuals that work for the same organisation; and *criminal network* – horizontal structure of individuals with shifting relations, who might not be part of any criminal group (UNODC, 2002: 33-44). Although this study follows a traditional taxonomy of criminal groups along a sequence based on the degree of vertical and horizontal quality, its importance lies in acknowledging that all the categories are not mutually excluding, rather they can exist at the same time, depending on the group considered.

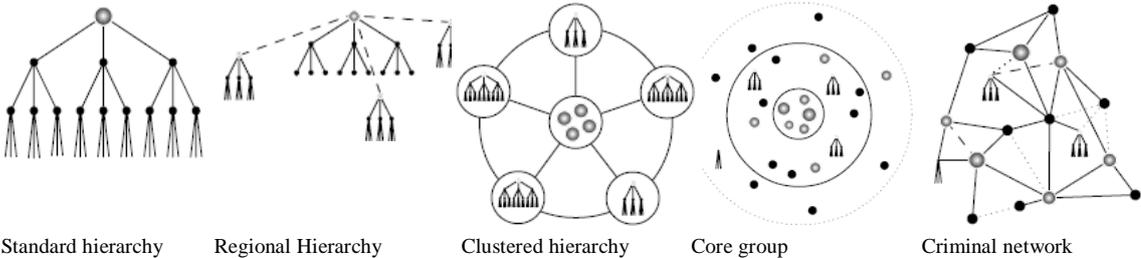


Table 2. Organisational structures of criminal groups. Source: UNODC 2012

The network perspective does not necessarily contradict the existence of hierarchical criminal groups. Although the historical momentum favours the emergence of the network model, Williams maintains that formal criminal organisations are not yet disappeared, and it is conceivable to have hybrid forms of criminal structure where small co-offending groups co-exist with hierarchical subsections (Williams, 2001: 69; 1998). A leading figure in the field of criminal network, Morselli highlights the fact that the concept of network can be applied in several ways (2009a: 10). While some authors interpret it as one of the possible forms that criminal organisations can assume (Naylor, 2006), Morselli suggests that “network transcend[s] all forms of organisations” (Morselli, 2009a: 10). He describes a *flexible order* (ibid.: 9-11), where criminal networks are “self-organizing” (ibid.: 11) and where their configurations are shaped by the interaction between the parts, being it individuals or groups (ibid.: 10). Hence, he envisions a prevailing network structure within which all other forms of organisation emerge, live and dissolve (ibid.).

2.3.5 Conclusion

The previous paragraph has examined some of the studies that have over time examined the issue of the organisation of crime on a theoretical level. Several important aspects emerged from this overview. First, the classification of complex crimes still remains open to debates. Especially when it comes to explain the nature of serious and organised crime, scholars have not yet established a univocal approach. Indeed, organised crime has been conceptualised either as business centred or as power driven and involved in illegal markets as well as in underworld monopolies. Second, although organised crime defies the boundaries of a definition, it shows an inherently multi-faceted and adaptable essence, which brings it to be involved in a

multitude of crimes. Third, the social organisation of criminals and crime are strictly related. One of the main questions in criminology is whether the acts pursued by actors shape the structure of criminal group and the type of associations or vice versa the structure of the group impact of the ways crimes are committed, and the focus of scholars on criminals, activities and organisational structures clearly tries to identify and isolate the connections among these dimensions. Fourth, the fact that different criminal activities can be perpetrated by diverse criminal groups suggests that organised crime is flexible and requires the coordination of interconnected actions. Fifth, there has been a tendency to depict organised crime in contrasting terms. Typically, one perspective presented highly formal organisations as opposed to the loose networked one. However, by dismissing such hyperbolic and clear-cut images, research offer a more nuanced picture, one where hierarchical and horizontal criminal groups coexist with individual offenders (Morselli, 2009a; von Lampe, 2012: 9; Young, 2018).

2.4 The illicit trafficking in antiquities

2.4.1 The building features

The emerging interest in criminal activities involved in art and culture has encouraged a multidisciplinary collaboration between researchers in diverse fields, including archaeology, international law, criminology, international relations and anthropology. As a result, scholarship has developed a sound, yet descriptive understanding on the main actors involved, the stolen and traded objects, and the geographical breadth of the transnational illicit market in antiquities (Bligh, 2009; Wei, 2009; Manacorda and Chappel, 2011).

This section focuses on the main features of the contemporary illicit trade in antiquities, as they emerge from the relevant literature. They can be grouped into six major elements: the geographical breadth of this illicit trafficking, the economic scope, the inherently grey nature, the transnational shape along with the complexity and the networked configuration showed by it.

The analysis of the dynamics of the illicit trafficking at issue enables to further link its present-day nature with the type of organisation that it presents. Indeed, as the main purpose of this research is to best describe the organisational complexity of the illicit trafficking in antiquities, it is first at all necessary to understand its empirical manifestations.

2.4.2 *The geographical breadth of the market*

An important feature of the illicit trafficking in antiquities concerns the size of the market, especially in terms of its geographical scope. Broadly based on the conceptualisation of role of suppliers and customers in the provision of illegal goods, the narrative conventionally divides the criminal market in antiquities among source, transit and destination countries, on the basis of a country's role in the global market (McGuire, 1990; Adler and Polk, 2005; Kozloff, 2005; Lane et al., 2008; Forrest, 2010; ICOM OBS, 2015). Countries with a rich archaeological heritage constitute the main origin of looted artefacts, and the plunder of excavations has reached alarming proportions (Brodie et al., 2001; Brodie and Tubb, 2002). Indeed, the objects originate from clandestine diggings sites depredated by locals, such as the Italian *tombaroli* (tomb raiders) or the South American *haucheros* (Matsuda, 1998; Ruiz, 2000; Elia, 2001; Matsuda, 2005; Watson and Todeschini, 2007; Mackenzie and Green, 2009;

Yates, 2014b). Theft from archaeological museums, despite being numerous, are less common than site looting (Carabinieri TPC, 2017). Mainstream studies suggest that illegal excavations are perpetrated either as a form of “subsistence digging” (Hardy, 2014) or as a form of specialised illegal profession. As pointed out by Schetter “the exploitation and sale of afghan archaeological materials and other antiquities constitutes an economic strategy for survival among local people” (Schetter, 2009: 9-10). According to an interview with a member of the Carabinieri art department (I21), the emergence of a specialised profession as illegal digger would be favoured by the combination of several factors, including a lack of appropriated legal framework, the indifference towards law enforcement, the possibility of high profits in case a rare artefact is discovered along with a passion for archaeology, although not pursued at professional level.

The role of a country in the market of illegal archaeological objects is defined by several factors. Dietzler (2013: 3) highlights that social, economic and political contexts concur in determining the likelihood of a country becoming a source of archaeological objects. Literature on the criminogenic effects of conflicts and military interventions, weak and failed states, corrupt political system as well as fragmentary and inefficient laws is extensive (Bogdanos, 2005; Casey, 2006: 123; Dietzler, 2007; Manacorda, 2009; Brodie, 2011: 408-411; Hardy, 2011; Dietzler, 2013: 3; Bichler et al., 2015). Afghanistan and Iraq, for instance, have become major targets of the illicit trafficking in archaeological artefacts during times of conflicts and political unrests (Campbell, 2013). Brusasco has described in several occasions the destruction of the Iraqi archaeological heritage during the U.S. led invasion (Brusasco, 2013), whereas Bogdanos gave an accurate account of the investigation following the theft from the Baghdad museum in Iraq in 2003 (Bogdanos, 2006; 2011). The archaeological

heritage in Cambodia has been plundered once the conflict with the Khmer Rouge regime erupted in the 1970 (Davis and Mackenzie, 2015: 294; Hardy, 2016: 27), when the Khmer Rouge themselves, the Cambodian army, paramilitary forces, and members of Cambodian and Thai organised criminal groups systematically looted temples and archaeological sites (Davis and Mackenzie, 2015: 299). Although the war ended in 1998, the illicit market in Cambodian antiquities currently remains active, following the conversion of some fighters into gangsters (ibid.). Uzbekistan, however, did not experience military interventions, yet the high degree of police inexperience on detecting and recognising artefacts, either real or fake, and incidents of corruption (Nemeth, 2016; OSCE, 2018) have enhanced the likelihood of the illicit trafficking in antiquities as a transit crime.

Destination countries are identified as those wealthy countries or “market states” (Casey, 2006: 128-129), where the art market is developed, and auction houses and museums attract large amounts of investments (Bator, 1988; Kersel, 2006). This end of the market has been studied mainly through the lenses of criminological theories dealing with corporate and white-collar crimes (Bazley, 2010; Mackenzie, 2011; Brodie and Bowman Proulx, 2013). The underlying reasons reside in the role of “powerful participants” (Casey and Hardy, 2017) such as museums, auction houses and private collectors. According to this perspective, the richest “collectors reside in the market countries such as the United States, Europe and Japan, and the market flourishes in those countries because it is there that the objects will sell for the highest price” (Merryman, 1994 cited in Bland, 2009: 83). Moreover, several criminal activities can be connected to this approach. Archaeological artefacts and other art pieces, for instance, can be purchased for tax evasion purposes (Conklin, 1994; Tijhuis, 2011) and in the past auction houses have been involved in fraud schemes and

anti-trust violations (Bazley, 2010). London, New York, Tokyo, and more generally the European Union, are considered the foremost destination sites of the illicit trafficking of cultural objects (Adler and Polk, 2005; Phelan, 2000). Moreover, as explained by Yates, Mackenzie and Smith, the market in the USA and western Europe has attracted the final end of the chain of the illicit market in antiquities because of a “postcolonial legacy of acquisition and collection exploit[ation]” (2017: 245; Brodie et al., 2000; Kersel, 2006). In these countries, indeed, art plays an important role in the definition of social status (Bowman, 2008).

Finally, transit countries are the links of the transnational chain. A country serves as conduit for illegal artefacts either for its geographically strategic position, especially if it shares borders with origin and destination countries, or for its role as “regional hub” (Kersel, 2006: 190). Studies of the illicit trafficking in cultural objects in Southeast Asia, for instance, highlighted that the free port of Hong Kong, along with Bangkok, Macau and to a lesser extent Singapore are portals for shipping looted archaeological materials out of the region (Prott and O’Keefe, 1989; Murphy, 1995; Shuzhong, 2001; Adler et al., 2009). One facilitating factor is represented by flawed legal frameworks that criminalise the export of objects belonging to the domestic cultural heritage, while excluding those artefacts that originated in other countries (Mackenzie, 2005).

Although the distinction between origin, transit, and destination countries serves clarification purposes with regard to the geographical scope of the market in illicit antiquities, such a clear-cut division is misleading and over-simplified (Bland, 2009: 83). First, the problem of illicitly excavated antiquities is not confined to countries in conflict or undergoing political turmoil; in fact, several countries showing stable economy and political institutions fall within the category of source countries. Italy

and France, for instance, have experienced for a long time the theft of archaeological material (Isman, 2009; Sandage, 2009). Second, the role of a country in the transnational illegal market at issue may go beyond one well defined function and can indeed fit all the above-mentioned categories. The Balkans are habitually depicted as a gateway to the EU black markets, but from this region originates a rich illegal trade in ancient coins and religious material (Maniscalco, 1998; Maniscalco, 2000; UNESCO, 2015). The United Kingdom is considered a destination country due to its museums and auction houses, yet, the country is rich in antiquities, ranging from prehistoric metal objects to iron age coins, to Roman-Celtic temples and remains, and suffers for uncontrolled metal detecting (Bland, 2009). Although the widely accepted picture is that of a transnational market, regional and domestic illegal market of antiquities flourish. The United States, for instance, has a vast internal market of stolen Native American artefacts (Blair, 1979; Felch, 2008) as much as Roman artefacts are internally smuggled within England (Adler and Polk, 2005). Finland is part of a little-known regional system where orthodox icons from Russia are illegally sold and trafficked (Thomas, 2015). Third, the centre of world economy is shifting, entailing that regions and countries that have so far been neglected by researcher emerge as new players in the illicit market in antiquities. Russia, for instance, has recently become a destination country for smuggled Syrian and Middle Eastern antiquities.

Hence, the illicit trafficking in cultural objects is a dynamic form of criminality, which often involves cross-border activities (Adler and Polk, 2005) and presents at once both local and global elements (Bowman, 2008; Dietzler, 2013).

2.4.3 *The economic scale of the illicit trafficking in antiquities*

Although it is possible to draw a fairly good picture of the geographical breadth of the illicit trafficking in cultural objects, the economic dimension escapes a precise measurement. A widespread agreement on the highly lucrative nature of this illegal trade exists (Manacorda and Chappell, 2011) and some authors have gone so far to estimate the annual value up to US\$6 billion (Charney, 2009: xvii). UNESCO calculated a lesser financial scope, around US\$2.2 billion per annum (UNESCO, 2005), whereas INTERPOL compares the yearly revenues of the illicit market of works of art to those of the illicit trade in drugs, arms or counterfeit goods (INTERPOL, 2015).

These assertions, however, require caution. As noted by Brodie, “there is no reliable statistics describing either the material volume or the monetary value of the trade” (Brodie, 2011: 411). In part, the problem is due to the unreliability of official data (Proulx, 2010). Many crimes involving art and antiquities are unreported because they are so called victimless crimes (Yates, 2016) and do not concern human beings or because other crimes against property are prioritised (Bowman, 2008), whereas crimes involving fakes and forgeries can be withheld from the police in order to avoid further investigations into fraud schemes. In case of antiquities smuggled from conflict countries, the suspicion about their illegal provenance might be satisfied through well forged documents (Brems and Van den Eynde, 2009), and the fact that the art and antiquities market per se is not illegal ensures that once an object is legally sold, the chances of recovering it diminish. Moreover, stolen art and antiquities may never resurface in the legal market, or only emerge after decades (Tucker, 2011; FBI, 2013).

2.4.4 *The grey nature of the illicit trafficking in antiquities*

The third feature of the illicit market in cultural objects refers to the overlapping between legal and illegal actors. Perhaps the most thorough research on the topic is that of Tjihuis (2006; 2011), who has applied the *locking model* to the illicit trafficking in art and antiquities. The author drew on the approach of criminogenic asymmetries developed by Passas and his model of legal-illegal interfaces. In Tjihuis' work, the interfaces are the *locks*, figuratively represented as ships, which metaphorically transport looted and stolen cultural objects from the illegal to the legal markets in art and antiquities (2006: 100-108), while laundering the proceeds of criminal activities into the legitimate economy. According to the author, interfaces can assume three forms: either as individuals, such as in the case of a professional dealer; or as an organisation, for example an auction house; or as a jurisdiction, in particular in the case of conflicting laws in different countries. (Tjihuis, 2011; Bichler et al., 2013; Bichler et al., 2015). In several cases, the interfaces can work in combination. Dealers, for instance, could travel to a country that has not fully implemented international regulations on the exports of cultural materials to purchase original artefacts to a minimum price (Brodie, 2015a).

To a certain extent, most of the black markets interact with the legal economy. Despite their entirely underground nature, the trafficking in drugs or in human beings rely on money laundering mechanisms to clear the proceeds of crimes. It is worth noting, however, that the illicit trafficking in antiquities differs from other transnational illegal markets as far as the bridges between legal and illegal economy are immediate, whereas other criminal markets enter legal businesses at a stage subsequent the actual perpetration of a crime. Dealers in antiquities can exploit their “Janus” role – explained as having “one face looking into the illicit past of an artefact and one looking into its public future where that dark past is concealed” (MacKenzie

and Davis, 2014: 723) – to act as direct channels between legality and illegality. Hence, the market in antiquities is criminogenic by nature. Indeed, the overlap between legality and illegality makes this market particularly prone to accept illicit practices, whereas many dealers and private collectors justify and excuse their participation in a known grey, if not completely black, market using classical criminological techniques of neutralisation (Sykes and Matza, 1957; Mackenzie, 2005). As described by a Belgian antiquity dealer: “Not wanting stolen goods is not necessarily a matter of conscience. It is the thing at the moment. It is only now that people do certain things to be ‘politically correct’. But as long as you are not buying the Venus of Milo or the Mona Lisa, you have to take things in their context” (Brems and Van den Eynde, 2009 at minutes 19:10-19:32).

2.4.5 Transnational, complex and networked crime

The remaining features of the illicit trafficking in antiquities can be grouped together on the ground that they are interrelated by nature: they define this illicit traffic as a transnational trade, based on networks and showing a high level of complexity.

As mentioned before, this illicit trafficking shows both national and transnational components. The fact that countries worldwide have been categorised in terms of origin, transit and destination, confirms how this illicit trafficking transcends the exclusively local market, following a trend similar to every transnational criminal market (Williams, 2001). In fact, contemporary forms of transnational crimes had to adapt to the increasing globalised economy and as such have expanded their scope beyond national borders (Joyce, 1999; Naylor, 2002; Passas, 2002). Global crimes are “moving targets” (Bowman, 2008: 2), since their nature, geographical scope and

techniques flexibly adjust to market demands and law enforcement activities (Ayling, 2009). The complexity of the illicit market in antiquities is corroborated by the variety of actors, often with specialised competences and roles, involved in the illegal traffic: looters and thieves; dealers and intermediaries; and buyers and collectors (Bator, 1982; Kersel, 2007; Mackenzie, 2011; Campbell, 2013; Polk, 2014). The numerous criminal activities involved in this illegal market go side by side with the several actors. The International Observatory on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods lists the most important practices and criminal behaviours that are considered as illicit antiquities trafficking: (i) thefts from museums, monuments, religious sites and other public or privately held places of conservation; (ii) illicit excavations of archaeological objects, including underwater excavations; (iii) removal of cultural property during armed conflicts or military occupation; (iv) illicit export and import of cultural property; (v) illegal transfer of ownership of cultural property (sale, purchase, assumption of mortgage debt, exchange, donation or legacy); (vi) production, trade and use of forged documentation; and (vii) traffic of fake or forged cultural property⁶.

Since the illicit antiquities trafficking undoubtedly falls within the concept of serious and organised crime, from its transnational reach and its complexity arise the question of the form it can assume. Is it networked based or is it possible to envisage a hierarchical structure?

Studies based on some well-documented antiquities trafficking cases such the so-called Medici Conspiracy (Watson and Todeschini, 2007; French and Frammolino, 2011) and empirical research suggests that the transnational illegal trafficking at issue presents a loosen structure (Mackenzie, 2011; Campbell, 2013). Thus, organised crime as a “flexible, variable, opportunistic network does appear to be involved” (Dietzler,

⁶ International Observatory on the Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods, <https://www.obs-traffic.museum/what-illicit-traffic>.

2013: 2) in the illicit art and antiquities market. Further endorsements of this idea may originate from evidence highlighting criminal networks as the most frequent forms of organisation for global crimes, at the expenses of the hierarchical structure displayed by traditional organised crime groups (Bruinsma and Bernasco, 2004). Role-based networks are thus created that reflect the transnational breadth of the market. Looters and collectors live in different countries, and an object can pass through many intermediaries before reaching the final destination site. However, a recent research by Mackenzie and Davis on the archaeological looting in Cambodia (2014), has emphasised how the chain of roles they described – looters, early- and middle-stage intermediaries, and organised criminals – might be “thought of as more stable, hierarchical and repetitively functioning supply chains than the highly fluid picture” (Mackenzie and Davis, 2014: 737). Furthermore, because the roles and the activities within the illicit antiquities trafficking in the country was static for decades, the groups and individuals froze their professional and personal relations so as to develop a recognised hierarchical structure (ibid.). Moreover, criminal organised groups were able to use violence to sanctions the attempts of those members involved in the illicit trafficking to act autonomously (ibid.), in that enacting a behaviour typically associated with formal, structured criminal organisations.

2.5 Hypothesis and research questions

The first part of the chapter has examined the approaches to the social organisation of crime, emphasising the three main lenses through which the topic has been analysed: the actors’ dimension, the activities’ dimension and the organisational structure’s dimension. Although the term organised crime is widely used within the

academia, international organisations and law enforcement environments, the concept remains elastic. Beyond definitional debates, the literature review has discussed the studies that have conceptualised a taxonomy of the social organisation of criminal activities and groups and has presented the ongoing arguments favouring hierarchical, networked and hybrid paradigms of organised crime.

The second part of the chapter has focused on the main qualities of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Research on the topic has focused on the economic scale of the market and its transnational nature. Although the growing body of published works, a substantial gap in the literature remains concerning the organisation of this illicit market.

The social organisation of crime offers a proper theoretical framework for looking at the architecture of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and allowing to deeper organise the knowledge on this illicit trafficking, the dynamics, the activities and the configuration it assumes.

In this regard, this study is based on the hypothesis that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is a sophisticated type of criminality, one where multiple models of criminal organisation are present. Indeed, the fact that this illicit trafficking includes several criminal behaviours and comprehends various actor's typologies makes it necessarily a crime that differentiates its configuration based on local, regional or transnational traits.

Thus, guided on this hypothesis the study looks at the social organisation of this illicit trafficking, that is focusing on the activities and how these activities can be studied. Two main questions guide the research, namely:

- How and to what extent is the illicit trafficking in antiquities structured? This question looks at which identifiable elements are needed to perform this multi-layered criminal activity;

- How is the illicit trafficking in antiquities socially organised? This question looks at the types of actors and roles that can be pinpointed within this illicit trade, the ways these roles and actors' typologies organise themselves to pursue a criminal activity and what configuration the illicit trafficking in antiquities assumes.

In order to answer to these questions and tests the hypothesis, this study needs not to focus only at the activities necessary to carry on the illicit trafficking at issue, it also involves an analysis of the types of actors involved, the basic ways the participants organise, coordinate and tasks themselves to pursue the activities, and the features the configuration of the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

Chapter 3

Methodology and research design

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to describe the research design applied to answer to the research questions and the underlying hypothesis of this study. As outlined in chapter 2, this research assumes that the illicit trafficking in antiquities cannot be described through one model of organised crime, rather it presents different configurations at local or transnational levels. To investigate this proposition, the study aspires to answer two lines of questions, one that examines the set of elements needed to pursue this crime and one that considers the types of tasks and roles displayed by the actors involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Ultimately, this thesis aims at assessing how criminal activities are structured and which typified categorisations of complex forms of crime apply to the illicit trafficking in antiquities in the two selected countries, Bulgaria and Italy.

The following sections of the chapter describes the methodological and analytical choices that sustain the research. Given that this study focuses on the social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities on its entirety, I did not take into consideration the object-specific sub-markets, such as the illicit trafficking in orthodox icons or in ancient Greek and Roman coins.

Section 2 outlines the methodological issues pertaining to the use of a qualitative research design, while section 3 describes the research design tailored to this study, including the case study approach and the data collection methods. Section 4 discusses the method used to examine the data, namely crime script analysis. A crime script

tailored to the illicit trafficking in antiquities is also illustrated. Finally, the limitations and ethical issues specific to this research are considered.

3.2 Methodological issues

This project relies on a qualitative approach to examine how and to what extent the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and Italy is organised and structured. The preference of a qualitative analysis over a mixed or exclusively quantitative approach is to be found in several reasons, both theoretical and practical. First, since the diverse epistemological and ontological premises of qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Champion, 2006: 102-103), the descriptive nature (Bernard et al., 2017: 7-8) of this research project suggests the appropriateness to approach the study from a qualitative stand. Quantitative methodologies postulate that objective and real phenomena can be investigated in terms of causal effects that allow predictions (Slevitch, 2011). This research aims at enhancing the understanding of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and does not intend to unravel causality relations of this market. Thus, it lies on descriptive questions (Cresswell, 2009: 137) that intend to examine the contextual nature of the phenomenon under consideration, in order to assess the widespread and accepted assumptions about it. Qualitative techniques of investigation enjoy a level of elasticity and a degree of detail (Champion, 2006: 103) that gives to the researcher the possibility to appreciate the social context of a phenomenon over its “aggregate evidence” (Whittemore et al., 2001: 524). With regard to the research questions delineated in Chapter 2, a quantitative approach cannot identify the typologies of actors that are involved in the illicit trafficking in

antiquities nor can ascertain which are the basic ways social relations among actors are shaped and how they collaborate.

Second, qualitative analysis provides a mean to research those areas of crime that are more difficult to investigate through mere quantitative techniques (Noaks and Wincup, 2004: 11). Quantitative methodologies apply numerical comparisons and statistical inferences to recognise and isolate specific variables contained within the framework of research, seek correlations and causality relationships. Given its transnational and mostly underground nature, the illicit trafficking in antiquities may prove particularly difficult for a quantitative analysis. Especially, the lack of statistical data and their unsystematic use represent a significant obstacle. This is mainly due to difficulties in gathering data on the actual figure of stolen and looted artefacts, their prices and the revenues of this illicit market (Brodie et al., 2000). The reason is to be found in that the behaviours and the offences falling within the reach of the illicit trafficking in antiquities are “rarely detected, reported and prosecuted” (Noaks and Wincup, 2004: 12). Moreover, data often change from country to country as a result of different legislations and investigative priorities.

Third, with particular reference to this research, statistics were not always available or, when accessible, their collection was fragmentary and not standardised. To give an example, in Bulgaria official statistics on the illicit trafficking in antiquities and its ancillary offences are not systematically saved. While I obtained some statistics by the Bulgarian Border Police regarding the artefacts recovered since 2016 during inspections at the border checkpoints, the office dealing with crimes against antiquities within the Chief Directorate Combating Organised Crime of the police did not collect any figures on the offences, the offenders or the objects stolen or trafficked (I13). For this reason, even a comparison with the statics published yearly by the Carabinieri and

available on their open access publication would have posed problem of sampling standards and reliability.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Case study approach

Case studies can be defined as empirical ways to thoroughly investigate a phenomenon considering its concrete environment (Yin, 2018: 56). The contextual focus of case studies offers important advantages to identify the elements that shape the illicit trafficking in antiquities. It further provides information on the behavioural relations between the protagonists of this transnational crime.

This dissertation follows a *holistic multiple-case design* (ibid.: 100), that is the study relies on two cases – Bulgaria and Italy – using one unit of analysis – the organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

A study on this trafficking on Bulgaria and Italy represents the possibility to test what is currently known about the organisational nature of the criminal market in antiquities to the reality portrayed by the case studies. These two countries share several similarities. They are both sources of illicit antiquities. Italy has one of the largest and most diverse archaeological heritages in Europe, which includes artefacts and sites from prehistoric to Phoenicians, Etruscan, Greek, Roman and Lombard periods (Ward-Perkins, 1962; Fortier, 1974; De Juliis, 1996; Staffa, 2001; Azzara, 2002; Colonna, 2002; Piga et al., 208; Sassatelli, 2008; Sciacca, 2008; Grassigli et al., 2008; Gasparri, 2012; Augenti, 2016; IIPP, 2018). The country is also home of unique heritage, such as the Nuragic civilisation in Sardinia (Pittau, 2013; Webster, 2017). Within the international market in antiquities, Italy has long been known for being a

primary target of illegal excavations. In fact, in the past decade the country has been at the centre of important restitutions of priceless archaeological objects that have been smuggled out of the country since the 1950s (Brodie, 2012a; Raffiotta, 2013; Isman, 2017). Similarly, in Bulgaria have been discovered some of the oldest prehistoric sites and the country has been home to the Thracian and Greek civilisations (Fol, 1989; Tonkov, 1996; Tsetskhladze, 1998; Webber, 2001; Boardman, 1963), which left abundant archaeological remains, while being integral part of the Roman Empire. Roman cities, fortress, coins and jewellery are present all over the country (Pavlov, 2013). Precious gold and silver Thracian hoards have been excavated in Bulgaria (Iordanov, 2012). The country has also been under the Ottoman Empire for centuries, which introduced elements of Islamic arts, jewellery and architecture (Petersen, 2017), while orthodox churches and museums throughout the country are renowned for their precious religious icons (Sgarbi et al., 2007; Stewart et al., 2015; I3; I4).

Furthermore, both Italy and Bulgaria have a specialised police unit dealing with crimes against the art. Although in Italy the most known law enforcement division dealing with cultural crimes is the Heritage Protection Unit of the Carabinieri, the Guardia di Finanza (Financial Police) also has a unit in charge of investigate and recover antiquities. Bulgaria counts two separate police sections responsible for art and antiquities crimes, whose exclusive jurisdiction on the subject matter is defined based on the organisational character of the criminal actors. Indeed, the office within the Chief Directorate Combating Organised Crime of the police is responsible only for the cases of illicit trafficking in antiquities where an organised form of criminality is involved, while those cases without organised crime features fall within the competence of the National Police. Bulgaria and Italy differ with respect to the existence of a specialised pool of judges appointed to investigate art and antiquities

related crimes. Whereas Italy does have such specialised judges (Ferri, 2016), the unit established in 2007 in Bulgaria has been dismissed in 2012 (I8).

Finally, studies have approached the topic of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in both countries, although a comprehensive research dealing with the extant nature, components, structure and organisation of this trafficking in Bulgaria and Italy is still lacking in the literature. The case of Bulgaria has been analysed in a few research (CSD, 2007; Campbell, 2013; Brodie, 2015b) and several media report. The most famous account is perhaps that of a journalist, who in 2009 travelled to Bulgaria to report on the looting of Rataria (O'Shea, 2009). Research on the Italian market for illegally excavated antiquities is far more numerous (Watson and Todeschini, 2007; Isman, 2009; Marín-Aguilera, 2012; Raffiotta, 2013; D'Ippolito, 2014), although it has mainly focused on famous and high-level cases. In particular, authors have concentrated on the "Medici Conspiracy" (Watson and Todeschini, 2007), a multi-faceted network of looters, collectors and art dealers responsible for supplying illicitly excavated artefacts from Italy to auction houses, museums and collectors in several countries in Europe and in the United States of America. Acknowledging the importance of these research in looking at an understudied illicit trade in Italy and Bulgaria, they are limited in as much they emphasise few known cases and address the transnational structure of the market in antiquities, while paying less attention to the domestic side of the illicit trafficking in archaeological artefacts.

The comparative approach used in this research project tries to overcome such limitations. It follows a "replication logic" (Yin, 2003: 45) in order to gain a more exhaustive understanding of the criminal commission process and how the illicit trafficking in antiquities is structured in Bulgaria and Italy. An advantage of applying a comparative approach is to potentially single out patterns beyond the mere

description of the case studies. According to this perspective, a comparison between Italy and Bulgaria helps achieving a deeper insight into aspects linked to the chain of illicit trafficking, both at local and transnational level. In turn, studying in the same research project the organisational features of the same criminal activity pursued in different contexts has the potential to reach a more refined conceptualisation of the activity per se.

3.3.2 *Data collection: Documentary sources and semi-structured interviews*

The following sub-sections give an account of the process of data gathering of this study. It relied on a variety of sources: judicial data, interviews with experts and online open sources, including media reports and specialised media. Criminological and criminal justice investigations have largely relied on documentary sources for they represent a unique tool for qualitative research (Noaks and Wincup, 2004: 106). However, judicial and police data differ from media sources. Official judicial and police records have proved particularly useful to research the *modus operandi* of criminals and criminal groups, their structure as well as issues related to ethnicity. In particular, data derived from courts accounts and judicial files are considered more valid because they originate from a variety of sources and therefore have been legally scrutinised before the beginning of the trial (Chiu et al., 2011). On the contrary, media sources have long been criticised for the ‘criminogenic consequences of the mass media’ representation of crime (Reiner, 1977: 189), the biased focus on ethnic minorities as perpetrators of crimes and the overall success of the police in contrasting violent crimes (Noaks and Wincup, 2004: 114). Despite the genuineness of such critics, they remain peripheral to this study. Media accounts of the illicit trafficking in

antiquities prioritise the looted and recovered artefacts, and the dynamics of the trafficking. Open source data on the Internet are advantageous for they are available and accessible at the end-consumer level (van Gelder and van Daele, 2014; Holt, 2010). Recently, open source analysis of online reports has been conducted to examine theft-to-order and looting-to-order (Hardy, 2015), highlighting the potential of systematically sampling journalistic, professional and academic records available online in order to conduct criminological research (ibid.: 5).

3.3.2.1 *Documentary sources*

To collect relevant data from documentary sources, I applied a *nonprobability sampling*, specifically an *accidental or convenient sampling technique* (Champion, 2006: 175-176; Hagan, 2011: 146). This is a sampling method where the elements of the target population are not identified in advance, they are rather selected based on practical criteria, including accessibility and availability at a given time (Etikan et al., 2016: 2; Maxfield and Babbie, 2015: 222, 224). Although accidental sampling might encompass generalisability pitfalls due to the limited size of the respondents (Champion, 2006: 176), the method is relied upon in criminal justice and criminological research for it allows the inclusion of data that would otherwise be difficult to retrieve (Maxfield and Babbie, 2015). A textbook example is represented by those primary sources – such as police investigations and judicial preliminary investigations files – containing sensitive information whose access is restricted by gatekeepers.

In order to create an updated data set, searches were conducted in 2016 and at the end of August 2018.

A) *Judicial cases*

Relevant judicial cases were identified through preliminary keyword search on judicial databases. With regard to the Italian cases, I searched on Dejure.it while for Bulgarian ones I looked at the website Legalacts.justice.bg. Given the focus on the social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities, results were chosen among the *criminal cases*.

The keywords used on the two websites reflected the concepts and the terminology that are employed in the legislation and law enforcement practices in Bulgaria and Italy. While it is ordinary to find the term *treasure hunters* in Bulgaria, the latter has a little application in Italy where looters are mostly defined as *tombaroli*.

On Legalacts.justice.bg results were generated by using the following keywords:

- археологически обекти (archaeological artefacts) – 420 results
- монети за износ (exports coins) – 4 results
- фалшиви монети (fake coins) – 3 results
- продава археологически (selling archaeological – 1 result
- търсене на съкровища (treasure hunting) – 0 results
- организирана престъпност археологически (organised crime archaeological)
– 0 results
- организирано престъпление лов на съкровища (organised crime treasure
hunting) – 0 results

The preliminary results, selected from courts of first instance and appeal courts, amounted to 428 judicial cases.

The following keywords were used to search on Dejure.it:

- Traffico reperti archeologici (trafficking archaeological artefacts) – 14 results
- Reperti archeologici reato (archaeological artefacts offence) – 143 results
- Tombarolo (looter) – 8 results
- Tombaroli (looters) – 5 results
- Scavi clandestini (clandestine excavations) – 21 results
- Scavi archeologici clandestini (clandestine archaeological excavations) – 15 results
- Scavi archeologici illeciti (illicit archaeological excavations) – 9 results
- Associazione reperti archeologici (association archaeological artefacts) – 2 results
- Mercato illecito reperti archeologici (illicit market archaeological artefacts) – 6 results
- Traffico illecito di reperti di interesse storico e archeologico (illicit trafficking of artefacts of historical and archaeological interest) – 3 results
- Traffico illecito di reperti archeologici (illicit trafficking of archaeological artefacts) – 6 results
- Esportazione illecita reperti archeologici (illicit export of archaeological artefacts) – 11 results

The preliminary results, selected from the Court of Cassation and the courts of first instance ruling on merit, amounted to 267 judicial cases. The sample size was

further reduced following a filtering process that discarded cases that were repeated, that did not satisfy the social organisation criteria of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and that had insufficiently detailed results. In several instances, for the same judicial case have been found the first-degree sentence, the appeal and the final Cassation judgement. To avoid repetition in the final dataset, only the ruling showing the most comprehensive information has been selected. Moreover, those court judgements that did not include a detailed description of the type of relations between the offenders or of their role in the illicit trafficking in antiquities have been discarded. Similarly, have not been chosen the sentences providing a general account of the criminal behaviours investigated and judged that were related to the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Consequently, the final judicial data set comprised 325 cases for Bulgaria and 73 for Italy (Annexes A and B contain a list of the cases).

During an interview with the Carabinieri in Rome, I obtained access to the official judicial proceedings of one additional case.

B) Online sources

This dissertation relies on judicial as well as other documentary sources. In order to obtain data referring to the typologies of actors, the dynamics of their relations and the structural organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in the two case studies, I preliminary searched several online sources. For Bulgaria, I searched the blog Archaeology in Bulgaria, where are collected and published in English relevant news on archaeological discoveries in the country and the Balkan regions, while paying particular attention to the looting and the illicit export of antiquities in Bulgaria. I further searched the online archives of the Custom Police and Border Police websites.

As for Archaeology in Bulgaria, of the 1,090 news articles published since 2014 only 46 were relevant for the purpose of the dissertation. Similarly, the Border Police website had one relevant item out of 68 articles, whereas the data set resulting from the Custom Police website amounted to 10 articles out of 1,974 published news (Annex C contains a list of the selected results).

With regard to the Italian cases, due to the absence of a specialised website focusing on Italian illicit antiquities, I ran a preliminary search on Google using the following keywords – the number in brackets indicate the viable selected cases:

- traffico reperti archeologici Veneto (trafficking archaeological artefacts Veneto) – 53 results (3)

- traffico reperti archeologici Liguria (trafficking archaeological artefacts Liguria) – 39 results (7)

- traffico reperti archeologici Sardegna (trafficking archaeological artefacts Sardinia) – 51 results (10)

- traffico reperti archeologici Friuli (trafficking archaeological artefacts Friuli) – 26 results (4)

- traffico reperti archeologici Lazio (trafficking archaeological artefacts Lazio) – 90 results (15)

- traffico reperti archeologici Puglia (trafficking archaeological artefacts Apulia) – 87 results (21)

- traffico reperti archeologici Toscana (trafficking archaeological artefacts Tuscany) – 44 results (3)

- traffico reperti archeologici Sicilia (trafficking archaeological artefacts Sicily) – 131 results (43)

- traffico reperti archeologici Campania (trafficking archaeological artefacts Campania) – 133 results (11)

- traffico reperti archeologici Calabria (trafficking archaeological artefacts Calabria) – 104 results (7)

- traffico reperti archeologici Piemonte (trafficking archaeological artefacts Piedmont) – 50 results (0)

- tombarolo (looter) – 167 results (47)

Further research was specifically conducted on the following law enforcement operations that were mentioned in the initial data set and required supplementary material – as before, the number in brackets are the selected cases:

- operazione Artemide reperti (operation Artemide artefacts) – 138 results (21)

- operazione Pandora reperti (operation Pandora artefacts) – 126 results (13)

- operazione Demetra reperti (operation Demetra) – 85 results (29)

- operazione Tempio di Hera reperti (operation Temple of Hera) – 101 results (22)

- operazione Gerione reperti (operation Gerione artefacts) – 181 results (8)

- operazione Dedalo reperti (operation Dedalo artefacts) – 156 results (18)

- operazione Himera reperti (operation Himera artefacts) – 96 results (8)

- operazione RoViNa reperti (operation RoViNa artefacts) – 159 results (3)

Open source documents for Italy amounted to 294 (an exhaustive inventory of documentary and online media sources is listed in Annex D).

As for judicial cases, the selection process of open source data applied a filter using the same three criteria mentioned above: repetition, insufficient information on

the social organisation of the offenders and scarce details of the organisation of the criminal activities. In the vast majority of cases, open source articles have been discarded because the same text has been used in different newspapers and blog.

3.3.2.2 Interviews

Another strategy of data collection has been *semi-structured interviews* to law enforcement personnel and experts on the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Interviews were useful to enhance the quality of the data and specially to gain in-depth description of the contextual aspects related to both the typologies of actors participating in the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the constituent elements of this trafficking. Interviews permit to yield thicker descriptions of the social phenomenon studied and to explore its dimensions (Champion, 2006: 268-269). Indeed, an advantage of semi-structured interviews over documentary resources is the interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer and the possibility to dialogue, to exchange information and to probe the interviewees, usually with follow-up questions (Noaks and Wincup, 2004: 79). This process is facilitated by their flexible format, which is based on a template of questions guiding the interview (Bernard et al., 2016: 76). Such elasticity helps the researcher to overcome reluctance, linguistic difficulties and general answers from the interviewees by modifying the order of how questions are asked, asking for examples and past experience (ibid.) so as to elicit appropriate qualitative data (Annex E displays the questionnaire template).

As for the documentary sources, the selection of the interviewees relied on a *nonprobability sampling method*. In the case of interviews, however, I used both *purposive* or *judgemental* and *snowballing sampling techniques* (Champion, 2006:

178-179). The first method envisages the deliberate choice of participants based on their specific characteristics, including their expert knowledge of the topic under scrutiny and their willingness to talk (Etikan et al., 2016: 2). It is particularly useful for it permits to select well-informed interviewees and obtain information-rich responses. Snowball sampling is a relational method (Champion, 2006: 178) largely used in qualitative research as they rely on initial contacts to identify additional potential participants, who are willing to be interviewed and are knowledgeable (Maxfield and Babbie, 2015: 225). This sampling technique resembles a chain, where interviewee put the researcher in contact with other experts. Among the interviews I conducted in Bulgaria, I interviewed an officer of the Directorate against Organised Crime following contextual presentations from an archaeologist, a museum's director and another police officer. I conducted 23 interviews with archaeologists, law enforcement personnel, former prosecutors and experts holding leading positions within museums and ministries. For a detailed list of the participants and the date and locations, see Annex F.

Interviews in criminological research need to consider issue of confidentiality, identity disclosure and informed consent (Wolfgang, 1981; Israel, 2004; Schneider, 2006). To gain access to some interviewees in Bulgaria I was supported by the Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD), where I was a visiting Ph.D. candidate and an intern for five months in 2016. The support of the CSD was an opportunity instrumental to overcome issues of trust and confidentiality. Indeed, the two major problems I encountered related to identity disclosure and the permission to record the interview. Indeed, many experts in Bulgaria were reluctant to be interviewed unless I was presented by a common acquaintances and anonymity was agreed upon. One case is exemplary. A retired Bulgarian archaeologist showed a particular interest in my

research and put me in contact with a former colleague, who for several years worked as archaeologist and staff member of the local archaeology museum in the north western part of Bulgaria. Although I successfully met and interviewed him, he agreed to talk to me only if I would have not disclosed his name – and he did not reveal to me his real name until after the end of the meeting. The modalities of the interview were also permeated by diffidence. He refused to be recorded, he handed me a closed envelop that according to him would have contained priceless information and answered my questions with vagueness, hesitation and resistance. He explained his behaviour by saying that he feared the reaction of powerful members of organised crime rings would have they known he released an interview and made their names. The overall impression I had during the whole discussion has been that he was genuinely scared, yet he interpreted the interview as an investigative journalistic inquest. Although I decided not to include his interview in the data analysis for the poverty of information, the experience has been very instructive for I had to handle a fickle situation and a very evasive respondent.

It should be stressed that I did not find similar problems of trust and confidentiality in Italy, where the experts from international organisations, former prosecutors and the Carabinieri accepted to be interviewed as I presented myself as a Ph.D. researcher.

I always asked for the permission to record the interview, yet I received only one positive answer from a law enforcement official, who, however, asked for anonymity. Therefore, I extensively relied on the notes I took during the interviews. Taking notes has been an advantage in some instances because it gave me the possibility to ask for clarification during the interview, to repeat some questions several times and, importantly, to come back to the interviewee if I needed further explanations.

3.3.2.2 Other means of data collection

Alongside the interviews and the documentary sources, in Bulgaria I was able to observe more closely two sites linked to the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

In one occasion, I visited the archaeological site of Ratiaria, which is located near the village of Archar in the northern part of the country close to the border with Romania. That of Ratiaria represents the most famous and well documented case of illicit excavation in Bulgaria (Dikov, 2015). The site is situated on the top of a hill facing the river Danube. Massive looting started in the late 1990s and witnesses' reports describe the presence at day and at night of dozens of looters, working both on their own and in small groups of three to four persons, who used metal detectors and shovels in combination with bulldozers. As a result of such destructive depredation, Ratiaria only preserves few arches and stone basements, which were either too heavy to transport or not valuable and easily sellable on the market. At the time of my research, the site was open to tourists, however its protection and conservation were minimal. Not only large parts of the site were covered by vegetation, several potsherds were used as weights to stop the guardian's truck.

Furthermore, following two interviews where Sofia flea markets were described as major open markets for antiquities, I decided to pay a visit to two of the most notorious ones. The first flea market was held in the city centre and was specialised in orthodox icons. The market, however, was heavily patrolled by the police every time I passed by, although I did not find out if it was because of the illegal selling of icons or for the vicinity of the cathedral, the catholic church and other monuments. The other flea market that I visited is the biggest in the city being held every week on Saturday.

Among the hundreds of second-hand objects, tools, cars and clothes, one section was reserved to ancient coins. The first time I went I simply walked through the stands; being the only non-Bulgarian in the market I was immediately approached by several people as a potential buyer and showed dozens of silver and bronze coins mixed with old U.S. dollars and sport medallions. I returned after a week and in this occasion, to encourage me, the owner of a stand let me sit on his chair and showed me several booklets containing coins in plastic bags and each with a detailed account of the century, the provenance, the image and the price. The booklets were placed in metal boxes hidden underneath the stand and covered with a sheet. Most of the coins were from the time of Alexander the Great; however, since I am not a numismatic expert, I was unable to determine whether they were real or fakes.

The evidence I derived from these experiences were not used to build the crime script. My research does not use as elective data gathering the ethnographic method, and my visit to archaeological sites and flea markets were not intended with such a goal. My purpose was to gain a first-hand idea of open-air sites and markets that are to various extents connected, if not small-scale hubs for, to the illicit trafficking in antiquities. The visits were very informative in terms of situational and environmental circumstances that facilitate looting and they provided me with a better understanding of a segment of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria.

3.3.3 *Qualitative research validity*

Concerns over the validity and the reliability of a study do not pertain only to the realm of quantitative research (Shenton, 2004). Indeed, Johnson defines validity as the

aggregate of criteria that make the findings of a qualitative study “plausible, credible, trustworthy, and, therefore, defensible” (Johnson, 1997: 282).

As for the validity and reliability of the dissertation, three criteria are discussed here (Leung, 2015; Merriam, 1995). The first is *reliability*, which concerns the degree to which the findings of a study are congruent with its intent (Merriam, 1995: 53), or, in simpler words, if the research’s evidence support the results. The key element to assess reliability is the possibility to replicate the process and the outcomes of a study. The idea underlying repetition is that if the steps of the research are exactly replicated, the results would be confirmed. However, a difference should be drawn between a quantitative and a qualitative approach. Whereas the first ensure reliability by random sampling, and the possibility to recreate the same context and the same procedures, in qualitative research the “changing nature of the phenomena scrutinised [...] renders such provisions problematic” (Shenton, 2004: 71), as does the rare randomisation of sampling. Of course, such differences should not prevent to guarantee the reliability of qualitative research designs. Shenton proposes to focus on the replicability of the methodological process. Indeed, the research design should be considered as a “prototype model” (ibid.) used by researchers to explain in detail the steps and choices made in the study. In so doing, it becomes possible for other researchers to re-propose the same study, even if the final findings would differ. Accordingly, a sound research design should provide for a description of the research plan, the detailed operationalisation of data collection and a reflexive account⁷ of the project (ibid.: 71-72). The latter includes the acknowledgment and evaluation of the limitations of the inquiry and its effectiveness (Ely et al., 1991: 179). A further tactic to strengthen the

⁷ As described by Ely and colleagues (1997: 179) reflexivity is a process, which “attempt[s] to identify, do something about, and acknowledge the limitations of the research: its location, its subjects, its process, its theoretical context, its data, its analysis, and how accounts recognize that the construction of knowledge takes place in the world and not apart from it”.

reliability of a study is to employ specifically designed methodological strategies, such as multiple methods of data collection needed to triangulate and corroborate the information (Johnson, 1997).

This research complies with the criteria of reliability for it specifies the research design in terms of unit of analysis and the cases used in the study in section 3.3.1, operational details of data gathering in section 3.3.2 and a description of the tool employed to analyse the data in section 3.4.

The second quality assurance criterion is *external validity*, which is exemplified by the generalisability of the results of a study. The latter refers to the notion that the findings of a study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1995: 57). However, generalisability in qualitative research should not be interpreted as the idea to reach universally applicable findings, being it more interested in explaining the particulars of events (Johnson: 1997: 289). Qualitative approach of generalisability incorporates the concept of ‘analytical generalisation’ (Yin, 2003: 39; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), entailing the evaluation of the extent to which a study’s findings can be applied to other studies sharing similarities with respect to the theoretical framework, the units of analysis and the social context (Leung, 2015: 326).

This study does not aim at proposing universal principles on the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Both the focus on two case studies and the application of crime script analysis as analytical tool to examine the data circumscribe the scope of the research to a segment of the illicit trafficking under inquiry. Indeed, only data pertinent to Bulgaria and Italy were selected and crime script analysis does raise issues of generalisability, being it inevitably build with limited, selected samples (Chiu et al., 2011). Nevertheless, this research can be useful for further research looking at the organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in other geographical settings. On a

comparative level, investigation on organisational forms of other types of complex crime could benefit from this research.

Finally, the third criterion here analysed is that of *internal validity*, which considers the inner coherence of the study. This parameter evaluates whether each step of the inquiry suits and is logically consequential to the preceding and following ones, and to what extent it is valid for the proposed outcomes (Leung, 2015: 325). Strategies to strengthen the internal validity of a study range from reflexivity to data and methods triangulation, to peer review (Merriam, 1995: 54-55; Johnson, 1997: 283).

This dissertation relies on multiple methods of data collection, as it is explained in the previous section. Also, throughout the research I confronted with colleagues and experts in the field the consistency of the research and the preliminary results. I saw internal validity as an ongoing reflection through which the hypothesis of the research is tested by the development of research questions, the collections and analysis of data and whether the research questions are answered or not by the data.

3.4 Tools for data analysis: crime script analysis

This section describes the tool used in this study to analyse the data collected so as to answer the research questions defined in Chapter 2 on the structure and social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and in Italy.

3.4.1 Crime script

Early works on scripts developed within cognitive psychology at the “intersection between linguistics, psychology and artificial intelligence” (Borrion,

2013: 7; Schank and Abelson, 1977; Nisbett and Ross, 1980). Script theory was first elaborated by Schank and Abelson to investigate the “schematic knowledge structures” (Schank, 1989: 14) encoded in a person’s memory necessary to behave in a specific situation-action routine (Schank and Abelson, 1977; Bower, Black and Turner, 1979: 178). The basic idea was that human knowledge is organised around hundreds of set situations that memory recognises once they occur while enacting the responses (ibid.: 178). Examples of said situations range from simple actions, such as answering the phone, to more complex situation, such as entering a shop and buy a book.

Drawing on these studies in cognitive science, Cornish developed the analytical schema of crime script within the context of situational crime prevention, whose purpose is to examine the details of a crime-commission process and, in turn, to “generat[e], organiz[e] and systematiz[e] knowledge about the *procedural aspects* and the *procedural requirements*” (Cornish, 1994: 160, italics in the text) needed to complete a crime. Largely based upon the triad of rational choice theory, the concept of opportunity structure and a crime-specific methodology (Cornish, 1994; Clarke, 2009; Freilich and Newman, 2017), situational crime prevention is a practical crime control perspective, which states that crime should decrease once opportunity are blocked. Situational crime prevention, indeed, is concerned with the introduction of “managerial and environmental changes that will reduce the opportunities or incentives for crime” (Clarke, 2009: 259; Sidebottom and Wortley, 2016: 169).

As proposed by Cornish, crimes script analysis serves exactly the goal of situational crime prevention: once the commission process of a crime is outlined, it is then possible to identify the interaction between the situation, the opportunity and the decisions made by the offender and thus locate the point of intervention to reduce the

crime. The crime-commission process is described through sequences of acts that result into a crime. The single act is itself the outcome of a decision taken by the offender shaped by definite sets of circumstances (Price et al., 2014). Assuming the enduring nature of the decision-making process, the final crime script would be the product of a chain of sequential decision-based actions. In other words, crime script analysis entails the creation of series of activities, which are sequentially linked to each other and which are further divided into scenes (Cornish, 1994). The latter “summarize the basic actions that can be executed in arrange of possible manners and contexts” (Nisbett and Ross, 1980: 34). Hence, crime script analysis comprises several degrees of abstraction. Consider a pyramid of five layers. At the top is located a *universal script*, consisting in a set of general systematised acts “arranged into a sequential order” (Cornish, 1994: 160). The advantage of a universal script lies in that it offers a procedural schema applicable to any crime. In his seminal work, Cornish proposed a nine-step script comprising *preparation, entry, pre-condition, instrumental pre-condition, instrumental initiation, instrumental actualisation, doing, post-condition* and *exit* (ibid.: 160-161). Recently, Tompson and Chaney (2011) proposed a revised model that includes only four steps, namely *preparation, pre-activity, activity* and *post-activity*. The second layer is taken by the *metascript* that pinpoints the broad criminal category, such as theft of property. It is followed by the *protoscript*, which specifies the sub-category of offence, for instance robbery. The *script* identifies the specific crime – for examples robbery from a person, while the *tracks* break down the single actions of the crime considered (Cornish, 1994: 160).

Due to its emphasis on opportunity structure and crime specificity, and especially thanks to the crime-reduction control perspective, crime script analysis has experienced a great success over the past two decades. Early applications of this tool

focused on predatory crimes. Several key studies have unfolded the procedural elements of stolen vehicles business (Tremblay et al, 2001), serial sex and child sex offences (Beauregard et al, 2007; Deslauries-Varin and Beauregard, 2010; Leclerc et al., 2011; Brayley et al., 2011), credit card forgery (Mativat and Tremblay, 1997, Lacoste and Tremblay, 2003), employee computer crimes (Willison, 2006) and online stolen data market (Hutchings and Holt, 2014). Scripts on money laundering (Gilmour, 2014) and on copper theft from churches (Price et al., 2014) have also been designed. The production and selling of illegal drugs have largely attracted the attention of researcher. For instance, Sytsma and Piza (2018) analysed the structure of open-air drug selling through the use of CCTV video footage, while Leontiadis and Hutchings (2016) investigated the online trade of illegal prescription of drugs. Chiu and colleagues (2011), moreover, deconstructed the crime-commission process of clandestine drug laboratories.

The study of organised crime and transnational forms of criminality has not remained unaffected by the wider application of crime script analysis. Rowe and colleagues (2013) analysed the ways organised criminal groups elicit corruptive behaviours from public officials, while a pivotal study on the issue is that of Sarrica (2005), who categorised the opportunity structure of migrant smuggling and criticised the general belief that organised crime groups involved in this activity have a vertical configuration. Scholars have relied on script analysis to enrich the knowledge on organised criminal activities. One line of research has focused on transnational illicit trafficking. Moreto and Clarke (2014), for instance, looked at the transnational illicit market in endangered species, while Loung (2017) examined border-cross drug trafficking from Vietnam to Australia. Both studies highlighted the lack of agreement on a univocal model to describe transnational trades of illicit goods. A second,

flourishing line of inquiry concentrates on the complex activities that fall within the broader definition of organised crime. Von Lampe (2010) compared through scripts lenses the illegal activities related to the illicit cigarette black market in Germany and the UK. Tompson and Chaney (2011) carried out an examination of the electronic illegal waste market with a particular emphasis on the means of transportation and the final disposal's locations. Savona and colleagues (2014) untangled the chain of events of human trafficking for sexual exploitation from Eastern Europe and Nigeria to Italy. Viollaz, Graham and Lantsmann (2018) applied the analytical tool of crime script to understand at which stage of the illicit wildlife trafficking is located the intersection with financial crimes. Based on their results, economic corruption, frauds and money laundering are present at all stages of this particular form of transnational organised crime. A third line of study employs crime script to in-depth analyse the decision-making process, the behaviours and the relationships between terrorists. Clark and Newman (2006) thoroughly investigated suicide bombing and proposed to look at the opportunity structure of terrorism in order to reduce the possibility of an attack to occur. According to their research, mechanisms to prevent terrorism should focus on pinpointing the most attractive targets, controlling the weapons commonly used to pursue an attack and decreasing the facilitating conditions of everyday life. Recently, de Bie (2016) analysed how jihadists foreign fighters in the Netherlands have changed the modalities to prepare and undertake a terrorist operation within the timeframe 2000-2013. He suggests that geopolitical changes, social context and technological developments influence changes in the operational decision of foreign fighters. Other studies included the combined use of crime script with geographical profiling methods in order to identify the actions and the movements of terrorists before an attack (Cheswoth et al., 2017) and with social network analysis to pinpoint the vulnerabilities

of terrorist networks and design counter-strategies (de Bie et al., 2015). The joint use of social network and crime script analyses has also been applied to identify the role of brokers in stolen vehicle illicit exportation (Morselli and Roy, 2008) and the points of intersection between legal and illegal activities in the illicit trafficking in cultural properties (Bichler et al., 2013).

The application of crime script analysis to the investigation of organised crime, and sophisticated and transnational criminal activities may prove problematic. Indeed, there are several shortcomings that have been pinpointed. First, as stated by von Lampe (2010: 8) organised crime might be so complex that the crime triangle – offender, victim and location – might be difficult to identify. Not only activities are protracted over time, but also dozens of different criminal behaviours can be involved (Moreto and Clarke, 2014: 211). Consider the illicit trafficking in antiquities. This illicit trade amounts to a plethora of offences, which range from robbery from museum to illegal excavation of archaeological sites. Forgery is also part of the scheme, when it involves the falsification of artefacts and provenance documents. The complexity of organised forms of criminality can easily render feeble the crime-specificity feature of scripts. Complexity refers also to the number and types of actors taking part in an illicit trade. In their research, Moreto and Clarke (2014) highlight how even a specific category of actors of the illegal trafficking in endangered species, the poachers, can be divided between independent poachers and members of an organised group of poachers. Similarly, their degree of engagement in the trade changes based on the fortuitous or professional quality of their smuggling.

Second, crimes, in both transnational and local shape, have a very dynamic nature. The illicit trafficking in antiquities offers again a good example. Over time,

extensively excavated archaeological sites are emptied of all artefacts. Accordingly, looters relocate to other locations where the heritage is still present, if not intact, and the expectation of monetary rewards are high. Moreover, the antiquities market responds to new trends. The economic development in Russia, for instance, has led to the establishment of a larger number of rich entrepreneurs, who conquered a portion of the market in antiquities. Russian collectors are particularly interested in orthodox icons for the social status associated to their ownership (I6).

Third, to research transnational illegal market requires long lasting and expensive fieldworks (Moreto and Clarke, 2014). If research is sponsored by institutions, the time and economic constraints play a fundamental role in choosing selective case studies. Moreover, certain parts of the trafficking can be impossible to investigate due to their underground nature.

Despite these shortcomings, crime script analysis is “a useful tool for achieving an understanding of [the] constituent parts” (ibid.: 210) of organised crime and illicit transnational trafficking. The concurrent presence of a variety of offences at different levels of a logistic criminal chain represents the essence of transnational, cross-border crimes. One of the approaches of organised crime, indeed, defines it as the provision of illegal goods and services, entailing the existence of several stages – production, supplying, trafficking and selling. Moreover, Cornish and Clarke (2002: 52, 54) highlight how the emphasis on crime-commission process and on the requirements to commit a crime may facilitate the understanding of how a highly sophisticated criminal activity may emerge from the concatenation of simpler crimes.

The approach followed in this study considers these reflections. In fact, the study does not have as primary goal to identify preventive measures through the crime script analysis, although considerations on successful points of intervention can be

drawn. By treating the illicit trafficking in antiquities as an aggregation of elements (Cornish and Clarke, 2002: 59), the role of crime script is rationalised to identify, analyse and understand the primary segments of this illicit trade. The phase-based approach taken by crime script in the analysis of the criminal activities offers the possibility to connect a chain of actions with the types of actors and the geographical locations in which they take place. As such, crime script analysis answers appropriately to the research question focusing on the identifiable components of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Moreover, once the steps of the illicit trafficking in antiquities have been identified and connected to the tasks of the actors, it is then possible to investigate the organisational forms of this illicit trafficking without preconceptions on the configuration that it assumes. Indeed, the hypothesis of this study reflects the presence of multiple organisational architectures, rather than focusing on one only. A role analysis that provides information in terms of organisational sophistication is suited to answer to the research question concentrating on the typologies of actors involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the way they organised around tasks. It exceeds the application of a network approach, because the latter has its theoretical and empirical focus on the relations of individuals and how family, friendship or occupational ties help criminals to communicate, transfer resources and build trust (Kenney, 2007). The perspective of this research, instead, is to connect the category of actors and their roles with the organisation of the activities, an approach that does not apply typical measures of connectivity and positional importance such as degree centrality and betweenness centrality. Thus, in this research project, a description of the shapes assumed by the illicit trafficking in antiquities analyses to the relations among the roles, rather than the behavioural relations among the actors involved.

3.4.2 *Building the script for illicit trafficking in antiquities*

The process of modelling a crime script entails delineating a “description of a number of events into a structured sequence” (Tompson and Chaney, 2011: 8). Although there is no crystallised method to ensure the quality of crime script analysis, in this dissertation I follow a logical procedure to build the crime script of the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

As advised by scholars (Dehghanniri and Borrion, 2016; Borrion, 2013; Tompson and Chaney, 2011), I first developed a master-script, a template which I elaborated based on the information found in several main sources. The first is the seminal article of Cornish (1994), where he provides the essential notion and procedural aspects of crime script. The second source is the renewed version of script analysis adopted by Tompson and Chaney (2011) on the transnational illicit trade in electronic waste. Their work is informative not only for the application of this analytical tool to a specific transnational crime, rather for its contribution to strengthening the method of building a script. The third source I relied upon is the script created by Price and colleagues (2014) to understand the opportunity structure of theft of copper from churches. This script along with the work of Dietzler (2013) – which is my fourth source – represents a concrete application of crime script analysis to a peripheral aspect of the trade in antiquities. Although Dietzler did not use the crime script framework, she provided the most valid account of the main stages of the illicit trafficking in antiquities (table 1). The research questions and sub-questions helped me in process of identifying the master-script’s elements.

SEQUENCE →→→	Stage 1 Theft	Stage 2 Transit	Stage 3 Facilitation	Stage 4 Sale/Purchase
ROLE Motivated Offender	Looters	Smugglers	Document Forgers Government Officials Curators Academics Launderers Appraisers Valuers	Dealers Buyers Collectors
MICRO-SETTING Suitable Target & Absence of Capable Guardianship	Archaeological Site	Border Checkpoint Maritime Port Airport Customs	University Museum Embassy Border Checkpoint Maritime port Airport customs Internet	Private residence Museum Hotel Internet
MACRO-SETTING Absence of Capable Guardianship	Source Country	Transit Country	Source Country Transit Country Market Country Internet	Market Country Internet

Table 3. The four stages process of the illicit trafficking in antiquities by Dietzler (2013)

The construction of the crime script template unfolds following three steps.

In step one I categorised the acts which implement the mere logistical nature of the illicit trafficking at issue. The acts include *preparatory activities*, the moment of *stealing* the objects, *storing* and *concealing* them, activities aimed at *preparing* antiquities *to be sold*, *transporting* and finally *selling* them.

Step two pinpoints the requirements needed to enact each act. Essential elements are: a *scene*, that is the function of the act; an *activity*, which can be defined as the corresponding action to each scene (Tompson and Chaney, 2011); and the *actors*, in other words the participants to the crime. Table 2 shows the template for the illicit trafficking in antiquities at this stage of the modelling process.

Writing a script entails organising what is currently known about the crime under scrutiny. At this stage, it also means to clarify the information about potential structure. Therefore, in order to describe the activities, I answered to questions relating

to the selection of feasible targets; the location where the crime takes place – either at local, global or cross-border level; and the modalities of execution, which primarily entail the instruments needed and the ways actors cooperate.

PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES	STEALING	STORING AND CONCEALING	PREPARATION TO SELL	TRANSPORT	SELLING
Scene	Scene	Scene	Scene	Scene	Scene
Activities	Activities	Activities	Activities	Activities	Activities
Actors	Actors	Actors	Actors	Actors	Actors

Table 4. Template of the illicit trafficking in antiquities delineating the steps

As concerns the scene, this is the setting within which the activities take place and the cast behaves. To identify the scenes of my master-script, I drew on the script described by Tompson and Chaney (2011) using a three-folded order: pre-activity, activity and post-activity.

Finally, in step three I broke down each different act into a *track* – the specific actions pursued by the participants, as illustrated in table 4.

STEALING			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Enter the site Approach the targeted area	Looters Treasure hunters	Local
Activity	Metal-detecting Digging Looting		
Post-activity	Taking the artefacts Prepare artefacts for easy transport Leave the site		

Table 5. Template of the track – stealing

Once the information on the illicit trafficking in antiquities are organised according to the procedures described above, the next step involves the interpretation of the script's contents and the practical application to the case studies, which is detailed in the following chapters.

3.5 Limitations

All research suffers limitations to various degrees. Several limits were identified in the current study, namely issues relating the data collection methods, their analysis and the generalisability of findings.

First at all, a constraint consisted in the accessibility and availability of relevant material. As concerns with judicial sources, the number of trials involving some element of the illicit trafficking in antiquities were considerably less than I first expected. Moreover, many criminal proceedings were still ongoing as were the majority of cases that interviewed law enforcement officers referred to. Interviewees and media sources increased the selected material I used to inform my research.

A second limitations relates to the accuracy, completeness and reliability of judicial data. They are secondary sources originating from law enforcement investigations and, inevitably, they reflect the police biases, resources and objectives (Calderoni, 2010: 4977; Hobbs and Antonopoulos, 2014). By the time law enforcement official data reach the judicial phase, information that are useful for academic research, such as individual behaviours and organisational features, might have been discarded because they do not satisfy the primary goal of prosecution: a conviction (Calderoni, 2010). The evidence presented in a criminal proceeding focuses on the aspects of the criminal behaviour and activity needed to convict the offender. Hence, it is likely that the data contained in judicial sources is limited to some degree. Similarly, once the trial is concluded and the sentence is made available to the public, other information may be lost as only a small percentage of the individuals is prosecuted and sentenced (Berlusconi, 2012). The problem of missing data is relevant

also when considering the methods used by law enforcement agencies to gather evidence. Investigators rely on direct observations, archival data, informants' and witnesses' information that inevitably generate incomplete set of data (Berlusconi, 2012: 63). Notwithstanding their operational limits, law enforcement and judicial generated data are an important source for the study of crime and the illicit trafficking in antiquities. For this study, only court judgements have been used as transcripts of wiretappings and of law enforcement investigations were not available. In the selection of the cases, the accuracy of the information has been one of the primary criteria for inclusion or exclusion and only those cases that included a detailed description of the facts and the context of the investigation have been selected. Moreover, I relied on the triangulation of data. Collecting data from diverse sources has increased the possibility to verify the reliability of the data. In particular, it has been especially helpful the opportunity to confront and weight with law enforcement and former prosecutors the information gathered through judicial data as well as the possibility to integrate them with media accounts on the same case.

Third, open source method of data collection provides a rich collection of information, which nevertheless requires a careful screening before being used. In this respect, several issues can be highlighted. In particular, media reports tend to propose a sensationalist and hyperbolic image of the illicit trafficking in antiquities based on rather limited empirical data. A clear example is the connection between the drug and the antiquities trafficking. Although some cases of smugglers involved in both markets, the link is far from being habitual and automatic. Data on Bulgaria, for instance, indicated a small minority of cases where drugs and antiquities were stored or sold together – in cases BG51, BG94, BG198, BG223, BG77) and BG260. Moreover, news spread from media channel to media channel. Although repeated

news does not pose problems for their reliability, large amount of reports and articles have to be analysed to obtain original information. Furthermore, most of the documents provide an accurate but general use of the term illicit trafficking in antiquities. This issue especially applies when it comes to the description of actors and the activities involved. Each article gives its own interpretation of organised crime groups, rings, bosses, looters and intermediaries so that the meaning and the contents of the selected media reports should be screened having in mind a categorisation of participants, co-offenders and criminal acts.

The use of open source data in qualitative studies raises further concerns on the quality and methodological rigor of the research. One of the controversial issues on the use of openly available data relates to the uniqueness and originality of the contents. Qualitative research is based on observations, interviews, documents and create knowledge capturing the contextual experience of the researcher, who develops a “privileged insider view” (Chauvette et al, 2019: 2) of the social phenomenon under study. As such, qualitative data are indivisible from the context in which it has obtained. The use of open source data might result in the loss of part or the whole contextual information and, in turn, in twisting the real meaning of the data (ibid.: 3). Another concern on open data considers the ethical issues relating to informed consent and confidentiality (Eysenbach and Till, 2001). Researcher have to comply with legal requirements on the disclosure of information obtained by participants in a study project and it is their responsibility to protect privacy of the participants. In case of open data as secondary source, privacy and anonymity can be breached (Chauvette et al., 2019: 4). Data can also be used for projects that share little, if nothing, with the goal of the primary context in which they have been obtained. This study relies on open source data; however, the concerns relating epistemological, methodological and

ethical problems are peripheral. This study, in fact, does not use already published qualitative studies on the illicit trafficking in antiquities as source of data. Thus, it avoided to lose, diminish or change the meaning associated with the original context of the open source information. As for the privacy of interviewees or person under investigation or arrested that have been mentioned in blogs, media reports and media accounts of law enforcement operations, their identity has never been disclosed as it never was when using judicial documents.

A fourth issue encountered in this study was the language. I refer to the fact that many documentary sources available and accessible in Bulgaria were written only in Bulgarian. I therefore relied on a first translation through the Google Translate application, which was further refined by the help of a colleague interning at the Center for the Study of Democracy. Language was sometimes a problem with interviewees in Bulgaria. Although they all spoke English, in few instances they preferred to have an unofficial translator in case of necessity. Again, I was supported by the staff of the Center for the Study of Democracy. I also carefully chose the appropriate words to use during each interview and sometimes I prepared draft questions in Bulgarian.

Fifth, crime script is inherently limited with regard to the generalisability of the findings, as already mentioned. Indeed, the dataset only contains information related to my two case studies, Bulgaria and Italy and the data obtained through documentary sources and interviews. However, this study does not aim to provide any general laws on the overall organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities around the world, being it more concerned to investigate this illicit trafficking through the selection of case studies.

Sixth, a specific limitation lies on the characterisation of the actors in the data. Each interviewee has his own perspective and tends to interpret the knowledge s/he possesses based on such perspective. For instance, the Bulgarian police officer working at the Chief Directorate Combating Organised Crime largely categorised the participants in this trafficking in terms of “organised crime members” and “organised crime groups”, while his colleague at the Bulgarian National Police emphasised the role of single or small professional groups of looters. Such a clear-cut categorisation could lead to a misleading representation of the trade. The triangulation between data and perspectives offered by other experts – first at all archaeologists – played an essential role in providing a more nuanced and realistic picture of the trafficking at issue.

Chapter 4

Data analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at analysing the organisational features of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and in Italy. In so doing, it explores the degree of complexity shown by the offenders and the configuration of this illicit trafficking. After a brief overview of the state of the art of the illicit antiquities trade in Bulgaria and Italy, section 3 applies the crime script model to this illicit trafficking and its auxiliary activities in Bulgaria and Italy. The script used for this research project is built along six steps: preparatory activity, stealing, storing and concealing, preparation to sell, transport and selling – see table 5 for the whole script sequence. Script analysis is suited to answer to the question on the identifiable elements needed to pursue the illicit trafficking in antiquities for it examines the single acts committed at each stage of this criminal activity. It further helps weighting its geographical features by identifying the local and international level at which activities are pursued and the extent to which activities are integrated or exist in isolation. Section 4 categorises the actors involved in this market as they emerge from the data gathered. This type of investigation is useful because it outlines the relations between offenders, their tasks and their roles in the illicit trafficking at issue. Four main typologies of actors are analysed, namely individuals, small groups, hierarchical organisations and networks. The tasks pursued by offenders are further detailed for each actor's typology. Finally, section 5 concludes the chapter.

STEP		SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS	LOCATION
1	Preparatory activities	Pre-activity	Find initial capital	Looters Treasure hunters Dealers Organised crime groups' members Buyers	Local
		Activity	Choose the target Purchase technical tools Purchase means of transport Establish contacts with other actors		
		Post-activity	n/a		
2	Stealing	Pre-activity	Enter the site Approach the target area	Looters Treasure hunters	Local
		Activity	Metal-detect Digging Looting		
		Post-activity	Taking the artefacts Prepare artefacts for easy transport Leave the site		
3	Storage and concealing	Pre-activity	Finding a storage location	Looters Treasure hunters Accomplices Middlemen	Local
		Activity	Transport the antiquity to the storage location		
		Post-activity	Exit the storage location		
4	Preparation to sell	Pre-activity	Divide the antiquities	Looters Experts (cleaners, restores) Dealers	Local
		Activity	Clean the antiquities Restore the antiquities Disguise the antiquities Put the antiquities into bags		
		Post-activity	n/a		
5	Transport	Pre-activity	Disguise and hide antiquities in the mean of transport	Smugglers Looters Dealers	Local Transnational
		Activity	Smuggle		
		Post-activity	Deliver the antiquites		
6	Selling				
6a	Direct selling to internal market	Pre-activity	Reach the selling location Advertise artefacts on the Internet	Looters Antique shop's owner Dealers Buyers	Local
		Activity	Start the transaction Negotiate Sell		
		Post-activity	Exit the selling location		
6b	Selling to international market	Pre-activity	Contact the known buyer Reach the selling location	Looters Auction house's employees Dealers Buyers	Transnational
		Activity	Start the transaction Negotiate Sell		
		Post-activity	Exit the selling locaton		

Table 6. Script sequence of the illicit trafficking in antiquities

4.2 Background: The illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and Italy

4.2.1 *Bulgaria*

Bulgaria has a rich archaeological heritage. Its geographical position facing Anatolia and the Black Sea has made the country a bridge between the Asian and the European continents since prehistoric times. Thus, Bulgaria has some of the oldest Neolithic caves and stone architecture in Europe (Thorpe, 2012), while it has also been home of the Greek and Thracian civilisations (Fol, 1989; Tonkov, 1996; Tsetskhladze, 1998; Webber, 2001; Boardman, 1963) and part of the Roman and Byzantine Empires (Pavlov, 2013). Along the northern border of Bulgaria, demarcated by the Danube River, were built several Roman colonies and fortress, including renowned archaeological sites of Bononia, Rataria, Colonia Ulpia Oescus Traiana, Novae and Durostorum (Dikov, 2016a). The Thracian civilisation was located in the southern-east part of the Balkan region, comprising what today is central and southeast Bulgaria, the Thrace region in Greece and the Balkan part of Turkey. Thracian tribes, however, expanded to arrive on the Danube River. Some of the most famous Thracian archaeological sites are located in central Bulgaria in the ‘Valley of the Kings’, so called for the presence of dozens Thracian kings’ tombs (Iordanov, 2012). Ancient Greek colonieess can be found along the Black Sea coast (I11).

The rich archaeological heritage has stimulated the growth of an illegal market in antiquities. Although evidence indicate that local residents were involved in looting since the 1940s (I19) and the practice was known during the communist period, the plunder of archaeological heritage was under a strict central government control until 1989 (CSD, 2007: 178; I19). The fall of the communist regime paved the way to an uncontrolled, systematic looting that spread in the whole country. Indeed, the decade of the 1990s is acknowledged for its rampant and sometime extreme looting (I8; I4).

An interviewee remembered how in the 1990s traders from Greece “travelled from village to village and bought for nothing very precious ethnographic and archaeological objects. With big cars and trucks they drove into the villages and said ‘we buy, we buy’ with microphones” (I15). Lorries were always full and smugglers wanted to export these artefacts in western Europe or in the United States.

Looting in Bulgaria has flourished due to the interaction of several reasons. A first important factor can be pinpointed in the deep economic crisis the country faced after the end of the communist regime and the high, widespread level of poverty among the population (CSD, 2007). Another cause has been the low priority given by law enforcement authorities to looting and selling illicit artefacts until recently. A pool of prosecutors specialised in art crimes was only established in 2006 and subsequently dismissed in 2012 (I12; I8). This second aspect should be considered together with the high number of professional and amateur looters active in Bulgaria. Interviewees agreed in indicating an average number of 3 – to 5,000 active looters in the whole country, although the number would rise up to 300,000 if amateur looters were counted (I8; I9; Dikov, 2016b). However, well-established dealers would amount to less than ten (I8). Fourth, the liberalisation of the market following the regime change has also enlarged the presence on the antiquities market scene of actors, whose activity was previously strictly regulated by the regime (CSD, 2007: 178-179; I19). Numismatic collectors, for instance, organise weekly fairs where they can meet, exchange information and coins (I10). Furthermore, the growth of the illicit market in antiquities found fertile ground in the general attitude of the society itself that failed to see in looting a serious crime nor a deviant behaviour since it does not involve direct harm to human beings (I15). This mentality encounters a lenient demand side, one where international and national regulations on the import-export of antiquities has not

been strictly regulated for decades and where medium and small size museums, antique shops, auction houses and private collectors accept antiquities notwithstanding the doubts that could be raised on the legal provenance of artefacts (Yates et al., 2017). Finally, the Internet is playing a crucial, growing role in the selling and exportation of illicit antiquities (I8). Not only coins, fragments of marble statues, fibulae and other small metallic objects are sold on online marketplaces, such as eBay and Amazon, also auction houses have started using online auctions to sell antiquities (ibid.).

Although the market in illicit antiquities is considered one of the richest in Bulgaria, there are no official data on either its revenues or of the people involved. Estimates on the actual looting of the Bulgarian heritage are not available, and archaeologists suggest that treasure hunting and the illicit trafficking of antiquities could be worth up to \$ 1 billion annually (Dikov, 2016b). The market, however, presents alternate ups and downs. After the peak in the 1990s and a two-year period in 2006-2007, the illicit trafficking in antiquities has slowed down (Valandovski, 2015; I8). This happened partly because several rich archaeological sites have been already ransacked and partly because other illegal activities are preferred due to easier activities and higher economical rewards, first at all the illegal smuggling of migrant (I8). It also proves difficult to establish the amount of people involved. The only available estimates pertain to looters, as seen before, while other actors' types escape a precise quantification. The actual number of collectors in Bulgaria is unknown (I11), whereas the exact involvement of organised criminal groups in this market is open to debate. On the one hand, some experts provide a picture where organised criminal organisations, either hierarchically or loosely structured, control the market (I17; I13; I12; I16). On the other hand, others maintain that the presence of organised crime in the

illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria is overrated at the expenses of not organised offenders (I4; I9).

4.2.2 *Italy*

Italy is a notorious source country of illicit antiquities (Isman, 2009, 2017; Raffiotta, 2013; Strappaveccia, 2014). The country has a heterogeneous archaeological heritage spanning from prehistoric to medieval cultural heritage. Apart from ancient Roman architecture and artefacts that are present from the North to the South of the country (Grassigli et al., 2008), Italy has been home of the Nuragic civilisation in Sardinia (Pittau, 2013; Webster, 2017), the Etrurian civilisation in central regions, Magna Graecia in the southern part of the country (Ward-Perkins, 1962; Fortier, 1974; De Juliis, 1996; Staffa, 2001; Azzara, 2002; Colonna, 2002; Piga et al., 2008; Sassatelli, 2008; Sciacca, 2008; IIPP, 2018), while the Longobards expanded over the centuries from the north of Italy to a vast part of the peninsula (Gasparri, 2012; Augenti, 2016).

Notwithstanding the historical accounts of past centuries ransacks, including the Napoleonic Era's plundering (Charney, 2015: 110-111; Moretti, 2002), the Italian archaeological heritage has been the target of systematic looting and illegal export of antiquities since the 1950s, with a peak between the 1970s and the early 2000s (Isman, 2009: 27). The extent of this illicit trafficking in Italy has been so massive to be defined as 'The Great Loot'⁸ (ibid.). As in the case of Bulgaria, the exact amount of how many archaeological artefacts have been smuggled out of Italy is based on estimates. As pointed out by Isman, it is possible that several million artefacts have been sold abroad over the past 40 years (ibid.: 67) and that "the 80% of Etrurian or

⁸ In Italian "La Grande Rapina".

Roman objects on the market have a clandestine origin” (Fiorilli, in Isman, 2009: 27). People involved in the looting since the 1970s are thousands (ibid.: 27, 67), although the protagonists are difficult to pinpoint. Criminal organisations, *tombatori*, dealers, couriers and traffickers work in a shadowy yet widespread way and cross all the social levels.

Primary cause of the extensive looting is the existence of such rich and diverse archaeological heritage. The most damaged regions include Lazio, Campania, Apulia and the two islands, Sicily and Sardinia (Mazzei, 2002; Basso, 2002; Salvi, 2002; Isman, 2009). There, archaeological sites on land and underwater have been systematically targeted (Tusa, 2002). A second reason, yet related to the first, is the request for unique artefacts by part of private collectors, auction houses and museums. Although in the past decade the attitude of foreign museums and well-established auction houses towards the acquisition of antiquities originating from Italy has become more cautious, the illicit market is still dynamic. In January 2016, for instance, the Financial Police has seized a container shipped from the United States by a German private collector, which comprised archaeological and art artefacts. The man also had a collection in his summer residence in Liguria, comprising antiquities “dated between the I century b.C and the III century a.C, such as frames, capitals, columns, funerary urns, a sarcophagus’ cover, fragments of a fictile sheet, fragments of amphorae, soapstones and remnants of soapstone turning” (OS21). Main destinations of illegal antiquities are countries European and international countries with a rich and solid market tradition, such as the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the United States (Basso, 2002). However, the routes of the illicit antiquities trafficking have changed over time. The investigation and criminal process of high-level dealers, museum’s curators and auction houses (Watson and Todeschini, 2007; Hugh, 2007; Hugh, 2010; Felch and

Frammolino, 2011; True, 2011) impacted the market. As pointed out by an interviewee, the fact that hub countries such as Switzerland started implementing police collaboration diverted trafficking routes towards new transit spots, first at all Spain (I21; EUROPOL, 2017, 2018).

A theme commonly linked to the illegal antiquities market in Italy is the involvement of organised crime groups to the illicit trafficking of archaeological artefacts (Nistri, 2009; Strappaveccia, 2014; I20). The idea that Mafia-like criminal organisations have a diffuse control over the market in illegal antiquities is generally dismissed as extreme (Nistri, 2009: 184-185), although local organised crime groups may be involved in the trafficking of illegal cultural goods due to the high profits (I20; Strappaveccia, 2014). Law enforcement operations in past decades have stressed the links between groups of looters and members of locally based organised crime groups. In Operation ‘Tempio di Hera’, for instance, one of the organisers supervising the activities of looting and trade on antiquities in Calabria enjoyed a long-lasting membership with local ‘Ndrangheta clans, although he and his partners foster the illicit trafficking in antiquities independently (OS106). Moreover, evidence suggest that antiquities attract a large number of actors to laundry money originated from illegal businesses (Cantone, 2018), including organised crime members (Strappaveccia, 2014).

4.3 Key findings

4.3.1 Crime script of the illicit trafficking in antiquities

In order to examine the structure and the social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and in Italy, it is imperative to first categorise and describe the steps underlying the crime commission process of this criminal activity. This section aims at answering to the research question on the identifiable elements needed to pursue the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Hence, it applies the crime script model to the selected case studies. As previously outlined in Chapter 3, the script of the illicit trafficking in antiquities comprises six steps, namely *preparatory activities*, *stealing*, *storage and concealing*, *preparation to sell*, *transport* and *selling*. Each step is described separately and illustrates the data on Bulgaria and Italy jointly. The script also indicates what actors are involved and the location – either local or transnational – where the activities are carried out. The offences ancillary to the individual stage of the illicit trafficking in antiquities are indicated at the end of each step. In this way, it is possible to attain a comprehensive understanding of the single actions needed to pursue the illicit trafficking under scrutiny. Moreover, the script serves as basis to further discuss the actors’ categories and the organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in the analysed countries.

Step 1: Preparatory activities

PREPARATORY ACTIVITIES			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Find initial capital		
Activity	Choos the target Purchase technical tools Purchase means of transport Establish contacts with other actors	Looters Treasure hunters Dealers Organised crime groups’ members	Local
Post-activity	n/a	Buyers	

From the analysis of the data gathered, it has been possible to pinpoint several activities that logically and chronologically precede the act of looting and serve a preparatory function. In particular, these activities comprise finding and choosing the most suitable site to plunder, obtaining the tools used for looting and establishing contacts with potential co-offenders, such as other looters, dealers and buyers.

Preparatory activities are necessary as actors are aware that they need to identify the opportunities to steal and maximise their profits. Looting requires an initial capital to invest in the purchase of the equipment needed to search for antiquities, which can be limited in case of handmade or low-quality metal detectors or more extensive when professional looters buy geo-radars and deep range specialised metal detectors. Moreover, being an arrest a possible outcome of looting, offenders tend to balance the expectation of economic gains with the risks deriving from the plunder of archaeological objects. Thus, choosing a rich archaeological site with a low level of security represents a primary activity for undetected and successful illegal excavations. Looters work under the assumption that in the surroundings of legitimate archaeological sites there is a high probability to bring to light artefacts (I14). They tend to concentrate on sites where excavations are at the beginning and as such poorly protected or in sites where digging are at an advanced stage. In both cases, looters preferably select sites located far away from inhabited locations:

“[Often] archaeological sites are not marked as archaeological sites. [...]. Every time, looters have information that you can find something. [They know it] in two ways: first, they loot near great archaeological sites, for example if in a village there is a big archaeological site from late Roman time at the top of [the] hill. [...] Local groups of looters search nearby, for example for necropolis [that can be] around, [...] for temples, sacred areas [that are not yet been discovered]” (ibid.)

As the interviewee stressed, “there are no case[s] when specialised groups start digging without prior knowledge” (ibid.) of ongoing archaeological excavations or presence of archaeological material. Looters are often in contact with regional

museums, hence being aware of the state of affairs of excavations and having access to precise and updated archaeological maps, or even they “buy specialised issues in archaeology” (ibid.). Looters take advantage of the fact that archaeological sites are often unsigned and left unpatrolled during the night or when diggings are suspended. In fact, the absence of a capable guardian, being it security guards, archaeologists or authorities, is limited and looters have greater chance to avoid detection.

Data accounts on Bulgaria report that in the majority of cases, looters and treasure hunters have been active in fields outside cities and villages unless artefacts were found in the home’s backyard. Sometimes, however, renowned archaeological sites, such as Rataria (O’Shea, 2009; Dikov, 2015), or areas known for the archaeological and historical relevance have been targeted. One looter, for example, has been detected while searching for antiquities in a known “Ancient Thracian Hellenistic Period settlement near Izvor in Bulgaria’s Southeast Burgas District” (AB6) that, however, is at present “part of a pasture, and grazing sheep add to the already sad picture of the treasure hunting raids”. The man was bulldozing the area, although as “archaeologists have found, the treasure hunter [...] probably has not been the only one to raid the site”. In fact, rescue digging brought to light part of the wall of the fortified Thracian settlement and several scattered artefacts, “primarily iron items such as an iron ax, spear tips, chisels, ceramic loom weights [and] household pottery, amphorae, and fragmented vessels for keeping grain and other foodstuffs” (ibid.).

The vast archaeological underground and the contiguity of archaeological areas with private properties and cities makes the choice of the locations to loot easier in Italy. In an operation led by the Carabinieri in Pompei, Naples, tunnels that connected the garden of a private house to the Pompei archaeological area were discovered (OS5). The tunnels have been excavated by a group of looters and were leading to “a

new site, which have revealed a big villa situated immediately outside the walls of Pompeii, in the northern area” (ibid.).

The choice of the site to loot or the geographical area to search might also depend on the type of artefacts. Indeed, based on their personal interests as long as on the market demand that prioritise specific items, professional looters concentrate their efforts in different areas of the country. This is case of the Thracian region in Bulgaria (AB1) as well as of the Etrurian, Nuragic and Magna Graecia artefacts that can be found in certain regions in Mid- and Southern Italy (Mazzei, 2002; Alessandrini, 2016). Although they often know where to search, looters might need a map to locate the area (I14; AB4). Frequently, however, non-professional looters do not act based on a well-delineated plan, they rather engage in metal detecting and treasure hunting nearby archaeological sites in search of any artefacts they might find. In case BG47, for instance, the Bulgarian Border Police witnessed the two defendants digging with shovels near a Palaeolithic settlement dating back to the Bronze period and later converted into a Roman fortress. In a similar way, a group of looters were identified by the Italian Financial Police while digging in an area near the archaeological site of Giunone Sospita (Juno the Savior) in the outskirts of Rome (OS19). In that occasion, looters were excavating an unknown location “connected to the nearby Roman temple” (ibid.) where were found the remains of architectural elements in marble, coins and over 24,000 fragments dating back to the late Republican and the Imperial Roma ages.

Technological advances can be used to help locating archaeological fields or the exact location where to target. Apart from helicopters and areal pictures, drones illustrate how looters keep abreast of new opportunities. The aerial survey by drones

allows to recognise significant elements of the territory that can remain unnoticed if standing on the ground:

“For instance, looking at the terrain early in the morning or at sunset [...] it is possible to catch micro relief that signal the presence of ruins just beneath the ground. In the absence of micro relief, it is possible to observe the anomalies of the vegetation. Buried vestiges, by changing the mineral and chemical composition of the soil that covers them, modify the plants genetics in the terrain. Therefore, some types of remains originate dry and stony soils, while in sandy terrains plants tend to cling to structures covered with soil. Then, plants such as alfalfa and asphodel indicate the presence of limestone, which has always been typical of building stones” (OS52)

Looters using drones are facilitated in that they can explore vast archaeological areas and locate a good and rich looting site. Although drones’ surveys need time, they are considerably faster than other research methods, including the *spilloni* or spindles, and cover bigger areas. Once individualised the site, looters arrive, excavate and escape with the illicit antiquities.

Another activity preparatory to stealing is the purchase of technical tools for looting and of means of transport. An interviewee (I5) was keen to show the pictures of a failed attempt of looting a field in mid-Bulgaria. The pictures were interesting for they displayed the technique employed by the looters to dig – called agrarian and which is described in detail under step 2 of the script – along with the tools used. They had metal detectors, shovels, a tractor and a car. These are by far the most common instruments utilized. Metal detectors, for instance, were openly mentioned in 21 cases in Bulgaria and in 28 cases in Italy, while tractors and bulldozers are usually associated with intensive, aggressive looting (OS85; BG143; BG170; BG257). Other pieces of equipment might include sieves, binoculars, pickaxes and so-called *spilloni* as well as high-definition geo-radars or geo-scanners based on electromagnetic prospecting (BG120; I15). The latter are far more sophisticated than metal detectors for they do not reveal the presence of metal or other objects in the soils, instead they

investigate the physical characteristics of the soil substrates and the existence of artificial structures (ibid.). Middle quality geo-radars can scan up to 18 meters underground, whereas the most sophisticated metal detector cannot exceed two to three meters in depth.

The use of metal detectors and geo-radars in Bulgaria is strictly regulated and allowed for scientific and archaeological reasons only. According to the legislation in force at the time of the research, the use of both instruments near and within an archaeological area was legitimated exclusively after the issuance of a permit by a specifically designed committee of the Ministry of Culture (I5), which not only provides a written authorisation, it also keeps a list of metal detectors serial numbers. Whoever buys a metal detector is indeed required by law to register it at the Ministry of Culture (ibid.).

Italy has similar legislative restrictions as far as metal detectors and geo-radars are concerned. Although this technical equipment is legally sold, it cannot be utilized in archaeological sites and areas under conservation order related to landscape and biodiversity. Metal detecting in natural parks is forbidden. The latest changes regarding crimes against the cultural heritage in Italy were implemented in 2017. Among others, one of the new offences is the illegal detention of metal detector and probes within an archaeological area. Indeed, if a person is found holding any technical means to search for artefacts, even without antiquities to testify the looting, he is criminally liable (Crisafi, 2017).

The selling and use of metal detectors for purposes other than scientific, however, is legal in both countries. Metal detectorists lawfully search for gold, meteorites fragments and any other type of non-precious metal. Hence, it is a common practice among looters to avoid law enforcement controls by metal detecting in

deserted areas. In I9, the interviewee described how a group of looters tried to avoid the arrest by the police by hiding the equipment. In his description, he:

“was in an archaeological site in the north-east of Bulgaria and with some policemen they saw some persons excavating with sophisticated technology. But, because the site was open [...] and there were some hundred meters from the street to the place where [looters] were excavating, [they] hide the instruments and when the police asked them what were they doing, they answered that they saw someone excavating and tried to make them escape. The policemen did not arrest them because there would have not been enough evidence in a courtroom to condemn them and any good lawyer could have obtained their release. They only seized the instruments.” (I9)

Metal detectors, moreover, had the registration numbers scraped to elude identification (ibid.).

Finally, transport is ensured mostly by the use of private cars. In eleven cases in Bulgaria (BG20; BG80; BG165; BG185; BG326; BG327; BG22; BG32; BG124; BG143; BG223) and seven in Italy (IT42; OS13; OS38; OS42; OS43; OS62; OS87) looters have been identified after they left the looting area on board cars, where artefacts and metal detectors were hidden.

Establishing contacts with potential co-offenders is the third category of preparatory activities that emerge from the gathered data. Actors show numerous ways to get in touch with other co-offenders and start collaborating. The easiest way, and the most obvious, is the collaboration among people who know each other, either because they are friends or because they are known to have an interest in the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In case BG87 and BG88 in Bulgaria, two friends overheard in a coffee shop a conversation over a gold treasure buried in the fields and decided to organise a ‘looting-trip’ with two other offenders. They also borrowed a tractor from another friend to utilise in the illicit excavations. In August 2012, the defendant R.P. and the friend K.A.

“were in a restaurant in the town of Peshtera. They heard a conversation at a neighboring table, that in the village of Banya, not far from the town of Panagyurishte,

was buried a treasure and they decided to check”. On 14.10.2012 K.A. called N.B. and told him [that] he would walk with R.P. on the next day in the [surrounding area] of the village Banya to look for buried gold coins. He invited him to go and watch. The next day, 15.10.2012, K.A. called his nephew and offered him to go to the countryside without [specifying the reasons]. The same day, R.P., N.B. and the nephew set off by car from Sofia to Banya. [there] K.A. was waiting for them, [and] brought them to a hill where there was R.H.. There was a hole in the ground, part of which was freshly dug, and nearby there were the remains of a stone wall. K.A. and R.P. continue to dig with a spindle and a shovel and four buckets” (BG87)

The group of looters have been spotted by an eyewitness, who informed the mayor and the police. When arrested, they were still looting and admitted that they hoped to find gold coins or fragments in the soil (ibid.) in the area surrounding the Thracian fortress of Panagyurishte.

In Italy, the craft of looting was known to be passed over from generation to generation (I21; OS46; OS65). Nowadays the tradition disappeared, and family ties have been replaced by other types of connections, such as friendship and common association to a criminal group (Strappaveccia, 2014; OS102-OS124). Contacts between looters and other players, first of all buyers and dealers, are maintained also through phone calls and email exchanges. In IT6 and OS9, indeed, the defendants kept the numbers of looters and collectors in their phonebooks. In OS9, in particular, during a routine check the Carabinieri stopped and searched the car of an Italian-Swiss citizen, finding several archaeological artefacts together with some handwritten sheets of paper containing lists of buyers’ names, objects and prices.

Another common system to approach co-offenders are specifically designed meetings. This is a sophisticated way to organise looting that was described by the interviewee in I4 referring to a police investigation in Bulgaria. According to his account, in the main Bulgarian cities, such as “Sofia, Plovdiv, Vratsa, Ruse, Stara Zagora and Burgas” (ibid.), meetings between dealers and *diggers* (the term was used by the interviewee) are organised on a weekly or monthly basis in public places, such

as restaurants or cafes, where the actors would sit, exchange information on current transactions and new business opportunities. Although the legitimacy of the meetings, security is tight. In fact, participants could enter only by invitation, thus creating closed groups of trusted co-offenders and concurrently decreasing the possibility of detection by law enforcement agencies (ibid.). Furthermore, the gatherings only serve as occasions where people exchange similar interests and contacts without openly discuss deviant or illegal behaviours. Once the meeting is over, they call each other, meet in private and define the details of the operation, “if there is the need or the will to conclude a deal” (ibid.).

Finally, a particular typology of contacting between co-offenders in Bulgaria is defined as *fishing* (I14), an action that requires a more organised typology of criminality. The term refers to the practice utilised by some organised criminal groups, whose boss dispatches a trusted man in a region known to have a rich archaeological heritage, hence a vast reserve of potentially valuable artefacts to introduce in the illicit market. According to the interviewee, each organised criminal group would employ a total of “four to five trusted man to cover the entire country” (ibid.). How does fishing work? The underlying idea is simple. The trusted man would blend in local cafes or other social venues, presenting himself as a dealer or a collector and would spread words of his interest in antiquities (ibid.). He might also provide some basic tools for the illegal digs. In order to create and consolidate trust, he would pay a good amount of money for each artefact received, even in the cases of low to no value of the object. Once a truly precious piece is discovered, however, the organised crime middleman would pay less than the real market value. “Let’s say that [the piece] is worth 200,000 euros. The trusted man would give [to the looters] 200,000 leva⁹. Looters are fine with

⁹ The Lev is the Bulgarian currency. At the time of the interview, 1 lev was corresponded to 0,51 euros.

it because they trust the person, because the previous times they received more of the real value” (ibid.). Looters would bite as fishes, hence the fishing technique.

Actors and ancillary offences

The first step of the script sees the participation of several actors, including treasure hunters, looters, dealers and members of organised criminal groups. Being the activities preparatory to looting, the actors involved are necessary active on a local level. Indeed, they operate within the national boundaries, especially in the case of looters and treasure hunters who need to locate looting sites. Likewise, organised crime frontmen are dispatched by their organisation in several country districts, yet they do not act outside the country.

Moreover, this stage of the commission process of the illicit trafficking in antiquities is vulnerable to the production of fake documents. In interview I15, the interviewee illustrated a case in which a permit was issued by the Ministry of Culture in Bulgaria for the use of a geo-radar within the set boundaries of an ongoing archaeological excavation in Sofia. Several months after the permit was issued, the registered holder was called by the police, who informed him that a copy of the permit was found in an illegal excavation several kilometres away from Sofia. Looters copied the permit and manually faked it by changing the name of the city, while maintaining unvaried the name of the holder (I15).

Evidence also suggest that exists a popular black market for treasure hunting maps, which can be sold and exchanged for “tens of thousands of US dollars” (AB4).

Step 2: Stealing

STEALING			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Enter the site Approach the targeted area	Looters Treasure hunters	Local
Activity	Metal-detecting Digging Looting		
Post-activity	Taking the artefacts Prepare artefacts for easy transport Leave the site		

(i) *Pre-activity*

If preparatory activities set off the process of stealing, the pre-activity scene comprehends the physical acts necessary to approach and enter the criminal activity of stealing per se. Data have indicated several actions that fall within the pre-activity step.

First at all, once looters have identified the area of work and obtained all the technical tools, they chose whether to loot during the night or in the daily light. In many cases professional looters and treasure hunters prefer to work during the day. Two are the reasons that explain this preference. First at all, looting fields often have very low, if none, public lighting making it difficult for looters to excavate and recognise artefacts. Second, a group of people seen excavating at night-time rise more suspicion than the during the day. In fact, in Italy the police caught a small group of looters as they were attracted by moving flashlights in an archaeological area at night (OS48). In the words of a looter: “Why at night, to be caught? During the normal working hours, to keep a low profile: from six in the morning, until five”¹⁰ (Isman: 2009: 17). In case OS80, a small group of looters – three friends – in Padria, in north Sardinia, equipped the looting area as a “real building site, with all the necessary

¹⁰ “Macché di notte, per farci beccare? Nel normale orario di lavoro, per dare meno nell’occhio: dalle sei del mattino, alle cinque”.

equipment to dig without problems. Shovels and pickaxes, rakes and flashlights, even beach umbrella to shelter from the sun” (ibid.) and make people believe that construction workers were excavating. In short, to give an image of normality to what was in reality the clandestine excavation of two tunnels adjacent to an archaeological area.

Despite the risks, many looters work at night. For instance, non-professional looters or treasure hunters who have a legal job during the day, search for archaeological artefacts in their spare time in the evenings (OS60). The night is also an obligatory choice if looters target an open archaeological site (I19). In this case, they need to wait until the site is closed and the last visitors have left. Describing the history of the archaeological treasure found in site of Morgantina – Sicily – in the 1970s and sold abroad, Raffiotta recollected the description of the countless digs excavated at night and discovered in the morning by archaeologists (Raffiotta, 2013: 7-10):

“On 29.11.1977, during a perimeter check in the necropolis ‘Cittadella’, everything was quiet without any news, but returning to the area of ‘San Francesco’ in the Bisconti district, I noticed a dig; going on the site, in the excavated soil I noticed clay fragments of a statue [...]. The material [left by the looters] was recovered, then I cleaned the area and, in my opinion, it seems a small temple. Recovered material: terracotta fragments of a big statue; a capital or base of the statue in white stone; a terracotta lion’s foot; a terracotta fragmented statue’s head; two achromatic oil lamp; several fragments of statues; three achromatic small cups; a small statue’s foot; a capital spiral fragment in white stone; several other fragments” (excerpt of a letter written by F. Cassarino, assistant to the Archaeological Superintendence in Agrigento, Sicily, in ibid.: 7)

Second, being it pursued at night or during the day, pre-activity entails that looters would approach the targeted area. The most common way used by looters implies driving with a private car to the looting area, park it and possibly hide it not to draw attention or rise suspicion, take the tools needed to metal detect and excavate and, finally, enter the site. However, some account of looting highlighted a more

complex pre-activity. As seen in the previous step, in case OS5 looters pinpointed as target an area along the inside margins the archaeological park of Pompeii, which included a well-preserved Roman villa, at the time still unknown to archaeologists. Given the impossibility to enter Pompeii at night-time and spend hours in it plundering the site, looters decided to excavate tunnels that connected the site with the cellar of a private house located just outside the archaeological area.

(ii) *Activity*

The methods of searching for archaeological artefacts are simple, standardised and used regardless of the numbers of co-offending looters. Results emerging from the data indicate that treasure hunters and looters walk slowly in an area with the metal detector and dig and sift the terrain every time that they detect objects. This way of proceeding gives the terrain the typical uneven and mottled look associated with looting (I19).

The same activity, however, shows different degrees of sophistication in case looters act alone or in groups. The activities of two, three co-operating looters are indeed more complex and often requiring a certain division of roles. First, looters and treasure hunters would differentiate the activities. While one would keep lookout, the remaining members of the group would metal detect and excavate (BG47; BG48). On March 2009, in the vicinity of Lyaskovets, between the villages of Dolno Riahovo and Malak Preslavets (Silistra, Bulgaria), D.T. and D.P. were spotted by the border police in a Palaeolithic settlement used until Roman epoch while they were “inside a pit, digging with metal detectors and shovels. The third person was standing aside, propped against a tree” (BG48), acting as a guard. Second, the presence of special

technical means such as geo-radars or tractors would involve additional specialisation among the co-offenders. Consider the *agrar* or agrarian (the word in italics was used by the interviewee) method of looting described by the interviewee in I5 and mentioned in the previous step of the script. In this case, the fact that looters utilise a tractor requires that at least one member knows how to operate it. This person would cover a unique role within the group, namely the initial excavation of the sites with the tractor and, as such, signing the physical limits of the illegal sites itself. The interviewee described the approach used by looters. Out in the countryside, the looter will dig a straight line with the tractor, similar to soil ploughing of seed. He would excavate 80 centimetres to one-meter deep line, while the other looters would be in charge of metal detecting, digging and sifting. The agrarian method may be preferred to less sophisticated looting techniques because of the potential results. In fact, some of the most famous Thracian treasures have been accidentally found during agricultural works. The Panagyurishte treasure, for instance, is one the richest Thracian hoard discovered in Bulgaria. It was unearthed in 1949 during clay diggings and exposed in the Plovdiv Archaeological Museum (Pandaliev, 2012). It dates back to the Hellenistic period and comprises nine solid gold vessels, decorated with zoomorphic and anthropomorphic figures.

Looters can also use bulldozers to excavate and collect any type of artefacts found in the terrain (OS85; AB6). As for tractors, groups resorting to bulldozers require a specialised member knowing how to manoeuvre it. If looters have a geo-radar at disposition, they will follow a different excavating routine, yet again with a clear division of roles. In the first place, the actor that has the expertise to handle the geo-radar would map the interested area – for instance Thracian tumuli – to obtain a

precise image of the architecture inside the tomb along with the disposition of precious remains. Only after having mapped the tumuli, would looters start excavating (I15).

In Bulgaria in some cases (BG69; BG70; BG81), looters were stopped by the police while detecting an area with the use of homemade or self-assembled metal detectors. The most sophisticated of these tools were built with portable computer running a geographic tracking software and connected to cable probes. In these cases, one looter would walk through the targeted area – woods, fields surrounding archaeological sites – with the computer in his backpack to map the underground and identify the potential looting sites, while the other group’s members would dig.

A method to search for artefacts typical of professional looters in Italy is the use of spindles. These are long metal or wooden sticks that looters would lightly insert into the ground to probe whether artefacts are hidden beneath it (OS65; Isman, 2009: 115). Spindles are wooden or metal sticks forged to drill down the soils. One end is bigger than the “body of the probe and with a deep threading groove in the middle – like a screw – that holding the soil in the grooving, [allows] to recognise the material” (Fabrizio, 2018). Expert looters are able to identify whether they have found a necropolis or other types of archaeological remains by the sound produced by the spindle underground. Indeed, artefacts discovered through the use of spindles are usually large and made of marble, metal or terracotta. Once archaeological objects are discovered, looters would excavate and recover them. According to the account of one former *tombarolo*, looters would proceed by probing the soils every 15 centimetres and creating a perimeter that delimits the excavating area (ibid.).

It is noteworthy to mention that looting can result from entirely accidental discoveries. In one famous case in Italy, known as the case of the Faso’s bronze or the *Atleta Vittoritoso* – *Victorius Youth*, the bronze statue was inadvertently recovered by

fishermen in 1964 (IT63). Not handed over to the Archaeological Superintendence, the bronze was hidden several times in private houses and underground before being sold to a middleman outside Italy and, finally, to the Getty Museum in U.S. in 1977.

(iii) *Post-activity*

This section includes all the steps needed to conclude the illegal activity. Several actions can be identified as post-activity.

First, when the objects are too heavy or too large, looters break them into fragments to facilitate the removal and the transport (Isman, 2009: 59). This applies particularly in cases of marble statues, sarcophagi or frescoes on the walls. Describing the removal of Pompeiian frescoes, the author describes a hurried and destructive work:

“Due to the haste and the incapacity, the lack of preparation and the ignorance, the thieves act in a rough way: unprofessional and not at all scientific. [...] Their excavation aims at a one purpose only: to remove the paintings as quickly as possible. They detach the frescos without ‘preparing’ the walls. The rough and improvised work compromises the integrity of the artworks; they will be found with visible gaps, which did not exist before the excavation: the pictures prove it. Predators work with pickaxes, not carefully. They shatter the paintings, to extract them.” (ibid.: 93-94).

Fragmenting antiquities also serves a profitability logic: if museums and collectors own a piece, they would pay to obtain the remaining fragments.

Second, although unusual, looters can decide to cover up the digging so as to avoid immediate detections of the illegal excavation. In OS36, unidentified looters in Sardinia targeted the archaeological site of Mont’e Prama and, specifically, an ancient tomb just discovered by archaeologists. After pulling out the stone cover with a pickaxe, looters re-covered the tomb to conceal the ransack.

Third, looters can decide to leave the tools used to excavate in plain sight or to take them at home. Commonly choosing the second option, looters disassemble metal detectors and radars and hid all the tools in the cars with the artefacts (BG21; BG31; BG123; BG142; BG19; BG164; BG184; IT63; IT42; OS38; OS53).

Actors and ancillary offences

This step of the script only includes looters and treasure hunters, who can act locally either alone or in small groups. Also, no criminal offences ancillary to looting were identified.

Step 3: Storage and concealing

STORAGE AND CONCEALING			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS' CATEGORY	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Find a storage location	Looters Treasure hunters	Local
Activity	Transport the antiquity to the storage location	Accomplices Middlemen	
Post-activity	Exit the storage location		

(i) Pre-activity

This step of the script starts with the physical possession of the illicit antiquities. At this stage, pre-activity does not entail many undertakings. Actors start from the assumption that it is safer to hide the artefacts before selling them or handing them over to dealers, collectors and other buyers. The crucial act consists in finding a storage location that can be a garage, a stable, a room in a private dwelling or the car itself. As pointed out by an interviewee, many treasure hunters and looters prefer to

hide the archaeological objects “in mountains, forests, and [sometimes] in banks” (I13). In fact, antiquities are often buried underground until a seller is found; “in Lazio, there was who buried antiquities in the garden, waiting for the next journey [of the buyer] and purchase” (Isman, 2009: 55).

(ii) *Activity*

Storage and concealing are simple activities. Many looters and treasure hunters bring the archaeological goods in their homes, especially if they found coins or other small objects, which can be easily concealed in boxes, closets, basements, cellars and garages (BG115; BG123; BG270; BG253; BG54; BG159; BG186; BG305; BG308; IT35; OS11; OS10; OS17; OS71). Sometimes small artefacts would be hidden in the cars’ trunk (BG124; BG142; BG185).

A strategy to minimise detection and monetary losses in case of law enforcement seizures requires looters to separate antiquities and store them in different locations. In cases BG250 and AB19, for instance, the defendant was found in possession of a collection of 407 artefacts, including “coins, fibulas, appliqués, parts of rings and arrow tips” (AB19) that were kept in different locations: the defendant’s “home in the town of Novi Pazar, in his mother’s home, in his wife’s flower shop, and in his car, in a plastic bag under the front seat” (ibid.). On the contrary, in two cases in Italy (IT54; OS63) the Carabinieri discovered one hidden storage room where archaeological artefacts have been amassed altogether. In one case, the defendant was a retired antique dealer, who kept a real treasure in safe room in his apartment, to which he only had access. He collected “vases, statures, helmets, and bronzes, tools of everyday life, dating between 800 to 300 b.C, some belonging to the Hellenic art of Magna Graecia

and others to the Etruscan art of the Tuscan cities” (OS63). Similarly, in the other case, the defendant was convicted “for receiving [illicit] archaeological artefacts found in his home” (IT54), although he declared that the antiquities were indeed belonging to his son-in-law, who he “considered to be a participant of an association aimed at trafficking in archaeological artefacts” (ibid.). However, the court established a direct link between the defendant and the room where the artefacts were stored, “of which [he] not only had the availability, but to which he had constant access” (ibid.), thus identifying the crime of abetting. Actors might further decide to change the hidden locations of illegal antiquities. A good example is provided by the adventures of the Victorious Youth, a bronze statue that, as mentioned already, was found in the summer of 1964 by the fishermen of two fishing vessels in the Adriatic Sea, near Fano (IT63). The statue was then hidden for some “days or weeks in the [...] house of F.D., a friend of F.G. [one of the captains of the fishing vessels], who declared to have transported the statue, on request of F.G., using his own car” (ibid.) to his house where it was buried underground. In August 1964, the statue was sold to the same fishermen who found it and, subsequently, transferred to two houses, the last one located in Gubbio, a small town in central Italy. According to the investigations, the statue disappeared without a trace, although the antiquity “remain in Italy, probably in Gubbio and always concealed” (ibid.), until it reappeared again in 1972, when T.H. “claimed to have seen the statue in that year at a German antique shop [...], while it was being cleaned and then to have seen it the year after, once the restoration was completed” (ibid.). The Carabinieri were able to retrace the steps of the bronze years later because part of the marine encrustations covering the statue was lost in the ground in Fano (ibid.). They established that the Victorious Youth in 1974 was sold to a London based antique dealer and, then, in 1977 sold to the Getty Museum (ibid.).

Interviewees in Bulgaria clearly highlighted that in the case of *fishing* mentioned in previous paragraph, looters are directly contacted by organised crime group's frontmen, and thus they tend to sell the artefacts to the intermediary right after having unearthed them (I14). Hence, in this particular case the step of storing and concealing illegal antiquities is postponed with respect to the step of selling. However, based on the agreement between the parts, the handover to the local organised crime intermediary could take place after having hidden the artefacts.

(iii) *Post-activity*

The step concludes with actors hiding the looted antiquities in the chosen storage location and leaving it.

Actors and ancillary offences

Actors engaged in the step of storage and concealing include the looters, treasure hunters and their potential accomplices. Local middlemen might also be involved at this stage when looters decide to avoid step 3 and step 4 of the script and sell the antiquities directly after being illegally excavated. In this case, the storage is deferred after the distribution of the stolen artefacts. One case is exemplary in this regard. In the course of Operation 'Gerione' (OS94-OS101), a mixed Italian, Greek and German law enforcement group search in 1994 the house of a known intermediary in Munich.

"The basement was divided into three rooms, a storage room, a warehouse. It was in the latter that were found dozens of boxes, each containing several fragments or archaeological artefacts, many of which were still covered with soil, all of which were however meticulously classified. The last room in the basement consisted of a huge, very clean laboratory in which there were several precision instruments, chemicals, paints, solvents, so much that it looked like a real chemical laboratory. [...]"

Throughout [the attic], hundreds of vases, stelae, stone labs with various inscriptions had been stored, and again: bronzes, statues and mosaics, jewels, frescoes, of all sizes, pervaded both the floor and the shelves. Most of the artefacts had been stolen from Italy, but even here, there were artefacts from both Bulgaria and Greece” (OS96)

In this case, the intermediary bought the antiquities before they had been cleaned and restored, as they were sold to him right after the discovery. Moreover, the role of the intermediary in OS96 incorporate the steps of *concealing* and *preparation to sell* for his work was not confined to store the antiquities before finding buyers and re-distributing the artefacts, but also to clean and restore them, which represent the main activities of step 4, as described in the next paragraph.

Step 4: Preparation to sell

PREPARATION TO SELL			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS' CATEGORY	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Divide the antiquities	Looters Experts (cleaners, restorers) Dealers	Local
Activity	Clean the antiquities Restore the antiquities Disguise the antiquities Put the antiquities into bags		
Post-activity	n/a		

(i) *Pre-activity*

The fourth step of the illicit trafficking at issue is represented by those activities needed to prepare the antiquities to be sold in the illegal market. Pre-activity at this stage is dedicated to one specific action, namely dividing the artefacts between those that are precious and well-preserved, and those that are either very common or ruined beyond any possible restoration (I14). The difference between these two types of antiquities is not only based on the potential revenues, but it also reflects the markets of destination (CSD, 2007: 179). Indeed, the internal market in Bulgaria attracts small

objects, fragments and antiquities that have low value due to their profusion – such as Roman and Greek coins in Bulgaria – or their bad preservation status (I12). On the other hand, a rare and intact painted vase, a marble statue or a golden mask are destined to the richer international market. This method is also found in Italy, but with less strict application. Many Italian collectors, in fact, are willing to acquire exquisite antiquities originated from the central and southern regions of the country, thus sustaining a rich domestic market in illegal antiquities. Consider, for example, the case described in OS63, mentioned in the previous step. During the investigations, experts highlighted that most of the antiquities collected by the defendant were probably directly purchased by “*tombaroli* active in Apulia and the Etruscan necropolises of Tarquinia and Cerveteri” (OS63).

(ii) *Activity*

Based on the data derived from open sources and the additional information gathered through the interviews, four distinct activities emerged that serve as preparation to sell looted antiquities. The first consist in cleaning the artefacts. It represents a critical but essential action, one without which antiquities cannot proceed along the following steps. The centrality of the act of cleaning as a separate activity of the illicit trafficking in antiquities was highlighted by one interviewee (I14). Looted artefacts retain soil on the surface, are encrusted with mud and metals corrode. Cleaning is often an activity outsourced to external actors, who are not member of organised criminal groups nor are they involved directly in looting; “[dealers and organised crime bosses] have one or two persons that clean the objects, to prepare them to the West” (ibid.). Therefore, chemists, restores, art conservators and

archaeologists may be hired to clean the objects and prepare them to be sold. The cleaning techniques vary based on the antiquity: coins or other metallic object or fragment need to have the old patina removed, whereas marble or terracotta vessels are washed of any soil remains and brushed. Underwater antiquities might need to be exfoliated from marine encrustations. As stressed by the interviewee “‘cleaners’ use tools and specific acids and chemicals for the coins. They have knowledge of chemistry and metallurgy [...] and they know how to clean the patina for old copper and bronze” (ibid.).

The second act is strictly related to the post-activity of step 2 of the script. When looters reduce artefacts into fragments to easily transport them or when archaeological remains are unearthed already shattered, they have to be restored (Isman, 2009: 27). As for the cleaning, it is often a third person other than then the looter or the dealer to restore the antiquities. However, looters themselves can clean and restore, if they handle first-hand the negotiation and trade with renowned dealers. A looter narrates how “in the evening I was coming back from work and, two hours before dinner, I was glueing and sorting out; after dinner, I would perhaps look at the old planimetries. [...] I restored, sold, found the locations; the other [looters] kept excavating” (ibid.: 115). The looter in OS25 found in tomb near Foggia, an Italian city in Apulia, “3 amphorae, 9 volute kraters and three hydrias, and dozens of fragments, all dating back to the 4th century b.C.” (OS25). The vases were already fragmented at the moment of the discovery, probably due to the structural failing of the ceiling, but the looter already started to restore them as fragements were divided and packed based on the different vase they belong to (ibid.)

The third activity put in place in order to sell the artefacts is their disguise. The artefacts’ disguise is only required when pieces of considerable size and value need to

be transported outside national borders. Whereas a fibula can be smuggled in a pocket, a capital or a stele are easily recognisable. Offenders have two options available. First, if the object is well preserved, rare and can be sold for a good price, it can be disguised to look as contemporary art. Counting on the lack of expertise of the border and custom police, offenders can also decide to make “the antiquity look like a replica” (I8). Second, the artefact can be cut into small pieces. This method is preferred when the antiquities’ quality is poor or if there are no options available to avoid detection while trafficking the whole artefact (I18).

Finally, the last activity consists in putting the artefacts into bags, so that they become easier to handle, transport, distribute and be sold. In several published records of judicial cases in Bulgaria, looters and dealers have been arrested while carrying small metallic objects – especially coins, fibulae, arrowheads – inside transparent plastic purses and bags (BG77; BG78). In December 2015, the Bulgarian Custom Agency seized thousands of antiquities destined to the United Kingdom, most of which were probably fakes, at the border point in Ruse, before they were smuggled into Romania (AB20). Antiquities were found in four cardboard boxes and “in one of the boxes, the customs officers found an antique chest containing hundreds of figurines, tools fragments, or coins, each of which had been wrapped in an individual plastic bag. Similar artefacts were found in the other cardboard boxes. Some of the plastic bags had inscriptions in Bulgarian and prices tags in GBP, with prices of up to GBP 2,000” (ibid.). In case BG199, however, the police searched the house of the defendant H.I. and found numerous artefacts already bagged and ready to be transported. The evidence were described during the trial:

“42 pieces of glass bracelets’ fragments in a polyethylene bag; 19 pieces of glass bracelets’ fragments in a white paper envelope; paper envelope containing 11 metal bracelets and 1 ring; paper envelope containing 2 pieces of glass bracelets; polyethylene bag containing 234 coins /washers; cartboard box containing 15 pieces of

fibreglass parts, 3 coins and 10 pieces of metal fragments; 2 white paper bags containing 18 fragments of vessels and 71 metal balls.” (BG199)

(iii) *Post-activity*

This step of the script concludes with the actors having the physical availability of restored and cleaned antiquities. Post-activity does not necessitate further actions for this step connects directly with step 5 – distribution of the antiquities and step 6 – selling the artefacts.

Actors and ancillary offences

This step of the illicit trafficking in antiquities script sees the involvement of actors specialised in cleaning and restoring the antiquities. Generally active at local level, they can include renowned restores (Isman, 2009: 47, 53), people who have studied at high school or university level chemistry or the looters themselves, who develop a certain level of expertise over the years. The statue of the *Artemide marcianate*, a sculpture excavated between Cassino and Caserta (Italy) in 1993 during the construction of a new building, has been reproduced three times. Once the Carabinieri discovered the existence of the statue in the black market, some of the actors involved in its selling invented an interesting ploy to confuse the investigation:

“They hire an unaware artisan, a marble worker in Rome, at the Verano cemetery. [...] they ask him to realise two copies of the sculpture, bringing him ten pictures. He asks 35 million lire, about 17,500 euros; they agree on 25 and six months. ‘I proceed by using a pantograph mold’, he explain. The result is satisfying, so much that one year later the client asks for two more copies: this time for 45 million. [...] The [client himself] makes the first copy “grow old”: in ‘a laboratory of Manduria, in the province of Taranto, with acids and silicates’.” (ibid.: 53)

The first fake was then buried so as to have it discovered by the Carabinieri and make them think that they recovered the original statue. The copy was so perfect, that even experts have been deceived at the beginning (ibid.).

Although rarely, dealers at international level can also manage the cleaning procedures. In Operation ‘Gerione’ (OS94-OS101), mentioned in the previous paragraph, the house of the intermediary searched by the police also had in the basement:

“a pool five meters deep, sixty meters long and thirty meters wide. Inside it, standing below the water level, there was an endless number of vessels of all sizes. So [the intermediary] cleaned the artefacts, immersing the larger ones in a swimming pool, where they remained for days, in a sort of bain-marie of water and chemical substances, to remove the various encrustations due to time and atmospheric agents. Near the swimming pool there were several pools of plastic with very aggressive chemical agents. Those were used to remove particularly persistent encrustations” (OS96)

With regard to ancillary offences, at this stage of the script is likely connected to activities related to the production of fakes. Apart from the case of the *Artemide marcianate* mentioned above, data indicate that fakes are often mixed with original artefacts to increase the likelihood of a deal. In 2017, two people were arrested in Veneto, Italy, after having organised the sell of fortyfour artefacts, twelve of which were fakes (OS91). Several sources highlighted how fakes of Bulgarian antiquities are extremely common (I4; AB20; AB32), in particular in the case of coins, fibulae, pottery and to a lesser extent marbles and gold artefacts (BG207; BG208). The case described in AB20 is informative in this respect. As already mentioned in the previous paragraph, the Custom Police found thousand of antiquities hidden in four boxes in a car, whose driver was trying to cross the border with Romania. Many of the coins and artefacts were fakes and several were labelled with fake origins as well, as for instance a forged Celts and Anglo-Saxons coin destined to the British market. Following the

intensive looting of the 1990s and beginning of 2000s, the high demand for archaeological objects collide with their diminished availability (I4). Indeed, “in many sites the first five to seventeen centimetres are now empty of any metal artefacts” (ibid.). Hence, looters and dealers may resort to fakes. Estimates by the police in Bulgaria indicate that about the 60% of coins exported to foreign markets are fakes (ibid.) hidden among the original ones. “Bulgarian-made fake gold coins of Ancient Macedon Emperor Alexander the Great, for example, [have inundated] the collectors’ auctions in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the USA” (AB32). Gold Thracian artifacts are also highly requested antiquities that can be faked. “One of the most professionally made fakes detected by the Bulgarian police [in 2015] was a forged Ancient Thracian treasure representing a golden laurel wreath with oak leaves, [...] made of real gold and was designed as a replica of an Ancient Thracian treasure from the 4 -3 century b.C.” (ibid.).

Step 5: Transport

TRANSPORT			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS' CATEGORY	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Disguise and hide antiquities in the mean of transport	Smugglers Looters Dealers	Local Transnational
Activity	Smuggling		
Post-activity	Deliver the antiquities		

This is the step dedicated to the distribution of illicit antiquities. It is linked to the activity of transport and it is the only step of the script that presents an inherently transnational nature. Given that the antiquities market has a double national-international character, objects are transported within a country’s boundaries and over the borders. A second clarification points to the fact that transport does not automatically follow step 4 – preparation to sell. In case of direct selling to internal

markets – which is described in the next step dedicated to trade – the transfer of artefacts is scheduled after the sale agreement.

(i) *Pre-activity*

Pre-activity of transport is dedicated to disguise and hide the antiquities. Although the techniques used to conceal illicit goods are limited, their simplicity does not result in highly effective outcomes. As emerged from data gathered, drivers tend to hide antiquities inside their luggage, personal bags and in-between the car front seats (CB2; CB3; CB8; CB4; CB6). In August 2012 the Bulgarian Custom Police during “an x-ray examination [...] detected two plastic bags inside the right front seat of [a] car. The bags were full of ancient coins with patina. The personal check on the driver discovered two other plastic bags with ancient findings” (CB2). Similarly, in August 2010 at the Kalotina border crossing the police “seized four ancient items hidden in the luggage of passengers travelling from Turkey to Germany. The smuggled items were carefully wrapped with napkins and put on the bottom of the suitcase” (CB4). In a case recorded by an interviewee, a person concealed dozens of coins in a belt he was wearing beneath the clothes (I18).

(ii) *Activity*

A number of alternative ways are available to traffickers, largely depending on the means of transport. Smuggling by car is the most common method. Data on both Bulgaria and Italy showed several cases where traffickers transported artefacts by car. In OS29, for instance, the police in Turin, Italy, stopped a car with five persons on

board and found several Sardinian Nuragic artefacts in the cars' luggage compartment. Involved in a transnational illegal trade of archaeological artefacts originating from Sardinia, they were in charge of the transport. At the time of the arrest, the group of traffickers had already travelled by car and by ferry from Sardinia to Corsica and to Turin.

“According to the investigators, [the smugglers] were ready to cross the border with Switzerland to deliver the treasure hidden inside some travel bags: artefacts worth hundreds of thousands of euros originating from illegal excavations in Sardinia, almost certainly in the north-western area of the island” (OS29).

In this occasion, a total of 244 artifacts have been recovered, in particular a nuragic small vessel, one archer, 80 bronze bracelets and rings, 33 bronze spearheads, vessels, molds, 22 rods and 96 bronze fragments. Interestingly, with the antiquities have been found two authentic lithographies of Picasso (*ibid.*).

Other standard means of transport are trains (CB1; OS86), trucks (CB7) and busses (I4; I18). What differs between the latter and cars is the level of the traffickers' engagement with the criminal activity. Traffickers who travel by car have the specific task to transfer illegal antiquities from the point of origin directly to the location where they would be sold. Although smugglers often work alone, they may be part of criminal groups whose boss assign them the job (I14). On the contrary, antiquities transported by train, busses or lorries are smuggling methods preferred by criminal organisations. Compared to cars' driving, they are more sophisticated and advantageous. Members of the group do not need to travel with the objects, because in the city of arrival the packages, boxes or bags are collected by a group's affiliate (I5). In CB7, for instance, at the Kapitan Andrevo checking point between Turkey and Bulgaria a Turkish citizen drove a lorry containing a shipment of antiquities, which have been hidden among the cargo before his departure. Outsourcing to a third party

the transport of illegal antiquities enhances the security of criminals for it proves difficult for the police to link the objects with the dealer. One essential activity, however, consists in bribing the drivers, who would not report the fact to the border police, in part to keep the money, in part by fear of retaliation (I13). “The driver of the bus, ah, [they – organised crime] pay him 50 or 100 euros to deliver this package from Sofia to Vienna. And the risk is maybe one, two percent to make a mistake” (I5). The same method applies to trucks drivers (I4). Bribing is practiced also at the border. Indeed, many border and custom officers let the busses – and cars – pass in exchange of pocket money (I10; I18). Moreover, the criminal organisations hire smugglers who have years of experience in the contraband of alcohol, drugs, cigarettes and who have “criminal connections at the border” (I14) as well as personal contact with the border police and custom. Smugglers approach the border at night to contact the officers, pay a bribe and continue the journey (ibid.). If needed, the same technique is repeated at each border control. Smugglers do not count only on bribing custom officials to transport antiquities on the other side of the border. Often officials themselves are not trained enough to recognise valuable artefacts or they preferably check the passports (I5).

In his book on the looting of antiquities in Italy, Isman described the case of ‘Mozart’ (Isman, 2009: 54-56), an Austrian collector who transported antiquities out of Italy to create and expand his own private collection. ‘Mozart’ worked as a touristic guide, bringing “Austrian tourists on coach travels [...] in the archaeological areas around Rome. With the tourists, however, on the way back he boards also the pieces illegally excavated that he buys, cleans and in some way restore at home” (ibid.). When arrested, he had created a small museum counting 600 items and a catalogue for sales (ibid.: 55), while he kept more than 2,500 antiquities in a safe deposit.

Data indicate other two techniques of smuggling, although less frequent than shipments. First, dealers send antiquities by post, through postal couriers such as the DHL (I13; I5). This method is primarily confined to individual dealers with personal contacts in other countries and looters or to dealers selling objects through the Internet (I14). In case OS3, for instance, the majority of antiquities sold through an online auction by a dealer based in Calabria have been found in the availability of a woman in Foggia, who also received them by post. Following a year long investigation, the Carabinieri further discovered that the online dealer had been active for about two years and had sold through the Internet over 4,000 coins and 600 artefacts (ibid.). Second, smugglers try to contraband antiquities in and out of the country by flight or ship cargos. As mentioned before with regard to busses, trains and lorries, this technique is advantageous for it separates the trafficker from the smuggled object, making it difficult for law enforcement officers to individualise the smuggler. In cases CB9 and AB15, for instance, 746 cultural artefacts, including “ancient and medieval bronze and copper rings and coins” (CB9), were seized in 2016 at the Sofia Airport, Bulgaria, in a shipment arriving from Switzerland. The same airport was used in 2015 to illegally export 82 silver coins of Philip II of Macedonia to the United States through a courier company. The coins were hidden inside three routers (CB10).

(iii) *Post-activity*

Post-activity includes the actions needed to complete the transport of illicit antiquities, which range from delivering the artefacts to the buyer or dealer, arriving at the location destined to sell – such as a fair or an antique market – and collecting the shipment at the airport, bus or train station. As described by the interviewee referring

to the use of busses as means of transport, once the bus driver arrives “in Vienna, Munchen, Berlin, Frankfurt [...] another man, Bulgarian man[...] takes the package and [sell] the cultural object in the auctions, to internet dealers. And the Bulgarian dealer [will] give the driver a percentage of the sell” (15).

Actors and ancillary offences

Several actors can be involved in the distribution of archaeological objects. Apart from collectors who personally loot and transport antiquities to their own collections, criminal groups employ members with the specific task of crossing borders and deliver the antiquities to the final consumer. This activity can be outsourced to an external person, specialised in smuggling illegal goods for several groups. Offenders at this stage work at both level – local and transnational.

As for the ancillary offences, data indicate the use of bribes to pay the services of busses’ and lorries’ drivers as well as police officers at the border check points. Moreover, fake custom documents can be used by the traffickers to elude taxes payment at the border (Isman, 2009: 94).

Step 6: Selling

Selling represents the final step of the script. After being unearthed, cleaned, packed and transported, the illegal antiquities are finally sold. As mentioned at step 5, it is important to recall that the steps of transport and selling are interchangeable. In fact, those looters who chose the Internet as commercial channel, would ship the antiquities only after the purchase is concluded.

From the analysis of the collected data it has been possible to identify two typologies of selling antiquities: direct selling to internal market and selling to the international market. Each type has a tailored track described below.

Direct selling to internal market

DIRECT SELLING TO INTERNAL MARKET			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS' CATEGORY	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Reach the selling location Advertise artefacts on the Internet	Looters Antique shop' owner Dealers Buyers	Local
Activity	Start the transaction Negotiate Selling		
Post-activity	Exit the selling locations		

This type of trade is typically displayed within internal market purchases and selling over the Internet.

(i) *Pre-activity*

This step of the script begins right after the division between antiquities operated by looters or experts mentioned in step 4. Such division serves reasons of profitability, for low- and high-quality objects are directed to different markets. Two acts can be pinpointed at the pre-activity stage. Typically, looters or dealers with availability of antiquities need to reach the selected location to sell them. This can be an antique shop or market, a flea market or a fair. However, if the artefacts are sold via the Internet, the dealer needs first to advertise them on a website – eBay, Facebook – or via email, an activity that comprise posting pictures and descriptions of each item as well as the contact details (OS30; OS37 OS41).

(ii) *Activity*

Artefacts, especially small metal objects and coins are sorted in the many flea market or national numismatic fairs present in the cities, villages and countryside (I9; I10; I14; CSD, 2007). Selling these objects follows certain actions. First, buyer and seller need to establish a link and some level of trust. The buyer usually walks around the stalls, shows his interest in the coins openly sold – these are mainly foreign and recent coins, therefore legal antiques – start talking with the seller, who on his part may pose questions to test the availability of the potential buyer. Trust is gained once the buyer purchases some coins with no value. At this point, both parts may decide to either strengthen the trust by repeating the process on consecutive days or to reach directly the negotiating point. In the second case, the seller exhibits the coins by price and origin and the deal is concluded shortly (I5).

Antiquities illegally excavated are sold in antiques shops together with legal antiquities. In this case, artefacts can remain unsold for months, even years. Shops' owners often loot antiquities on their own (BG99) or are supplied by networks of looters (CSD, 2007: 180). In case BG41, V.H.P. was the owner of an antique shop in Sofia and he was suspected of keeping and selling stolen artefacts he had bought from looters. Following a search, the police officers described the shop contained dozens of pieces such as “paintings, knives, coins, pens, clocks, pottery, porcelain statuettes, sculptures, glasses, bayonets, rifles and rings” (ibid.). Due to the illegality of the antiquities, shops' owners have two options available: they either decide to produce false provenance documents or to sell them without any type of documents. In the

second case, they can withdraw from the sale if the buyer insists to have a proof of legal provenance (BG99).

Data indicate another technique to conclude a deal. Since actors are in contact with each other, looters or dealers can call collectors or other intermediaries to propose a transaction. After having decided upon a meeting point – for instance, a garage (BG177; BG200) or a hotel (OS91; OS92; OS93) – actors meet, inspect the artefacts and discuss the price. This method is used by collectors and buyers who prefer to maintain anonymity and keep to a minimum the possibility of avoiding detection by law enforcement investigations. In OS93, two dealers booked a hotel room in the city center of Verona, where they stored into a big travel bag the antiquities they intended to sell. They also used the room to meet potential clients and negotiate the price.

The Internet can facilitate these operations. Looters can send directly to collectors' emails with the pictures of the artefacts at disposal. In OS37 a “group of people who carried out illegal excavations in the provinces of Nuoro and the Logudoro¹¹ and then retailed the archaeological findings outside of Sardinia, [...] had a cd-rom full of pictures of the artefacts. In the first part of the deal, in fact, the images of the antiquities potential buyers would want to acquire were sent to them via email” (ibid.). Selling over the Internet is a way to trade illicit antiquities as much as selling them in a fair or in an antique' shop. Low quality coins and other types of antiquities are often sold directly by the looters on the Internet (I14). In OS56, an amateur looter in Siracusa, Sicily, advertised online the availability of numerous archaeological artefacts of Greek and Roman origin, which included “99 silver and bronze coins and 16 artefacts of various typology (fibulae, rings, earrings, achromatic ceramic cups, ceramic oil lamps)” (OS56). Case OS30 further illustrates how an archaeology

¹¹ Both are located in the central part of Sardinia, Italy.

enthusiast “used online selling websites to introduce into the market coins from the Punic, republican, imperial and medieval Rome times, in a period comprised between the IV century b.C. to the XII century d.C.” (ibid.). Over the time, he sold two thousand gold, silver and bronze coins, 535 archaeological and paleontological artefacts, and over a thousand clay, bronze and glass artefacts (ibid.). Data suggest that eBay and Amazon are the most widely used websites used to contact buyers (OS41; I14; I8), although the alternative of online auction houses is growing. In the case described in OS3, an Italian online dealer used to “sell [illegal] archaeological artefact by publishing bulletins on online auctions” (ibid.). Facebook is also used. Exemplary in this respect is OS16. In this case, a combined activity conducted by Carabinieri and archaeologists in Lazio had made possible to identify on Facebook Marketplace a fragement of a tuff column, posted without any document stating the legal origin and acquisition by part of the advertiser. It was further discovered that he had a column’s drum in his office, illegally removed from the archaeological site of the ancient village of Ardea (OS16). Compared to flea markets, the Internet has some advantages. First, the law does not prohibit the online selling of coins; second, it gives the possibility to maintain a low profile, if not complete anonymity; third, the profits are high. According to the estimates of an interviewee, the annual revenue on eBay of coins sold to the Canadian and United States markets can reach US \$ 400,000 (I14). In a case handled by an interviewee, a Bulgarian man living in the “U.S. sold at least 30,000 objects on eBay through two accounts, [although] he probably had more unknown accounts” (I8) that the U.S. police could not identify. The Internet is not solely for single dealers. Criminal group utilize it too, although the modalities differs. Groups are more sophisticated, use several accounts, post under different names and address various end markets by country of destination (ibid.). Fourth, the Internet

facilitates the laundering of illicit artefacts into the legal antiquities market. “Some techniques [are put into place] as in the ‘real’ world. [For example, having] fake accounts as a buyer and as a seller. In this way, you buy [the antiquity] from yourself to have a provenance and then you sell it to someone else” (I13), preferably in another country where it can be sent by post.

(iii) *Post-activity*

Once the deal is reached, this track of the script can be concluded in two ways. If the purchase was made face-to-face in a flea market, in an antique shop or in an agreed upon location, the buyer leaves the place and the actors separate. If the sell was conducted on the Internet, both parties disconnect. The buyer would then pay – usually online – whereas the seller would prepare to send the antiquities to the buyer. At this point, the script re-connects with step 5.

Selling to international market

SELLING TO INTERNATIONAL MARKET			
SCENE	TRACK	ACTORS' CATEGORY	LOCATION
Pre-activity	Contact the known buyer Reach the selling location	Looters Auction houses' employees Dealers Buyers	Transnational
Activity	Start the transaction Negotiate Sell		
Post-activity	Exit the selling locations		

(i) *Pre-activity*

Contrary to the activity per se, the pre-activity step does not differ from the direct selling typology. However, while direct selling starts after step 4, selling to international markets imply that the trafficking stage took already place.

(ii) *Activity*

Apart from the geographical setting, the major difference between the direct and the international selling is represented by the presence of antique and numismatic fairs, and auction houses in countries other than that of origin of the illicit antiquities.

In this final step of the script, antiquities are indeed sold to a player of the international market, which include collectors, action houses and sometimes museums. A deal can be finalised in several ways, based on the actors involved. Single dealers as well as members of criminal groups reach international antiques fairs and markets. In I14, the interviewee reported a case where several Roman coins were destined to the numismatic fair in Verona, Italy.

The police “had information that three persons were going to one region [in Bulgaria] to fish. We started surveillance on them, but it was difficult to detect where the coins were hidden. We had the information – don’t remember if it was from an informant or from wiretaps – that these three people had connections to very high-level criminals and they were informed of this high-level’s decision to sell the items in the big fair in Verona. So, we decided to contact the Carabinieri in Verona and they also established day and night surveillance. But the coins left Bulgaria, possibly at night, so we decided with the Carabineiri to wait for the three persons in Italy” (I14)

The three men smuggled the coins from Bulgaria to Italy passing through Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia by car and exposed the antiquities in the fair before being arrested. Apart from Italy, the fairs and flea markets in Munich have been considered for years the biggest distribution point for illicit antiquities (I5; I13). Following the same trends of internal market, in the fairs are sold coins and small antiquities, including the pieces of objects previously cut. It is improbable to find intact and fine

archaeological artefacts exposed in a stall, which are in fact preferably purchased by auctions houses, small museums and private collectors. In case of a precious although common object, the dealer goes directly to the owner of the auction house and negotiate a price. However, if the artefact is rare, in excellent conditions and expensive, buyer and seller might agree on a fraud scheme. In exchange of the 30 or 40 percent of the object's value, the employee of the auction house would organise a fake auction where the dealer will be the fake costumer (I14). In this way, the buyer receives a bribe, the auction house gains in prestige and the dealer creates real provenance documents.

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(iii) *Post-activity*

As for the pre-activity, the acts implemented to conclude the selling phase do not differentiate from those of the direct selling to internal market. In each mode of selling described above, the buyer completes the transaction by payment the price of the antiquity, the seller delivers the object and they both exit the deal.

Actors and ancillary offences

The final step of the script sees the presence of many actors. Collectors, dealers, looters, auctioneers, traders, and art and numismatic enthusiasts. They are active at both domestic and transnational level, based on reasons of profitability. Artefacts whose conditions are beyond restoration are destined to the internal market, while fine archaeological pieces will be sold to the international market in antiquities. Moreover,

coins in Bulgaria are aimed to increase the already wide internal and international numismatic market (CSD, 2007: 179-180).

This stage of the script is vulnerable to two main offences other than the illegal export and trade of antiquities. First, in flea markets and antique shops fake artefacts can be sold instead of real ones. Bulgarian forgeries, especially coins and gold objects, are renowned for their high quality. Following a period of extensive looting, finding antiquities and coins can be more difficult; therefore, to meet the high demand dealers and looters can resort to introduce fakes in the market.

“The problem is that treasure hunting in Bulgaria is thriving, but the uppermost archaeological layer, which is 30-40 cm deep, has already been fully ransacked. At the same time, there is a demand, and the antique dealers start compensating [the lack of supply] with fakes. So, if you are used to making and spending BGN 5,000-10,000 (app. EUR 2,550-5,100) [per month], you would not be glad to start making only BGN 1,000 (app. EUR 510).” (AB32)

According to the interviewee in I4, to avoid the suspicion of consumers, Bulgarian dealers recur to the scheme of sending their fakes to a dealer in another country – Italy, just as example – who would then sell the forgeries as original artefacts.

Second, at this phase of the script, both parties involved in the transaction can agree to produce fake provenance documents as part of the deal. Their collaboration is crucial in order to laundry the illicit antiquity. Only with fake provenances, the buyer acquires the ownership of the antiquity and can legally re-sell it or keep it in a collection.

4.4 Conclusion on the crime script

This section has examined how the illicit trafficking in antiquities is pursued. The six steps in which the illicit trafficking in antiquities has divided into represent the main nodes that create a chain of activities along which this illicit trade develops. These nodes are essential to build the crime script of a complex crime such as the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In this way, a script analysis becomes more feasible for it ascertain the key activities of an illicit trade rather than the entire illegal market.

Compared to the script model developed by Cornish (1994), important additions proposed in this research project were two columns dedicated respectively to the actors involved and the location of the activities. They enabled the researcher to balance the geographical features of the illicit trafficking in antiquities by identifying the local and international level at which activities are pursued and the extent to which activities are integrated or exist in isolation. Indeed, the six nodes are not necessarily fixed in a chronological order. Depending on the availability of different course of actions, steps 4, 5 and 6 can change the position in the script. Looters can sell the antiquity right after having unearthed it, postponing the distribution stage after the deal in concluded.

Moreover, the script approach permits to analyse the nature of the illicit market in antiquities. It presents at the same time a domestic and transnational character. Antiquities are smuggled from the country of origin to other countries where they are sold, while both Italy and Bulgaria have a growing internal market for antiquities. Moreover, linking at the end of each step the actors with the criminal activity they engage with serves to weight the actual presence of organised crime groups, the involvement of Mafia-like groups in this trafficking and pinpoint the stage at which individual criminals and criminal organisations intervene. Indeed, it is possible to envisage at both transnational and local level the presence of actors that defy a

definition of organised crime side by side of organised criminals. Looters engaging in treasure hunting and plundering of archaeological areas on their own are qualitative different from criminals organised in groups and showing a division of roles functional to develop a criminal project.

4.5 The various roles of the offenders

The illicit trafficking in antiquities is a flexible market that attracts a plethora of actors, each of which has a precise role in the chain of activities. The dynamics of relations among these actors are not univocal. Indeed, they display various forms of interaction, which differ for the level of division of labour and coordination (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 9).

The purpose of the section is to describe the organisation of the actors involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and in Italy. Having as starting point the actors indicated at each step of the crime script, data are examined and organised so as to identify the patterns of relations among the actors' role and define their organisational categories. This section aims at addressing the research questions on the roles and the dynamics of actors in the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Ultimately, this provides a way to analyse the illicit trafficking in antiquities in terms of groups' configuration.

4.5.1 The facets of social organisation: Identifying the actors' roles

Depending on the criminal activity they engage with and the step of the script, actors have been hereby allocated seven different typologies: looters, keepers, aiders,

sellers, traffickers and hybrids. These typologies are based on a specific role that is discernible, or in other words, on the action a participant is expected to commit since he holds a determined position within the chain of the illicit trafficking. The categorisation of actors' roles strongly relies on the studies on the social organisation of criminals that have been illustrated in chapter dedicated to the literature (Cressey, 1969; McIntosh, 1975; Best and Luckenbill, 1994; Williams, 2001). Such a classification is useful for it identifies the various critical positions that can be found in the illicit trafficking in antiquities, while connecting them with the activities specified at the crime script level.

4.5.2 The facets of social organisation: Actors' categories

Once the actors' roles within the illicit trafficking in antiquities are identified, the dynamics of the relations among them need to be addressed. Using the criterion of complexity, the actors' roles have been organised along a sequence of organisational types. Drawing on the rational approach of Cressey (1969), McIntosh (1975) and Best and Luckenbill (1994), complexity is being measured through the following variables: the number of co-offenders; the degree of specialisation they have for the crime they commit; how many roles are identified in one group; and the casual nature of their criminal relation. Actors are hereby divided in four broad categories: individual offenders, small groups, networks and hierarchical groups.

The first type considers individual actors who display unsophisticated levels of organisation and no co-offending behaviours. Primary criteria to identify single offenders in the data were that they were arrested or convicted alone and the lack of evidence to connect them to any co-offenders.

The second category is dedicated to small groups. Actors falling within this classification show a certain degree of cooperation among two or more persons. Typical of small groups is the occasional nature of the criminal association, one without long-lasting criminal projects. Small groups may present a certain degree of complexity, which includes partial definition of roles among the members in the pursuit of criminal acts.

The last two categories distinguish between networks and hierarchical groups, a distinction that strongly relies on the models of organised crime described in the scholarly literature. Although networks and hierarchical groups share some traits compared to the categories of individuals and small groups – including a larger and longer-lasting membership, an established division of tasks and responsibilities within the group, and criminal activities that are perpetrated repeatedly over time as part of a criminal project, they differ in several respects. Networks display a more flexible nature, one where the criminal system remains in place, the tasks are clearly identified, but the offenders can vary (Chambliss, 1978). As such, the interaction among the participants is interchangeable, and personal and professional skills can be used in separate criminal projects (Williams, 2001; Morselli, 2009a). Most importantly, networks lack the figure of a formal boss at the top of the group. On the contrary, the hierarchical model features a strong leadership, a pyramidal chain of authority and discipline, and coercive methods used by the hierarchy to maintain the control over the organisation. This rigid model of organised crime is best exemplified by Mafia-like organisation in Italy and the United States (Cressey, 1969; Albanese, 2004, 2014; Abadinsky, 2007; von Lampe, 2016), although hierarchical structures can be found also in association small in size, where the participants “subordinate themselves to a

decision making process that defines the roles and the tasks” (von Lampe, 2016: 105) rather than to a central authority.

Although the seven roles listed above can pertain to the categories of individuals and small groups, it is worth mentioning that consumers cannot be included within networks and hierarchical groups. A criminal group, either hierarchical or networked, that organises a trade in illegal antiquities has as a goal to profit from the selling of artefacts. Hence, it would escape any market logic to include a buyer. Moreover, in case the member of a criminal group is a collector, he acts as an individual actor, not in behalf of the group itself (Strappaveccia, 2014). With regard to networks and hierarchical groups, it should be further noted that their existence is based on a set division of tasks and roles. Hence, the roles mentioned in section 4.4.1 are engrained in the group structure. For this reason, the next sections address the facets of social criminal organisation in Bulgaria and in Italy dividing individual actors and small groups from networks and hierarchical groups.

4.6 The social organisation of actors in Bulgaria: Individuals and small groups

Looters

Looters and treasure hunters often work in association, although data from open source and judicial cases have presented several examples of lone offenders. They represent by far the most numerous categories of actors identified in the data. Indeed, counting both individual and small groups, looters have been named in 208 cases.

Data suggest that there are variations in the modalities through which looters are recognised and stopped, which reflect the carefulness of looters in choosing sites and

times. It is possible to identify three modalities. While in most cases the engagement of people in the activity of looting and treasure hunting was uncovered by the police during searches in their private dwellings on the basis of operational information, several accounts describe how looters were detected and caught while metal detecting or illegally excavating or caught incidentally during other criminal investigations.

Transcription from court cases indicate that the police intervened at home following operational information – either from an informant or from wiretappings – during ongoing investigations. Sometimes, they act on information given by competing actors involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities. During New Year’s Eve in 2012, the Museum of Teteven was robbed: one collection of coins and two Thracian metal vessels were stolen. At the local police station, the police officer responsible of the investigation decided to invite “some of the most prominent illegal diggers of the region in order to ask them information” (I4) on the theft. Interestingly, one of the looter distanced the whole metal-detector community of Teteven from the robbery explaining that looters work hard, found artefacts on a daily basis and have no interest in the involvement and presence of the police in the area, as it negatively affects the business. A few days later, the police received an anonymous communication indicating the name of the alleged robber. Although it has been never confirmed, the police suspected the looters of Teteven to have passed over the name so as to “take measures against him” (ibid.).

Out of the 208 cases in which looters and treasure hunters were identified, 68 concluded with a search and seizure at home by the police. The common characteristic is that looters have metal detectors at home and other technical equipment. In BG186, for instance, the defendant kept at home six metal detectors and more than 2,000

among Ottoman coins dated back between 1256-1687 and metal objects comprised between the IV century b.C. and the XVII century a.C..

In all cases looters have been found in possess of archaeological artefacts. However, the amount and the type of seized antiquities vary. Whereas in some cases only few dozen antiquities are confiscated (BG105; BG113; BG128; BG137; BG130), looters may collect hundreds, if not thousands, of illegal artefacts (BG101; BG106; BG104; BG156; BG166). The type of antiquity also differs. Although the vast majority of judicial transcripts describes antiquities that are commonly found in Bulgaria, such as coins, fibulae, horse appliqués, arrows and arrowheads, and fragments of ceramic and terracotta, occasionally looters diversify the commodities and plunder precious marble artefacts, fossils and books. In a unique account (BG201), in 2009 the defendant discovered in the Plovdiv region two gospels dating back to the 17th and 19th centuries and failed to denounce them to the Ministry of Culture. In BG121, the police stopped M.J.I.'s car inside which they found a sack containing artefacts. In his home, the police further discovered two disassembled metal detectors and two shovels hidden in cloth covers as well as fossils from the Pleistocene period along with metal objects of Ottoman origin (XV-XVII century).

The other way looters and treasure hunters are identified by law enforcement activities is when they are seen engaging in metal detecting and illegal excavations. This represent a less numerous typology than the search and seizure at home. Indeed, only 53 cases of direct looting were detected. In case BG149 two policemen were patrolling the territory of a small village, Lyuben, during the first hours of the afternoon. When they arrived in the vicinity of the Roman fortress Variana, their attention was caught by a sudden electronic whistle. They saw a looter inside a freshly excavated dig – two meters long, one meter wide and one and a half meter deep –

alternating on regular times a metal detector with a shovel. After several minutes of observation, the policemen decided to arrest him and found in his possession forty-one ancient coins and antique jewellery. Similarly, in case BG300 two officers of the Border Police in Silistra noticed a local resident using a rectangular metal detector near the archaeological area of Lyaskovetz. Next to him were also two shovels and an axe for excavating. When stopped by the police he admitted he was searching the ground for archaeological remains and showed his findings. Following a search in his home, other antiquities were found, including a piece of mosaic with cherry blossoms, a bronze plate with leaf-like shape and five metal plates.

The third way of identification that emerge from the data is that looters and treasure hunters can be discovered accidentally. This is particularly the case of routine controls on the streets. It is a modality that fits with the post-activity moment of the stealing step, when looters have searched an archaeological area, looted it and left it. Since the primary mean of transport is represented by private cars, it is indicative that looters have been identified during patrolling and controls on the streets 14 times.

In case AB34, “police officers in the southern Bulgarian city of Smolyan have arrested a treasure hunter confiscating over 300 ancient and medieval coins as well as a number of other archaeological artefacts. [After] his car was pulled over by the police, [...] inside it the police discovered a total of 335 coins. Another 17 coins as well as 19 archaeological artefacts, two metal detectors, and 32 bullets of various caliber were found later at home”.

In a similar case, the defendant was stopped on the road in the province of Razgrad for a routine inspection by the police. Because the “registration of the vehicle was expired” (BG280), the two policemen decided to carry on a search of the car and found in its luggage compartment one metal detector, one straight shovel with dried soil traces and one “wooden box with a metal casing on it and 14 old coins each wrapped in a white napkin, 5 coins of white metal, 4 yellow metal coin, 5 coins of

black metal and 1 metal part of a 'key' ring, 1 small polyethylene envelope with various metal objects – coins, rings and pendants, 1 horse applique of yellow metal and 1 [antique] knife” (ibid.). During the pre-trial investigation, the defendant stated that he became interested in treasure hunting during the years and bought a metal detector in Ruse two years before the event. He also admitted having excavated half of the coins in the yard of his house, while the other half and the knife were bought in Germany in a market two weeks before (ibid.).

In BG123 the car was owned by the daughter of H.I.H, who during a check in 2013 handed over to the police one metal detector and 21 metal objects, including Roman coins of different value and fibulae, that he was carrying in the car. The police received word by an informant that the defendant would have carried cultural objects and they stopped him while driving. “When searching between the front left and the front right seats, [under the] handbrake were found one white metal coin [...] and 1 Roman coin with the image of Mark Aurelius” (BG123). In the luggage van was kept a metal detector, while hidden in the garage and the living room of his house H.I.H. had another metal detector, a control panel and a metal handle along with small metal artefacts (ibid.). In BG142 N.S.T. had a metal detector and one shovel in the luggage compartment of the car and one digital emitter for long-range metal localisation with probes at home.

It is possible to include within accidental discoveries also those made during investigation for crimes other than the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In this respect, case BG185 is exemplary. In January 2010, A.N.S. caused severe body injuries to a third person and following his arrest, his home was searched. The police found a metal detector, 23 Roman and Greek coins, an arrowhead, a dart and several cylindrical metal objects from Roman times (V-III century b.C.) and a knife.

Another aspect that emerge from the gathered data is that looters might be collectors themselves. In this case, they decide to personally engage in the search for archaeological artefacts instead of relying on a third person, an intermediary to buy illicit artefacts (BG70; BG87; BG88; BG96; BG42; BG43; BG46; BG292). This feature assumes an interesting contour because usually collectors that search for their own antiquities fall within the individual category of looters, rather than in that of small groups. However, four collectors were part of small groups (BG70; BG87; BG88; BG96). In BG70 the co-offenders were a married couple who owned a house with a garage and an external storage room. In the storage room, the police found a metal detector along with 27 artefacts in metal, such as fragments of pendants, bronze appliquéés, fragments of bronze bracelets, coins, while in the garage fragments of a marble headstone with traces of soil were hidden inside boxes. The husband, N.S., stated to be

“a collector of antique weapons, but he was interested in antique items of all kinds, because he loved history and had [some] knowledge in this field. In his collection, besides many swords, checkers, daggers and other weapons, parts of them and metal detectors, there were guns and bayonets, revolvers, pistols, a large number of cartridges.” (BG70)

He became interested in antiquities by chance during some construction works in his home. In his courtyard,

“there was an accident – a broken pipeline – [which created] a huge hollow with a diameter of about 20 meters, which had to be filled with soil to level up. [...] They poured the soil into the yard. From the evidence, it was found that the soil was loaded on trucks from the construction works in the Greek quarter of Varna, which is known to be an archaeological reserve. [...] It was in this soil that three archaeological objects [a fragment of a frieze marble urn, decorated with garland decorations and with a frontal image of beak-head relief, fragment from the bottom of the column of fine-grain marble without ornament and a Roman Corinthian capital of grained marble with sculptural ornaments in all corners] were found by the defendant”

In cases BG87 and BG88 two friends, R.P. and K.A., overheard a conversation in a cafeteria about valuable archaeological artefacts being discovered in fields in the

Panagyurishte region. Being R.P. an antiquities' collector specialised in ancient coins, he decided with K.A., to organise a looting trip with other co-perpetrators. Once they arrived in the village of Banya, they started metal-detecting and digging in the area of a medieval fortress; however, they were seen and soon after arrested.

The subcategory of looters and treasure hunters, either individual or small groups, can be divided between two typologies: the professional looter and the non-professional looter or treasure hunter, whose organisational characteristics varies.

Professional looters tend to utilise serious tools for detecting and excavating antiquities, such as geo-raders and deep-range metal detectors. Being these tools expensive, they require an initial capital, which is not deemed necessary by occasional treasure hunters. Professional looters, on the contrary, may invest in new, updated technological equipment in view of greater upcoming profits. The logic is clear: the more the tools are professional, the greater is the possibility to find antiquities buried deep in the ground or very precious metal artefacts. Also, specialised tools as geo-raders permit looters to engage in more extensive search for archaeological artefacts. Moreover, professional looters organise their expedition in advance. They know where to obtain the equipment needed and what location to visit. In cases BG170 and BG171, A.B.A., Z.M.M. and H.D.H. were found guilty and charged with two years and six months of prisons and a fine of 5,000 leva each for having excavated in an archaeological field in December 2006, "the first two as perpetrators and the third as a helper" (ibid.). The three defendants knew each other.

"In December 2006, they learned that the shepherds had carried out a 'treasure hunt' and discovered valuable objects when digging the tombstone, located near the village of Veselets, Omurtag. This fact has prompted the three defendants to decide to go and [excavate] the mound. A.B.A. turned to K., as he knew the latter owned an excavator and asked him to rent it, explaining that he had to dig a pool and promising to pay a rent of 500 leva. K. explained to A.B.A. that the tractor was damaged and if he wanted to work with him, he had to find a man to repair it. On 17 December 2006, A.B.A. met with S. and asked him [to repair it]. [...] On 18 December 2006, the repair

was completed and S. called A.B.A., explaining that he could not work with the excavating device, but could only drive it. [...] On the same day, at about 5.30 pm, M. came back from work at the Targovishte Water Supply Company where he worked as a bumper. At the gate, the three defendants waited for him to talk to his son, H.D.H. explained to M. that they were looking for a man who could work with a digger to do a job – leveling out terrain for a fee. Initially M. refused, but then agreed” (ibid.) .

Professional looters also study in advance which objects are more valuable, by reading manuals and specialised books. One of the defendants of case BG65, for instance, researched the market in antique coins through expert publications and had among the illicit artefacts two books on Roman and Greek coins and their value. In BG69, T.I. was stopped by the police while carrying the copies of a Roman coins’ catalogue and a book entitled “Undetected treasures” along with other technical equipment.

Besides, professional looters carry out rational activities. Once they have discovered and unearthed antiquities, they hide them in different locations and prepare them to be transported and sold by cleaning them, dividing them in small bags – as described in step 3 of the script. Such an organisation is often shown also at the group level, since professionals tend to divide the roles between each other. The description of cases BG170 and BG171 already gives an idea that different persons have different responsibilities: S. repaired the tractor, M. digged the field with the tractor, while A.B.A. would drive the tractor, excavate with a shovel and recover the artefacts. Another example presents a limited division of roles. In March 2009,

“border policemen – Cs.D. and R.S. – in the vicinity of Lyaskovets, between Dolno Ryahovo and Malak Preslavets, near a road noticed a parked car. The site itself is of ‘professional interest’ for the Border Police, as [it is] an archaeological area and it is protected. [They] decided to check and [...] at about 200-300 meters, they noticed three faces, two of them – defendants S.S. and S.C. – were located inside a dig and using a shovel and a pick they digged. The third person – defendant I. – stood sideways, propped on a tree. Although they did not clearly hear the conversation, the intonation and the gestures, the [border policemen] understood that he was giving guidance.” (BG48)

Finally, professional looters can be active for years. In BG207, the looter has been active for more than 15 years at the moment of the arrest, while in BG52 and BG53, the two co-perpetrators were known to have been both “engaged for about ten years in search of archaeological artefacts in the region of Provadia and surrounding villages, which is [an area] rich of ancient and medieval artifacts” (BG53).

Non-professional looters use less sophisticated tools, mostly cheap metal detectors. They do not organise the looting in advance nor do they study in advance the planimetries of the locations to dig and loot. In many cases, non-professional looters and treasure hunter do not specifically search for antiquities; rather they look for any type of metal, lost jewellery, meteorites’ parts. In BG283, the treasure hunter did “not dispute[d] the established situation [that is the conviction] stating that the metal detector [he was stopped with] has been purchased mainly for the detection of metal waste” (ibid.) and that he found the antiquities unintentionally. Occasional finders also fall within the category of non-professional treasure hunters. In fact, in a country like Bulgaria, where villages, small towns and cities are built near or on top of old archaeological settlements, it is common that people discover antiquities in their home backyard. Under such circumstances, although the intent of looting is lacking at the moment of the discovery, people that illegally keep the antiquities and start the activity of looting after the discovery fall within the category of looters. They are usually found with metal detectors at home. For instance, L.V.I. lived in the village of Gigen, in the province of Pleven; the village is located “in the territory of the ancient city of Ulpia Escus¹² and it is declared an archaeological reserve. [...] The property located on the address where L.V.I. lives falls within the protection zone ‘A’ of the reserve” (BG194). L.V.I. found several antiquities, mostly coins, in “the yard of the

¹² Colonia Ulpia Oescus Traiana, also known as Palatiolon or Palatiolum, is an ancient Thracian, Roman and Byzantine city and fortress located in Moesia, in today’s northern Bulgaria.

house where [he] was removing a half-broken farm outbuilding” (ibid.). He also had a “metal detector ‘new force silent’ without a serial number [...] designed for the search of archaeological sites” (ibid.). The lack of preparation and the non-professional attitude, moreover, lead treasure hunters to choose the looting sites based on the ease of access. Hence, they often location with low possibilities to find precious archaeological objects and higher chances to be caught by the police (BG9; BG11).

Groups of non-professional looters display a very loose organisation. Not only they do not show any division of roles among each other, they also collaborate sporadically and do not organise their looting activities around a specific project. BG24 shows the lack of complexity of a group of three looters that was spotted in October 2014 by police officers of Silistra while exploring an inhabited area, called ‘Lozata’, using metal detectors, and equipped with headphones and shovels. According to the account of the Court of Appeal in Varna, at around

“6.30 p.m. [...] entering the ‘Lozata’ area on a dirt road to the left of the paved road in the direction of the village of Popina, [the police officers] noticed a parked car and subsequently the agricultural fields: three people, separated from each other, each with a device in their hands were carrying out specific circular movements. Since the area was often target of treasure hunting, [the police officers] decided to investigate. As they approached, they found that the ground [had] fresh dug holes.” (BG24)

Instead of assigning a task to each member of the small group, the looters were all metal detecting at the same time. Having tasked one of them to guard the street and the fields, might have avoided their arrest. Also, in BG178, the defendant explained how he would work alone and from time to time collaborate with another looter he knew.

A further feature that differentiate individual and small groups of looters is, of course, the size of the group. As the category itself mentions, individual looters do not collaborate with any other actor to pursue the activities listed in steps 1 and 2 of the

script. Small groups, on the contrary, show variations in the number of the members. Data show that in Bulgaria groups comprise two to 7 members, with a majority of cases displaying two and three co-offenders' – respectively 45 and 28 cases. Four looters collaborating were mentioned only in 11 cases, whereas only two case showed five (BG132; AB10) and one case with six (BG322) and seven (BG112) co-perpetrators.

The connections of looters with other criminal markets only emerged with regard to illegal drugs (BG51; BG76; BG77; BG198). In BG51, the defendant had 68 coins, a ring, spiral pendent and other metallic artefacts worth 2,704 leva along with three metal detectors and 25 grams of cannabis. Coins, artefacts and cannabis were divided into small bags. In another case, the police were informed that C.I.P. was keeping at home in Novi Pazar drugs and antiquities that failed to register at the local archaeological museum.

“On 17.08.2010, [...] a search and seizure took place in the property of C.I.P., [which had] a yard with one-storey house and outbuildings to the house. [...] In the annex of the house, also used for residential purposes, C.I.P. voluntarily surrendered three packages with eight boxes, eight plastic bags and large envelopes containing [marijuana and hashish]. In the same room of the annex, C.I.P. surrendered and described sixty archaeological objects and antique coins.” (BG77)

In other rooms of the house, were hidden weapons and two metal detectors. Also, in 2016 H.I. was found guilty of holding at home a mix of antiquities and drugs. He had a total of 258 artefacts, mostly “coins (whole and fragmented), of bronze and copper, antique and medieval, authentic, strongly corroded and oxidized, from the Roman period and the Middle Ages” (BG198), together with 52 grams of marijuana with an established value of 311.88 leva and one unregistered metal detector.

Keepers

This category comprises those actors who had antiquities in their availability, yet the modalities of acquisition were not established, including the fact that no technical equipment or metal detectors were found together with the artefacts. This type of actors has been found in 72 cases.

Keepers can include figures that are commonly described in the literature on the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Intermediaries, for instance, can fall within this category for they acquire, collect and store antiquities before selling them to the next dealer or to a collector. Collectors too can be included in the category of keepers. Since they buy antiquities to enhance their personal collections, they would not have technical equipment needed to loot at home. The case of the defendant in BG312, for instance, can be interpreted as a keeper-collector, for the police found an assortment of well-preserved archaeological artefacts and fossils in his home. Similarly, In BG12, in 2011 the police searched the home of the defendant following his involvement in the shooting of a domestic animal and discovered “36 authentic coins valued 185 BGN” (ibid.) still showing traces of soil. In this case, the keeper could either be a collector who recently bought new antiquities or a person keeping it temporarily.

According to the interviewee in I13 and confirmed by the interviewee in I5, keepers perform a specific task in the architecture of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Indeed, they are the actors who safely store the illicit antiquities in the aftermath of the looting and for the entire period needed to find a buyer. Hence, keepers represent a key position in the illicit trafficking, one which is preferably covered by individual actors due to the level of trust conferred to the task. Among the 72 cases of keepers identified in Bulgaria, the majority consisted of individual offenders: 64 cases. However, keepers can be members of an organised criminal group

or being linked to it as an external associate. In the latter case, a keeper might provide a service to several looters and criminal organisations at the same time. In the case described in BG80, J.K.K. “for the period from December 2014 until December 8, 2016 in the city of B. and on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria, participated in an organized criminal group” (ibid.) with other four co-perpetrator specialised in fiscal frauds and illegally selling tobacco’s products. J.K.K. was storing in his house over ten kilos of chopped tobacco alongside with 179 antiquities, mostly comprised of Roman, Byzantine and medieval coins and rings, valued 2,2122 leva. In BG227, on the contrary, I.G.V. was an external actor, who was found keeping at home 82 artefacts including copies. Similalry, on 14.03.2012, the police searched the residence of V.G.T. and found several antiquities, many still covered with soil “indicating that they have been [...] dug out the ground” (BG130). Antiquities were examined by some experts from the National Archaeological Institute with Museum, the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the National History Museum in Sofia. According to the experts:

“Especially valuable [were] fragment of sandstone reliefs. A male head in a profile on top of which is part of a relief of the Thracian king Heros, I-II century and a three-dimensional head of marble. A middle-aged man is represented. The head of the Roman Emperor Tiberius [...], who ruled the Empire from 14 to 37 a.C.. The head was dated to the first century [...] and was a work of provincial artists.” (BG130).

The defendant stated that the marble head of Tiberius was in fact a replica made by a friend, an artist, who enjoyed reproducing antiquities and donate them to acquaintances. Experts, however, confirmed the authenticity of all the artefacts and the involvement of V.G.T. in the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

As seen for looters, casual discoveries of antiquities can turn people into keepers. In this case, keepers are not professional looters, nor treasure hunters, nor collectors. Data suggest that in these cases people found antiquities accidentally in

their own gardens or in nearby yards and fail to register them to the Ministry of Culture or to the local archaeological museums for a lack of legislative knowledge or intent. What differentiates casual looters from casual keepers is the engagement in metal-detecting and looting after the first discovery: while looters do, keepers only store them, as confirmed by the fact that they do not have metal detectors at home. For instance, I.S.T. lived “immediately next to the village of Archar, [where] is located the ‘Antique city of Rataria’, which is an archaeological cultural site of national significance. In the soil of the land of the village there are artefacts, to which the inhabitants of the village do not pay attention” (BG311). During the trial, I.S.T. declared that 18 antiquities the police found in his property were scattered all around, some at home, some in the farm buildings in the yard. Years before “in the courtyard, [he] found an ancient tomb and addressed the Museum of Vidin. The museum employees seized the artefacts which, in their view, had scientific and artistic value and the rest remained in the defendant’s possession” (ibid.).

Sellers

Sellers present several features. First at all, the act of selling is a type of transaction that makes the actors involved inherently lone players. Although sellers are in contact with looters, other dealers, collectors and keepers, in the majority of cases they engage in the deviant transactions individually. Out of the 21 cases of sellers identified within the collected data, in 12 instances the seller was an individual actor (BG20; BG41; BG60; BG94; BG99; BG163; BG168; BG190; BG256; BG260; BG305; BG308).

Second, sellers do not act exclusively at local level. As pointed out by an interviewee (I4), sellers often travel to other countries to conclude a deal. Modalities differ. While in some cases dealers go to neighbouring countries such as Turkey to exchange antiquities in local markets and acquire Middle Eastern artefacts, in other occasions sellers target marketplaces in Central and Western Europe, such as Austria, Spain or Germany, to conclude better deals:

“Nature do[es] not accept vacuum, now Bulgarian dealers go to Turkey, they buy in Turkey, buy cultural objects, other Bulgarian dealers wait from objects in Austria, for example. Objects in Syria and Turkey [are easy to buy], both countries are in a political crisis since years” (I4)

“In Spain we have 200,000 Bulgarian citizens, in Germany it’s 300,000, in Italy is maybe 300,000 Bulgarians. You know, Bulgarian citizens find a man [that is a dealer] for cultural goods in Spain, and Bulgarian dealers are very important in Spain.” (ibid.)

Bulgarian antiquities are not sold only by Bulgarian dealers. Interviewees highlighted that often “once the objects are abroad, they are sold to other organised crime groups, local, where no Bulgarians are involved” (I12). In I14, the interviewee agreed that groups of Serbian dealers specialised in antiquities and coins own stalls in the flea markets in Germany – specifically, Munich – where they sell Bulgarian and Balkan artefacts. Another interviewee stated that Serbia and Serbian criminals are becoming “a platform for illegal cultural heritage” (I7), not only because looted antiquities transit by the country, but also because “Serbian criminal groups are heavily involved and buy antiquities from smugglers from Bulgaria” (ibid.).

Third, sellers are specialised according to the items they sell (I4). Dealers selling antiquities – both real and fakes – have a separate market than antique dealers. A collector who would buy an orthodox icon would address a criminal group or a looter dedicated to icons. According to the interviewee in I4 in Sofia only 30 to 40 dealers

are specialised in antiquities, who have “financial resources [that] come from previous deals in antiquities” (I4), and they would also work with archaeological fakes.

Fourth, in terms of criminal transactions, it is possible to envisage two of the types described by Best and Luckenbill (1994): *deviant exchange* and *deviant exploitation*. While in the former the buyer and the seller have the same interest – one wants to sell an illicit antiquity, one wants to buy an illicit antiquity – and they are both aware of the illegality of the deal (BG60; AB35), in the latter only the dealer is performing a criminal act. An example of deviant exchange is case BG122. In 2013, H.K. and tried to acquire from A.T.T. antiquities knowing their illegal origin. Deviant exploitations are best characterised by a dealer in antiquities selling fakes among the real artefacts without informing the customers. In BG41, V.P.H. owned an antique shop where in 2011 the police discovered 58 Hellenic, Byzantine and Roman coins as well as fibulae, horse appliques, rings and metal fragments during a revenue control. Of the coins, experts later declared that only six were real, whereas the remaining were all fakes. Another case of deviant exploitation is found in case BG99:

“On May 11, 2011 an employee of the DG BOP [Directorate against Organised Crime, witness K.R.] visited the antique shop ‘V.’ Located in the cisty of Sofia. He was greeted by the owner of the shop, the defendant Ju.C.V.. Asked whether she sold ‘older items of origin’, she offered to K.R. a pair of antique earrings she took out of the cabinet on her desk for the sum of 2400 leva. She explained that these are Roman antique earrings of the II century, that they are the same pair, explaining that they were found during excavations in the region of South Bulgaria – in Veliko Tarnovo. [K.R.] asked if she had a document stating the [provenance] of the earrings. Ju.C.V. answered that it was not a problem. [then, K.R.] asked her to wait for him because he had to think about it and collect the sum. On the same date, on a second visit by K.R., [...] she told him she had reconsidered the deal and would like to keep the earrings for herself.” (BG99)

The shop owner also changed her story highlighting that she bought them two years before in Veliko Tarnovo (ibid.).

Fifth, evidence suggest that in Bulgaria sellers display different type of relations. As highlighted in the previous paragraph individual sellers interact only with looters and buyers on a one-by-one situation, whereas small group of sellers deal with customers and network with each other (I4; I14; I12). Moreover, individual sellers and small groups differs for the type of transaction they propose. On the one hand, the single actors sell in specifically designated and stable places such as antique shops, flea markets, stalls in antique open markets, their house, all of which provide the buyer a reference point, the possibility to build trusted relations and promote transactions over time. Cases BG306 and BG308 are good example of face-to-face transactions. They relate to the case of I.D.N, a dealer of antiquities that on April 6, 2012 was arrested during a meeting that he organised in his own home, in the garage, to show to a buyer the archaeological artefacts he had to sell: a total of 1.055 objects. When the police arrived

“in the garage [...] on a table – like a metal structure – they noticed objects of cultural and historical values [...]: 100 uncleaned bronze coins of different shapes and sizes; 2 coins of white metal; 1 fragment of ceramics depicting a human face; 1 bronze fibula; 3 parts of fiberglass; 9 bronze objects; fragments of antique mirrors; 4 stone tiles; 1 fossil; part of a bone; 46 stone objects of different shapes and sizes; 13 ceramic fragments; 3 ceramic vertebrae; 1 vertebral fragment; 1 iron arrowhead; 1 iron nail and 1 iron ring; 7 bronze needles; 5 bronze fibers” (BG308)

The remaning archaeological artefacts and fossils were found stored in I.D.N.'s club, car, apartment and in “the basement was discovered and seized a pouch bag containing 28 fossils of different shapes and sizes; 16 ceramic vertebrae; 1 ceramic latch; 11 stone hammers; 1 old weight; 25 flints; 1 ceramic weight; part of a horn; 5 stone objects with traces of treatment on them; 1 ceramic handle; 2 fake teeth; 3 stones” (ibid.). The potential buyer arrived by taxi, having been given the exact location of the meeting point (ibid.). On the other hand, dealers operating in small groups prefer to organise meetings with the sole purpose of selling antiquities. In this

way, the sellers can keep a low profile: contact with potential buyers are direct, deals are often concluded over one meeting. Location and persons involved are difficult to locate and they avoid being targeted by the police. Such cooperation among sellers, however, does not display any type of division of roles. For instance, in April 2012, R.I and K.Z., decided to meet in gas station diner a potential buyer to negotiate a deal (AB41). They were carrying 386 coins and other archaeological artefacts they wanted to sell, among which the most impressive were “two gold coins from the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire over one ed by Empress Aelia Pulcheria (414-453 a.C.), and another one minted by Emperor Justinian I the Great (527-565 a.C.)” (ibid.) and ten silver coins form the ancient twon of Mesembria and Apollonia, on the Bulgarian Black Sea coasts.

Sellers exhibit a third type of relation, one where dealers only are included. According to the interviewees in I10 and I4, dealers know each other and maintain relations with each other in order to be informed of the market tendencies, of potential transactions among themselves and just to enlarge their networks.

Aiders

In the illicit trafficking in antiquities aiders represent a unique type of actors. They have been conceptualised based on activities that are functional to this illicit trade as described in step 4. In fact, aiders are actors who provide a supporting service to co-offenders including looters and treasure hunters, dealers and sellers and organised crime groups.

Although they cover such a distinctive position (I14), only five cases with clear examples of aiders were identified in the data on Bulgaria (BG4; BG8; AB39; BG165;

BG166). However, they were useful for they pinpointed several aspects related to the organisation of this type of actors. The first key aspect is represented by the fact that aiders were always individual perpetrators. Being their role in the market built around the provision of specific services, aiders do not carry out their activities in association with others, although they maintain working relationships with other participants of the illicit antiquities trade. Another trait is that contrary to all the other actors, their involvement in the market is not always characterised by illegal forms. Whereas the production of fakes is recognised as criminal activity, cleaning an ancient Roman coin or working as a local guide to metal detectorists is not illegal per se. In this respect, AB39 is exemplary. This case took place in the region of Veliko Tarnovo, which is an area well-known for its archaeological and historical importance in Bulgaria¹³. Hence, it is a favourite destination for Bulgarian and foreign tourists, researchers, historians, archaeologists as well as looters and treasure hunters. In particular, under the medieval fortress located near ‘Magareshki Tokove’ (Donkey Heels), and ‘Gushterskoto Usoe’ (Lizard’s Deep), ‘Paychovi Varbi’ (Paayho’s Willow) and ‘Hanskata Stena’ (The Khan’s Wall) several tunnels have been excavated since centuries ago and have recently been targeted by looters in search for antiquities and gold treasures. After the peak in the 1990s and the early 2000s, the area has seen a decrease in the numbers of treasure hunters, although from time to time looters arrive from different parts of the country and look for remaining artefacts. In this context, local people aid the looters by working as hired guides. In AB39, one of the guides told that looters from Sofia “brought with them motor drills leading the exhaust fumes through buckets with water in order to avoid noise. They worked with scanners analysing the terrain and discover caverns and tunnels” (ibid.). As guide, he would earn up to 100 leva per day without

¹³ Veliko Tarnovo was the Second Bulgarian Empire, 1185-1396 (Pavlov, 2013).

even engage in metal detecting and looting. In cases BG4 and BG8, C.P. was involved in criminal activities for they she had tools needed for the production of fakes and replicas.

“In the course of the investigation, on 29.09.2011, it was carried out a search and seizure in a residential building located in the village of K.. [It was found] a metal frame owned and used by C.P., the daughter of C.R., and 143 artefacts were seized, including two pieces of old printed books, two pieces of necklace, two pieces of bracelets, one spoon and archeological objects, [together with] 136 pieces, of which 131 were coins and five other items. A large number of counterfeited coins from various historical eras and tools for their production were also seized [...]: 451 objects representing modern copies. Indeed, in the search and seizure, there were also [tools] for the production of such objects, two pieces of steel molds for the production of contemporary counterfeits of ancient Turkish coins and steel rings and flanges.” (BG8)

According to the data, forgers in Bulgaria specialise in one field – coins, ceramic, gold jewellery (AB32; I5) and only few are active in the country. “There are between 20 and 50 skilled forgers working actively in Bulgaria in ‘different fields’ of forgery [...]. The top performers among those, however, are about a dozen” (AB32).

A third important feature typical of aiders relates to their lone character. Indeed, it is common that criminal groups and individual dealers outsource to third actors the activities that require a high specialisation (I14). This is the case of “cleaners” (the term has been used by the interviewee, I14) for antique and ruined coins. They have in-depth knowledge of chemistry and restoring techniques and they have at disposal the required acids, chemicals and tools to remove the patina from copper, bronze, silver and gold coins. Cleaners can also have their own laboratory and may manufacture fakes (ibid.). In their capacity of outsourced specialised actors, aiders are not integral members of organised crime rings, yet they represent a point of contact between the criminal groups involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities and the actors external to organised crime environments (I12). The case illustrated in BG165

and BG166 can exemplify this latter point. Here, T.A.A. was keeping at home 1,277 coins and a horse applique. The antiquities were divided and

“most of the items [were] in good, very good and excellent condition. Most of the objects [were] cleaned, others [were] partially cleaned of soil overlays and by corrosive products, and some of them have a deposited conservation layer. The expert states that, according to the state of the cleaned coins, there is reason to assume that for the most part they are mechanically cleaned” (BG166)

When questioned by the police, the defendant first declared that the coins were provided by unknown persons to be restored, although he later changed the his account saying that he inherited them by his grandfather thirty years before and later on he began to clean them with the intention of selling them to a museum (BG165). Clearly, T.A.A. was an external actor to whom looters and dealers outsource the cleaning procedures.

Traffickers

As pointed out in I20, Bulgaria plays a double role as origin and transit country within the illicit trafficking in antiquities through the Balkan region. Therefore, traffickers assume a relevant role in this illicit market for they have the responsibility to smuggle and distribute the illicit antiquities. In the data on Bulgaria, 21 cases directly mentioned traffickers.

The role of traffickers is twofold. As couriers, they travel within the country and convey antiquities and messages between the interested parties (I12). As smugglers, they cross the national border to travel abroad and deliver illicit archaeological artefacts to the consumers (BG118; BG267; BP1; CB2; CB3; CB5; AB3). It is important to notice that all of the judiciary and open source cases dealing with traffickers had a transnational component. In BP1, for instance, the driver of a lorry

travelling to England tried to pass the checkpoint at Vidin during the night carrying hidden in a parcel “marble fragments of a votive plate [i.e. a stele] with a bas-relief consisting of 2 bigger and 15 small fragments, as well as small ceramic pieces” (ibid.). Similarly, in BG267 the defendant attempted to smuggle from Turkey into Bulgaria seven figurines, 56 coins hidden partly in the luggage and partly in his own jacket’s pockets. The artefacts were purchased in a Turkish antique market “as souvenirs” (ibid.)

Data suggest that traffickers travel both in and out Bulgaria. According to the interviewee in I18, in the period comprised between 2000 and 2015 the Border Police identified 83 attempts of smuggling antiquities at the Bulgarian borders. Interestingly, I18 confirmed the transit function of the country within the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In fact, the detected illicit antiquities were smuggled into Bulgaria from Greece, Macedonia, Romania and Turkey, whereas they were smuggled out towards Turkey, Romania, Macedonia, Greece and Serbia.

Traffickers work either as individuals (BG118; BG267; CB2; CB3; CB5, CB7; CB8; CB9; CB10; AB3; AB15; AB20; AB31; AB32; BP1) or in small groups (AB8; AB44; CB4; CB6; BG297; SG3), although they do not display major differences in the organisation. Not only are the modalities of smuggling identical, small groups do not present any degree of division of roles. Compare case AB3 with case CB4. In the first case, 11,000 “ancient coins and the other artifacts have been discovered by officers at the Lesovo border crossing point in a car with license plate from Belgium driven by a citizen of Turkey. In the smuggling attempt, the archaeological artefacts were hidden in niches found in the trunk and underneath the car’s fenders. [...] They may have originated in Turkey or in other countries from Asia Minor and the Middle East” (AB3). In case CB4 two traffickers were also smuggling, this time to Germany, 188

coins of different size and shape, pendants, three buckles and two rings “in a metal box. Underneath the bottom of the box customs officers found two catalogs of ancient coins and eleven books in foreign languages” (CB4). Unrelated to the numbers of the traffickers, smuggling is pursued in the same way because the acts assigned to this task do not require different tasks.

Traffickers can be defined as are criminals specialised in one activity. In I13, the interviewee highlighted how smugglers work for different organised criminal groups and traffic any type of illicit good. BG118 confirmed this trend. In this case, the custom police in Ruse stopped a minibus that was travelling to Romania and transported over three kilograms of cocaine, several ammunition for firearms and three well-preserved roman coins. Whereas smugglers can differentiate the clientele, organised criminal groups tend to specialise in the provision and selling of one illicit good. According to the same interviewee (I13) criminal groups that have become involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in the last decade, tend to focus only on this illicit good.

Consumers

Consumers are a broad category that identifies all those actors who bought antiquities first-hand, who own collections and dealers who buy artefacts to resell them. It is a category of offenders positioned at the very end of the trade chain and that draw less attention than looters or dealers. Knowing that they engage in illegal transactions, they tend to maintain anonymity. Moreover, consumers are not necessarily persons, as several final buyers are legal actors such as museums and auction houses. This entails a higher probability to lose track of looted antiquities that

often resurface in legal market years later. As seen in the example of the Victorious Youth, the statue was founded in 1964 and displayed in a museum only thirteen years later, in 1977. Besides, law enforcement investigations focus mainly on looters and dealers. For all these reasons, buyers are very difficult to detect. In the data on Bulgaria, only six cases mentioned this type of actor (BG60; BG122; BG163; BG302; BG269; BG279).

Notwithstanding the paucity of data, it has been possible to identify an important distinction between two types of consumers. The first buys antiquities for their private collections (BG302), while the second does not explain the reasons of the purchase and may be individual intermediaries. In BG122, H.V.C. tried to purchase from A.T.T. illicit antiquities, namely 6 Greek silver coins and a fragment of an amphora for 21,000 leva. Similarly, in BG60 V.S. acquired from M.I.B. several coins, appliqués, fibulae, some in good conditions, some deformed or fragmented from M.I.B.. In neither cases the defendants stated why they were buying.

In all the six cases, consumers were single actors and no small groups or members of criminal organisation were detected.

Hybrids

This is the last role of actors that has been categorised within the illicit trafficking in antiquities. It is a special category for it include participants who cover more than one role at the time, such as looters that directly sell antiquities. In Bulgaria, hybrid roles have been counted in 10 cases.

Two main aspects related to the features of social organisation emerged from the analysis of the data. First, all cases of hybrid actors included looters or treasure hunters

who were selling the antiquities they discovered. They displayed a basic type of organisation, which implied the direct selling of antiquities either via the Internet or through a meeting in person with the buyers (AB32; BG82). R.D.P., for instance, was a looter who advertised illegal antiquities online. In 2011, he was arrested by an undercover police officer after he brought to a meeting coins and other artefacts to be sold (BG44). In BG82, the looters R.D.I. and K.J. met in a petrol station P.L. to sell him coins, ornaments and other ancient objects. In only one case, BG187, the looter was involved in all the activities of the illicit trafficking in antiquities: he metal-detected, looted, cleaned and sold illicit archaeological artefacts. Moreover, he created a small private collection and produced replicas.

Second, hybrid actors typically work alone, without engaging in relationships with other fellow actors. They incorporate in one person all the roles that can be found within the illicit trafficking in antiquities (BG187; BG272). Even as individual actors, however, they share a certain degree of relations with some participants. The primary exchange of relationships occurs with consumers. Due to their multiple capacity as looters and dealers, hybrid actors are involved in economic transactions (BG97; BG173; BG319; AB32; BG44), irrespective of the genuineness of the artefacts sold. In AB32, for instance, a treasure hunter was also involved in the production, sell and distribution of fakes, mostly coins. As expert from the police pointed out, treasure hunters and looters who are caught with fakes are not punishable (*ibid.*) for carrying fakes is not considered a crime under Bulgarian criminal law. Moreover, the treasure hunter himself discarded the fraud mechanism behind fakes highlighting that “whoever isn’t knowledgeable, deserves to get it” (*ibid.*).

4.7 Networks and hierarchical groups in Bulgaria

The last two categories of actors are described separately from individual and small groups because they exhibit a complex form of association that is not shared by the first two categories. In fact, hierarchical organisations and networks are based on an internal division of roles, which permits them to function more effectively, safely and on a greater scale. Moreover, they have on average a longer lifespan compared to small groups and individual offenders.

Although the presence of organised crime groups has been confirmed by the majority of the interviewees (I4; I5; I8; I12; I13; I14; I16; I19), judicial and open source data mentioned the organisations at issue only in 6 cases (BG189; AB5; AB12; AB25; AB29; AB36).

According to the interviewees, the typologies of organised crime involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria are not univocal.

On the one hand, traditional hierarchical groups developed and consolidated after the fall of the communist regime in the 1990s (I16; I8; Pushkarova, 2010). This type evolved as a development of the structures of the totalitarian party and “essentially represented an aspect of the adaptation of the former party political elite to the conditions of a democratic society and a free market economy” (Pushkarova, 2010: 36). To overcome the 1980s centrally planned economy crisis, the elite tried to create illegal channels for drugs and weapons trafficking (I17). This form of organised crime generated large and long-lasting criminal organisations in Bulgaria, which were active throughout the whole post-1989 period of transition and the following decades (ibid.). Apart from drug and weapons trafficking, these groups were – and still are – involved in numerous illegal markets, including money laundering, racketeering, prostitution, extortion and kidnapping for ransom, and in various illegal cross-border trades such as

human and antiquities trafficking (I17; I13; I4). They are active at both local and international level. These groups display a pyramidal structure, an elaborate division of roles and a high degree of violence to maintain internal control (I17). However, according to the interviewee in I4 the hierarchical structure only refers to single, independent organised crime group and does not reflect the traditional Mafia-like organisation where an overarching hierarchy controls all the sub-groups.

On the other hand, the second type of organised crime covers all criminal associations that emerged spontaneously after the collapse of the Communist regime (I17). These criminal groups developed in the past two decades show a small, flexible, less structured and networked organisation (I4; I17), a temporary nature and they specialise in one criminal market (*ibid.*). Indeed, the members of these groups do not participate concurrently in several criminal trades but choose one lucrative market and establish their networks and activities within the boundaries of it (I5). The choice to engage in the illicit trade of antiquities depends on the high economic reward, but also in the fact that it is considered a “less risky business compared to the illicit trade in weapons or human trafficking, therefore there is no need to create something like a typical Mafia structure that protects the illegal business” (I17).

Data from judicial and open source confirm the presence in the country of loose networks. In BG189, for instance, the main defendant was tried for being the head of an organised criminal group involved in the looting and the trafficking to foreign countries of illicit antiquities. He worked together with four other members. Although the defendants were all acquitted, the real point of interest where the relations among the members. They did not resemble a very sophisticated group: apart from having a recognised leader, the remaining co-perpetrators were not assigned any specific tasks and performed the same activities.

Similarly, in AB5 a criminal group of four members participated in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in southern Bulgaria. The group was small and presented very loose division of roles. However, they showed a good planning of the criminal activities for they stored archaeological artefacts in six different homes and five cars, and studied a sector of the antiquities market in advance: they had “11 numismatics catalogs with an official personal registration and other documents for archaeological items sold to auctions houses in Germany, Austria, and the United Kingdom” (AB5).

In AB25, a criminal group was arrested in the northern Bulgarian region of Montana. In this case, the six members presented a division of labour. While one was the top figure of the group and “one of the leading dealers and traffickers” (AB25) of antiquities in Bulgaria, two associates were in charge of transporting the illicit antiquities to buyers and were caught while going to the negotiating meeting point (*ibid.*). All of them had technical equipment and metal detectors to loot archaeological sites. Contrary to AB5, however, this latter group had an internal connotation and dealt with local consumers.

Interestingly, the combination between the groups’ specialisation in one criminal market and the extensive looting of the past twenty years that create a shortage of Bulgarian antiquities has encouraged a process of monopolisation among the criminal organisations involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities. As explained by an interviewee, if ten years ago twenty criminal groups were active in this illicit trade and were all earning rich profits, nowadays “the biggest organised crime groups tried to remove dealers and the smallest criminal groups in order to merge the groups” (I14), diminishing the number of active groups to five (*ibid.*). Despite the monopolisation, the groups maintain a networked configuration.

4.8 The social organisation of actors in Italy: Individual actors and small groups

Looters

Data indicate that looters and treasure hunters in Italy are present as both loners and members of small group. Looters were identified in a total of 64 cases among judicial reports and open source.

As in the case of Bulgaria, data show several ways through which looters and treasure hunters have been recognised and arrested by the police. Apart from few cases in which law enforcement investigations led to searches in private dwellings, the vast majority of looters have been spotted while engaged in metal-detecting, digging or looting. Moreover, in rare instances the police discovered looters during routine streets patrolling.

Records from judicial cases and data from open source indicated that in 25 cases looters have been seen during illegal excavations. In case OS67, one looter was surprised in Taormina, Sicily, by the Carabinieri among the remains of the local Arab-Norman castle. At their sight, the man tried to escape, and to get rid of the metal detector and other tools for excavation but was stopped shortly after. “During the subsequent house search, they found numerous archaeological artefacts from the Arab-Norman era illegally held: 183 ancient coins and 44 metal objects of various types (rings, fibulae...)” (OS67). Similarly, in IT5 B.G. and Z.R. were arrested in October 2011, caught while stealing artefacts in an archaeological site. They have been “previously observed entering the archaeological settlement and caught in the act of taking various metal artefacts identified thanks to the help of three latest-generation metal detectors. Subsequent searches made it possible to retrieve documentation useful

for the rest of the investigations as well as other precious objects still soaked in soil” (IT5). Small groups of two looters have been arrested also in cases IT24 and IT26, while in case OS47 two archaeology enthusiasts were stopped in the archaeological field of Abitato di Spina, in Emilia-Romagna, equipped with the necessary tools, a shovel and a sack. At the moment of the arrest they had already looted 700 artefacts:

“These are ceramic fragments (probably edges, walls, lugs and bottoms), divided between black-painted ceramic, gray ceramic and rough ceramic of great value and interest: [...] all from the Etruscan era. [...] In their houses located in the city of Cento a further 1,600 pottery fragments have been discovered, of which about 500 with black-painted decorations and red figures of Etruscan times and others apparently referable to the Renaissance age. Other 1,100 pieces found following the searches carried out must still be classified.” (OS47)

Several accounts indicate that looters were active at night-time (OS44; OS48; OS49; OS55; OS67; OS69) and their activities were found out because the movements of flashlight attracted the attention of police patrols. In OS48, for instance, six looters were metal-detecting and excavating a field near Catania, Sicily, and needed flashlights to use pickaxes, shovels and inspect the soil in search of fragments and artefacts. Similarly, at dawn one day at the end of February 2018, the Carabinieri in a natural reserve and archaeological area near Rome “noticed from a distance a small light coming from the top of a cliff, right along the path that leads to the Roman villa. The soldiers stationed themselves on the beach and, after about an hour, they saw a man holding a torch and a dark sack. The military blocked and searched him. He has been found in possession of still dirty excavation tools and numerous fragments of terracotta and mosaics just taken from the archaeological site” (OS69).

In other cases, looters were detected accidentally as part of routine car checks on the streets. In case OS4 two looters had their car stopped and search and several antiquities were found in the passengers’ seats, including small chalices, black figures ceramics and terracotta probably looted from a necropolis, whereas in case OS43 a

local *tombarolo* in Fiumicino, Rome, was caught in his car with a metal detector and coins when he was returning home. Accidental discoveries were made also during investigations for crimes unrelated to the illicit trafficking in antiquities or accidents (IT32; IT61; OS17; OS53; OS85). During a theft investigation in north Sardinia, the police searched the house of two suspects, where along with the stolen goods it found hidden metal detectors and archaeological artefacts, namely “bronze utensils from the Nuragic age and ancient coins” (OS53). In another case, a landslide near the famous archaeological site of Vulci drew the attention of the local Carabinieri station, who found a group of seven looters near a chasm:

“With the bulldozer they had dug a 4 meter by 4 chasm, four meters deep. The bulldozer then remained on the edge, while two looters dove inside, in the darkness and cold of the winter night, and the others were outside. At a certain point everything collapsed and the victims remained buried, the one who was further down died suffocated, the other survived by a miracle.” (OS85)

Contrary to Bulgaria, where several collectors engaged directly in the search and looting of archaeological artefacts, only two cases of looters-collectors were found in Italy. In OS17, the Carabinieri arrested

“a 62 year old looter from Ardea, who had stolen [antiquities] from various sites and kept them in his house: [...] about 500 pieces [including] a marble funerary urn, amphorae, marble and terracotta basreliefs, capitals, a column’s trunk, tools for weaving, pottery and other portions of artefacts attributable to temples and tombs for hundreds of pieces, some dating back to the III century b.C. and others to the imperial age.” (OS17)

The looter-collector was identified during an investigation on drug trafficking: his house was surveilled due to a “continuous coming and going” (ibid.). People were probably other looters that wanted to sell the defendant newly excavated artefacts. Case OS59 narrates of L.S., who looted for 30 years the archaeological site of Herdonia, Apulia. He became a *tombarolo* following his grandfather tradition, who started excavating fields near legal archaeological sites in the 1930s. The grandfather

used to hand over the Archaeological Museum in Foggia the antiquities he found in exchange of a monetary reward. L.S., however, collected part of the findings and started selling some of the best-preserved items to dealers and collectors, who would introduce them into the Belgium market for antiquities.

Data suggest that many looters in Italy fall within the individual type: 31 cases out of 64. The remaining cases show a high variability in the number of the group's members. Although two (OS4; OS13; OS38; OS47; OS53; OS55; OS68; OS70; OS72; OS79) and three (OS18; OS45; OS74; OS76; OS80) appear as the average quantity, some co-looters collaborated in larger groups.

For instance, in 2012

“four *tombaroli* equipped up to their necks [started] an illegal excavation in the deposit of votive offerings in the countryside between Lanuvio and Genzano, connected to the sanctuary of Giunone Sospita. With them, they had metal detectors, geo-radar, water pumps, electricity generators, shovels and pickaxes. The [Financial police] surprised the four scoundrels, all Italians, while they were desecrating a sanctuary full of hundreds of artefacts and statues of real dimensions, related to the devotional apparatus of Juno. [...] In their homes was recovered other historical-archaeological material coming also from other burial sites of Etruscan epoch that would have fed the circuit of international collecting.” (OS58)

while, as previously seen, in Vulci a group of eight looters were excavating an Etrurian tomb with a bulldozer when the ground collapsed and two of them were buried under it (OS85). Finally, in cases OS3, OS54 and OS23 looters were cooperating in groups of respectively 16, 14 and 11 members. The case in OS23 is unique. It involved eleven divers, including a former “*corallaro*” – a person who find and sell coral – who found buried in the seaside in Liguria 31 Roman amphorae, perfectly preserved apart from marine encrustation, and several other underwater antiquities such as a Roman dagger, vessels and pottery. They created a local illegal trade and advertised the merchandise with intriguing flyers: “Do you have to redeem

an obligation with a notary, doctor or politician with a unique and precious gift? A Roman amphora fresh from digging is what you need”¹⁴.

The distinction made for the case of Bulgaria between professional and non-professional looters applies to Italy too. Whereas professionals utilise a vast array of technical equipment – metal detectors, bulldozers, shovels, *spilloni*, sieves – to search for antiquities, non-professional looters remain at the level of cheap and unsophisticated metal detectors. Apart from the equipment, the main difference is represented by the size of the group. As a matter of fact, groups counting over three members shared a certain degree of complexity in the organisation, especially in terms of basic, although effective division of roles during the excavations. In case OS85 only one looter was using the bulldozer while the co-perpetrators waited on a side to proceed with shovels and sieves. In an interview with a former *tombarolo*, Isman highlighted the same specialised set of tasks among small groups of looters active in northern Lazio. “We were three; one drove the mechanical shovel, and a labourer helped” (Isman, 2009: 17), while the other waited to continue the excavation manually once an artefact had been unearthed. This feature further entails that professional looters are groups that synchronise and coordinate the looting in advance, rather than leave them to spontaneous metal-detecting routines. Actors involved in professional looting unite around a defined project, although data indicate that they do not maintain the collaboration over an extensive period of time. Professional single looters, on the contrary, continue their activity for years (Isman, 2009; OS59; OS69).

The less specialised groups, whose members frequently work together for limited periods, do not include more than two or three persons. Associations of non-professional looters are characterised by fluidity (I21) and small groups of looters

¹⁴ “Devi disimpegnarti con qualche notaio, medico o politico con un regalo unico e pregiato? L’anfora romana fresca di scavo è quello che fa per te” (OS23).

constantly dissolve and reconstitute with different members. They reduce collaborative relations to the minimum: rather than elaborate a plan and attribute tasks, they engage in the same activity together. In case OS68 two looters have been arrested while they were excavating in the archaeological area of Rocca di Entella, Sicily. “Thanks to the metal detectors they managed to find twenty coins, nineteen of Roman periods and one of the Punic era. The soldiers found them in their backpacks, together with shovels and pickaxes” (OS68). The archaeological area of Rocca di Entella was a known target for looters: a total of 14 *tombaroli* have been seen and arrested between 2011 and 2016 during illegal excavations (ibid.).

Similarly, in case OS79

“the Carabinieri pressed charged against two men surprised on the hill that goes up to the top of the archaeological area [Roselle]. Tuesday morning, the two brothers from Lazio [...], were seen by the custodian of the Etruscan area with those strange tools in their hands. Those who work in the center of Roselle know how the tomb robbers behave. And those two men aged 44 and 48 armed with metal detectors and axes were certainly not in Roselle to admire the Etruscan artefacts and tombs in the area. On them, they found an ancient coin, probably from the Etruscan era, a silver spoon and three forged nails per head, as well as a fragment of a war remnant.”

According to an interviewee, among the non-professional looters there are “many amateurs with metal detectors, engaging in sporadic, occasional events and they do not show the intent of committing a crime” (I22).

Keepers

Whereas in Bulgaria keepers represented a specific role within the illicit market in antiquities (I13), in Italy the existence of such a position has been discarded by the interviewees in I21 and I22. However, in 22 cases, judicial and open source data indicated actors who had in their availability antiquities, yet they did not have any

equipment used to loot nor were the information detailed enough to characterise them as either looters, collectors or dealers. On October 19, 1999, for instance, the Financial police discovered in the garden of a house “placed next to palms and geraniums” (OS2) three grandiose Doric columns, stolen from archaeological sites in the province of Vibo Valentia, Calabria. One year later, on October 19, 2000, in the same area the police recovered in three private houses nine artefacts of considerable archaeological interest, in particular Roman amphorae and statuettes, dating back to the I century b.C.. The amphorae were ready to be sold or already bought: the still had the attached the stamp still showing the period and place of manufacture; in the end, they were placed in the Museum of Vibo Valentia after a thorough cleaning (ibid.).

The vast majority of keepers were individuals – 19 cases, a trend in line with the function assigned to a keeper. In case OS1, while looking for illegal weapons and explosives, the Carabinieri in Calabria found hidden in a stable an archaeological treasure: inside a closet where several artefacts of fine quality including “jewellery, bronze necklaces and decorated pottery” (ibid.). Similarly, in case OS50 a person in Basilicata was found detaining hundreds of antiquities at home, while in Ostia, Rome, a man, “probably a *tombarolo* or perhaps a clandestine antique dealer” (OS50), had a “skyphos [a two-handled wine-cup] but also an oinochoe and a kylix, the classic wine cup” (ibid.). The artefacts were partly original Etruscan objects and partly counterfeit, and the police could not verify the circumstances through which they came into the man’s properties nor what he intended to do with them. The same situation applied to case OS90, when an amphora, two vases and a bowl were discovered kept in the office of a professional, either as collection or to be sold.

In only two cases (IT48; IT28) keepers found antiquities casually during construction works and failed to communicate their recovery to the archaeological authorities.

Sellers

Sellers were counted in 21 cases in the collected data.

They present various characteristics. First, groups of sellers were a narrow minority, being them founded in only ten cases (IT3; IT10; IT34; IT66; OS3; OS8; OS41; OS91; OS92; OS93). As explained when analysing the data on Bulgaria, selling is an activity that requires actors to carry out illegal transactions on their own. In case IT3, the brothers L.P. and L.D. took advantage of their legal trade in antiquities to sell fakes and replicas among original artefacts. In case IT66, B.M. and C.S.J. sold to a jewelry store in the center of Rome some antique books for an amount of 50 euros:

“During the following personal searches, it was ascertained that the defendants held in a bag also numerous coins that the Carabinieri seized. [...] The coins dated back to the 20th century had no value, while those apparently from the Roman period seemed true and, therefore, of significant historical-archaeological value. [...] All the ancient coins had a high degree of oxidation and evident concretions from underground burial that point out their provenance from an archaeological excavation.” (IT66)

In this case, the dealers associated in the least possible number of co-offenders, two, a trend showed by all cases of sellers with the exception of two instances: in case OS8 three persons associated to buy and resell antiquities from a known local dealer, while in case OS41 four co-offenders ran an online traffic in antiquities. They organised a “gigantic trade on e-Bay of looted archaeological artefacts – about 600 objects, almost all of them Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Arab-Norman coins”

(OS41). The most precious coin costed around 100 euro. Moreover, data indicate that dealers in illicit antiquities in Italy do not further specialise in the commerce of either real or fake antiquities (IT3; IT52; OS91; OS92; OS93) as it has been suggested for the Bulgarian market.

Second, both individuals and small groups of dealers are active at the local level. As a matter of fact, none of the 21 cases included a seller with international ties. For instance, S.P. exhibited “about 500 Roman and Greek coins, dozens of limestone pebbles” (IT65) along with other fragments and small items in a stall during the annual international numismatic and philatelic fair in Verona, Veronafil. The coins showed traces of recent excavations and, in fact, most of them were still covered by soil and sand encrustations. Similarly, in case IT33, M.G. had the availability of numerous archaeological objects – among others a marble herm with soil’s traces on it – that were confiscated at his home and agricultural holding near Rome as well as at his mother’s apartment in Rome. After he accidentally unearthed the artefacts while working in his farm, M.G. kept them in different safe locations with the intention to sell the antiquities to collectors in Italy.

Third, due to the limited size, evidence suggest a lack of complex organisational structure among the members. The image that clearly emerge from the data is that of membership confined to two to three participants, who collaborate in performing an illegal transaction without assigning precise tasks to each of the participant. Exemplary in this respect is the scheme implemented by two co-offenders in cases OS91, OS92 and OS93. Active in the northern regions of Italy, and in particular between Venice, Treviso and Verona, two dealers acquired highly valued antiquities from illegal excavations in Apulia and Sicily and concealed among them fakes commissioned to a forger. The sellers used a hotel room in the city centre of Verona as

meeting point for buyers, where the items were inspected, and once the deal was concluded they left the city. “There were already buyers, Italians and very interested in those vases of rare beauty. Too bad they were ad-hoc prepared fakes (the forger was not identified): ‘They were perhaps too good to be true’” (OS93). Apart from the fakes, the remaining artefacts dated back to the IV and III centuries b.C., for a value of around one million euros (ibid.).

Direct selling through online website is another little sophisticated way utilise by dealers in Italy. Online sellers were found in cases OS30, OS3, OS41 and OS16. In the first one, coins from Punic, Roman and medieval age were sold on the Internet by an individual seller with a vast online network of buyers. Interestingly, the whole online activity was confined to Sardinia. Also active on a local basis was the dealer in case OS16, who used a profile on the social platform Facebook Marketplace to put on sale a fragment of a tuff column, guaranteeing complete anonymity to his contacts. In case OS3, a dealer used bulletins of online auctions to trade antiquities in whole Italy, although the main buyer was a collector living in Foggia, Apulia. He had been active for about two years and had sold through the Internet over 4,000 coins and 600 artefacts (OS3). The case described in OS41 is the only one where a group of four co-offenders were involved in online antiquities selling on e-Bay: as previously seen, they advertised the sale of 576 coins of different size, origin and material.

Aiders

This category of actors has a scarce application in the Italian market in illicit antiquities. According to the interviewee in I21, apart from looters and dealers, the main actors present in the contemporary scenario of illicit cultural heritage are

criminal groups. This implies that the positions and the tasks allocated to the aiders are engrained within the structure of criminal organisations rather than outsourced to an external actor. As a consequence, a very limited amount of cases including individual aiders have been detected in the data on Italy: IT45, IT20 and IT39.

Despite the small number, the cases are representative of the activities associated to aiders. In the case describe in IT20, C.B. kept at home artefacts that came from recent illegal excavations. They had traces of dirt and soil on them and were stored “in a room separate from the house, evidently awaiting restoration work” (IT20) and some have been already superficially restored with gypsum and glue. Although it was impossible to determine the precise moment of the loot or when C.B. came to own Falisci antiquities, he organised a laboratory in his home to clean, restore and prepare them to be sold on the illicit market. In a similar venue, it has been highlighted how S.A.B. proceeded to a “meticulous restoration work” (IT39) of several antiquities so as to enhance the artistic value of the archaeological artefacts. While the first two examples concern individual aiders, case IT45 sees the collaboration of T.S. and T.F. in storing in their own private dwellings artefacts and in the “accurate reconstruction with careful assembly of the original pieces [of a bowl], a clear sign of true awareness of the archaeological value of the objects found” (IT45).

Another activity typical of aiders that has been repeatedly found in the data is the production of fakes by part of expert forgers. In the cases OS91, OS92 and OS93 described in the previous section dedicated to sellers, the dealers commissioned a number of faked antiquities to a forger specialised in Roman and Greek artefacts so as to be able to mix them with original antiquities and fraud buyers, who would unlikely notice the difference. The interviewee in I21 further highlighted that forgers are highly specialised professionals in the Italian market, who provide their services to any other

criminal party, irrespective of their membership or not to formal criminal organisations. Indeed, some looters involved in the direct selling of antiquities to intermediaries deal also in fakes (I21). They either learn how to become a forger or start a partnership. In the latter case, forgers and looters collaborate on single projects, typically dividing the tasks among themselves: while looters provide the type of artefact to reproduce and sometimes the original material of antiquities – such as potsherds, marbles, forgers give their expertise. Especially in the case of sculptures, professional forgers can excel (ibid.; Isman, 2009: 53-54). Sometimes, forgers are unaware of their role in a criminal project. In the notorious case of the *Artemide Marcianate* – the marching Artemide (OS94 – OS101), illegally excavated in 1993 between Cassino and Caserta, the dealers realised that in the antiquity market was circulating the news of the discovery of a statue, which elicited a law enforcement investigation. To divert it, they decided to order to a marble worker in Rome two copies of the Artemide, giving them several pictures (Isman, 2009: 53). After the statues were ready, one was moved to a laboratory in Apulia, where it was subjected to an aging process using acids and silicates (ibid.) and then planted in 1999 in a field in Campania for the investigators and experts to find it.

Traffickers

This type of actor shares a characteristic with aiders: in the majority of cases, traffickers are members of criminal organisations. Therefore, only six cases had a direct reference to independent smugglers, namely IT8, IT21, IT44, OS7, OS9 and OS86.

Several features can be pointed out. First, in all six cases traffickers had an international nature. Either towards the United Kingdom (IT8), Switzerland (IT21; OS9) or Germany (OS86) or from foreign countries to Italy (OS7), the smuggling of antiquities was organised on a cross-border level. Second, except from case OS7, traffickers work on their own. In IT44, V.A. tried to illegally export antique jewellery hidden in his luggage without declaring them to the custom. In an analogous case, “during a normal road traffic control service, the Carabinieri of the Serino station [a small town in Campania], stopped and checked an Italian-Swiss citizen” (OS9), who was driving back to Switzerland carrying among others five amphorae, one terracotta box and several gold and silver earrings. Once discovered, the police found 57 Roman coins stored in his father’s apartment in Italy ready to be smuggled out of the country (ibid.). The trafficking scheme described in OS7, on the contrary, was organised by two Italian citizens. Probably members of a criminal group – although no indication of a membership were provided in the open source article, they shipped antiquities and animal skins from Eritrea to Salerno. In June 2018, the Financial police in Salerno, Campania

“seized within the commercial port of Salerno several and precious artefacts in African and asian ivory, skins and objects from piton, crocodile and varan, very rare corals and shells, one Phoenician-Punic amphora and 20,720 kilograms of contraband cigarettes. The merchandise was travelling hidden inside a container shipped from Eritrea, declared at the custom containing the personal effects of two Italian citizens returning from Africa.” (OS7)

The antiquity was an artifact of particular value, dated back to the V-III centuries b.C., probably found by looters underwater. This case is unique in two aspects. It is the only example among the data indicating a connecton between the illicit antiquities trade and other illegal trades, such as wildlife and sigarette trafficking. Moreover, the mixed asian and African origin of the illegal goods suggests

a global trade, where Italy represents the destination of the merchandise or the entry point for the European market.

As can be seen from the description of the above-mentioned cases, the modalities of trafficking vary, a difference that constitute the third feature of this category of actors. Two patterns of relations can be identified among traffickers. On the one hand, individual traffickers organised travels and the actual smuggling on their own through cars, trains and shipments. In case OS86, the smuggler decided to travel at night on an international train to Germany carrying with him several luggages “containing vases, glass ampullae, small statues and antique ceramics” (OS86) of Greek and Etrurian origin. On the other hand, traffickers can collaborate with other actors to carry out smuggling schemes. In case IT8, it was ascertained that the defendant, S.R., acquired antiquities that were illicitly excavated in Italy and sold them in the United Kingdom through a society belonging to him. In particular, S.R., was in contact with a known intermediary active between Italy and Switzerland and could take advantage of the wide network of relationships the middleman entertained with local looters operating in Italy. Similarly, in case IT21, a smuggler used to export illicit antiquities to Switzerland taking advantage of his former wife’s residence status in the country. In fact, it was in her residence and her professional study that the Swiss police “found and seized the enourmous archaeological heritage” (IT21). She was arrested for aiding and abetting the illicit trafficking in antiquities organised by the husband.

Consumers

As already explained in the section on Bulgaria, consumers represent a type of actors difficult to identify in the data. From the analysis of data on Italy, a total of 16 cases concerned buyers and all of them involved individuals. In the majority of cases, buyers were collectors (IT12; OS2; OS16; OS20; OS21; OS40, OS63; OS89). In case OS20, a couple in a small city near Rome was investigated by the Financial police for a complex case of fraudulent bankruptcy and found in the availability of 121 precious antiquities dating between the I-V and the VIII-IX century a.C.. They created a small museum “to adorn the garden and the rooms of the dwelling, consisting – among others – of trunks and portions of columns, transport amphorae, a Greek inscription, fragments of common Roman pottery, valves of oysters and teeth” (OS20). The couple probably bought the antiquities on the clandestine market as a reinvestment of the money diverted from the creditors of their society. The collector in case OS16 owned a small homemade museum with dozen of fine artefacts, including two exquisite craters, one taurine and one equine head, all possibly coming from a sculptural group of considerable size dated between IV century b.C and the II century a.C.. Cases OS40, OS2 and OS63 mentioned private illegal museums, too. In May 2014 a professional living in Vittoria, a small city near Ragusa, Sicily, kept in three safes “dozens of ‘jar’ and ‘albarelli’¹⁵ vases produced in Caltagirone between the 1700 and 1800” (OS40). He bought over 600 artefacts, among others, a hundred coins, axes, millstones made of lava, gold necklaces mounted with gold coins, documents from the 18th century and a vast collection of vases and amphorae (ibid.). In Piedmont a retired antique dealer collected over 200 among vases, small statues and bronzes from the Magna Grecia and the Etrurian regions (OS63).

¹⁵ With the term ‘albarelli’ are defined the vases used in ancient pharmacies to contain spices, herbal products or medicinal preparations.

In other instances, the role of the buyer is not clear. In case IT1, for example, S.T.N. was arrested because in 2011 he acquired illegal antiquities and paid with cheques, yet no further details confirmed whether he was a dealer, a looter or a collector.

Although data are mainly concerned with consumers as perpetrators in an illegal transaction, buyers can be the victims. This is a form of deviant transaction (Best and Luckenbill, 1994) and the case of G.G. in IT53 is exemplary. In 1995 as part of a criminal proceeding for receiving stolen antiquities, G.G. was found guilty and had seized a Roman marble tombstones, dated III century b.C.. Years later, Turkey claimed that the object was looted and exported out of the country; however, in 2012 it was ascertained that G.G. acquired in good faith from a dealer the marble stone that was then returned to him.

Hybrid

Data on the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Italy included the role of hybrid actors in 12 cases.

Evidence suggest three main aspects related to the organisation of this type of actors. A primary feature is the presence of both categories of participants: individual and small groups. Whereas in eight cases (IT6; IT25; IT50; IT67; OS25; OS56; OS73; OS83) hybrid offenders acted on their own, in the remaining four (OS11; OS23; OS31; OS39) they co-operated.

In case IT67, Ba. Fc., was charged for the illegal possess of 251 looted antiquities that he was storing, cleaning and restoring so as to sell them. A similar situation is described in OS25. In this case, a person discovered fifteen precious

artefacts, “3 amphorae, 9 spiral craters and 3 hydrae” (OS25), in a tomb in Arpinanova, near Foggia, Apulia. Due to the collapse of the tomb’s ceiling, some of vases were broken and the looter preserved each fragment in a plastic bag to restore the amphorae. At the moment of the arrest, he was keeping the intact and restored artefacts, and the fragments in his garage. To give an idea of how precious the vases were, experts indicated that each of it, once restored, could have been sold on the black market for about 45,000 euros (ibid.). In OS23, as seen, 31 roman amphorae were found underwater by a group of divers, who decided to retrieve them and start their own illegal antiquities business. Without removing marine encrustations to ensure the amphorae’s authenticity, they advertised the merchandise with flyers and sold them to professionals. Again, in case OS31, a group of three co-offenders established an illegal trade in antiquities between Sardinia and Lombardy. The investigation started on midday on a summer day

“in Funtana Bangius, near the ruins of the Roman baths in the countryside of Ortacesus [mid-southern part of Sardinia]. A site that the military [...] was already keeping under control after having discovered signs that indicated the activity of looters. [The three *tombaroli*], armed with metal detectors and pickaxes, have been surprised while digging in the archaeological area. They already had recovered some coins.” (OS31)

The looters excavated together fields in Sardinia and hide antiquities in their properties in the island. One of them, residing and working in the greater Milan, was also in charge of transporting to and selling the artefacts in Lombardy. The police found a small treasure in their apartments: 1,350 coins, 850 bronze artefacts, 18 vessels, three Nuragic bronzes, 407 items of jewelry and one Roman votive statue.

A second feature showed by hybrid actors in Italy consists in their wider occupations compared to Bulgaria. While in the latter country hybrid actors were typified by the figure of the looter involved in all the steps of the crime commission

process, in Italy looters do not represent the only type of hybrid actor. Case OS56, for instance, depicts the classic hybrid participant: a looter in Siracusa, Sicily, used to keep at home metal detectors and other professional tools to excavate together with artefacts that he directly sold online. In another case, however, the defendant was found with “851 authentic antiquities of various types, [...] counterfeit archaeological material [and] instruments for the reproduction of coins” (IT50). T.G. also had the availability of two metal detectors found on board the vehicle on which he was at the time of a police check, and claimed to be a looter (ibid.). In case IT25, F.R. did not engage in looting, he only bought antiquities to illegally exports and sell them.

The third aspect considers the dynamics of relations among hybrid actors. Whereas individuals only interact with other players in the market, small groups have flexible dynamics among themselves. The defendat in case IT6, O.F., claimed to be a collector, who inherited from his father a number of antiquities, which he offered to donate in 2007 to the Foundation Port of Rome for the new Museum in Ostia. However, among the artefacts seized in his apartment – “including mirrors, an oil lamp, a neckless, a ring, hearings, bracelets, fibulae, amphorae, glass fragments” (IT6) – he kept an agenda with the names of the looters he was in contact with to conclude new deals. On the contrary, the group’s members described in case OS31, searched for antiquities together, while only one of them was in the position to transport and sell the objects. Such minimal division of tasks was not present in case OS39, where a group of six people all collaborated in the same activities: they looted stone artefacts in the Aeolian Islands, they moved and hide them in the house of one of them and transported them together in the main island.

4.9 Networks and hierarchical groups in Italy

Data on Italy substantiate the idea that organised crime is involved in the illicit trafficking in antiquities; however, they further confirm that the involvement of traditional Mafia-like organisations is minimal. According to the interviewee in I20,

“the local organised crime knows about the illicit trafficking in antiquities, but it is not involved with the same role it has in other activities, for example the drug trade. More than anything else, the actors are subject to the control exercised by organised crime groups on the territory and pay a tax. The Mafia system does not coincide, strictly, with the system for the trade of antiquities.”

In Operation Purgatorio, for instance, eleven people were part of a criminal organisation ran by a local ‘Ndrangheta boss, died in prison in 2015. The organisation “illegally traded artifacts, mostly from the site of ‘Scrimbia’, near Vibo, between Calabria, Campania and Switzerland” (OS183). The investigation started after it was discovered “a clandestine excavation, consisting of a tunnel long about 40 meters, adequately propped up, equipped with ventilation outlets and a water pump, which led from the garage of a private dwelling to the [...] archaeological site. Thousands of clay artefacts were found in the gallery and various equipment needed for excavation operations” (ibid.). Although a member of ‘Ndrangheta was the organisers of the illegal activity, the group lacked the Mafia-like associative bond that is exemplified by the complete control over this particular market (OS184). In Operation Tempio di Hera, N.G., who acted as the head of one of the looting squads of the criminal network, enjoyed the membership of a local ‘Ndrangheta clan (OS196), however, he acted independently from this organisation in the pursuit of the antiquities trafficking.

Another interviewee confirmed that the image of organised crime associated with the illicit antiquities trade reflects that of a loose criminal organisation, with a number of people working together rather than a structured hierarchical group (I22). Evidence from judicial and open source data are again in line with this perspective. A

total of 28 cases dealt with criminal organisations: nine cases from the judicial records, four single cases and fifteen law enforcement operations among the open source data¹⁶. Of those, only three mentioned hierarchical criminal groups: IT6, Operation Purgatorio (OS183-OS185) and Operation Demetra (OS214-OS242).

In case IT6, P.G. was investigated for the “offences of criminal conspiracy, illicit export of archaeological objects and receiving stolen goods” (IT62). In particular, he participated to the “top-down criminal group in Gela [Sicily] and several other cities [...] and promoted this association in Riesi” (ibid.), where he assumed the position of head of the local group.

“The Review Tribunal has then highlighted a series of significant contacts with the promoters and organisers, as well as with the other participants in the criminal association [...], noting that the suspect [P.G.] organised an activity of research of archaeological artefacts and illicit excavations with a co-perpetrator and he was in charge of the selling, also abroad, of these goods.” (ibid.)

Open source data on Operation Demetra described a hierarchical group, whose base was again in Riesi, Sicily (OS218). The group was led by F.L., an important figure in the circuits of the illegal antiquities market. He was himself a looter and “kept the contact between Sicily and the potential buyers in north [Italy], managing all the phases of the traffic: from clandestine excavations, to the search for buyers, up to the selling” (ibid.). It was an “articulated criminal association” (OS220): teams of looters were active on the entire Sicilian territory, while the group also included several forgers, with laboratories scattered in the province of Catania (OS220; OS221). In some cases, looters arranged with landowners to rent or buy agricultural

¹⁶ Operation Ghelas, 2007 (OS125; OS126; OS127); Operation Artemide, 2016 (OS128-OS148); Operation Agorà, 2016 (OS149-OS164); Operation Pandora, 2017 (OS165-OS168; OS170-OS174); Operation Tersite, 2011 (OS175-OS182); Operation Purgatorio, 2015 (OS183-OS185); Operation ‘Tempio di Hera’, 2017 (OS106-OS113; OS115-OS124); Operation Dedalo, 2015 (OS186-OS203); Operation Aurea, 2006 (OS204-OS205); Operation Himera, 2017 (OS206-OS213); Operation Demetra, 2018 (OS214-OS242); Operation Boucher, 2010 (OS243-OS250); Operation Rovina, 2011 (OS251-OS253); Operation Ulisse, 2008 (OS254-OS257); Operation Pandora 3 (OS294).

fields in order to excavate undisturbed at night and during the day (OS241). Moreover, the hierarchical group of Operation Demetra used couriers to transport illicit antiquities hidden in vans' and cars' false bottoms to the buyers in the northern regions in Italy and to Germany, where a collateral "transnational criminal holding" (OS222) lead by a British art dealer, T.W.V., "through a complex logistic-operational network extended between Italy, Spain and Germany" (ibid.) was able to launder a great number of artefacts through false provenance certificates and later sold them.

The remaining data portray networks of different sizes and degrees of sophistication. In Operation Artemide, the investigators described "a structured group, operating in the whole South Italy (especially in Campania and Apulia), dedicated to clandestine excavations, to buying stolen goods and to the selling of cultural heritage" (OS136). However, the group is not "attributable to a single criminal organisation but it was managed individually by 'researchers' of antiquities" (OS141). The criminal network in Operation Artemide presents

"levels, roles and ranks. Six or seven the organisers, the alledged leaders and promoters of a structure dedicated to illicit excavations [...]: people who know the value of the pieces to sell and has the right contacts in Italy and abroad, with foundations and private museums in half of the world, where to sell the goods stolen [in Italy]." (OS142)

This operation begun after part of a fresco in the 'House of Neptune' in Pompeii was stolen. Groups of *tombaroli* looted known archaeological areas as Pompeii, Herculaneum, Paestum and Cerveteri, as well as poorly monitored areas such as ancient villas and cimiteries in Campania, Apulia and eastern Sicily. The artefacts were sold in Italy and in other countries. In Italy collectors and other purchasers were arrested all over the country, from Sicily to Rome to Milan (OS133), whereas traffickers transported the objects destined to the international market to Spain (OS139). The Carabinieri seized over 2,000 artefacts, precious and well-preserved:

amphorae, red figures vases, architectural fragments and ancient italic coins. In Operation Agorà, twelve people were arrested by the Financial police as they were part of “a network of groups operating in different territories” (OS154) in Sicily and in Campania. Although they found and excavated the archaeological sites independently, looters exchanged the pictures of the illicit antiquities on WhatsApp (OS153) because the logistic base for the selling was in Gela, Sicily (OS164) and they first wanted to agree on what pieces were more valuable to be sold. Among the artefacts seized by the police were included about 400 coins, dated back between V-II century b.C., which were destined to local buyers (OS149). Interestingly, the organisers of the illicit trafficking, and looters themselves, O.P., S.d.S. and R.M., were also involved in the Operation Demetra as looters: in Operation Agorà they also identified rich collectors and auction houses in Germany and Spain (OS153). In Operation Boucher, the criminal network counted four “operation units linked with each other (OS245). Three of the units were based in Apulian cities, while the last one was the “international component [of the group] because included the ‘terminals for receiving and laundering the artefacts who operated in France, using also known art galleries’” (ibid.). Looters were targeting archaeological sites in Apulia and Basilicata:

“the discovered tombs, once they were plundered, were appropriately closed and covered with vegetation in order not to arouse suspicion. The morphology of these territories, constituted by hills, allowed the groups of *tombaroli* to organise a lookout with the task of alarming the accomplices who were probing and excavating the soil, at the slightest warning of danger or when vehicles were approaching.” (OS248)

The main intermediary in Apulia was also the leader of the group of looters in Basilicata, who was in contact with a French citizen of Italian origin and another Italian citizen, already known to the police because in 2008 he was stopped while smuggling in Italy pre-columbian artefacts (OS243). The intermediary was a butcher and used his job to hide the illegal activity: during the investigation, the police heard

him talking about “rolls” and “small lambs” as he referred to illicit antiquities (ibid.). Similarly, in Operation Aurea, the Carabinieri arrested in 2006 ten people operating in Campania, Lazio, Umbria, Toscana and Veneto, while seizing 750 artefacts

“[all] authentic from the Roman periods and coming from illicit excavations in Campania and in other areas of the central and northern Italy, there are also 53 stuccos, dating back to the I century b.C., walls’ decorative friezes belonging to an imperial house, which the expert are now looking for in the territory of Campania” (OS204)

As for the sophistication, the group was “well organised” (ibid.) so as to cover the whole Italian territory, although the division of tasks was not clear-cut. Participants were targeting archaeological sites in one region and then selling the illicit artefacts in the country. The criminal network had a national connotation: looters were also smugglers. “One courier [has been tailed] from Campania and ended in the province of Venice” (OS205) and they consistently used e-Bay for selling artefacts. In Sicily, the Carabinieri traced dozens of buyers, who were “students and retirees” (OS208).

Networks and hierarchical groups share some common traits. With respect to the geographical breadth of the activities, they included both Italy and foreign countries. However, it is worth mentioning that the operational bases often reside in the southern part of Italy, especially in Sicily, Calabria, Apulia and Campania. This scenario answers to functional reasons: the same regions have been part of the Magna Graecia and Roman civilisations. As such, they represent a huge origin basin for highly precious antiquities.

With regard to the complexity of the organisation among the participants, the members of networks and hierarchical groups are assigned defined tasks of which they know they are responsible for the success of the common criminal project. Roles included those already seen in individual and small groups of actors, although they are engrained within the criminal organisation. The network dismantled in the Operation

Tempio di Hera is exemplary. The group was “branched out and well-structured” (OS102) and organised by P.G.A. “a greedy person and well introduced in the world of clandestine reaserch” (ibid.). The network, however, counted several groups of *tombaroli*. The specialised looter N.G. directed, guided and coordinated the other looters by teaching them how to use sophisticated tools to search for antiquities and by individualising the best fields to illegally excavate. Moreover, this organisation referred to three main dealers: E.P. in charge of keeping the artefacts and selling them to the local market, while creating a small museum of his own; F.A., specialised in deals with Italian and foreign auction houses; and R.M., selling antiquities to collectors at national and international level.

The same roles were present in the hierarchical group of Operation Demetra, with the difference that the leader of the group, F.L., controlled the activities more strictly and in person, and run all the pahses of the illicit trafficking. Simialrly, in Operation Purgatorio, the hierarchical group was structured in a way that the boss controlled all the activities and the other members had each a specific, univocal role within the group: one was the coordinator and financier; three were dedicated to find further fundings, especially abroad; one was the intermediary for the selling and the export of the illicit antiquities (ibid.); two brothers were the looters; while another co-perpetrator rented the apartment from where they realised a tunnel to enter an archaeological protected site from the underground. Finally, in Switzerland one person was in charge of selling the antiquities in the country’s market.

One of the recurrent roles in networks and hierarchical groups in Italy is that of the intermediary – as opposed to Bulgaria, where middlemen have only been identified by interviewees and not openly in the judicial and open source data. Intermediaries in Italy have a double nature. On the one hand, they are part of the criminal organisation,

such as the first dealer mentioned in Operation Tempio di Hera. On the other hand, they can be persons external to the group, yet trusted by it. In Operation Demetra, the art and antique dealer, T.W.V., was in contact with the organiser of an illegal antiquities trade and his courier. He received the artefacts directly for the traffickers in a country other than Italy – Germany, the United Kingdom – and sold them through an international holding specialised in works of art and antiquities. External dealers may also show a higher level of sophistication in their connections with criminal organisations. This is the case of intermediaries that work as referees for more than one group. In OS94-OS101, the dealer was based in Germany and collected antiquities from criminal organisations and other individual dealers from several countries: Italy, Greece and Bulgaria. Similarly, in Operation Tempio di Hera, one of the dealers, R.M., worked for other criminal networks: in Operation Artemide he was leading a group of local looters in Apulia, the same role he covered in Operation Pandora 3 in 2001 (OS294).

Another characteristic that emerged from the data on hierarchies and networks in Italy is represented by the specialisation of certain actors in the illegal antiquities market. Once actors start operating within the illicit trafficking in antiquities, they will unlikely leave it, even after they have been arrested several times. In cases OS29 and OS34, OS35 and OS37, M.Z., coordinated the illicit trade of Nuragic antiquities, despite he has been arrested for the same criminal activity in 2006 (OS29). The illicit trafficking involved Sardinia, Corsica, Piedmont and Switzerland: as trafficker, M.Z. used to transfer the antiquities to Corsica hidden among “pecorino cheese, yogurt and building materials [...] on board of lorries and vans” (OS34). These actors take advantage of the fact that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is a niche market, and once they have established contacts among key looters, dealers and customers, they

are able to create long-lasting networks of collaborating co-offenders. The specialisation of actors also implies the specialisation of hierarchies and networks in one market and their tendency to establish groups operating over the years (OS186-OS203).

From the analysis of the data on criminal organisations has also emerged the double national and international nature of the illegal trafficking. Indeed, most of the hierarchical groups and networks have been operating at both levels. This double nature can be interpreted in two ways. On the one side, criminal organisations have the operational basis in Italy, where they loot antiquities, which are then trafficked and sold transnationally. In Operation Boucher (OS243-OS250), two sets of looters' groups were operating in Apulia and Basilicata and gave the stolen antiquities to a dealer in Apulia, a butcher. He and the head of one the looters groups acted as frontmen of the organisation. They established contacts with two brothers living in France, who would acquire the artefacts to sell them in French market. Twice a year, one of the brothers travelled to Italy to inspect and choose the merchandise. The organisation, moreover, developed a network in other European countries: Spain, Luxembourg and Germany. Similarly, the group in Operation Himera (OS206-OS213) targeted the international market. In this case, the top members directed the illicit excavations in several archaeological sites and tasked some associates with the role of couriers to Germany. The association aimed at the illegal exportation and sell of Italian antiquities to the European antiquities market. On the other side, a criminal organisation can have the basis in Italy and destine the antiquities to both Italian and international markets. The group in cases OS29, OS34, OS35, OS37 falls within this category. Indeed, the members organised the intensive looting of archaeological areas in mid-Sardinia and divided the market in two lines. Part of the antiquities were

shipped to Lombardy, Veneto and Umbria in order to be sold to the flourishing market of Italian collectors; the remaining part was transferred to Corsica, where the major operative group sent the artefacts to foreign European collectors. Finally, there are groups operating exclusively at national level. For instance, the criminal network dismantled in Operation Aurea looted artefacts in Campania and sold them in other Italian regions, such as Lazio, Umbria, Toscana and Veneto (OS204-OS205).

4.10 Conclusion on the social organisation of actors

This section has applied the conceptual framework of the social organisation of crime to the illicit trafficking in antiquities. By using a role analysis, it has been possible to pinpoint seven main categories of actors based on the task they perform in the illicit trade activities' chain.

The first category is represented by looters. They hold a position at the very beginning of the operational chain of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and they symbolise it. Without looters antiquities cannot be found and unearthed. Data from open source, judicial cases and interviews frequently define interchangeably looters and treasure hunters. Although they carry out the same activity, it is important to highlight that treasure hunters pertain to a wider circle and differentiate from looters for they do not search exclusively for antiquities, rather for any metal objects, from gold to copper, from meteorites to lost jewels. Moreover, collectors who personally engage in looting are also included in this category (BG70; BG87; BG88; BG96; BG42; BG43; BG46; BG292; OS17).

Keepers represent the second category originated from the available data. The decision to create this group stemmed by the fact that in several cases people were

storing antiquities, yet the modalities of acquisition were not established. In addition, no technical equipment or metal detectors were found together with the artefacts, thus rendering impossible to categorise the actor as a looter or a collector. Moreover, during I13, the interviewee specified that criminal groups often recur to *storers* (the term was used by the interviewee) to hide illicit artefacts before selling them. The category of keepers also includes the actors indicated in the script as accomplices. Keepers serve the purpose of separating looters, dealers and key organisers of criminal groups from the danger posed by police investigations.

The third type of players is identified by aiders. They constitute a unique role within the illicit trafficking in antiquities because they do not engage directly in looting, but they provide a service to other actors. The category of aiders finds its rationale in the description of functions in step 3 of the script, which varies from cleaning antiquities, to restoring them, to producing fakes. As such, aiders include those offenders that in the actors' column of the script are named accomplices and experts. Aiders can be individual actors who specialise in the provision of one service or members of a criminal organisation to whom is assigned a determined role.

Once artefacts are excavated, stored and cleaned, they are ready to be sold. Hence, one category of actors is dedicated to sellers, who engage in commercial deals. Evidence suggest that there are variations in the sellers' sub-types depending on the stage of the illicit trafficking at which antiquities are sold. In fact, looters can be sellers if they decide to immediately proceed to a deal; intermediaries can be sellers for they trade items to other dealers or final consumers. Antique shops' owners and auction houses fall withint the category of sellers by function.

The following category is embodied by traffickers, who are responsible for the smuggling and distribution of antiquities from and to all the other players. It has an

inherently double local-transnational nature, as does the illicit trafficking in antiquities itself. Traffickers distribute illegal antiquities to buyers within the country or smuggle them through the borders to reach the final destinations. Similar to sellers, traffickers hold a specific role in the illicit antiquities market, however they can change the position in the illicit trafficking chain based on the phase of the illicit trade at which antiquities are distributed. As stressed in the section dedicated to the script, in fact, the distribution step can be positioned before or after the looting or the deal.

As looters represent actors at the very beginning of the market, consumers are those situated at the very end of the chain. Consumers includes both people, such as collectors, and legal subjects, such as museums and auction houses. Consumers can also hold a position at middle levels of the trade when their role do not exhaust with the act of buying, rather they propose other transactions. A middleman acquiring a statue in order to resell it to a richer bidder exemplifies this latter case as it covers both the consumer and seller roles. Consumers and sellers resemble the image of the two side of the same coin, as who buys often changes role to sell in a subsequent moment.

The residual category of actors is defined as hybrid. It is a broad category, one which comprehends those actors who play more than one role alone. A typical example is illustrated by a person who loots, smuggles and trades on its own.

In general, the illicit trafficking in antiquities shows a variety of organisational models. All the identified roles are present in Bulgaria and Italy. In both countries the largest category of offenders is that of looters and treasure hunters, although the number of cases differ. Data on Bulgaria counted 208 cases of looter, while only 64 cases were identified in the data in Italy.

Bulgaria and Italy differ in other aspects with regard to the social organisation of actors. In Bulgaria the illicit trafficking in antiquities appears fragmented, with a

majority of individual actors and members of small groups to the detriment of hierarchical groups and networks. Moreover, looters – both individual and organised in small groups – engage in the illicit activity out of opportunity and associate temporarily around a project, whereas professional looters represent a minority in the category. Likewise, the other categories of actors are largely individuals. They present various degrees of specialisation: sellers specialise based on the type of antiquities they sell, although they will sell fakes and originals together; aiders, especially forgers, dedicate themselves to one type of antiquity, either coins, ceramic, jewellery. Keepers showed an occasional character along with professional traits and connections with criminal organisations. In several cases, keepers were not looters, nor treasure hunter or collectors, rather they accidentally discovered antiquities in their gardens, yards, agricultural land and failed to register them. As narrated in case BG80, actors may cover the role of keeper in a criminal group inasmuch as it engages with the illicit trafficking in antiquities, while covering another role within the same group in other criminal projects. Traffickers identified in the data on Bulgaria can be divided in two varieties. While one includes loose traffickers that might have found or bought antiquities on their own and want to profits from them in a rich market country, another type specialise in the activity of smuggling and it is employed by one or more criminal groups to traffic antiquities or even different merchandise at the same time.

Hierarchies and networks are active participants of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria, however according to the data they do not represent the main categories of actors. They display different characteristics based on the period of origin of the group: whereas older organised crime groups follow a hierarchical structure that depended on organisational necessity after the fall of the Communist regime, younger criminal groups are organised with a flexible network structure that

can be easily dismantled by members themselves. Also, the first type engages with a wide range of criminal activities which includes the illicit antiquities trade along with drug trafficking, weapons smuggling; the second one specialises in one criminal market for as long as it generates profits. Moreover, they differ also for the dissimilar strategies showed in the first stage of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. According to the data, the first type of organised crime tends not to have looters as members of the organisation, rather they pay individual or small groups of looters to search for antiquities and excavate; in other words, they outsource the looting to external members. The second type, on the contrary, due to its specialisation in the field counts among its members looters that are engrained in the mechanism of the organisation.

In Italy, the market in illicit antiquities appears more structured than in Bulgaria, already at the level of looters. Although, individual *tombaroli* fall mostly within the non-professional category, small group of looters show a higher degree of professionalisation, demonstrated by the use of sophisticated metal detectors, bulldozers and by the targeting of important archaeological areas and their neighbourhoods. Moreover, small groups have a certain degree of tasks' division, a common criminal project and an organisation functional to the goal. These groups in Italy can also reach large numbers of members. In this country, the category that consistently shows low organisational features is the seller: even groups of two or three members perform illegal transactions with a longitudinal structure and without any type of tasks' specialisation. The greater organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Italy compared to Bulgaria entails that keepers, aiders and traffickers are figures usually part of a network or a hierarchical group. This explains why in Bulgaria keepers as actors separated from structured criminal organisations have been identified in 72 cases, while in Italy they were found in only 22 cases. When they are

independent actors, keepers in Italy act preponderantly on their own and tend to store several antiquities of great value and sometimes good quality fakes. Aiders too cover a role that has a limited application outside networks and hierarchical groups. In fact, only three cases of individual aiders were identified, where they cleaned and restored illegally excavated artefacts, while forgers paid by a group of sellers or a criminal organisation have been mentioned only with regard to the complicated forgery scheme of the *Artemide Marciante* (OS94-OS101) and in cases OS91-OS93 where sellers were offering to interested buyers real antiquities and high quality forgeries. Cases of traffickers identified in the data on Italy are far less numerous than those in Bulgaria: 6 cases compared to 21. Interestingly, however, in all the six cases smuggler had an international character as they were smuggling antiquities from Italy to other European markets, including the United Kingdom, Germany and Switzerland, and, apart from case OS7, they were all individual actors. The case described in OS7 is unique in several aspects: the traffickers were two people; it is the only case where the smuggled antiquities were not original from Italy, but from African and Asian countries; antiquities were stocked in a container together with contraband cigarettes and illegal wildlife goods. For these reasons, it is conceivable that the two traffickers of this case were, in fact, members of a bigger Italian criminal organisation, although data were insufficient to circumstantiate their membership.

The presence of hierarchical groups and networks is more pronounced in Italy than in Bulgaria. Notwithstanding the long history of Mafia and Mafia-like organisations in the country, the illicit trafficking in antiquities exhibits a minimal and peripheral presence of traditional organised crime. The latter is involved at local level; the data show two ways in which organisations such as Mafia and 'Ndrangheta are linked with the illicit trafficking in antiquities. First, as part of its semi-government

function of exercising control on the territory they may ask actors involved in the illicit trafficking at issue to pay a tax. Second, members of these organisations may play a role in a criminal group active in the illicit antiquities traffickin but, in this case, they do not participate in the capacity of member of a Mafia-like organisation; they do exploit their connections in the criminal world, however they act as independent actors.

In general, the groups operating in Italy display more a networked than a hierarchical configuration. This is due to the fact that while single individuals may be active over the years in the illicit trafficking in antiquities, criminal organisations do not have a long lifespan, and criminals will collaborate again in other newly formed associations. In fact, as in the case of Bulgaria, networks tend to be younger criminal groups, dedicated predominately to one criminal activity – the illicit trafficking in antiquities – and designed around one project. Another reason for the success of network over hierarchies is to be found in that networks often work in a territory that includes several regions, where different traditional organised crime groups are active. Hence, a flexible structure made of small teams responsible for their part of the project and responding to a core group of organisers serves functional purposes and has better chances of taking over a share of the illicit antiquities market while avoiding contrasts with Mafia-like groups. Interestingly, both hierarchical groups and networks in Italy share one trait: they incorporate teams of looters. This a characteristic that unites hierarchies and networks in Italy with the second type of organised crime described in Bulgaria: they both have looters so as to specialise in one illegal market and avoid collaboration with other criminal groups.

Mirroring the domestic-transnational dichotomy of the illicit trafficking in antiquities, in both Italy and Bulgaria it is possible to envisage actors that operates on

two main layers. The first layer is constituted by individuals and small groups displaying a low degree of sophistication. They work at local level, engage in the market at issue with a non-continuous attitude and do not organise themselves around a long-lasting, refined criminal project. Thus, they do not evolve into more complex organisational forms. The second layer includes those professional and organised individuals, small groups and criminal organisations – networks and hierarchies – that display a formal division of roles, a specialised character and that are engrained within the international market in antiquities. Sophisticated actors like these can remain active for several years and may develop connections in market countries. This applies especially to hierarchical groups and networks that have local branches in charge of the actual looting of antiquities as well as international branches responsible to distributing and selling the illicit merchandise to the best bidder.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Research on the illicit trafficking in antiquities has flourished in the past decade due to a widespread consensus among scholars that looting and illegally exporting antiquities has spanned globally, following a general trend showed by all criminal markets (Williams, 2001). The general approach to the illicit trafficking at issue considers its prevailing transnational nature together with set roles played by countries as source, transit and destination of illicit antiquities. Furthermore, the multifaceted nature of this illegal trade is well documented by the presence of several actors, who hold key position in the market – looters and dealers, intermediaries and collectors. Yet, there exists an ongoing need to capture the full nature of the antiquities trafficking, with particular emphasis on the organisational dynamics. Hence, this study has applied the theoretical framework of the social organisation to the illicit trafficking in antiquities by addressing three main perspectives associated with it: how criminal activities are committed; how criminals organise and divide the tasks needed to pursue the illegal activities; and what are the shapes assumed by this illicit trafficking.

This chapter is divided in two main section. The first discusses the main findings of the research project with regard to the literature on the organisation of crime. In so doing, it answers to the research questions laid down in Chapter 2 enquiring on the extent of the structure of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and on its dynamics of social organisation. The second part of the chapter provides the concluding remarks of the dissertation, while highlighting the significance of the study.

5.2 Discussing the findings of the research projects

Instead of analysing *why* criminals cooperate, the focus of this study has been directed at *how* the illicit trafficking in antiquities is organised. The *how* question has received a considerable amount of attention within the scholarly literature on organised crime and illicit trafficking for understanding the nature of criminal co-offending is a key aspect in criminology. By considering basic principles of social organisation of crime and criminals, it is possible to see that organised crime, illicit trafficking and their underlying dimensions can be expressed as conceptualisations of degrees of criminal collaboration. Hence, it is crucial for the development and strengthening of a theoretical understanding of serious and organised crime to investigate and deconstruct its organising elements and measure the degree of organisation (Hagan, 1983).

This consideration led me to address the conceptual approaches to the organisation of crime, which were discussed in Chapter 2 and elaborated with regard to the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Chapter 4. In general, the results of this study suggest that the illicit trafficking at issue is not a monolithic crime, rather it shows various dimensions of social organisation. The illicit trafficking in antiquities provide an open, wide and flexible field of opportunities for a plethora of actors, from independent offenders to well-structured criminal group.

5.2.1 *The structure of the illicit trafficking in antiquities: Identifiable elements and organisation of activities*

One of the two lines of research approached in this study looked at the ways the criminal acts constituting the illicit trafficking in antiquities are construed and chained to each other. The data collected on Italy and Bulgaria have been analysed so as to create a script comprising six steps: preparatory activities, stealing, storage and concealing, preparation to sell, transport and selling. By applying the script approach, the illicit trafficking in antiquities stops being a blanket term used to identify a criminal phenomenon and attention is paid to the variety of events that it covers.

Several outcomes on the structure of the illicit trafficking in antiquities can be drawn from the description of the script.

First, data support the view that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is an elaborate and loose criminal activity. The script highlights that the numerous activities involved in this illicit trade can be logically and chronologically organised into a sequence of actions that reduces its complexity. The six steps in which the illicit trafficking in antiquities has been broken down represent the main nodes that create a chain of activities along which this illicit trade develops. In other words, these nodes constitute the “pinch points” (Moreto and Clarke, 2014: 216), the primary functions that facilitate the commission of a sophisticated crime as the one here analysed. The findings suggest that the illicit trafficking in antiquities has a more intricated and loose nature than anticipated, one that exceed a fixed structural order. In fact, as it has been stressed when addressing step 3 – storage and concealing, step 4 – preparation to sell, step 5 – transport and step 6 – selling, they can be moved along the logistical chain based on the availability of different paths to complete the actions. Looters can sell the antiquities right after having unearthed them, postponing the distribution stage after the deal is concluded. This possibility is exemplified in the case of the fishing technique utilised in Bulgaria by criminal organisations described in step 1 of the

script. In this case, looters are encouraged to contact the criminal group frontman right after the discovery in order to sell it as soon as possible (I14). The contextual existence of several ways in which tracks can be followed by actors entails a greater level of sophistication in the script (Cornish, 1994: 175) as well as the possibility to envisage a more complex script, one where more scenarios are available. Table 7 illustrates a multi-layered version of the script that considers the alternative chains of events emerged from the data.

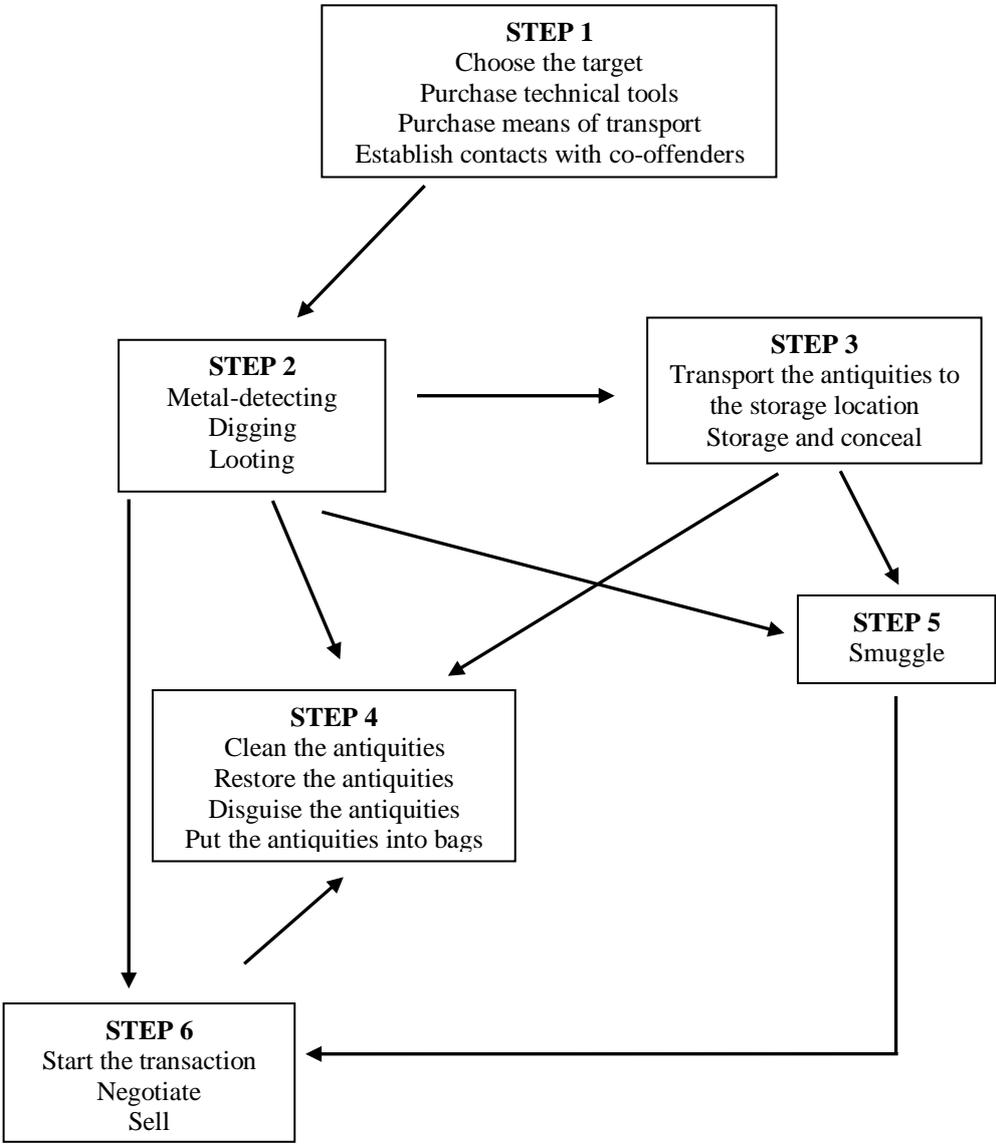


Table 7. Multi-layered script of the illicit trafficking in antiquities

Second, data support the idea that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is not inherently transnational but has an important domestic component. The location column added in the script highlights that each activity constituting the illicit trafficking in antiquities has its own geographical connotation. Scholarly literature has conceptualised this illicit trade as innately transnational following the market logic based on demand and supply (Lane et al., 2008) in a globalised economy (Naylor, 2002; Passas, 2002). As such, nations have been conventionally divided in source, transit and destination countries, on the basis of a country's role in the global antiquities market (McGuire, 1990; Adler and Polk, 2005; Kozloff, 2005; Forrest, 2010). While source countries possess rich archaeological heritages, destination ones sustain the demand side and are identified in market state (Casey, 2006), where history of war and colonisation and the presence of a well-established art and antiquities market have contributed and still do to attract legal and illegal antiquities. Transit countries are depicted as mere channels of antiquities in the market chain. Although the findings of the research confirm the transnational connotation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities, it has also emerged that the national element of the market plays a significant role in the development of this illicit trafficking. Not only Italy and Bulgaria revealed to have growing internal antiquities markets, also the majority of criminal activities shaping this illicit trafficking are perpetrated on a local level. Indeed, it is possible to pinpoint the specific position within the organisational chain that configures the passage from a merely domestic to a transnational trafficking: step 5, when illicit archaeological artefacts are smuggled out of the origin country. Hence, it is safe to say that the illicit trafficking in antiquities has a double soul. On the one hand, it has a transnational and cross-border character as many artefacts are sold in countries different from the source, where looting occurs. Step 6 of the script has been

separated expressly to substantiate the consistent reference emerging from interviewees, judicial and open source data to cross-border trafficking and smugglers caught with artefacts. Bulgaria has been indicated as a transit country (I20; I8) and the Border Police confirmed the several smuggling attempts have been identified (I18). Moreover, Italy and Bulgaria have obtained the restitution of some trafficked artefacts and there are ongoing controversies going on failed restitutions even when the illegal export has been ascertained by a court. In December 2018, the Italian Court of Cassation rejected the appeal of the Getty Museum against the decision of the judge for the preliminary investigations to return the Victorious Youth to Italy (S.U., 2018). Yet, the statue has not been returned. On the other hand, antiquities are looted and sold in the same country. The tensions between the local and the international character of illegal markets (Longo et al., 2010) is very well represented by the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In Bulgaria the local market is used to sell low quality artefacts and those that are not considered precious enough to be directed to the richer international market. In antique's shops and fairs, it is common to find coins, fragments of marbles, small metal objects such as fibulae, arrowheads and earrings, and potteries. Fine collections in Bulgaria are rare and escape the wider knowledge of the public. One of the most extensive collections of hundreds of rare Roman, Greek and Thracian antiquities is that of Vassil Bozhkov, which was exhibited in the European Union Parliament in Brussels in occasion of Bulgaria's admission into the EU (Kraske, 2007). Italy has a prosperous internal market in antiquities. As seen in the previous section, collectors in the country buy antiquities especially from the Etrurian, Roman and Hellenistic periods (OS29; OS34; OS35; OS37). In one case, the market was confined to Sardinia (OS16).

Third, the Internet has a significant influence on the illicit trafficking in antiquities. As a matter of fact, interviews, judicial and open source data have stressed that the Internet is extensively used at the selling stage. The existence of online platforms for private-to-private transactions, such as e-Bay, and the establishment of online auctions promote the growth of the market in antiquities into a “diversified commercial operation” (Brodie, 2015: 11). Two are the main repercussions of the use of the Internet in the organisational structures of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. The first consists in the anticipation of the interactions between actors at an early stage of the chain. Looters and dealers that sell antiquities over the Internet move up the step of the selling right after step 4 – the preparation to sell. Moreover, looters can directly contact collectors via email and send the pictures of the antiquities to be offered (OS37), so that the trade is customised in advanced. The second is connected to the flexibility and accessibility shown by the Internet. Any actor that resorts to the online world, from looters to dealers, from collectors to auction houses, should be able to generally avoid local or international middlemen, thus eliminating at least one organisational layer. Distances are eroded, antiquities are easily available. Artefacts can be bought online from any corner of the world. In 2011, for instance, “21,000 archaeological objects, including ancient coins, jewellery, bronze eagles, buckles, arrows and spearheads, and bone sewing needles” (Canadian Heritage, 2011; Crawford, 2011; AFP, 2011; I8) were sold online. The objects were seized in 2007 by the Canadian Border Police as they were smuggled by mail into the country and represented a collection of mixed Hellenistic, Roman, Macedonian, Byzantine and Ottoman cultural heritage. Furthermore, online sellers and buyers do not need to know or be members of circles of collectors, antiquities’ passionates or dealers. Potential customers only need to surfe the web. As pointed out by Brodie (2015) some websites

have a list of vendors, who do not specialise in antiquities, but they sell among other objects antique coins. The Internet allows the access and the participation of buyers from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds. As seen in case OS30, in Cagliari, Sardinia an archaeology enthusiast sold through several websites Punic, Roman and medieval coins to a vast number of collectors, while in Operation Aurea the buyers were mostly students and pensioners (OS208). As already stressed throughout the script section, the online market of Bulgarian coins is wide, accessible and cheap. The price of one coin sold on e-Bay can be as low as 0.50 \$ (I14) if it is a very common one or the quality is not high.

Fourth, data confirm the grey nature of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. The script framework allows to identify the stage at which the artefacts change their nature from illicit to licit. Laundering mechanisms to obtain false provenance and thus legalise the antiquity are thoroughly described in the sixth step of the script. The findings substantiate the locking model developed by Tjihuis (2006; 2011). While drawing on the concept of interfaces (Passas, 2002), he distinguished among individual, organisational and jurisdictional interfaces. From the analysis of the data, the role of jurisdictions as point where the illegal and the legal systems interact is often mentioned by interviewees (I20; I8; I5; I12; I13; I14). In particular, they stressed those situations where antiquities are laundered by transferring them from the origin country to the market country, which act as the lock between licit and illicit circuits described by Tjihuis. Once the artefacts arrive in the country of destination, the illegal nature can lose importance: the owner can under- or falsely declare the content of the merchandise. Also, if he can demonstrate to have bought the antiquities in the origin country, he may be protected as a good faith buyer (Tjihuis, 2006). It might also be the case that the authorities of the destination country do not communicate with the source

country, with the consequence that they cannot verify if the antiquities are originary from that country and if they have been registered as looted. In the end, antiquities are trafficked and laundered into licit goods. As the interviewees highlighted themselves, however, most of the examples they provided to explain the role played by the legislations' loopholes referred to investigations dating back to the first ten years of the 2000s (I18), and things may have changed. Collaboration between law enforcement agencies on stolen antiquities, for instance, has improved in the past decade, in part thanks to the increased interest at international level (I21). Consider the example set in the smuggling case described by the interviewee in I14. In this case, the Bulgarian police and the Italian Carabinieri cooperated in order to follow and arrest three traffickers that travelled through the Balkan region to Verona with illegal coins. Interfaces exemplified by individuals and organisations have been located throughout the description of step 6. In Sofia, the owner of the antique's shop was ready to sell a pair of Roman earrings to a buyer without any original provenance documents (BG99). Small to middle size auction houses can organise a scheme by which the buyer of an antiquity is in reality the dealer that smuggled it from the origin country: the artefacts acquired a legal status certified by a false provenance and ownership certificate (I14). In the discussion on interfaces it is again important to note that the Internet has become a key role-player. Although the majority of antiquities sold online do not have documents stating their origins (Brodie, 2015: 11), buyers are not concerned of the legality or not of the merchandise. This can be partially explained by the fact that the antiquities sold on the Internet are of poor quality and attract people who are not interested in the history or the provenance of an object.

5.2.2 *The various roles of the illicit trafficking in antiquities*

When introducing the various perspectives on the social organisation of crime, it has been highlighted how a definitional approach to serious and organised crime is limited in so far it includes hundreds of definition and concentrates selectively on legal, political, economic or sociological aspects of what is meant by the phenomenon. For the type of data collected, it is difficult to propose a general definition of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. In this respect, the role analysis of the actors involved is advantageous to capture the degree of organisation resulting from the roles' dynamics.

As mentioned in previous chapters, in criminal markets specific roles are allocated to the perpetrators. Roles perform an important part in the organisation of criminal activities because they represent the function assigned to offenders depending on their specific knowledge or availability. An art restorer that is asked to clean encrusted antiquities, for instance, is given a task based on his specialisation. The actors, or more precisely the tasks they perpetrate, are discussed in both sections 3 and 4 of Chapter 4, although with a different perspective. In section 3, each step of the script has introduced a column highlighting the main actors involved at each stage as they emerged from the combined analysis of the data. The following table correlates once more the script stages with the actors.

STEP		ACTORS
1	Preparatory activities	Looters Treasure hunters Dealers Organised crime groups' members Buyers
2	Stealing	Looters Treasure hunters
3	Storage and concealing	Looters Treasure hunters Accomplices Middlemen
4	Preparation to sell	Looters Experts (cleaners, restores) Dealers
5	Transport	Smugglers Looters Dealers
6	Selling	Looters Antique shop's owner Auction house's employees Dealers Buyers

Table 8. Identification of the actors for each step of the script

What information emerge from this table? At first glance, each step indicates the contextual presence of several actors. Although some offenders are expected to be present at certain steps such as the smugglers in the transport phase, recurrent actors are looters and treasure hunters, dealers and buyers. Looters, in particular, are accounted for in all the six steps. It is safe to say that they are key actors that engage not only in the actual looting and stealing of antiquities, they can also be involved first-hand in concluding a deal with an intermediary or directly selling the antiquities to a collector. Buyers and dealers need to keep the contacts with looters since the first step of the illicit antiquities trade. This applies especially for collectors who prefer to negotiate with looters without the interference of intermediaries. Hence, buyers and dealers are present also at steps 4, 5 and 6 of the script.

One of the main aims of the research is to understand the level of organisation showed by the offenders. In this respect, the actors to which has been applied a label throughout the script model and that have been recapitulated in table 8, can be classified based on the performed role. Section 4 of Chapter 4 has created a function-based classification of the offenders active in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria and Italy. As such, seven roles have been categorised as summarised by table 9.

ROLES	ACTORS
Looters	Looters Treasure hunters
Keepers	Looters Treasure hunters Accomplices Middlemen
Aiders	Looters Treasure hunters Accomplices Experts (cleaners, restores)
Sellers	Dealers Antique shop's owner Auction house's employees
Traffickers	Smugglers
Consumers	Dealers Antique shop's owner Auction house's employees
Hybrid	Exemplified by a looter that transport and sell

Table 9. The link between the roles and the actors mentioned in the script

5.2.3 *The social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and its configuration*

Once the roles have been categorised and connected to the phase-based script model, the seven categories have been further systematised along a sequence ranging

from the lowest to the highest level of sophistication: individuals, small groups, hierarchical groups and networks.

What these categorisations tell us in terms of the organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities? And what are the configurations that emerge from the findings?

A first, important aspect relates to the variety of social organisation. Indeed, the illicit trafficking in antiquities is a crime that utilises multiple models of organisation. The degree of organisation depends on the division and coordination among the roles, the amount of planning and the time involved in the execution of a criminal activity (Albini, 2011: 26; von Lampe, 2016: 70). As data indicate, the illicit trafficking in antiquities comprehends the all array of organisation, from lone actors to criminal organisations. Moreover, on their own or co-offending, these offenders display both organised and not-organised traits. Activities reflect the organisational degree of the actors: along to highly professional and organised looters, for instance, it is possible to find treasure hunters who behave in a spontaneous way.

A second aspect indicates how the illicit trafficking at issue is extremely composite. It is a market that attracts a great variety of criminals and does not have a prevailing component. In fact, the several models of social organisation not only are all present in this illicit trafficking, they also coexist in the same phase and may not establish collaborative relations. From the analysis of the data, it is possible to identify a variance in the predominance of individuals and small groups based on the task performed by the actors. In both Bulgaria and Italy there are four roles that are predominantly runned by lone actors: sellers, aiders, traffickers and consumers. As seen in the previous paragraphs, the activities pursued by these actors do not require a high degree of sophistication and, as a consequence, they mostly act alone and do not

have one or more co-perpetrators. On the contrary, looters and treasure hunters are the typology of actors that display a uniform presence of individuals and small groups. Again, the reason is to be found in the activity they pursue and the necessity to cooperate in order to increase the professionalism and, in turn, the profits. This is the same reason why networks and hierarchical groups identified in Italy display a high degree of organisation at the looting stage, with two or three teams of *tombaroli* that are members of the criminal groups.

Third, the variety in organisational models reflects the diverse types of deviance present at each stage of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. When introducing the approaches to social organisation, it has been described how Best and Luckenbill (1994) analyse the relations' dynamics between the actors while committing a criminal activity. They categorise individual deviance, deviant exchange and deviant exploitation. In the illicit trafficking at issue, they are all enacted by the actors involved. Individuals operate alone and do not associate with other offenders. This is especially true for single looters, although this form of lone engagement in criminal activities has been found throughout the data with regards to all the typologies of actors. Sellers and aiders, as highlighted above, are perfect examples of lone actors, too. Because they provide an illegal service to various other offenders, they have to maintain broader relations with a number of actors in the illicit trafficking in antiquities, being it a looter, or a collector, or a criminal group; however, they always execute their tasks on their own. Hybrid perhaps symbolise the typology of individual actor more than any other figure. A collector that is also a looter and does not recur to the service of an intermediary or a dealer acts completely on his own. The difference between the latter and an aider, though, lies in the form of the criminal transaction. A collector-looter provides a service to himself, whereas an aider will forge false coins at

the request of someone and even at his presence. The real point, in this case, is not that the forger operates with or without other people being present but whether his actions are perpetrated by one offender and, if taken alone, will be considered deviant. Furthermore, a collector-looter is an isolated actor in the market; on the contrary, an aider is a lone actor with a specific position within the market, who provides a service, develops a network of contacts and can work for several different criminal organisations or criminals at the same time.

As individual actors engage in individual deviance, the members of small groups engage in joint form of deviance. As seen in Chapter 2, Best and Luckenbill identified a type of social organisation as deviant exchange, which entails two or more actors that willingly and consciously cooperate in the pursuit of a criminal activity, in particular by exchanging illicit goods and services (Best and Luckenbill, 1994: 118). Deviant exchange can be assimilated to the market-based crimes identified by von Lampe (2016), as the core function of both is the provision of services and goods. Selling is a key stage of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Archaeological artefacts can be sold in shops, market stalls, fairs, auction houses or simply in a garage; although the transitory and sometimes improvised transactions, sales and trades of antiquities are part of a larger chain. Sells can be repeated along the trafficking chain. Looters can sell artefacts to collectors or to an intermediary that would be in charge of finding another buyer. Intermediaries can sell the artefacts to auction houses, which will organise an auction and find a buyer. In all these cases, actors perform cooperative deviant roles as they are all aware of the illicit provenance of the looted objects and of the illegality of the sell.

A particular type of deviant exchange can be envisaged in the contacts that aiders, sellers and looters have with other deviant actors, as do *colleagues* (Best and

Luckenbill, 1994). This is the example of the meetings with restricted access organised by some dealers and looters in Bulgaria. During these meetings, the participants exchange information on several topics, that range from prices of antiquities to new archaeological discoveries, from current transactions to new business avenues. Actors in this way create a body of knowledge through their acquaintances and circumscribed within these contacts. In a way, it is safe to say that these meeting help creating a subculture because only among the accepted members exist a specialised knowledge and shared behavioural norms.

Being the focus of this study the types of deviance among the actors participating in the same criminal activity, the finding suggest that the vast majority of relations fall within the deviant exchange type. However, there are examples of deviant exploitation. When auction houses knowingly acquire illegal antiquities and organise an auction, the collectors participating to it who will buy the artefacts thinking that they are legal, will be deceived. It is a fraud where one part obtains financial rewards and the buyer – the victim – suffers a loss: the looted artefacts might be later reclaimed by the lawful owner, mostly the country of origin. These are form of predatory crimes where there is in place “an antagonistic relationship between offender and victim” (von Lampe, 2016: 76).

Fourth, analysing the data on Bulgaria and Italy, findings suggest that the illicit trafficking in antiquities in both countries displays several of the organisational typologies described in Chapter 2. Apart from individuals, actors do perform activities together. However, the type of interaction can range from a completely absent division of tasks, where criminals carry out the same activity at the same time, to more coordinated and complex division of labours. In this last scenario, each member is tasked not only with one activity – let say looting – but also with a specific role in it –

for instance, using a tractor to excavate a tomb. One type of group organisation is represented by *peers* (Best and Luckenbill, 1994), which shares similarities with the *tactical planners* and the *task force guide* described by Cressey (1972). These are all elementary forms of criminal organisation, with a minimal division of roles. In some instances, in small groups of looters with no assigned tasks, it is possible to find one person that recruits skill members and lead the criminal group during the excavations and the looting. An example is described in cases BG87 and BG88: of the two friends that decided to organise a looting-trip to the Panagyurishte region, Bulgaria, only one found and recruited the specialised member driving the tractor, the one manouvering it to excavate and the remaining looters. He and his friend were also the two leading looters during the illegal excavation. Peers, tactical planners and task force guides are characterised by informal structures where one or two members exercise authority over a period of time limited to the preparation and commission of the looting. These extremely little, loose groups are typically found also in the association of small groups of sellers, traffickers and consumers.

Another type of group organisation that emerged among looters and treasure hunters is that of *craft organisations* (McIntosh, 1975). They are exemplified by small groups where each person specialises in a role and the criminal conducts are routinised. It is perhaps the most widely present type of criminal groups of looters in the illicit trafficking in antiquities described in Bulgaria and Italy. Looters and treasure hunters associate in small size groups of two, three, four persons. These groups look for opportunities, that is they search for places where they know they can find antiquities and they act on established routines: going out always during the preferred period of the day – night or day, searching for antiquities, excavating. They have people specialised in specific tasks: using the tractor, metal-detecting, excavating.

Routine, however, does not entail highly planned criminal activities. In these criminal groups, offenders behave following a recognised model of actions without changing it. In craft organisations, the skills and techniques of looting are improved and taught among the looters (Isman, 2009). Findings suggest that craft organisations only exist at the first stage of the illicit trafficking, among looters and treasure hunters.

Project organisations (McIntosh, 1975) are a further typology that emerges from the analysis of the data. These are more sophisticated criminal groups than the previous one and they present a lesser degree of routine compared to craft organisations coupled with technical advances. In the illicit trafficking analysed, project organisations are typical form of association of small groups of professional looters. In fact, professional looters invest a good capital to buy the latest metal-detectors available on the market, sometime even buying very expensive items such as geo-radars. The use of drones to search for antiquities further indicates the presence of professional groups of looters. The members of project organisations associate around the common venture of looting and selling illegal antiquities; as such, they tend to select a vast area where to search for artefacts and they escape the routinisation typical of craft organisations. In this case, looters can conceive more creative conduct, for instance excavate a tunnel that will allow the undetected entrance to known, touristic and surveilled archaeological area (OS5) or simulating a construction site (OS80).

Craft and project organisations are assimilable to the *teams* described by Best and Luckenbill (1994) in terms of higher roles' specialisation and of small-to-medium size of the group. The data suggest, indeed, that the number of looters in professional groups range from three to eight members, although in Italy in three unique cases, looters were cooperating in large groups: respectively 16 (OS39), 14 (OS54) and 11 (OS23) members.

An interesting finding on the social organisation of teams relates only to Italy. As already mentioned, one of the difference between networks and hierarchical groups in Bulgaria and in Italy is that in the latter country these two types of criminal organisations are structured so as to include local teams of *tombaroli*, who although being engrained in the criminal association, work autonomously. In this way, teams strengthen the efficiency of the network or hierarchical group, they increase the amount of land and archaeological areas searched for, the possibility to find antiquities and, in turn, the monetary reward of the criminal organisation; moreover, they enhance the safety of the group as if one team of looters is caught by the police, the remaining teams can continue the work. In the case here described, teams differentiate from craft and project organisations because they are not independent criminal groups, rather they are part of bigger network or hierarchical organisation; however, as the looters in craft and project organisations, teams self-regulate their activity on the territory and subordinate to the main organisers only with regard to the type of antiquities that should be looted.

Hierarchical groups fall within the description of *formal organisations* (Best and Luckenbill, 1994) and *business organisations* (McIntosh, 1975) provided in the literature. As a matter of fact, formal and business organisations are the largest in size and the most enduring. They also display the high level of rationality as suggested by their advanced degree of roles' division assigned to each member and the highest level of internal collaboration. In general, data indicate that in Bulgaria and Italy hierarchical structures have a limited presence, whereas networks represent by far the most utilised form of organisation when a criminal group is intentionally designed to included dozens of members. Interestingly, networks escape the definition of formal and business organisations for they defy the top-down associational ties; they met the

criteria associated to teams, in particular the tasks' allocation and performance to accomplish a goal, although they are larger in size than teams.

Fifth, as deviant exchange and deviant exploitation are patterns of relations that can be found throughout the models of social organisation, data do not support the idea that the illicit trafficking in antiquities falls within the meaning of illegal-governance crimes. As defined by von Lampe, this latter category's purpose is not limited to monetary rewards, rather it aims at establishing authority over the criminal underworld through the imposition and enforcing of rules, the settlements of disputes and the collection of monetary contributions (ibid. 78). The findings of this research reject the presence in the illicit market at issue of actors that exert this type of functions and that are typically associated with long- and well-established Mafia-like organisations. Some interviewees (I20; I8; I12) have indicated that there are criminal groups that can be configured as traditional Mafia-like organised crime; however, they do not control the illicit trafficking in antiquities and data dismiss the idea of one criminal group that coordinate all the activities of other groups.

What is interesting to note in this respect, however, is the process of monopolisation happening in Bulgaria as described by the interviewee in I14. Although still at the beginning, this process can entail future changes in the illicit market in antiquities in Bulgaria. The unification in one big structure of several smaller groups implies that this new criminal organisation will exert the control on a large part of the illicit trafficking in antiquities, leaving to the remaining smaller criminal groups the room to manoeuvre only on a segment of the illicit trafficking. Despite the slow disappearance of small groups and as much slow formation of an oligopoly in the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Bulgaria, these organisations lack several criteria to exert an illegal-governance role on the antiquities' market. They do

not impose and enforce criminal norms within the group, they do not settle disputes or recur to violence or corruption to regulate relations within and outside the groups and, finally, and they do not have a precise territory to control over which impose racketeering schemes. In other words, they still escape the nature of Mafia-like organisations.

Sitxh, the dichotomy hierarchy-network brings the debate back to the configuration of the market. As mentioned in Chapter 2, with regard to the debate on transnational trades in illicit goods, there is an ongoing tension between the hierarchical and the networked perspective. The discussion among scholars permits an interpretation of criminal configurations, linking the practices identified in the case studies to the intensively studies transnational typologies. As already highlighted, the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Italy and Bulgaria does not have one unique organisational structure, although networks are the most numerous ones. It is possible to distinguish to following structure:

Standard hierarchies. They have been mentioned in Italy and interviewees in Bulgaria maintain that the hierarchical model is still present in the country. Hierarchical groups in Bulgaria developed after the fall of the Communist regime and strengthen their rigid structure during the years of political and economic transition in the 1990s. They are groups that covers as much as criminal activities possible, ranging from illicit trafficking of goods (antiquities of course, but also drugs, weapons, people, cigarettes) to extortion racketeering, to money laundering. They have a high division of labour, however in Bulgaria data suggest that they do not have looters within the organisation, as they prefer to pay individual looters to procure the antiquities. In Italy, hierarchical groups were described in IT6, Operation Purgatorio (OS183-OS185) and Operation Demetra (OS214-OS242). They are all-inclusive and

criminal organisations that manage all the phases of the traffic, from the looting, to the cleaning, to the search for buyers and, finally, to the selling. These organisations count on specialised figures, such as looter, forgers and traffickers and have a transnational connotation.

Flux networks (Williams, 2010). From the analysis of the data, this form of organisation has been displayed especially by the least structured and amorphous groups of looters. It is typified by the non-professional category of looters and treasure hunters, where they only collaborate once for the time needed to find antiquities.

Directed networks (Williams, 2001). These networks are led by a core of organisers towards a specific goal. Data indicate that core networks have been found only in Italy. As seen in the case of ‘Tempio di Hera’ (OS106-OS113; OS115-OS126) the key organisers guided the other members of the group in the choice of the archaeological area to loot and in the use of sophisticated tools. Moreover, connections among the co-offenders are based on the long-lasting common participation in criminal projects. Similarly, in Operation Artemide (OS128-OS148) the criminal group operated in the whole southern Italy; the leaders of the organisation promoted the creation of a structure where the research for antiquities was managed independently by looters, while they would maintain the connections with buyers in Italy and abroad. The same division, with a core logistic base in one town in Sicily and teams of looters working autonomously in different regions, is present in Operation Agorà (OS149-OS164).

Transactional networks (Williams, 2001). These are groups that come into shape based on the function of the illegal market. A good example is represented by a dealer that works for several criminal organisations and act as gatekeeper of the crucial transaction of antiquities (OS94-OS101).

Given the flexibility and the adaptability of the illicit antiquities trafficking, it is possible to envisage the network perspective of Morselli (2009a). As such, the illicit trafficking in antiquities can be described as a form of crime characterised by a networked organisational form that comprehends all type of self-organising structures (ibid.: 10) and is guided by the behaviours of the single parts.

To summarize, it is safe to say that the findings discussed in the previous section confirm the hypothesis underlying this research project that the illicit trafficking in antiquities is a sophisticated type of crime, which displays the contextual existence of several forms of social organisation and several organisational configurations. From individual deviance perpetrated by lone actors to deviant transactions perpetrated by a range of criminal organisations ranging in size and structure, they are present in all phases of the illicit trafficking at issue. Moreover, the findings highlight how the networked associative structure adapted to the functions and the needs of the market at both national and transnational level, whereas the pyramidal structure still appears in the market, yet it is more easily found at the domestic level.

5.3 Limitations of the research

It is important to shortly assess the main limitations of the study.

One constraint relates to the descriptive nature of the research. As highlighted on the literature review chapter, there is a lack of research in criminology on the topic of the social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Although this can be seen as a challenge to strengthen the knowledge on the issue, the fact that only a limited percentage of scholarly literature has addressed the organisation of actors and activities in the antiquities' market has let me to compare the findings of the

dissertation with the broader criminological literature on the organisation of crime rather than with other studies on the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

Moreover, this research relies on documentary data as well as on interviews as means of data collections. As already stressed in Chapter 3, the use of judicial and open source data give rise to constraints related to their accuracy, completeness and reliability. Judicial data reflect the biases, the purposes and the collections' methodologies used by law enforcement agencies which can imply the loss of important data from a social organisation perspective, while open source data can suffer from a general sensationalist and hyperbolic approach that, in turn, can falsify the image of the illicit trafficking in antiquities. Open source data, moreover, can be based on limited empirical data. However, this research has endeavoured to avoid these limitations. In the selection of the cases, the accuracy of the information and the level of details of the context of the investigation have been crucial to include or not judicial data and only the cases that included a detailed description have been selected. The same criteria applied to the selection of open source data. Moreover, the combined use of different tools of data collection – interviews, open source data, judicial data – has increased the possibility to verify the reliability of the data.

A limitation of this research is the generalisability of the findings. Dataset created for the crime script and the role analysis only contains the information related to the instances of Bulgaria and Italy and the data obtained from interviews and documentary sources. The aim of this research project escapes from providing general principles on the overall organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities around the world, being it more concerned to investigate this illicit trafficking through the selection of case studies.

5.4 Contribution to research

This research project has contributed to the study of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in several ways.

Although the nature of this illicit trafficking has been researched with regard to its main features, this study is unique as it is the first that research and analyse this illicit trafficking through the theoretical framework of the social organisation of crime. In this way, it goes further the debate on whether the illicit trafficking in antiquities can be understood as a form of organised crime and studies the ways the crime is organised and perpetrated. In so doing, it follows on previous attempts to exceed the application of the definitional approach to organised crime to the illicit trafficking in antiquities (Dietzler, 2013) and embraces a more general perspective, one where to understand the nature of a crime what is needed is to deconstruct its elements and measure the degree of organisation.

The wider aspect of the social organisation of crime and criminals represents a solid theoretical framework to interpret not only how actors organise themselves to pursue a criminal activity and what roles they enact within the market at issue, but also to pinpoint the identifiable elements underlying it. Indeed, this research has contributed to the scholarship by identifying the criminal activities that are needed to perform the illicit trafficking in antiquities in its entirety within an existing conceptual framework that has successfully assessed the same elements in other forms of illegal trade, including the drug trafficking, wildlife trafficking and terrorism. The findings of the dissertation can help future research to expand on the theoretical understanding of serious and organised crime.

Furthermore, this research adds to the field of the illicit trafficking in antiquities because it analyses two countries that are known to be part of it, but for which no in-depth studies have been done before. Italy and Bulgaria have been examined in terms of actors involved, their social organisation's dynamics and, finally, in terms of forms of groups organisations. Although the findings of the study confirm the inclination of the illicit trafficking in antiquities to adapt to a network base structure, they present a much more vibrant picture of this illicit trade in Bulgaria and Italy than the over-repeated image associated with transnational, tentacular networks. This research opened the curtains to the illicit trafficking in antiquities and described an ever-evolving market where different actors come together, divide, create and dissolve criminal associations.

Moreover, a common way to address the illicit trafficking in antiquities is to describe the passages at transnational level, yet few studies have analysed single countries and how the difference between local and international criminal markets are present and influence one country. This dissertation aims to improve the understanding of the interaction between the transnational and the domestic dynamics with regard to the instances of the illicit trafficking in antiquities in Italy and in Bulgaria. In this sense, this dissertation aims to contribute to the development of an accurate, comprehensive and evidence-based image of the illicit trafficking at issue in different regions of the world.

In addition, the use of crime script analysis has offered a valid analytical tool to sort the wide spectrum of offences and to identify the phases of this trafficking. As such, it has been possible to analyse six steps that altogether represent the key pinch points of this complex trafficking. It is important to remark that crime script analysis has been applied in this study as a methodological tool to unfold the commission

process of the illicit trafficking in antiquities and to further link the activities needed to pursue it with the actors involved. Hence, it should be stressed that one of the contributions of this study remarks the use of crime script analysis not just as a prevention but as an analytical tool, important to identify the settings of sophisticated criminal activities.

Finally, it should be highlighted that in answering the questions laid down at the beginning of the research project, this dissertation tries to formulate further venues of research useful to keep alive the study of the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

5.5 Future research perspectives

Given the specific scope of the research, this study has only looked at certain selected aspects of the organisation of crime that should be investigated and analysed further. Some future perspectives of research on the social organisation of the illicit trafficking in antiquities are suggested as follows.

The first aspect that emerges from the findings of this study and that needs further research relates to the necessity to move the current focus on the presence and role of organised crime, and structured criminal groups in general, towards the importance of less structured, informal groups at local level. For instance, studying the communities of looters, their motivations, their learning process would add an analytical layer to the illicit trafficking in antiquities.

Similarly, a benefit to the study of the illicit trafficking in antiquities would come from further research on the organisation of single elements of the operational chain: not only looters, but also dealers, traffickers and the buyers. As emerged for the analysis of the data on Italy and Bulgaria, they all represent important actors in the

illicit trafficking at issue and to understand why they decide to enter the antiquities' market, the modalities through which they establish relationships and pursue criminal activities would greatly add to the analysis of the organisational features of the antiquities' market.

This study has vastly relied on documentay sources and interviews, yet it would be very useful to study single typologies of actors and single criminal activities using ethnographic methodologies. Qualitative empirical research will enhance the study on the supply, demand and smuggling sides in that adding to the still limited knowledge on the cross-border trait of the market. Research on illicit antiquities can further benefit from ethnographic exploration of the areas looted and the main nodes of smuggling. In this way, it will enjoy qualitative studies that have generated in-depth genuine data that go beyond the knowledge derived from law enforcement and judiciary agencies, archaeologists and experts.

Although this research did not focus on the role of the Internet in the illicit trafficking at issue and touched upon it only in minimal part, it has been highlighted how people trade antiquities online through social media applications, emails and even create online auction houses. Studies on the impact of the Internet on the antiquities' market are needed to understand not only which actors are present on the online world and how do they organise, but also to investigate the opportunities that the Internet provides and the ways this instrument has changed the operational chain of this trade.

Finally, it should be stressed that crime script analysis is generally used as a tool of situational crime prevention. Since this research project did not approached the illicit trafficking in antiquities through the situational lenses, it would be stimulating to identify the system of opportunities that actors exploit in order to develop adequate

solutions and prevent if not all, segments of the criminal activities by targeting the offenders in those stages where it would be more efficient.

Annex A

Judicial data set – Bulgaria

Code	Reference
BG1	Decision 2336, 31.10.2014, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, XXIV Chamber
BG2	Decision 2232, 22.12.2011, Plovdiv, Administrative Court, XXIV Chamber
BG3	Decision 1661, 19.07.2011, Plovdiv, District Court, VII Criminal Chamber
BG4	Decision 1648, 24.06.2013, Plovdiv, Regional Court, XXI Criminal Chamber
BG5	Decision 1152, 17.05.2012, Plovdiv, Administrative Court, XIX Chamber
BG6	Definition 710, 17.11.2016, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG7	Decision 583, 13.03.2013, Burgas, Administrative Court, IX Chamber
BG8	Decision 562, 13.03.2014, Plovdiv, District Court, XI Chamber
BG9	Definition 561, 05.11.2015, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG10	Injunction 431, 06.06.2014, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG11	Definition 344, 16.05.2013, Razgrad, Regional Court Of Justice
BG12	Definition 340, 06.11.2012, Pernik, District Court
BG13	Definition 342, 15.07.2015, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Department
BG14	Decision 323, 20.02.2015, Plovdiv, Administrative Court, XXIII Chamber
BG15	Decision 299, 20.05.2014, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, III Chamber
BG16	Decision 296, 06.03.2017, Veliko Tarnovo, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG17	Definition 291, 25.07.2014, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, II Chamber
BG18	Agreement 271, 09.09.2011, Stara Zagora, District Court, Criminal Division
BG19	Decision 270, 12.12.2016, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG20	Decision 258, 26.10.2016, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Division, 26 th Chamber
BG21	Agreement 227, 22.12.2017, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Division, 2 nd
BG22	Decision 223, 11.04.2014, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG23	Decision 217, 30.06.2017, Veliko Tarnovo, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG24	Decision 217, 14.10.2016, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal
BG25	Decision 16, 16.06.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG26	Definition 215, 19.06.2009, Varna, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG27	Decision 213, 19.10.2015, Veliko Tarnovo, Appeal Court, Criminal Department
BG28	Decision 213, 27.11.2014, Asenovgrad, court not specified, 4 th Criminal Chamber
BG29	Decision 208, 19.11.2014, Asenovgrad, District Court, 3 rd Criminal Chamber
BG30	Decision 206, 19.11.2014, Stara Zagora, Regional Court, Criminal Chamber
BG31	Decision 200, 20.09.2016, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG32	Decision 190, 14.07.2017, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG33	Decision 38, 28.11.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG34	Decision 187, 20.08.2017, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG35	Decision 22, 26.04.2017, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG36	Decision 184, 13.07.2017, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG37	Decision 23, 24.09.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG38	Decision 182, 10.11.2015, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG39	Decision 18, 01.07.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Division
BG40	Agreement 169, 15.11.2013, Haskovo, District Court
BG41	Decision 167, 13.16.2014, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Division, 1 st Chamber
BG42	Decision 159, 08.07.2016, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG43	Decision 2, 22.01.2016, Shumen District Court Criminal Department
BG44	Decision 153, 18.05.2012, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Division, 32 nd Chamber
BG45	Definition 101, 30.03.2018, Haskovo, District Court
BG46	Decision 100, 28.10.2013, Varna, District Court, Criminal Division
BG47	Decision 100, 01.08.2012, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG48	Decision 28, 05.03.2012, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Department
BG49	Decision 98, 10.07.2014, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG50	Decision 6, 07.03.2014, Shumen District Court, Criminal Department

BG51	Definition 93, 03.06.2016, Sofia, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG52	Decision 93, 03.07.2014, Varna, District Court, Criminal Department, 8 th Chamber
BG53	Decision 14, 11.02.2014, Varna, District Court, Criminal Department
BG54	Definition 90, 17.09.2016, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG55	Agreement 89, 20.10.2014, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Chamber
BG56	Decision 88, 02.09.2013, Burgas, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG57	Agreement 86, 13.10.2017, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG58	Agreement 85, 02.09.2016, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG59	Agreement 85, 09.11.2015, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG60	Agreement 85, 01.10.2012, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG61	Agreement 85, 13.09.2011, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG62	Agreement 84, 31.08.2016, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG63	Decision 84, 06.03.2012, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Division
BG64	Decision 82, 22.04.2013, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG65	Agreement 81, 05.09.2014, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG66	Agreement 80, 24.09.2012, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG67	Agreement 74, 11.08.2017, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG68	Agreement 74, 15.10.2015, Haskovo, District Court
BG69	Definition 74, 12.03.2014, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Division
BG70	Decision 73, 18.10.2017, Varna, District Court, Criminal Department
BG71	Agreement 71, 30.12.2011, Shumen District Court Criminal Department
BG72	Decision 70, 27.02.2014, city not indicated, District Court Criminal Chamber
BG73	Decision 70, 27.03.2012, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG74	Agreement 67, 26.07.2016, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG75	Decision 66, 30.05.2011, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG76	Decision 64, 18.05.2012, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG77	Decision 3, 29.02.2012, Shumen District Court Criminal Department
BG78	Decision 63, 22.03.2013, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG79	Decision 60, 08.11.2017, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik Regional Court, Criminal Department
BG80	Agreement 60, 19.10.2017, Sofia, Specialised Criminal Court, 14 th Chamber
BG81	Decision 60, 18.12.2014, Haskovo District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG82	Decision 60, 18.07.2014, Burgas, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG83	Agreement 59, 09.10.2013, Plovdiv District Court, Criminal Department
BG84	Agreement 57, 10.08.2012, Haskovo District Court, Criminal
BG85	Agreement 57, 15.11.2011, Shumen District Court, Criminal Department
BG86	Agreement 56, 15.11.2011, Shumen District Court, Criminal Department
BG87	Decision 55, 18.12.2014, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG88	Decision 47, 15.11.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG89	Agreement 589, 15.11.2011, Shumen District Court, Criminal Department
BG90	Agreement 587, 15.11.2011, Shumen District Court, Criminal Department
BG91	Decision 53, 30.03.2015, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG92	Decision 1, 13.01.2015, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG93	Agreement 53, 31.10.2011, Shumen District Court Criminal Department
BG94	Decision 50, 22.02.2016, Sofia, City Court, Criminal Department, 32 nd Chamber
BG95	Decision 50, 09.07.2015, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Department
BG96	Decision 47, 19.03.2012, Plovdiv, District Court Criminal Department
BG97	Decision 47, 20.10.2011, Ruse, District Court Criminal Department
BG98	Agreement 43, 03.11.2016, Burgas, District Court Criminal Department
BG99	Decision 42, 13.01.2013, Sofia, City Court
BG100	Agreement 42, 15.11.2011, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Division
BG101	Agreement 42, 11.08.2011, Shumen District Court Criminal Department
BG102	Agreement 41, 12.12.2017, Haskovo, District Court
BG103	Decision 39, 09.11.2012, Pernik, Regional Court
BG104	Agreement 38, 05.03.2013, Sofia, City Court, Criminal Division, 14 th Chamber
BG105	Agreement 37, 28.12.2017, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Department
BG106	Decision 37, 10.10.2013, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Division
BG107	Agreement 36, 14.12.2017, Shumen District Court Criminal Department

BG108	Agreement 36, 02.11.2017, Haskovo District Court
BG109	Decision 35, 31.03.2016, Plovdiv District Court Criminal Department
BG110	Agreement 35, 09.05.2012, Plovdiv District Court, Criminal Department
BG111	Decision 34, 21.11.2016, Sofia, Specialised Criminal Court
BG112	Agreement 34, 23.03.2016, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG113	Agreement 33, 28.11.2017, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG114	Agreement 32, 16.11.2011, Pleven District Court, Criminal Department
BG115	Agreement 30, 11.12.2012, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Division
BG116	Decision 29, 23.05.2018, Pleven, District Court, Criminal Department
BG117	Decision 29, 04.07.2016, Stara Zagora, court not indicated
BG118	Agreement 29, 04.12.2015, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Division
BG119	Decision 29, 25.06.2014, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Division
BG120	Decision 28, 17.03.2016, Burgas, Appeal Court
BG121	Decision 28, 09.12.2015, Shumen, District Court
BG122	Decision 28, 24.03.2014, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG123	Decision 28, 17.09.2013, Vratsa, District Court, criminal Department
BG124	Agreement 27, 09.12.2013, Shumen, District Court
BG125	Agreement 27, 12.12.2012, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Department
BG126	Agreement 27, 24.04.2012, Haskovo, District Court, Criminal Division
BG127	Agreement 27, 05.07.2010, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Division
BG128	Agreement 26, 14.07.2011, Vratsa, District Court, criminal Division
BG129	Decision 25, 20.06.2018, Sofia, City Court, Criminal Division
BG130	Agreement 25, 20.12.2016, Pleven, District Court, Criminal Department
BG131	Agreement 25, 02.03.2016, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG132	Agreement 25, 02.03.2015, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG133	Agreement 24, 29.12.2016, Shumen, District Court
BG134	Decision 24, 21.10.2011, Kyustendil, Court of First Instance, Criminal Division
BG135	Agreement 24, 04.07.2011, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG136	Agreement 24, 09.05.2011, Shumen, District Court
BG137	Agreement 23, 04.07.2011, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG138	Agreement 22, 17.09.2015, Stara Zagora, Regional Court, Criminal chamber
BG139	Agreement 22, 12.09.2011, Pleven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG140	Agreement 21, 31.01.2018, Sofia, City Court, 5 th Chamber
BG141	Agreement 21, 21.12.2016, Shumen, Court of Justice, Criminal Department
BG142	Agreement 21, 16.03.2015, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG143	Decision 21, 08.04.2013, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Department
BG144	Agreement 20, 23.10.2018, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Division
BG145	Agreement 20, 20.09.2017, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG146	Agreement 20, 01.12.2016, Shumen, District Court
BG147	Agreement 20, 29.06.2011, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Department
BG148	Agreement 20, 01.12.2010, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Division
BG149	Decision 20, 08.09.2010, Vratsa, Regional Court, criminal Division
BG150	Agreement 19, 15.06.2018, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Division
BG151	Agreement 19, 15.11.2013, Regional Court, Criminal Department
BG152	Decision 19, 03.10.2012, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Division
BG153	Decision 18, 01.07.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG154	Agreement 18, 04.03.2015, Plovdiv, Court of Justice, Criminal Department
BG155	Decision 17, 18.04.2017, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG156	Agreement 17, 19.06.2012m Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Division
BG157	Agreement 17, 22.06.2010, Shumen, District Court
BG158	Agreement 16, 30.01.2017, Sofia, City Court, Criminal Division, 25 th Chamber
BG159	Agreement 16, 19.08.2015, Shumen, District Court
BG160	Agreement 16, 25.06.2014, Shumen, District Court
BG161	Agreement 16, 03.20.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG162	Decision 16, 21.05.2013, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG163	Agreement 16, 09.07.2012, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Division
BG164	Decision 16, 04.07.2011, Kyustendil, District Court, Criminal Division

BG165	Decision 15, 19.01.2016, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, 1 st Criminal Chamber
BG166	Decision 44, 19.10.2015, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG167	Agreement 15, 19.09.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG168	Agreement 15, 06.07.2012, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Division
BG169	Decision 15, 15.06.2011, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Division
BG170	Decision 15, 28.01.2011, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG171	Decision 39, 04.06.2010, Targovishte, District Court, Criminal Division
BG172	Agreement 14, 24.07.2018, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Division
BG173	Decision 14, 15.04.2016, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG174	Decision 14, 04.05.2012, Pernik, District Court
BG175	Agreement 14, 25.05.2011, Kyustendil, District Court
BG176	Agreement 13, 18.02.2015, Plovdiv, Court of Justice, Criminal Department
BG177	Decision 13, 28.03.2013, Pernik, District Court
BG178	Agreement 13, 26.06.2012, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Division
BG179	Agreement 13, 11.05.2011, Kyustendil, District Court
BG180	Decision 12, 14.01.2015, District Court, 1 st Criminal Chamber
BG181	Agreement 12, 17.10.2014, Vratsa, regional Court, Criminal Department
BG182	Agreement 12, 08.03.2013, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Department
BG183	Agreement 12, 28.03.2012, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG184	Agreement 12, 04.05.2011, Kyustendil, Regional Court
BG185	Agreement 12, 24.06.2010, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG186	Agreement 11, 16.06.2017, Varna, District Court, Criminal Division
BG187	Decision 11, 03.04.2017, Burgas, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG188	Agreement 11, 22.08.2016, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG189	Decision 11, 21.03.2016, Sofia, Specialised Criminal Court, V Chamber
BG190	Agreement 11, 23.09.2014, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG191	Agreement 11, 20.06.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG192	Agreement 10, 19.08.2016, Pleven, District Court, Criminal chamber
BG193	Agreement 10, 21.04.2016, Stara Zagora, District Court, Criminal Department
BG194	Decision 10, 06.02.2015, Pleven, District Court, criminal Department
BG195	Agreement 10, 21.08.2012, Sliven, Military Court,
BG196	Agreement 10, 29.02.2012, Shumen, District Court
BG197	Agreement 9, 07.04.2017, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG198	Agreement 9, 04.07.2016, Lovech, Court of Justice
BG199	Agreement 9, 15.08.2014, Vratsa, regional court, Criminal Division
BG200	Agreement 9, 22.02.2012, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG201	Agreement 9, 06.02.2012, Plovdiv, Court of Justice, Criminal Department
BG202	Agreement 8, 04.08.2014, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG203	Agreement 8, 14.05.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG204	Agreement 8, 05.02.2013, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG205	Agreement 8, 11.04.2012, Pernik, District Court
BG206	Decision 8, 20.02.2012, Kystendil, Court of Justice
BG207	Decision 8, 17.02.2012, Varna, Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
BG208	Decision 24, 21.10.2011, Kyustendil, Court of First Instance, Criminal Division
BG209	Decision 8, 07.06.2011, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Division
BG210	Agreement 7, 28.03.2018, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG211	Agreement 7, 21.03.2018, Stara Zagora, District Court, Criminal Department
BG212	Agreement 7, 23.07.2015, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG213	Decision 7, 26.05.2015, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, 2 nd Criminal Chamber
BG214	Agreement 7, 11.04.2013, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG215	Agreement 7, 15.03.2012, Sofia, Court of Justice, Criminal Department, 6 th Chamber
BG216	Agreement 7, 30.01.2012, Shumen, District Court
BG217	Agreement 6, 09.03.2017, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG218	Decision 6, 14.02.2013, Haskovo, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG219	Decision 6, 30.01.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal division
BG220	Agreement 6, 09.02.2012, Varna, district Court, Criminal Division
BG221	Agreement 6, 10.03.2011, Yambol, District Court, III Criminal Chamber

BG222	Decision 6, 23.02.2011, Kyustendil, Court of Justice
BG223	Agreement 5, 20.05.2017, Sofia, City Court, 3 rd Chamber
BG224	Agreement 5, 24.02.2017, Pleven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG225	Agreement 5, 03.06.2015, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG226	Agreement 5, 26.02.2015, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Department
BG227	Agreement 5, 03.04.2013, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Division
BG228	Decision 5, 21.02.2012, Pernik, Regional Court
BG229	Decision 5, 01.02.2011, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Division, 3 rd Chamber
BG230	Agreement 4, 15.01.2018, Ruse, District Court, Criminal Department
BG231	Agreement 4, 09.03.2017, Ruse, District Court, criminal Department
BG232	Agreement 4, 08.02.2017, Pleven, District Court, Criminal Department
BG233	Agreement 4, 01.04.2017, Shumen, District Court
BG234	Agreement 4, 29.01.2016, Stara Zagora, Regional Court, Criminal Chamber
BG235	Agreement 4, 28.01.2016, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG236	Agreement 4, 11.03.2015, Shumen, District Court
BG237	Agreement 4, 10.02.2014, Shumen, Distract Court
BG238	Agreement 4, 18.02.2013, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG239	Decision 4, 19.01.2011, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG240	Agreement 4, 18.01.2011, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Division
BG241	Agreement 3, 03.01.2017, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG242	Agreement 3, 27.01.2016, Shumen, District Court
BG243	Decision 3, 15.01.2015, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG244	Agreement 3, 22.01.2014, Shumen, District Court
BG245	Agreement 3, 15.02.2013, Vratsa, Regional Court, Criminal Department
BG246	Agreement 2, 03.01.2017, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Department
BG247	Decision 2, 04.04.2016, Plovdiv, Court of Appeal, Criminal Department
BG248	Decision 113, 22.12.2013, Plovdiv, District Court, Criminal Department
BG249	Agreement 2, 26.01.2016, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Department
BG250	Decision 2, 22.01.2016, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Division
BG251	Decision 2, 23.01.2014, Pernik, Regional Court
BG252	Agreement 2, 30.01.2012, Pazardzhik, District Court, Criminal Department
BG253	Decision 2, 20.01.2012, Kyustendil, Court of Justice
BG254	Agreement 2, 16.01.2012, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG255	Agreement 2, 13.01.2012, Shumen, District Court
BG256	Agreement 1, 12.01.2016, Sofia, City Court, Criminal Department
BG257	Agreement 1, 21.01.2012, Vratsa, District Court, Criminal Department
BG258	Agreement of case nr.192, 13.08.2018, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Department
BG259	Decision 48, 28.06.2018, Vidin, Court of Appeal
BG260	Agreement 297, 14.06.2018, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG261	Decision 5, 13.03.2018, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG262	Decision 2, 30.02.2018, Pernik, Regional Court
BG263	Decision 1, 24.01.2018, Pernik, Regional Court
BG264	Agreement 315, 13.11.2017, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG265	Agreement 312, 09.11.2017, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG266	Agreement 273, 04.10.2017, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG267	Agreement 397, 02.10.2017, Svilengrad, Regional Court, Criminal Department, I Chamber
BG268	Decision 13, 12.09.2017, Pernik, Regional court
BG269	Definition 3, 09.01.2017, Vidin, court not mentioned
BG270	Agreement 56, 08.12.2016, Vidin, District Court
BG271	Agreement 49, 01.11.2016, Vidin, District Court
BG272	Decision 25, 28.10.2016, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG273	Definition of case nr. 258, 04.10.2016, Vidin, District Court
BG274	Agreement of case nr. 841, 24.08.2016, Burgas, Regional Court, Criminal Chamber
BG275	Agreement of case nr. 215, 09.08.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG276	Decision 17, 24.06.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG277	Decision 25, 23.06.2016, Vidin, District Court

BG278	Definition 16, 16.06.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG279	Definition of case nr. 97, 25.05.2016, Vidin, Court of Justice
BG280	Decision of case nr. 35, 25.05.2016, Razgrad, Regional Court of Justice
BG281	Agreement of case nr. 83, 18.04.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG282	Agreement of case nr. 148, 18.03.2016, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG283	Decision 3, 18.02.2016, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG284	Decision 5, 04.02.2016, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG285	Decision 227, 01.10.2015, Haskovo, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG286	Definition of case nr. 1067, 29.10.2015, Burgas, Court of justice, Criminal Department
BG287	Definition 204, 30.09.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG288	Decision 182, 15.09.2015, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG289	Agreement of case nr. 256, 03.09.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG290	Definition 168, 22.07.2015, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG291	Agreement of case nr. 286, 26.06.2015, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG292	Decision of case nr. 277, 28.05.2014, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG293	Agreement of case nr. 250, 15.04.2015, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG294	Agreement of case nr. 147, 30.03.2015, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG295	Agreement of case nr. 132, 19.03.2015, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG296	Decision 109, 13.02.2015, Elhovo, District Court, 4 th Criminal Chamber
BG297	Definition of case nr. 48, 09.12.2014, Vidin, District Court, 1 st Criminal Chamber
BG298	Decision 48, 14.11.2014, Vidin, District Court
BG299	Definition 19, no date and court mentioned
BG300	Decision 24, 29.09.2014, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG301	Agreement of case nr. 149, 25.09.2014, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG302	Decision of case nr. 491, 08.07.2014, Kardzhali, Administrative Court, Criminal Chamber
BG303	Decision 134, 21.03.2014, Sofia, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG304	Decision 6, 07.03.2014, Shumen, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG305	Decision 9, 28.02.2014, Vidin, District Court
BG306	Agreement of case nr. 352, 20.12.2013, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG307	Decision 49, 09.10.2013, Vidin, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG308	Decision 25, 26.05.2013, Vidin, District Court of Justice
BG309	Decision 19, 05.04.2013, Vidin, District Court of Justice
BG310	Decision of case nr. 575, 25.03.2013, Sliven, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG311	Decision 16, 11.03.2013, Vidin, District Court of Justice
BG312	Agreement 14, 15.02.2013, Vidin, District Court
BG313	Agreement 122, 12.12.2012, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Chamber
BG314	Decision 44, 23.11.2012, Vidin, District Court
BG315	Agreement of case nr. 375, 15.11.2012, Yambol, District Court, 1 st Criminal Chamber
BG316	Agreement of case nr. 1108, 10.04.2012, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Division
BG317	Agreement of case nr. 375, 17.04.2012, Burgas, District Court, Criminal Division
BG318	Decision 4, 25.01.2012, Vidin, District Court
BG319	Decision 23, 30.11.2011, Razgrad, Regional Court of Justice
BG320	Agreement of case nr. 555, 19.10.2011, Ruse, Court of Justice, Criminal Division
BG321	Disposition of case nr. 191 20.05.2011, Kyustendil, District Court
BG322	Disposition of case nr. 104, 11.03.2011, Haskovo, District Court
BG323	Agreement of case nr. 370, 12.01.2011, Silistra, District Court, Criminal Division
BG324	Decision of case nr. 1039, Kardzhali, Administrative Court
BG325	Decision of case nr. 1037, Kardzhali, Administrative Court

Annex B
Judicial data set –Italy

Code	Reference
IT1	Sentence nr. 4799, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 11.01.2011
IT2	Sentence nr. 11757, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 22.01.2008
IT3	Sentence nr. 19249, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 04.05.2006
IT4	Sentence nr. 23746, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 05.05.2009
IT5	Sentence nr. 35714, Court of Cassation, penal division, V section, 07.04.2014
IT6	Sentence nr. 4276, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 07.01.2015
IT7	Sentence nr. 41507, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 10.11.2010
IT8	Sentence nr. 27066, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 08.04.2015
IT9	Sentence nr. 41509, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 10.11.2010
IT10	Sentence nr. 41506, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 10.11.2010
IT11	Sentence nr. 34413, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 06.07.2016
IT12	Sentence nr. 51818, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 06.12.2013
IT13	Sentence nr. 47918, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 07.12.2011
IT14	Sentence nr. 38831, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 25.05.2017
IT15	Sentence nr. 17348, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 29.03.2011
IT16	Sentence nr. 12082, Court of Cassation, penal division, I section, 06.10.2000
IT17	Sentence nr. 7623, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 16.02.2006
IT18	Sentence nr. 11701, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 07.02.2012
IT19	Sentence nr. 44275, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 23.10.2007
IT20	Sentence nr. 18586, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 07.04.2009
IT21	Sentence nr. 21889, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 22.02.2012
IT22	Sentence nr. 33533, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 21.05.2009
IT23	Sentence nr. 10470, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 19.01.2006
IT24	Sentence nr. 35970, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 19.01.2006
IT25	Sentence nr. 40805, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 03.07.2014
IT26	Sentence nr. 15685, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 25.03.2010
IT27	Sentence nr. 47825, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 21.06.2017
IT28	Sentence nr. 1214, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 28.11.1996
IT29	Sentence nr. 23295, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 28.04.2004
IT30	Sentence nr. 7885, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 01.02.1995
IT31	Sentence nr. 24654, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 03.02.2009
IT32	Sentence nr. 28239, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 22.04.2010
IT33	Sentence nr. 29867, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 06.06.2006
IT34	Sentence nr. 10003, Court of Cassation, penal division, IV section, 12.02.2009
IT35	Sentence nr. 7131, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 04.05.1999
IT36	Sentence nr. 2160, Court of Cassation, penal division, V section, 13.01.1998
IT37	Sentence nr. 46168, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 05.10.2016
IT38	Sentence nr. 2878, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 17.12.2014
IT39	Sentence nr. 15938, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 13.01.2009
IT40	Sentence nr. 19714, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 04.04.2007
IT41	Sentence nr. 3369, Court of Cassation, penal division, IV section, 08.11.2005
IT42	Sentence nr. 3700, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 03.12.2004
IT43	Sentence nr. 18552, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 11.02.2010
IT44	Sentence nr. 1253, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 28.02.1995
IT45	Sentence nr. 23844, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 27.06.2006
IT46	Sentence nr. 13071, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 15.02.2006
IT47	Sentence nr. 29070, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 08.05.2013
IT48	Sentence nr. 13273, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 14.03.2014
IT49	Sentence nr. 24509, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 22.05.2015
IT50	Sentence nr. 16924, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 17.04.2012

IT51	Sentence nr. 13984, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 09.11.1999
IT52	Sentence nr. 43354, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 14.10.2014
IT53	Sentence nr. 38036, Court of Cassation, penal division, I section, 08.06.2016
IT54	Sentence nr. 49074, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 04.12.2012
IT55	Sentence nr. 46623, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 27.10.2011
IT56	Sentence nr. 41996, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 16.07.2015
IT57	Sentence nr. 41997, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 16.07.2015
IT58	Sentence nr. 25629, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 08.06.2010
IT59	Sentence nr. 13832, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 17.02.2017
IT60	Sentence nr. 39041, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 08.07.2009
IT61	Sentence nr. 30941, Court of Cassation, penal division, II section, 10.07.2014
IT62	Sentence nr. 11762, Court of Cassation, penal division, III section, 22.01.2008
IT63	Sentence of 10.02.2011, Court ruling on merit, Office on Preliminary Investigations, Pesaro
IT64	Sentence nr. 20, Court of Appeal, Taranto, 22.03.2017
IT65	Sentence nr. 3572, Court of Appeal, II section, Rome, 22.04.2016
IT66	Sentence of 05.12.2007, Tribunal, penal division, IV section, Rome
IT67	Sentence nr. 2901, Tribunal, penal division, I section, Bari, 20.09.2011
IT68	Sentence nr. 290, Court of Appeal, labour section, Ancona, 28.04.2011
IT69	Sentence nr. 1181, Appeal Court, I section, Bari, 12.11.2012
IT70	Sentence nr. 5297, Court of Appeal, I section, Rome, 22.12.2008
IT71	Sentence nr. 2079, Tribunal, penal division, II section, Taranto, 08.08.2016
IT72	Sentence nr. 5887, Tribunal, penal division, II section, Rome, 05.06.2008
IT73	Sentence nr. 9333, Court of Appeal, III section, Rome, 14.11.2016

Annex C

Open source data set – Bulgaria

SOURCE: ARCHAEOLOGY IN BULGARIA, blog	
Code	Reference
AB1	“Smallest Ancient Thracian Brick Tomb Found Near Bulgaria’s Rozovo, Thoroughly Looted By Treasure Hunters”, 23.09.2018
AB2	“Treasure Hunters Found 5th Century Bc Thracian King’s Burial Worth Usd 60 Million Back In 2002, Report Says”, 26.09.2018
AB3	“11,000 coins, archaeological artifacts seized on bulgaria’s border in attempted smuggling from turkey into eu”, 26.05.2018
AB4	“2 treasure hunters rescued from self-made mine in bulgaria’s rhodope mountains, hospitalized in critical condition”, 29.04.2018
AB5	“Bulgaria’s police seize 95 archaeological artifacts from ‘organized crime’ treasure hunters”, 22.03.2018
AB6	“Archaeologists find ancient thracian fortress near bulgaria’s burgas bulldozed by treasure hunter”, 21.11.2017
AB7	“Large medieval gold treasure found by accident by police, seized from treasure hunters in Bulgaria’s Kazanlak”, 18.11.2017
AB8	“Bulgarian, turkish man sentenced in shumen for trafficking roman artifacts from middle east”, 08.01.2017
AB9	“Suspected arson by treasure hunters destroys ruins of glorious roman city Ulpia oescus near Bulgaria’s Gigen”, 02.09.2016
AB10	“5 treasure hunters arrested while ‘trenching’ late antiquity settlement with tractor near Bulgaria’s Petarnitsa”, 06.08.2016
AB11	“Police seize over 400 archaeological artifacts from treasure hunter in northwest Bulgaria”, 27.04.2016
AB12	“Treasure hunters get away with suspended sentences in high profile trial in Bulgaria’s Pazardzhik”, 18.04.2016
AB13	“Stolen thracian-roman silver mask helmet restored, showcased in Bulgaria’s Plovdiv 21

	years after theft”, 25.04.2016
AB14	“Senior bulgarian civil servant caught with diverse collection of archaeological artifacts, coins in anti-treasure hunting raid”, 31.03.2016
AB15	“Bulgaria’s customs capture nearly 700 archaeological artifacts, coins at Sofia airport”, 31.03.2016
AB16	“Police arrest 3 men for illegal possession of archaeological artifacts in Bulgaria’s Nova Zagora”, 25.03.2016
AB17	“Bulgarian, greek treasure hunting gang busted by border police”, 24.03.2016
AB18	“2 treasure hunters arrested while destroying ancient roman city ratiaria near Bulgaria’s Archar”, 8.02.2016
AB19	“Bulgarian man receives suspended sentence for holding ‘unregistered’ archaeological artifacts”, 23.01.2016
AB20	“Bulgaria’s customs capture thousands of uk bound likely fake archaeological artifacts on border with Romania”, 14.12.2015
AB21	“Bulgarian police seize almost 1,000 archaeological artifacts from treasure hunters”, 21.11.2015
AB22	“Treasure hunters looting Bulgaria’s black sea underwater archaeology riches as well, diving instructor reveals”, 5.11.2015
AB23	“Appellate court in Bulgaria’s Burgas terminates high profile treasure hunting trial over technicality”, 30.11.2015
AB24	“Bulgarian Police Bust 2 Treasure Hunters Bulldozing Ancient Thracian Burial Mound”, 19.10.2015
AB25	“Bulgarian police bust antique trafficking ring, seize roman decurion’s gravestone, 800 invaluable artifacts”, 16.10.2015
AB26	“Bulgarian court puts off trial against high profile traffickers of archaeological artifacts”, 13.10.2015
AB27	“Bulgarian prosecutor’s office charges 3 treasure hunters for raiding medieval fortress”, 20.10.2015
AB28	“2 men arrested for treasure hunting at late antiquity and medieval fortress near bulgaria’s chuyetlovo”, 09.10.2015
AB29	“3 treasure hunters to be tried for looting ancient roman city novae in Bulgaria’s Svishtov”, 29.09.2015
AB30	“Bulgarian court seizes 3,000 ancient and medieval coins from man in Stara Zagora”, 25.09.2015
AB31	“Bulgarian police seize from traffickers ancient roman sacrificial altar dedicated to Jupiter dolichenus”, 8.09.2015
AB32	“Bulgarian antique traffickers flood Europe with fake archaeological artifacts, forged Thracian treasure on sale for eur 200,000”, 20.07.2015
AB33	“Bulgarian court acquits lawyer brothers in highprofile treasure hunting trial over destruction of thracian mound”, 10.07.2015
AB34	“Bulgarian police capture treasure hunter with over 300 archaeological artifacts , coins”, 27.07.2015
AB35	“Bulgarian police nab 2 men for selling illegal archaeological artifacts in downtown Sofia”, 07.07.2015
AB36	“Treasure hunters steal ancient artifacts from roman and byzantine fortress Zaldapa in northeastBulgaria”, 14.07.2015
AB37	“Krater seized from Bulgarian treasure hunter made in ancient Greece during age of Pericles”, 04.06.2015
AB38	“Greek Man Testifies in Bulgarian Lawyers’ Trial over Treasure Hunting, Destruction of Thracian Tumulus”, 02.05.2015
AB39	“Scores of Treasure Hunters Pillage Medieval Fortress, Late Iron Age Settlement in Search of Legendary Bulgarian Rebel’s Gold”, 02.05.2015
AB40	“Bulgaria’s Plovdiv Funds Emergency Rescue Excavations of Ancient Thracian Burial Mound Targeted by Treasure Hunters”, 21.04.2015
AB41	“History Museum in Bulgaria’s Sliven Receives Ancient Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Austrian Coins Seized from Treasure Hunters”, 23.04.2015
AB42	“Bulgarian Prosecutors Charge 3 Men with Treasure Hunting Digs in Ancient Roman Military Camp Novae”, 22.04.2015

AB43	“Bulgarian Treasure Hunter Receives Jail Sentence over Digs in Ancient Roman City Ratiaria”, 06.04.2015
AB44	“Bulgarian Archaeologist Finds 5000-Year-Old Relief from Ancient Mesopotamia among Artifacts Seized from Treasure Hunters”, 27.03.2015
AB45	“Bulgarian Lawyers Go on Trial for Treasure Hunting, Shattering Ancient Thracian Burial Mound”, 25.03.2015
SOURCE: CUSTOM POLICE WEBSITE	
CB1	“200-year-old us coins found at Kalotina checkpoint”, 18.10.2012
CB2	“Bulgaria busts smuggled treasure-hunter’s artefacts at Lesovo checkpoint”, 20.08.2012
CB3	“Ancient coin carried by Bulgarian customs officers arrested at Kalotina crossing”, 24.06.2012
CB4	“Antique coins, antique jewelry and numismatic catalogs revealed at Kalotina crossing”, 05.06.2012
CB5	“484 ancient coins seized at Kalotina customs checkpoint”, 07.03.2011
CB6	“Four ancient items, seized at Kalotina border crossing are authentic”, 11.08.2010
CB7	“Customs officers at Kapitan Andreevo bcp seized nearly 3000 ancient coins”, 14.06.2018
CB8	“Customs officers at Vrashka Chuka seized ancient coins”, 13.12.2016
CB9	“Customs officers at Sofia airport seized 746 cultural artifacts”, 30.03.2016
CB10	“The customs officials at Sofia airport detected and seized a priceless monetary hoard”, 11.06.2015
SOURCE: BORDER POLICE WEBSITE	
BP1	“Border police prevented the smuggling of cultural and historical values at Vidin Border Crossing Ponit”, 05.08.2015

Annex D

Open source data set – Italy

Code	Reference
OS1	“Crotone, cercano armi e trovano reperti archeologici”, Si24, 16.05.2018
OS2	“L’inchiesta. Il traffico di reperti archeologici: dal Vibonese fino agli Stati Uniti” News.il Vibonese.it, 20.11.2017
OS3	“Traffico di reperti archeologici, denunciati sedici ‘tombaroli’, cn24tv.it, 18.11.2010
OS4	“Trafugati reperti V-III sec.a.C.,denounce”, La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 06.05.2013
OS5	“Pompei, furto e traffico di reperti archeologici: accusate 14 persone, i dettagli”, vivicentro.it, 04.06.2018
OS6	“Pompei, inestinguibile vergogna: rubato affresco della dea Artemide”, vesuviolive, 18.03.2014
OS7	“Salerno. Maxi sequestro avorio, pelli animali esotici e reperti archeologici”, larampa.it, 19.06.2018
OS8	“SESSA AURUNCA / TEANO – Traffico reperti archeologici, tre indagati: un medico, un avvocato e un tombarolo”, paesenews.it, 18.03.2016
OS9	“Traffico di reperti archeologici, due denunce a Serino”, irpiniaoggi.it, 06.04.2011
OS10	“Arco di Trento, recuperati dai carabinieri manoscritti rubati in paese”, Gazzetta delle Valli, 17.05.2017
OS11	“Nascondevano un Tesoro, sequestrata una collezione di reperti archeologici”, La voce di Rovigo, 11.05.2017
OS12	“Siti archeologici depredati dai tombaroli”, Alto Adige, 29.10.2011
OS13	“Oltre 200 reperti del periodo romano in casa, denunciati due ‘tombaroli’ di Codroipo”, Udinetoday, 23.02.2016
OS14	“Recuperati preziosi reperti archeologici trafugati in Spagna” La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 14.04.2015
OS15	“Rimpatriati dalla Germania reperti archeologici trafugati in Puglia e Basilicata”, La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 22.10.2012

OS16	“Un piccolo museo in casa di un immobiliare romano. Sequestrati reperti archeologici per un milione di euro”, Repubblica.it, 11.05.2018
OS17	“Un museo archeologico “privato””, ilpontino.it, 16.10.2009
OS18	“Tarquinia, tre arresti per scavi e traffico di reperti archeologici”, TusciaTimes.eu, 16.02.2016
OS19	“Gdf sventa saccheggio sito archeologico”, La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 4.09.2013
OS20	“Gdf Roma: museo privato con 121 reperti archeologici scoperto in una villa a labico”, stelladitaliannews, 16.06.2018
OS21	“Operazione Augusto Imperatore. Sequestrati vari reperti di interesse storico e archeologico”, Cronaca4, 14.01.2016
OS22	“Ritrovati reperti del VII secolo a.C in una valigia nel bosco di Sarzana”, Secolo d'Italia, 29.12.2016
OS23	“Furto di reperti archeologici: 11 persone indagate tra cui il dirigente comunale imperiese Enrico”, Sanremonews, 31.07.2013
OS24	“Foggia, traffico reperti del 1600 e armi d'epoca: anche una reliquia appartenuta a Papa Innocenzo XI”, La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 06.10.2017
OS25	“In un garage antichità daune Maxisequestro di vasi valgono oltre 500mila euro”, la Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 13.10.2011
OS26	“Scovati 21 tombaroli Nel Foggiano recuperati quasi 600 reperti”, La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 10.07.2013
OS27	“Traffico reperti archeologici GdF salva il «guerriero dauno»”, la Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno, 14.01.2009
OS28	“430 reperti nuragici tornano a casa dalla Svizzera!”, Paradisola.it, 05.07.2016
OS29	“Bronzetti e reperti archeologici stroncato un traffico internazionale”, la Nuova Sardegna, 26.04.2015
OS30	“Cagliari, scoperto traffico da 1 mln di euro di reperti archeologici venduti online”, Adnkronos, 25.11.2010
OS31	“Imprenditore-tombarolo in trappola: confiscati migliaia di antichi reperti”, L'Unione sarda, 04.08.2010
OS32	“Monete, bronzetti e preziosi: sequestro di reperti archeologici nell'oristanese”, Cagliaripad, 21.12.2013
OS33	“Nuoro. Recuperati dai Carabinieri reperti archeologici trafugati in Svizzera”, artemagazine, 05.07.2016
OS34	“Sassari, traffico internazionale di reperti archeologici: in cella l'undicesimo Corriere”, La Nuova Sardegna, 20.12.2013
OS35	“Sgominato traffico reperti archeologici Undici arresti per un giro da 1,5 milioni”, L'Unione sarda, 21.12.2013
OS36	“Tombaroli a Mont'e Prama: Scavata nella notte una tomba, archeologi si pagano le guardie!”, Sardegnainblog.it, 23.09.2014
OS37	“Traffico di reperti archeologici tra Sardegna e Corsica: 10 arresti”, Sassari Notizie, 20.12.2013
OS38	“Traffico di reperti archeologici a Montalto: denunciate due persone”, Civonline, 09.07.2011
OS39	“Filicudi, antiche machine e reperti preziosi sequestrate dai carabinieri. In 6 denunciati”, Ansa, 12.02.2018
OS40	“Reperti archeologici in casa . Denunciato un professionista”, LiveSicilia, 27.05.2017
OS41	“Sicilia. I beni culturali finiscono all'asta Traffico di reperti rubati su E-Bay” IlGiornale.it, 12.03.2010
OS42	“Tombarolo' alla necropoli di Spina”, Ferrara24ore, 5.06.2014
OS43	“A caccia di sesterzi, arrestato tombarolo”, Fregeneonline.com, 25.01.2016
OS44	“Beccato tombarolo con reperti del IV-III secolo a.C.” Ambienteeambienti.com, 25.07.2011
OS45	“Bloccati 3 tombaroli in azione negli scavi di Ostia”, Rai2010, 01.04.2011
OS46	“Caccia al tesoro, i tombaroli del terzo millennio”, IlGiornale.it, 14.08.2011
OS47	“COMACCHIO: Trafugavano reperti archeologici, denunciati due "tombaroli"”, TR24, 05.12.2015
OS48	“Con pale e picconi a "caccia" di reperti, scoperta banda di tombaroli”, CataniaToday, 06.03.2017
OS49	“Con pale e picconi a "caccia" di reperti, scoperta banda di tombaroli”, Newz.it, 11.11.2009

OS40	“Denunciato un tombarolo "insospettabile"”, Ansa, 13.03.2018
OS51	“Depredava il sito di Megara Iblea, arrestato tombarolo catanese”, LaSicilia, 28.06.2018
OS52	“Droni e tombaroli, amici stretti”, Quotidiano di Bari, 28.05.2016
OS53	“Due tombaroli scoperti e arrestati a Sassari”, La Nuova Sardegna, 29.05.2014
OS54	“Furti negli scavi archeologici: a processo 14 tombaroli”, Casertanews, 02.06.2018
OS55	“Furto reperti, preso “tombarolo””, Lacittàdisalerno.it, 24.03.2013
OS56	“Il ristoratore tombarolo, In casa un pezzo di museo messo all’asta su Internet”, Ragusah24, 21.04.2016
OS57	“In spiaggia con metal detector, denunciato presunto tombarolo”, Approdonews.it, 01.02.2016
OS58	“Lanuvio, Denunciati I Quattro "Tombaroli" Che Hanno Saccheggiato Il Santuario Di Giunone Sospita” L’Osservatorio d’Italia, 09.10.2012
OS59	“L’ex tombarolo di Herdonia non si è pentito. “Migliaia di tesori, ma solo per sfamare la famiglia”, IImagafono.eu, 03.06.2016
OS60	“Medico Di Giorno, Tombarolo Di Notte, Denunciato Dai Carabinieri A Piano Di Sorrento”, Sorrentonews, 13.09.2013
OS61	“Controlli dei carabinieri, denunciato un tombarolo”, MelfiLive.it, 13.03.2018
OS62	“Mesagne. I vigili denunciano un tombarolo”, Il Gazzettino di Brindisi, 13.01.2014
OS63	“Nascondeva in casa una sala del tesoro”, LaStampa, 25.02.2017
OS64	“Ostia Antica, bloccato tombarolo con coppe e vasi etruschi”, ilquotidianodellitorale.it, 21.11.2017
OS65	“Quando facevo il tombarolo”, Questotrentino, 09.05.2001
OS66	““Ha trafugato reperti", arresto convalidato per un ravanusano”, Agrigentonotizie, 23.08.2016
OS67	“Recuperati 200 reperti archeologici. Denunciato un tombarolo”, Gazzetta Ionica, 27.12.2016
OS68	“Col metal detector per rubare monete da un’area archeologica: arrestati”, Palermotoday, 25.08.2016
OS69	“Roma, sorpreso mentre ruba reperti archeologici: arrestato tombarolo 57enne di Anzio”, Il Messaggero.it, 26.02.2018
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OS279	“Scoperto in Italia traffico di beni archeologici verso la Svizzera”, SWI swissinfo.ch, 15.07.2001
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OS289	“Quando il patrimonio di tutti diventa un lucroso business”, tvsvizzera.it, 08.04.2018
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OS292	“Ritrovate opere antiche per 50 milioni Nel "tesoro" anche reperti sardi”, L'Unione Sarda.it, 21.01.2015
OS293	“Rapporto Ecomafia 2002”, Legambiente.it
OS294	“Furti d'arte: recuperato materiale archeologico, 5 arresti. Testimonianze IV-V secolo avanti cristo in Puglia”, Adnkronos, 21.11.2001

Annex E

Questionnaires

The illicit antiquities trade in Bulgaria

The actors of the market

1. Who are the actors involved in the illicit antiquities trade in Bulgaria?

2. What are the types of social relations among the actors? How are the co-offending patterns organised: Do actors associate for one criminal activity, or have a long-standing partnership perhaps in other criminal markets too?
3. How many people are arrested and prosecuted each year?
4. What shape the contemporary illicit antiquities trafficking does reflect in Bulgaria: a loose and interchangeable network, a stable network of individuals, a stable network of criminal groups, other form of criminal organisational?
5. Can the illicit antiquities trafficking in Bulgaria be defined as organised crime? Why?
6. To what extent, if any, there is an ethnical component in the actors involved?

The objects trafficked

7. What are the smuggled antiquities originated in Bulgaria?
8. What are the smuggled antiquities originated outside Bulgaria?
9. What is the extent of underwater archaeological heritage trafficked in Bulgaria?

Regional point of view

10. Where do the antiquities come from? Are the majority of antiquities nationally looted or are there different origin countries? Are there antiquities originated outside Bulgaria and smuggled through the region?
11. To what extent there is a regional illegal market in antiquities?
12. What are the main cities and/or region in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
13. There are cases of archaeological artefacts returned to countries in Bulgaria? From where?
14. Can you indicate one or more particularly important cases in relations to the illicit trafficking of antiquities in Bulgaria?

International dimension

15. Through which routes are the antiquities smuggled in and out Bulgaria?
16. What are the main destination countries?
17. Through which border crossings is the traffic conducted?
18. What are the main methods of traffic?
19. Can you indicate one or more particularly important cases of international dimensions involving Bulgaria?

Assessment of the market

20. What are the estimated figures of the market: how many objects are looted and trafficked per year? Are there statistics related to these figures?
21. What is the estimate revenue from the illicit trafficking in antiquities per year?
22. What is the ratio between legal and illegal incomes from this market?

Factors influencing the illicit market in antiquities

23. To what extent previous organisational forms of criminal market (for instance, drugs) facilitated the emergence of the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
24. To what extent the illicit antiquities trafficking interact with other criminal markets in the region?
25. To what extent the role of the Balkans as bridge towards the black markets in Europe has influenced the development of the illicit antiquities trade patterns in Bulgaria?
26. Did any change in the size of the market and in the typologies of actors involved occurred between 1980s and 1990s, and 1990s to now?
27. How does the legal market affect the illegal antiquities market?
28. What is the demand side for antiquities: the number and types of users, change of prices, influence of the government policy on illegal trade, changing attitudes of consumers/customers?
29. What is the supply side of antiquities: the intensity of cross-border traffic, fluctuation in quality and quantity of illegally sold antiquities?
30. What are the specific statutory factors that influence the illicit market in antiquities: changes in legislation, loopholes, etc?

Tools used in the illicit trafficking in antiquities

31. What are the laundering schemes utilised in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
32. What are the corruption schemes utilised in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
33. What groups of experts are used in this market (museum personnel, archaeologists, etc.)?
34. What is the extent of violence used in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
35. What is the extent of cyber-crime in the illicit market in antiquities?

The illicit antiquities trade in Italy

The actors of the market

1. Who are the actors involved in the illicit antiquities trade in Italy?
2. What are the types of social relations among the actors? How are the co-offending patterns organised: Do actors associate for one criminal activity, or have a long-standing partnership perhaps in other criminal markets too?
3. How many people are arrested and prosecuted each year?
4. What shape the contemporary illicit antiquities trafficking does reflect in Italy: a loose and interchangeable network, a stable network of individuals, a stable network of criminal groups, other form of criminal organisational?
5. Can the illicit antiquities trafficking in Italy be defined as organised crime? Why?
6. To what extent, if any, there is an ethnical component in the actors involved?

The objects trafficked

7. What are the smuggled antiquities originated in Italy?
8. What are the smuggled antiquities originated outside Italy?
9. What is the extent of underwater archaeological heritage trafficked in Italy?

Regional point of view

10. Where do the antiquities come from? Are the majority of antiquities nationally looted or are there different origin countries? Are there antiquities originated outside Italy and smuggled through the region?
11. To what extent there is a regional illegal market in antiquities?
12. What are the main cities and/or region in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
13. There are cases of archaeological artefacts returned to countries in Italy? From where?
14. Can you indicate one or more particularly important cases in relations to the illicit trafficking of antiquities in Italy?

International dimension

15. Through which routes are the antiquities smuggled in and out Italy?
16. What are the main destination countries?
17. Through which border crossings is the traffic conducted?
18. What are the main methods of traffic?
19. Can you indicate one or more particularly important cases of international dimensions involving Italy?

Assessment of the market

20. What are the estimated figures of the market: how many objects are looted and trafficked per year? Are there statistics related to these figures?
21. What is the estimate revenue from the illicit trafficking in antiquities per year?
22. What is the ratio between legal and illegal incomes from this market?

Factors influencing the illicit market in antiquities

23. To what extent previous organisational forms of criminal market (for instance, drugs) facilitated the emergence of the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
24. To what extent the illicit antiquities trafficking interact with other criminal markets in the region?
25. Did any change in the size of the market and in the typologies of actors involved occurred between 1980s and 1990s, and 1990s to now?
26. How does the legal market affect the illegal antiquities market?
27. What is the demand side for antiquities: the number and types of users, change of prices, influence of the government policy on illegal trade, changing attitudes of consumers/customers?
28. What is the supply side of antiquities: the intensity of cross-border traffic, fluctuation in quality and quantity of illegally sold antiquities?
29. What are the specific statutory factors that influence the illicit market in antiquities: changes in legislation, loopholes, etc?

Tools used in the illicit trafficking in antiquities

30. What are the laundering schemes utilised in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
31. What are the corruption schemes utilised in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
32. What groups of experts are used in this market (museum personnel, archaeologists, etc.)?
33. What is the extent of violence used in the illicit trafficking in antiquities?
34. What is the extent of cyber-crime in the illicit market in antiquities?

Annex F

Interviews

Code	Experts	Date, place and duration
I1	Prosecutor	29.01.2016 – phone and email interview, 1 hour
I2	Archaeologist	02.02.2016 – phone interview, 1 hour
I3	UNESCO	04.02.2016 – face-to-face, Venice, Italy, 1 hour
I4	Police officer, National Police	27.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,20 hours
I5	Police officer, National Police	05.08.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,5 hours
I6	Police officer	07.06.2016 – face-to-face, Bucharest, Romania, 1,5 hours
I7	Police officer	05.11.2016 – face-to-face, Bucharest, Romania, 2 hours
I8	Former prosecutor	31.05.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1 hour
I9	Director National History Museum	21.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2 hours
I10	Numismatic collector	11.04.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 45 minutes
I11	Employee, Ministry of Culture	26.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1 hour
I12	Former prosecutor	04.08.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,15 hours
I13	Police officer, Directorate Combating organized crime	10.06.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,30 hours
I14	Police officer, Directorate Combating organized crime	25.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,20 hours
I15	Director of National Archaeological Institute with Museum	26.07.2016 – fact-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 2,30 hours
I16	Archaeologist	29.04.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,5 hours
I17	Criminal law professor	09.06.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,30 hours
I18	Police officer, Border police	01.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1 hour
I19	Archaeologist	18.07.2016 – face-to-face, Sofia, Bulgaria, 1,30 hours
I20	Prosecutor	15.01.2016 – phone interview, Rome, Italy, 1,30 hours
I21	Carabinieri, Cultural Heritage	15.03.2018 – face-to-face, Rome, Italy, 1 hour
I22	Carabinieri, Cultural Heritage	22.06.2018 – face-to-face, Rome, Italy, 1,30 hours
I23	Archaeologist	23.02.2016 – face-to-face, Bologna, Italy, 1,5 hours

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