

## SUMMARY

### **Monumental and Cultural Practices for the Preservation, Enhancement, Management of Religious Monuments in Heraklion, Crete**

The object of this thesis is to study the preservation, enhancement and management of religious buildings as heritage from a cultural and social viewpoint. Specifically, it focuses on archaeological, architectural processes and the politics of uses and reuse of two religious/monumental sites in the Cretan city of Heraklion. The field of research includes the Monastery of Saint Peter of the Dominicans and the Museum of Christian Art and Church of St Catherine of Sinai, during the period from 1940 to present day. The intended approach utilizes archaeological and historical data in combination with ethnographic research in order to investigate shifts in the use and perception of certain religious shrines and to highlight the entanglements and assemblages of heritage-making, as a powerful process. Moreover, the analysis of research material based on concepts and theoretical models from Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies is also employed. The dissertation focuses on the following research questions of how social actors (individuals and institutions) “from up” (archaeologists, architects, church officials, institutional representatives of the city) and social actors “from bottom” (pilgrims, visitors) understand, value and negotiate the historical past of those places, and how the redefinitions of use of religious shrines’s are entangled with the practice of making «realms of memory», in the city. The investigation of those «case studies» can offer a «thick description» of local society’s collective representation, not only for those places, but as well as for the conception of its main history. The objective of this thesis is to highlight the potential historical, aesthetic, practical and ideological complexity, that sometimes emerges and opposes the classical archaeological approach. Methodologically, the research utilizes participatory observation, conduction of qualitative interviews, the use of ethnographic notes and audiovisual evidence and the study of heterogeneous archive material that is available.