

Mind the Gap: Prediction and Performance in Respect to Visitor Numbers at the New Acropolis Museum

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Abstract

This paper attempts to understand why the initial predictions of attendance at the New Acropolis Museum proved highly inaccurate when compared against visitor numbers recorded in the five years following the museum's inauguration. It will be argued that the exaggerated estimates of visitation at the museum are the result of political factors, primarily the interest in bringing about the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens. The desire for the disputed sculptures encouraged Greek officials, as well as campaigners seeking the repatriation of the contentious sculptures, to inflate projections of attendance in an effort to bolster claims for the restitution of the Marbles.

Key Words: New Acropolis Museum, Elgin Marbles, Parthenon, attendance

Introduction

Located just 300 metres to the south-east of the Athenian Acropolis, and offering 14,000 square metres of exhibition space, the New Acropolis Museum was officially opened in June 2009, its inauguration greeted with intense public and media interest. With the design and construction project spread over more than 30 years, and completed at the cost of €129 million, the museum had also been under intense scrutiny from long before its completion. As the home to roughly half the surviving sculptures that once adorned the Parthenon, there has also been considerable political interest in the New Acropolis Museum which was always intended to play a major role in Greek attempts to repatriate the Marbles removed from the ancient temple at the start of the nineteenth century by Lord Elgin, and which are currently housed in the British Museum. (Following Merryman (2006: 98), this article uses the term 'Elgin Marbles' to differentiate the sculptures currently residing in the British Museum from the rest the surviving Parthenon Marbles, the vast majority of which are now on display in the top-floor gallery of the New Acropolis Museum.) Despite opening as the recession began to impact on Greece, the New Acropolis Museum nevertheless immediately established itself as the most well-attended museum in the country, and over the past five years it has become the second most visited cultural attraction in Athens, topped only by the archaeological site of the Acropolis itself.

A range of academics and museum professionals have offered opinions regarding the new museum. The architects and their advisors involved with the design process have presented detailed discussions of the aims and intentions that guided the modern design and construction of the building (e.g. Bernard Tschumi Architects 2009; Mantis 2010; Pandermalis 2010), while other professional architects have expressed some rather less-than-complimentary opinions regarding the appearance of the large museum constructed from concrete and glass (e.g. Lepicovsky 2009). Those affiliated with the various international campaign groups intent on repatriating the Elgin Marbles to Athens have been eager to endorse the design of the new museum and the layout of the galleries inside (e.g. Flynn 2006; Hitchens 2009), while archaeologists and museologists have offered more balanced assessments of the museum and its exhibition design that blend praise with criticism (e.g. James 2009; Beard 2010: 190-197; Eiteljorg 2010; Caskey 2011; Plantzos 2011). Such was the importance of the New Acropolis Museum that the international press also devoted numerous articles to the building and its

contents: Nicolai Ouroussoff (2007), the architecture critic for the *New York Times*, offered praise for a what he considered to be a 'building that is both an enlightening meditation on the Parthenon and a mesmerizing work in its own right'; by contrast *The Guardian* journalist Simon Jenkins (2009) was rather less effusive with his praise, comparing the exterior of the museum to 'the police headquarters of a banana republic'.

One feature of the New Acropolis Museum that has, however, previously received only cursory attention is that of visitor numbers. Yet comparison of the initial estimates of visitation against the fluctuating levels of attendance recorded over the course of the first five years of the museum's life reveal that the original predictions were wildly inaccurate. It is the contention of this paper that the attendance estimates made by Greek culture officials and politicians, and supported by international campaigners seeking the return of the Elgin Marbles, were exceedingly optimistic and the museum never had any credible possibility of fulfilling such expectations. It will be argued that, had greater care and attention been paid to records of visitation at the nearby Acropolis, then considerably more accurate estimates of attendance at the New Acropolis Museum could have been generated. Unfortunately, even in the years following the opening of the museum, poor use of statistical material has continued to provide erroneous and misleading information concerning levels of attendance. It is the belief of this article that the high profile nature of the dispute regarding ownership of the Elgin Marbles, and the political and cultural importance that is attached to these sculptures, played the principal role in the exaggerated estimates of attendance in the years leading up to the opening of the museum. It is also possible that more recent inaccuracies regarding the calculation of visitor numbers at the museum in the years since its inauguration have also been proffered to the media and international campaign organizations in an effort to reinforce the argument in favour of the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens.

Between Estimates and Actuality

Interviewed by *Time* in October 2007, Professor Dimitrios Pandermalis, President of the Acropolis Museum's Organizing Committee, and currently the President of the Museum, was absolutely clear about the number of visitors he expected to see annually coming through the doors once the New Acropolis Museum finally opened to the public: 'More than two million. Today the Acropolis gets about one and a half million. And we believe the new museum will attract more' (Lacayo 2007). Writing in the *Museums Journal* a year earlier, Tom Flynn, an art historian and a leading advocate for the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens, provided an even more optimistic assessment of the likely popularity of the museum: 'The old Acropolis Museum currently attracts around 1.5 million people each year. The Greeks hope their New Acropolis Museum will at least double that figure' (Flynn 2006). As early as 2001, the British MP Eddie O'Hara tabled a Private Members' Bill in the House of Commons which also claimed that, once opened, there would be an 'estimated three million visitors per annum to the Acropolis Museum from around the world' (O'Hara 2001).

Even as Greece began to suffer from the effects of the economic crisis, officials in Athens were still adamant that the New Acropolis Museum would deliver about two million visitors annually. Thus, in June 2009, with the financial crisis well underway and just as the museum was about to officially open to the public, it was noted in the Greek press: 'The museum is also expected to ... [attract] some 10,000 visitors a day and about 2 million every year, an in-flux that Culture Minister Antonis Samaras believes will shift public opinion in favor of the Parthenon Marbles' return' (Kitsantonis 2009). The future Greek Prime Minister had already used the predicted attendance at the museum to push for the return of the sculptures from London; a month earlier he had emphasised the importance of museum visitation to the repatriation issue: 'The presence of thousands of visitors will be much stronger than any public statement [regarding the disputed sculptures]' (Paphitis 2009). In the five years since it opened, however, the New Acropolis Museum has failed to live up to the predictions made by Greek politicians and museum officials, or those offered by international campaigners seeking the return of the Elgin Marbles.

Spurred on by the novelty of the newly opened New Acropolis Museum, together with an entrance fee of just €1, visitor numbers during the first official count carried out by the museum

for the 11 month period June 2009 to May 2010 were a highly creditable 1,950,539 (Table 1). This number appears to have increased a little over 60,000 by the time the museum reached its one-year anniversary, with Professor Pandermalis informing the Greek press that attendance at the museum during the first full year of operation had reached 2,010,641 (*Athens News Agency* 2010). See also Tsiotsou and Mavragani 2013: 45-46, quoted below, p. 178). As such, the New Acropolis Museum reached the 2 million visitors anticipated by Pandermalis, though fell well short of the 3 million that O'Hara and Flynn estimated would be the annual visitation.

The New Acropolis Museum also proved to be the most popular cultural attraction in Greece, and in the calendar year of 2010 the Hellenic Statistical Authority (prior to 2010 the National Statistical Service of Greece) recorded that more people visited the museum (1,355,890) than were actually venturing up onto the rock of the Acropolis (993,496. Hellenic Statistical Authority 2011: 465, 467. See also *AFP* 2011; Labropoulou 2011: 13-14; Bounia 2012: 138. See below, Table 5). However, an increase in the museum's entrance costs from €1 to €5, added to the deepening of the recession in Greece, and possibly a decline in visitor curiosity as the novelty of the new museum wore off (Gill 2013: 234), contributed to a devastating tail-off in the numbers visiting the New Acropolis Museum during the second 12 months of operation (June 2010-May 2011). As can be seen in Table 1, official visitation figures compiled by the staff of the New Acropolis Museum (as calculated from the sale of visitor tickets in the museum), recorded a precipitous drop in attendance of well over half a million during the museum's second year. Further declines in visitation, though not as sharp, were also recorded over the following two years. Attendance records from the museum do, at least, appear to indicate that the decline in visitation has stabilized, with a sizable increase in visitation of well over 100,000 during the last year of operation (June 2013-May 2014): hopefully the beginning of an upward trajectory that will continue over coming years.

According to the official attendance figures produced by the New Acropolis Museum, the total number of visitors to the New Acropolis Museum since inauguration in June 2009 through to the end of May 2014, therefore, stands at 6,601,898. To welcome this many visitors over the course of five years is no small achievement for any museum. Nonetheless, the visitor total is a poor return on what Greek officials and international Marbles campaigners had been predicting the museum would achieve. Total attendance across the first five years of operation has therefore fallen almost 4.4 million short of the figure predicted by both the museum's president and suggested by the current Greek prime minister. It is also about 8.4 million fewer visitors than Tom Flynn considered acceptable to Greek officials, as well as the estimate that Eddie O'Hara proffered to British MPs. The latest annual report published by the museum also makes it clear that, rather than the 10,000 visitors that the Greek Culture Ministry had envisaged would be coming through the doors of the museum each day, 'In its five years of operation the museum has serviced large crowds with an on-average of over 3000 visitors daily' (Acropolis Museum 2014a).

Year	Visitor Numbers	Variation in Visitors From Previous Year
June 2009 – May 2010	1,950,539	--
June 2010 – May 2011	1,309,859	Decline of 640,680
June 2011 – May 2012	1,143,886	Decline of 165,973
June 2012 – May 2013	1,036,059	Decline of 107,827
June 2013 – May 2014	1,161,555	Increase of 125,496

Table 1: Official museum records of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum, June 2009–May 2014 Figures derived from New Acropolis Museum 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014. Figures for the period June 2009–May 2010 confirmed through the museum's enquiry desk. Pers. Comm. 30 October 2012, and 2 July 2013.¹

It might be argued that there is a natural tendency for the staff of all museums to overestimate projections of attendance for a variety of political or financial reasons, while politicians are also expected to talk-up the prospects of landmark construction projects. However, visitation at the New Acropolis Museum has fallen so far short of the initial estimates that it is difficult to pass off the discrepancies in the figures as the result of a somewhat over-exuberant approach to attendance prediction. The vast disparity between prediction and performance at the museum

is simply too large to be dismissed as over-optimism. Rather, it is an exaggeration of annual attendance by as much as 56 per cent, and involving millions of people.

Figures compiled by the Hellenic Statistical Authority provide a similar picture of the attendance at the New Acropolis Museum (Table 2). Rather than the system used in the official records of the New Acropolis Museum, which takes June as the starting point for each annual count of visitors, the Hellenic Statistical Authority follows the calendar year. Thus, from January to December 2010 – the first full year in which the New Acropolis Museum was open to the public – 1,355,890 people were recorded as coming through the museum’s doors. However, attendance declined by 111,188 in 2011, and dropped a further 224,240 in 2012, before visitation finally rallied in 2013, increasing by 70,677. According to the Hellenic Statistical Authority, the New Acropolis Museum therefore welcomed 4,712,193 visitors through its doors in its first four full calendar years. Very similar figures have also been reproduced and widely circulated in *The Art Newspaper’s* annual calculations of visitation at international exhibitions and museums, which records total attendance at the New Acropolis Museum since the first full year of operation at 4,612,027 (Table 3).²

Year	Visitor Numbers	Variation in Visitors From Previous Year
2010	1,355,890	--
2011	1,244,702	Decline of 111,188
2012	1,020,462	Decline of 224,240
2013	1,091,139	Increase of 70,677

Table 2: Visitor numbers for the New Acropolis Museum, 2010–2013 as published by the Hellenic Statistical Authority *Figures derived from the Hellenic Statistical Authority 2012: 62 (for years 2010 & 2011); 2014: 3 (for years 2011, 2012, 2013).*

Year	Visitor Numbers	Variation in Visitors From Previous Year	Position on the ‘League Table’ of International Museum Visitation
2010	1,355,720	--	25
2011	1,244,702	Decline of 111,018	38
2012	1,020,462	Decline of 224,240	59
2013	1,091,143	Increase of 70,681	57

Table 3: Visitor numbers for the New Acropolis Museum, 2010-2013 as published in *The Art Newspaper* *Figures derived from The Art Newspaper. 2011: 24 (for year 2010); 2012: 37 (for year 2011); 2013: 29 (for year 2012); 2014: 15 (for year 2013).*

Predictions and Propaganda

The vast gulf that exists between the initial estimates of attendance at the New Acropolis Museum and the visitation figures generated over the course of the past five years begs the question of whether the predictions of visitor numbers could have been more accurately calculated. Even a cursory examination of the attendance records from the nearby archaeological site of the Acropolis would certainly indicate that visitation to the New Acropolis Museum was unlikely to reach the levels estimated by the Greek government. It was, after all, attendance to the hill-top site that provided the statistical foundation upon which were built the predictions of Pandermalis (Lacayo 2007) and Flynn (2006): both scholars claimed that, when the New Acropolis Museum finally opened, attendance would greatly exceed the 1.5 million visitors who annually toured the archaeological site and the old museum located on the eastern end of the rock. However, records compiled by the National Statistical Service of Greece clearly demonstrate that annual visitation to the famous hilltop site never actually reached, let alone surpassed, 1.26 million in the ten years prior to these predictions. In fact, the average number of visitors to the rock each year in the period 1996–2005 was 1.05 million, almost half-a-million short of the figure stated by the two scholars (Table 4). These records were readily available and in the year the New Acropolis Museum was inaugurated it was correctly noted by the academic Nicholas James that, ‘Since the early 1970s, annual totals [to the Acropolis] have varied around a million

visitors, fluctuating in response to worldwide conditions for tourism (exchange rates, security etc.) and to the policy on charging Greek citizens for entry’ (2009: 1147). Attendance figures from the Acropolis, therefore, correspond reasonably closely to levels of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum, with the latter having welcomed between 1 and 1.24 million visitors during each calendar year since the end of the first full year of operation (see Tables 2 & 2a). Had Pandermalis and Flynn paid closer attention to the attendance records from the Acropolis, visitation at the associated museum could – and indeed should – have been predicted with far greater accuracy than proved to be the case.

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Visitors to the Acropolis	1,177,897	1,200,800	1,248,469	989,877	1,253,259

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Visitors to the Acropolis	1,132,973	877,502	770,010	821,657	1,002,459

Table 4 *Figures from National Statistical Service of Greece 1999: 423, 2000: 458, 2001: 444, 2004: 492, 2006: 453, 2007: 489. (Although visitation to the Acropolis had reached 1.5 million on one year in the 1980s, a rise in the cost of admission substantially reduced annual attendance over the following decades).*

For Pandermalis and Flynn to envisage that the New Acropolis Museum would welcome two or three million visitors each year also required roughly 100–200 per cent more people to visit the museum than were already visiting the rock of the Acropolis. It would be an understatement to say this was assuming a great deal of the New Acropolis Museum. Even had Greece avoided the economic recession, it would still have been exceptionally optimistic to expect double or triple the number of people visiting the hilltop of the Acropolis, with the iconic temple in honour of Athena Parthenos crowning its summit, to go and visit the new museum. Indeed, long before the opening of the New Acropolis Museum, it was clear that the trend among tourists to Greece indicated the opposite was more likely to be true; the majority of overseas visitors to the country are generally more likely to visit archaeological sites rather than museums (Kalogeropoulou 1996: 136).

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
Visitors to the Acropolis	993,496	1,317,572	1,374,365	1,390,056
Visitors to the New Acropolis Museum	1,355,890	1,244,702	1,020,462	1,091,139

Table 5 *Figures for the Acropolis derived from Hellenic Statistical Authority 2011: 465 (for year 2010); 2014: 3 (for years 2011, 2012 & 2013). Figures for the New Acropolis Museum derived from the Hellenic Statistical Authority 2012: 62 (for years 2010 & 2011), 2014: 3 (for years 2011, 2012, 2013). Comparison of the attendance records derived from the archaeological site and the New*

Acropolis Museum since 2010 clearly demonstrate that people are more interested in standing on the summit of the Acropolis, even with the full price ticket costing €12, than part with €5 to gain admittance to the nearby museum (**Table 5**). Indeed, only in 2010, the first full calendar year of operation, has the New Acropolis Museum recorded a greater number of visitors than the archaeological site. In the three calendar years that have followed, the museum has recorded an overall decline in annual attendance of 264,751. By contrast, visitation to the rock of the Acropolis has grown year-on-year and from 2010 to 2013 there was an increase in annual visitation of 396,560. Indeed, if the number of visitors to the hilltop site keeps growing at the present rate, then visitation to the Acropolis should finally reach the 1.5 million that both Pandermalis and Flynn erroneously claimed had already been the annual average back in 2006 and 2007.

The inexplicable exaggeration of the attendance figures from the Acropolis during the 1990s and early 2000s, compounded by the unlikely claim that, once opened, the New Acropolis Museum was expected to receive 100–200 per cent more visitors than the nearby archaeological site, appear to be the immediate cause of the over-optimistic attendance predictions for the museum. Why the faulty figures, and the estimates that they generated, were not spotted far earlier is, however, possibly due to the highly politicized nature of the New Acropolis Museum and especially its role in the campaign to reclaim the Elgin Marbles.

As has already been seen, the close association of the New Acropolis Museum with the campaign to repatriate the Elgin Marbles was clearly referenced by the, then, Culture Minister Antonis Samaras in 2009. The role of the museum in applying further pressure on the Trustees of the British Museum, and indeed the British Government, is also explicit in earlier comments made by a variety of Greek politicians in the years leading up to the inauguration of the New Acropolis Museum. For example, touring the construction site in the summer of 2006, Culture Minister Giorgos Voulgarakis would emphasize that, 'Greece now has the infrastructure to accommodate all the missing parts of the Parthenon' (*Kathimerini* 2006). The following year, Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis stressed that 'the reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures remains the great goal. I am confident that the new Acropolis Museum, work for whose completion is now going on with a speedy pace, will add new and very strong arguments to this effort' (*Athens New Agency* 2007). In 2008, the new Culture Minister, Mihalis Liapis, also clearly articulated how the building project was aimed specifically at reclaiming Elgin's trophies: 'This modern, functional and safe museum will be a strong argument against those who oppose the Marbles' return.¹³ The desire of Greek politicians to associate themselves with the New Acropolis Museum, and the role the building was clearly intended to play in the recovery of the sculptures from London, is understandable given the unique importance that the Marbles generate within Greek politics.

All political parties, from the ultra-nationalist to the Communist, participate in the national crusade for the restitution of the sculptures. Since the affair has become a "national issue" it has been sacralized and is beyond any serious criticism ... The crusade also confers authority on the Minister for Culture, who is seen as advancing one of the most important national issues of her/his time. (Hamilakis 2007: 256-59)⁴

Given the prime role in the repatriation campaign that had been allotted to the New Acropolis Museum, then it becomes understandable that Greek politicians and culture officials would wish to emphasize its favourable attributes and exaggerate the levels of visitation that were expected once its doors were opened to the public. Nonetheless, as Alexandra Bounia has recently noted of the New Acropolis Museum: 'Since its very presence had from the beginning been associated with the return of the marbles, its political role was understood as only half-complete' (2012: 143). It may even have been the case that Greek politicians were hoping extremely high estimates of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum would further increase the pressure on the British authorities and induce them to return the Elgin Marbles in time for the official opening of the building in 2009, thus completing the dream that had brought the museum into being.

That the New Acropolis Museum had, as one of its primary objectives, the aim of facilitating the repatriation of the Elgin Marbles is also clear from the nature of the design and

construction of the building. The 1989 architectural competition for the museum made plain this intention when it was noted: 'the envisaged return of the Parthenon pediment marbles (the so-called "Elgin Marbles") necessitates the creation of corresponding areas for their display.' The design programme would later add: 'Since the repatriation of the original Parthenon sculptures is envisaged, room must be provided to facilitate their display together with the remaining architectural members and sculptures which are found in Greece' (Hellenic Ministry of Culture 1989: 23, 49. Quoted in Lending 2009: 571). It has thus been recently stated that the links made between the New Acropolis Museum and the return of the Elgin Marbles in the 1989 architectural competition had, in effect, made the design brief a 'political-legal and museum-historical manifesto in disguise' (Lending 2009: 572).

The winning design of the 1989 architectural competition was eventually shelved, necessitating a fourth and final competition that was run in 2000, with Bernard Tschumi's design declared the competition winner in October 2001 (Rutten 2009: 137). Over the following years it was this design that would take its concrete and glass form to become the New Acropolis Museum inaugurated in June 2009. (For the four museum design competitions spread between 1976–2000, see, for example, Fouseki. 2006: 536; Pandermalis 2009: 24.) While the architectural brief for the fourth and last competition was never made public, Tschumi has, nevertheless, acknowledged that he was well aware of the innate relationship that existed between the campaign to repatriate the Elgin Marbles and the construction of the New Acropolis Museum. The Swiss-French architect would thus write of the difficulties he faced when attempting to 'design a structure whose unstated mandate is to facilitate the reunification of the Parthenon Frieze' (2009: 82).

Given this intimate relationship that binds the New Acropolis Museum to the Greek desire to reclaim the Marbles from London, there is the disturbing possibility that the estimates of annual visitation at the museum offered by Greek politicians and culture officials, and subsequently referenced by international campaigners, were deliberate exaggerations intended to bolster repatriation claims for the Elgin Marbles. There is certainly no doubt that the over-optimistic predictions of visitor numbers in the run-up to the opening of the New Acropolis Museum were used to add greater weight to the ongoing political and cultural campaign to reclaim the sculptures from London, whether offered to the Greek press by Samaras, proffered to the international media by Pandermalis, placed before British politicians by O'Hara, or presented to an academic and professional audience by Flynn.

Decline and Denial

With the estimates of the New Acropolis Museum's visitor numbers that were offered by heritage professionals such as Pandermalis and Flynn, as well as politicians such as Samaras and O'Hara, all failing to materialize at the museum, it is perhaps understandable that Greek culture officials have seemingly avoided drawing attention to the decline in visitor numbers. Nonetheless, there is little doubt that officials at the New Acropolis Museum have been well aware of the fall in visitation, both through their own attendance records as well as those published by the Hellenic Statistical Authority (**Tables 1 & 2**). In the museum's annual highlights report published in the summer of 2011, it was also proudly noted that, during the previous calendar year, 'the Acropolis Museum managed to achieve a ranking of 25 in the annual breakdown of museums internationally by visitor numbers, released by *The Art Newspaper*' (Acropolis Museum 2011; **Table 3**). However, when the next annual international 'league table' of museums and galleries was published in *The Art Newspaper* in April 2012, the New Acropolis Museum had dropped 13 places; the museum then fell an additional 21 places in 2012, before rising two places to finish 2013 in position 57; an overall drop of 32 places in three years (**Table 3**). It is, therefore, perhaps unsurprising to find that all the annual reports published by the New Acropolis Museum after 2011 have neglected to make any further reference to *The Art Newspaper's* attendance 'league tables' (Acropolis Museum 2012, 2013, 2014).

There has also been an almost complete lack of scholarly interest in the decline in visitation at the New Acropolis Museum. It has recently been noted that '[t]he main arena for public debates with regard to cultural matters in Greece in the last two decades has been the major national newspapers' (Bounia 2012: 133); both the Greek and international press did

indeed carry articles referencing the strong early performance of the New Acropolis Museum during the opening weeks and months of the museum, and the strong visitation numbers for the first year of operation (e.g. *AFP* 2010, 2011; *Athens News Agency* 2009). However, the newspapers failed to make any mention of the dramatic drop in attendance that took place over the following couple of years. This preference of focusing on the positive aspects of the New Acropolis Museum, while downplaying the more worrying aspects of the attendance records, is exemplified by the brief report published in *Greek Reporter* in August 2013, in which it was noted: 'The Acropolis Museum, which exhibits findings of the archaeological site of the Acropolis of Athens, ranks first in visitation [of museums in Greece]' (Korologou 2013). Just two days later, this article was picked up by *Elginism*, a website established and operated on behalf of campaigners advocating the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens, which re-ran the story, prefixing it with the comment: 'The New Acropolis Museum continues to go from strength to strength, topping the lists as the most popular museum in Greece.'⁵ While factually accurate, such reports failed to make any mention of the museum's own annual *Highlights Report*, published slightly earlier that summer, in which the figures, when contrasted with those of previous years, made it abundantly clear that attendance at the museum had dropped to a new low, declining by more than a 100,000 relative to the previous year, while annual visitation was down by about 900,000 compared with just three years earlier (Acropolis Museum 2013; see **Table 1**).

Academic publications have also failed to address the dramatic decline in levels of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum and, while content to emphasize the relatively high attendance during the initial months following the museum's inauguration, there has been a similar lack of interest in, or indeed acknowledgement of, the sharp fall in visitor numbers that began in 2010. Thus, in 2013, the academics Rodoula Tsiotsou (University of Macedonia) and Eleni Mavragani (University of the Aegean, Chios) made great play of the attendance figures from the museum during its first year. The introduction of their 2013 paper, 'Marketing Strategy of Museums: The Case of the New Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece', thus began with an extremely upbeat assessment of attendance at the newly opened museum:

In June 20, 2009, the new Acropolis Museum opened in Athens attracting the interest of national and international visitors and media. In June 2010, the museum announced that it accepted 1,700,000 visitors the first 9 months of its operation and reached more than 2,000,000 visitors on its first anniversary (Adamopoulou 2010). Since its first year of operation, the new Acropolis Museum achieved high visibility, attracted the interest of a number of visitors, became a major attraction of the city of Athens and overall created a positive image globally. (Tsiotsou and Mavragani 2013: 45-46)

Tsiotsou and Mavragani's paper appeared in the book, *Best Practices in Marketing and Their Impact Quality of Life Applying Quality of Life Research*, published in June 2013. Given the publication date, it is understandable that the chapter did not include the New Acropolis Museum's attendance records spanning June 2012 to May 2013, during which visitation reached its lowest ebb of just over 1 million (**Table 1**). It might, nonetheless, be expected that the authors would, at the least, have referenced the rapid drop in visitor numbers that set in from June 2010 and was clearly evident in the museum's *Highlights Report June 2010 – May 2011. Year Two*, released online in the summer of 2011 (Acropolis Museum 2011). The third year attendance figures at the New Acropolis Museum, revealing a decline of 806,653 visitors compared to the first year records (**Table 1**), were also released an entire year before Tsiotsou and Mavragani's article was published and might therefore reasonably be expected to have been included in their study. Attendance at the museum compiled and published by the Hellenic Statistical Authority, and more widely disseminated by *The Art Newspaper*, covering at least the first two, and much of the third, years of the museum's operation was also available well in advance of the book's publication. However, there is no reference in Tsiotsou and Mavragani's paper to the precipitous drop in visitation at the New Acropolis Museum during its second year of operation. Instead, the museum is held up as a shining beacon of success, and the paper claims in its epilogue that '[t]he new museum of Acropolis constitutes the benchmark for all other museums in Greece which ... have a very low visiting rate.' The Greek authors would

continue by noting that, despite some underlying problems such as understaffing, as well as initial teething problems, nevertheless, 'the new Acropolis Museum achieved its goals: to attract global attention, to reclaim the return of the Acropolis marbles from the British National Museum, to attract more than 2,000,000 visitors and to attract and educate Greek visitors and especially pupils' (Tsiotsou and Mavragani 2013: 58). The New Acropolis Museum is undoubtedly a valuable cultural resource that can be enjoyed by both Greeks and overseas visitors, while it also provides a powerful new weapon in the armoury of those seeking the repatriation of the Elgin marbles from London. However, it is clearly a long way from fulfilling the goal of providing in excess of the 2 million visitors that Greek academics like Tsiotsou and Mavragani – or indeed the museum's president and the current Greek prime minister – clearly believed to be the annual attendance target of the museum.

The apparent desire to put a positive spin on attendance, and a general lack of interest or concern regarding the rapid decline in visitation at the New Acropolis Museum following its first year of operation, let alone the failure of the museum to attain the annual visitor numbers of 2–3 million that were originally estimated, is partly understandable and may stem from a combination of an unwillingness to swallow national pride at the underperformance of such a landmark heritage project, together with a reluctance to undermine one of the arguments recently promoted in favour of repatriating the Elgin Marbles to Athens. Nevertheless, if new strategies are to be devised to boost visitor numbers to the museum in the future, then there needs to be an acceptance that a problem exists before it can be meaningfully addressed, or new approaches to increase attendance set in place. Aside from a recent passing reference to the drop in visitation at the museum by Professor David Gill (2013: 234), there appears to have been no acknowledgement of the problem of low levels of visitation until a short comment piece was published in the *Museums Journal* in September 2013 which claimed: 'Restitutionists petitioning for the return of Elgin's keepsakes have greeted the disappointing attendance figures at the New Acropolis Museum with deafening silence – hardly surprising since drawing attention to the lacklustre performance can only damage attempts to repatriate the marbles' (Beresford 2013a; see also, Beresford 2013b). It was a conclusion that drew an immediate response from campaigners advocating the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens. Despite presenting the figure of 3 million annual visitors to the New Acropolis Museum in his parliamentary Early Day Motion of 2001, the former MP, Eddie O'Hara – now the Chairman of the 'British Committee for the Reunification of the Parthenon Marbles' (BCRPM), as well as Honorary President of the closely affiliated campaign group 'Marbles Reunited' – would nevertheless comment of the article: 'Attendance figures are irrelevant to the case for reunification of the Parthenon sculptures.' Such views were shared by Marlen Godwin, also a member of the BCRPM, who claimed, 'We are not silent, nor do we feel that visitor numbers are the real issue' (see Beresford 2013a: O'Hara comment, 5 September; Godwin comment, 3 September). In addition to overlooking the claims made by O'Hara to British MPs over a decade earlier, it would appear that both these members of the BCRPM chose to overlook statements put out by other members of their Committee. Tom Flynn, for example, also happens to be an active member of the BCRPM, and he had clearly noted in 2006 that at least 3 million visitors per annum was the attendance target that Greek officials were aiming for when the New Acropolis Museum finally opened its doors. Furthermore, Professor Anthony Snodgrass, who was Chairman of the BCRPM until late 2010, had also used attendance figures to highlight the success of the museum, writing in the journal *Antiquity*: 'In its first year, the NAM [New Acropolis Museum] attracted over 2 million visitors, already many more than have entered the Duveen Gallery in London in any year (though the British Museum can hide this by citing only its total annual visitor numbers)' (Snodgrass 2011: 630).⁶ If levels of visitation to the New Acropolis Museum really are as 'irrelevant to the case for reunification of the Parthenon sculptures' as O'Hara has recently claimed, then not only has the Chairman of the BCRPM performed a volte-face from the position he held in 2001, but he is also out of step with his predecessor in the post and other members of his committee, as well as Greek politicians such as Antonis Samaras, or culture officials such as Professor Pandermalis, both of whom have also clearly referenced museum attendance as a factor in the return of the Marbles to Athens.

Perhaps most surprising in the claims of repatriation campaigners such as O'Hara and Godwin that levels of museum visitation should play no role in the debate concerning

the repatriation of the Elgin Marbles was that both BCRPM members, together with other leading Marbles campaigners drawn from around the world, had attended the colloquy, 'The Reunification of the Parthenon Marbles', held in London in June 2012. Though not personally present at the conference, the president of the New Acropolis Museum nevertheless provided a short note entitled, 'A Brief Message From Professor Pandermalis', which was included in the colloquy's programme. In the opening paragraph of his message, Pandermalis proudly proclaimed that there had been 'over 5 million visitors [to the New Acropolis Museum] in its first three years' (2012). The President of the New Acropolis Museum was, therefore, clearly using visitor numbers to emphasize what he would go on to refer to as the museum's 'third exceptionally successful year of operation.'

The claim by Professor Pandermalis that there had been more than 5 million visitors to the New Acropolis Museum over its first three years of operation also artificially inflated the museum's attendance. There were, in fact, only 4,404,284 visitors officially logged by the staff of the museum over the first three years of operation (**Table 1**). Pandermalis thus managed to find well over half-a-million (595,716) extra visitors during the same period. Just how the museum's president managed to make such a miscalculation and conjure as many phantom visitors to his museum as populate a city as large as Las Vegas is unclear. It may well be the case that, like his earlier mistake in claiming almost half-a-million additional annual visitors to the rock of the Acropolis than was actually the case, his latest exaggerated figures were merely the result of a mathematical error. However, if this was the case, then it appears somewhat strange that in the annual highlights report, published by the New Acropolis Museum in the very same month as the colloquy was held in London, Pandermalis would slightly more accurately refer to 'the *almost* 5 million visitors to the museum of the past three years' (Acropolis Museum 2012; my emphasis). Even then, however, it is still rather a stretch to round 4.4 up to 5 million.⁷

It is perhaps to be expected, if nonetheless still rather unfortunate, that Pandermalis' over-optimistic figure of 5 million-plus visitors to the New Acropolis Museum was quickly taken up by those campaigning for the return of the Elgin Marbles. The 2012 colloquy held in London was, after all, an event jointly organized by repatriation campaign groups based in Britain, Australia and the USA, while representatives of groups from South Africa, Switzerland, and of course the Greek government, also provided speeches at the conference held in London's Hellenic Centre. Pandermalis' exaggerated attendance figures were thus distributed directly to many of the most politically influential organizations and individuals lobbying for the return of the Elgin Marbles to Athens. These groups would then disseminate the exaggerated figures to a wider audience and, despite the claims by BCRPM members O'Hara and Godwin that figures of museum attendance are 'irrelevant' to the cause of repatriation, nonetheless, their committee referenced Pandermalis' figure of 'over 5 million visitors' on its website: in the section rather grandly entitled, 'Refuting the British Museum's Statements', the wayward statistical information supplied by the museum's president was accepted at face value and the figures used to undermine the British Museum's claims to the Marbles.⁸

Effects of Economic Recession

It might be argued with some credibility that, had the economic environment in Greece not deteriorated in the years following 2008, then the initial predictions of attendance at the New Acropolis Museum may have been considerably closer to being realized. Indeed, there is little doubt that the level of visitation at the museum partly reflects the Greek economic recession and its impact on the tourism sector. It has, therefore, been recently claimed that any discussion of attendance at museums or heritage sites must be measured against prevailing trends in tourism (Cellini and Cuccia 2013). Nevertheless, as can be seen from **Table 6**, while the numbers of international tourists coming to Greece did indeed drop from a high point of 16.2 million in 2007, they still held up remarkably well considering the socio-economic crisis affecting the country, as well as the adverse publicity Greece suffered as a result of violent demonstrations, strikes forcing the closure of museums and archaeological sites, and frequent political deadlock (e.g. Gill 2013: 236; Howery 2013: 231). In fact, throughout the first three years of the financial crisis – from 2008 to 2010 – tourist numbers to Greece remained higher than any year prior to 2006. By 2011, the numbers of international visitors to the country actually outstripped pre-

recession figures, and they continued to grow in 2012 and again in 2013. The outlook for the Greek tourism industry in 2014, and on into the immediate future, is also extremely positive (e.g. *To Vima* 2014).

International Arrivals into Greece	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
	12.5	11.7	14.4	15.2	16.2	15.9	14.9	15.0	16.4	16.9	20.1*

Table 6: International arrivals into the airports of Greece, 2003–2013 Figures derived from SETE 2012. * Provisional data (and also including cruise passengers) from SETE 2014.

With popular tourist destinations such as Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey undergoing political unrest, while other Mediterranean countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Libya and Algeria are even more unstable, a good deal of tourist traffic appears to have been redirected towards Greece. It was, therefore, emphasized in the Greek press in August 2013: 'After the temporary gains recorded in June, partly as a result of rioting in Turkey, Greece has recorded a significant increase in bookings for September and October that is attributed to ongoing unrest in neighboring Egypt' (Kousounis 2013; see also Mayerowitz 2011; Smith 2011; Smith 2013; Kingsley 2014). In the short-term at least, the tourist industry in Greece appears to be in rude health. If figures projected for 2014 prove correct, then they bode well for future attendance at the New Acropolis Museum, and indeed other museums and archaeological sites across Greece, all of which should all be looking to benefit from this upsurge in overseas visitors.

At the risk of sounding overly pessimistic, however, dependence on the continuing political instability of neighbouring countries scarcely guarantees a bright long-term future for visitation to the New Acropolis Museum, or for Greek tourism as a whole, especially while Greece remains a member of the Eurozone and retains a currency that will often make the country a relatively expensive destination compared to many of its non-Eurozone competitors. Recent claims by the Greek prime minister that tourism to the country might exceed 30 million over the next decade (Kousounis 2014), while 'more optimistic predictions suggest 40 million tourists by 2015!' (Karakousis 2014), therefore have to be treated with caution. Even with the rapid increase in Greek tourism, there is also a long way to go for the New Acropolis Museum to deliver on the number of visitors that were originally predicted. Indeed, despite the increase in attendance over the last year, the visitation figures indicate that the museum is failing to attract the additional hundreds-of-thousands required to boost visitation to the 2 million mark prophesied by Pandermalis (Lacayo 2007), let alone reach the 3 million stated by Flynn (2006) or O'Hara (2001). Furthermore, the New Acropolis Museum is clearly not reaping the full benefits of the massive upsurge in tourist numbers to Greece; although the museum remains by-far-and-away the most well-attended in the country, it is, nevertheless, failing to keep pace with the recent rapid rise in attendance recorded at other museums across the country. Thus, while average attendance increased by 14 per cent across all Greek museums in 2013 compared to the previous year, in the New Acropolis Museum the recorded rise was only 6.9 per cent (Hellenic Statistical Authority 2014: 3).

Marbles and Money

The debate regarding the extent to which attendance at the New Acropolis Museum is, or is not, of any merit in the long-running dispute concerning ownership of the Elgin Marbles is primarily of concern to academics and those museum professionals with an interest in disputes involving cultural heritage. However, the possibility that exaggerated projections of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum were used to bolster Greek governmental requests for funding of the construction of the museum from the European Commission has potentially wider ramifications.

At the foot of every page of the New Acropolis Museum website it is noted: 'The

“Construction of the New Acropolis Museum” project was co-financed by the Greek Public (Ministry of Culture) and the European Union (European Regional Development Fund) (Acropolis Museum 2014b; *Kathimerini* 2004). Despite receiving second billing on the museum’s website, it was the European Union that provided the vast majority of the money required to construct the building: of the €129 million spent on construction costs, €85 million – two-thirds of the total – was supplied by Greece’s EU partners. However, EU financing for the New Acropolis Museum was provided with the expectation that the museum would provide a significant economic boost to the local and regional economy. Indeed, as the museum’s website makes clear, the €85 million given to Greece in order to complete work on the museum was provided through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which has an overtly economic imperative. This has been recently stressed in a report of the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee: ‘The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is the EU’s main tool to reduce economic disparities between the regions.’ The report goes on to note that the ERDF ‘is the largest of the three main funds used by the EU to achieve greater economic cohesion, reduce regional disparities and promote economic growth across the EU.’⁹ Although heritage professionals rightly look to a wide variety of other factors in judging whether a museum should be considered successful (e.g. Falk and Dierking 2008), it was, nevertheless, primarily the economic potential of the project that allowed EU taxpayers’ money to be used in the construction of the New Acropolis Museum. As such, in order for the museum to receive ERDF monies, it should have been required to adequately demonstrate that it would be a creator of jobs and generator of revenue to the Makryianni district of Athens. Exaggerated predictions of attendance at the New Acropolis Museum – and the revenue these paying visitors would bring to the museum and the surrounding region of the city – might, therefore, have proved useful in convincing the European Commission to sanction the Greek request for €85 million of European taxpayers’ money to complete construction of the New Acropolis Museum.

According to a recent communication by O’Hara, the estimate of 3 million annual visitors to the New Acropolis Museum that was used in his 2001 House of Commons motion was a figure taken from ‘introductory descriptive detail from the then prospectus of the planned museum’ (comment in Beresford 2013a, 08 September). O’Hara felt sufficiently confident in the estimated attendance figure contained in this prospectus to inform his fellow British MPs that there would be an ‘estimated three million visitors per annum to the Acropolis Museum from around the world’ (O’Hara 2001). However, it has already been seen that at no point in the years leading up to 2001, or in the following eight years before the museum was finally opened to the public, could it credibly be claimed that 3 million was a plausible estimate of visitation at the New Acropolis Museum. Instead, attendance levels similar to, or just below, the 1.1 million people who were then visiting the summit of the Acropolis in 2001, would have been a far more reasonable prediction. This, therefore, begs the question of whether the Greek government was deliberately disseminating exaggerated visitor estimates with the intention of not only misleading politicians such as O’Hara and the other 109 MPs in the House of Commons who voted for his bill, but also as a means of convincing the European Commission that estimated levels of attendance guaranteed the economic viability of the museum. Predictions of very high visitor numbers on completion of the New Acropolis Museum, and the fees which they would supply on entering the museum, would certainly provide a strong monetary foundation upon which to base requests for financial assistance from the ERDF. Future investigations by political scientists would certainly appear necessary if we are to ascertain the extent to which inflated predictions of attendance played a role in convincing the European Commission to sanction spending €85 million of European taxpayers’ money on the construction of the museum.¹⁰

Attendance and the Entrance Fee

It is almost certainly the case that visitation to the New Acropolis Museum could be increased by a reduction in the entrance fee, or even the provision of free admission. For example, in the ten years following the 2001 institution of free admission to all the national museums of Britain, attendance to those museums that used to charge an entrance fee increased by 158 per cent.¹¹ Nonetheless, the need for entry fees had been accepted when the Greek Government and repatriation groups were making their initial predictions concerning attendance at the New

Acropolis Museum and, as such, should have been factored into these visitation estimates. Just prior to the inauguration of the museum in June 2009, it was therefore stressed by the Greek Culture Ministry that they had taken the decision to ‘set the admission price for the museum at one euro throughout 2009, in view of the global crisis and in consideration for Greek taxpayers who funded its construction’ (*Athens News Agency* 2009 ‘New Acropolis Museum Opens in June’, 21 May 2009).¹²

The low cost of admission to the New Acropolis Museum, together with an aggressive marketing campaign and global media interest, certainly fuelled the initial high levels of public interest and visitation to the museum (Tsiotsou and Mavragani 2013: 53-57). However, the desire by the Greek Government to set the admission price at €1 by way of thanks for the Greek taxpayers, might be taken as something of a snub to taxpayers from across the rest of the European Union who contributed the vast bulk of the finances required to construct the museum. Furthermore, for the Greek Culture Ministry to specifically offer thanks to the nation’s taxpayers should raise eyebrows given that Greece is a country where government officials openly acknowledge tax evasion to be ‘a national sport’ played by most of the population, and it has been recently suggested that as much as €30 billion of the nation’s tax revenue goes uncollected every year (*The Economist* 2012). According to the *Corruption Perceptions Index 2013*, compiled by the NGO Transparency International, Greece is also ranked as the most corrupt country in the EU and Western Europe, while globally Greece was in joint 80th position alongside China (Transparency International 2013). It is, therefore, little surprise that a recent EU report noted that 99 per cent of Greeks believed corruption was widespread in their country.¹³

Conclusion

There are a great many points worthy of admiration and praise in the design, construction and presentation of exhibits at the New Acropolis Museum. The museum is also a statement of the importance that the Greek government, and the country’s population as a whole, place on the well-being of their ancient heritage, and the desire to ensure the nation’s artworks and archaeological artefacts are preserved and displayed in facilities that rival the best in the world. The museum has also become the embodiment – made manifest in glass and concrete – of the Greek desire to see the Elgin Marbles returned to Athens. It is, however, extremely likely that it was this desire to recover the missing sculptures that led Greek politicians and the museum’s president, as well as international campaigners lobbying for the repatriation of the Marbles, to offer grossly exaggerated projections of the visitor numbers, while paying scant attention to the manner in which such estimates were calculated. It has been the contention of this paper that the predictions of visitation made in the years leading up to the opening of the New Acropolis Museum were generated for propaganda purposes in an effort to present a further argument in favour of the repatriation of the disputed sculptures currently on display in the British Museum. However, these initial estimates of visitation set unreasonable goals that the museum could never hope to achieve on a regular basis.

In the annual report of the New Acropolis Museum, published in the summer of 2011, it was claimed that, ‘Museum visitation numbers are a measure of the Museum’s success’. While the report would go on to correctly emphasize that visitor numbers ‘also reflect other external factors such as the number of tourist arrivals to Athens and the disposition and mood of the local community’ (Acropolis Museum 2011), nonetheless, judged against this particular criteria of success, the New Acropolis Museum must be considered a failure. After a strong opening year, attendance plummeted and, despite an encouraging rise in 2013, remains far below the initial predictions of visitation that were made in the years leading up to the opening of the museum. However, this paper has attempted to demonstrate that the politicians, academics and campaigners who proposed and disseminated the exaggerated estimates of visitation set an unreasonably high benchmark against which to gauge the success of the museum. It should instead be stressed that, by delivering an annual attendance only slightly below that of the nearby archaeological site of the Acropolis, crowned with the iconic Parthenon, the museum has achieved all that could reasonably have been expected of it.

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Notes

- ¹ Danae Zaoussis, Communications Officer, New Acropolis Museum, email message, 30 October 2012.
- ² *The Art Newspaper* emphasizes that, 'All data used was supplied by the institutions concerned' (2014: 3), and it would appear that the slight discrepancy in visitor numbers between *The Art Newspaper* and the Hellenic Statistical Authority is likely to be the result of slight readjustments to the data made by the Greek authority.
- ³ CBC (2008) 'Greece Promises Fall Opening for Much Delayed Acropolis Museum', *CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) News*, February 20, 2008
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/arts/artdesign/story/2008/02/20/acropolis-museum-fall.html>
- ⁴ For more on the importance of the Marbles to Greek politics, see, for example, Kersel 2004: 49-50; Harrison 2010: 174-82. John Henry Merryman in particular has laid emphasis on the perceived cultural nationalism bound up with Greek claims for the return of the sculptures, 1985: 1911-1916; 2006: 102-106.
- ⁵ *Elginism* (2013) 'New Acropolis Museum is Most Popular Museum in Greece', *Elginism*, 16 August, 2013.
<http://www.elginism.com/new-acropolis-museum/new-acropolis-museum-is-most-popular-museum-in-greece/20130816/7060/>
- ⁶ Given that there is no means of calculating the numbers of visitors to the Duveen Gallery, while attendance at the British Museum at the time Snodgrass was writing was 5,569,981 in 2009 and 5,842,138 in 2010, Snodgrass's assertion that fewer than 36 per cent of these visitors to the British Museum were inclined to view one of the museum's most famous exhibits, is questionable. (Attendance figures derived from *The Art Newspaper* 2010: 24; 2011: 24; see also Caldwell 2000.)
- ⁷ Even if attendance at the New Acropolis Museum during June 2012 is added to the museum's records of visitation spanning June 2009 to May 2012, thus taking the visitor numbers up to (and indeed slightly beyond) the three years during which the museum had been open to the public, it still falls well short of the total claimed by Professor Pandermalis. Thus, according to the Hellenic Statistical Authority, during June 2012, attendance at the New Acropolis Museum was 94,003 (2013). Added to the 4,404,284 visitors officially logged by the staff of the museum between June 2009–May 2012, the total is 4,498,287; this is at least 501,713 less than the 'over 5 million visitors' Pandermalis claimed had visited his Museum during its first three years.
- ⁸ Flynn, T. (n.d.) 'Refuting the British Museum's Statements', website of the British Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles (BCRPM) <http://www.parthenonuk.com/refuting-the-bm-s-statements>
- ⁹ House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (2012) *European Regional Development Fund: Second Report of Session 2012–13. HC 81 Incorporating HC 1954-i, Session 2010–12*, London. 2012: 3, 5. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmcomloc/81/81.pdf>
- ¹⁰ It has proved impossible to locate records relating to the official Greek governmental proposal that ERDF monies be sanctioned in order to allow the completion of the New Acropolis Museum. The ERDF also does not appear to make public the reasoning behind its decision to award the €85 million for the museum and the extent to which, if any, museum attendance – and the revenue that could

be generated from such visitation – played a role in persuading the European Commission to award the money. As such, it should be stressed that the role of projected museum attendance in the proposal for ERDF monies is currently unclear.

- ¹¹ Department for Culture, Media, and Sport 2014. Department for Culture Media and Sport 2014 'Maintaining World-Leading National Museums and Galleries, and Supporting the Museum Sector', 28 July, 2014
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/maintaining-world-leading-national-museums-and-galleries-and-supporting-the-museum-sector/supporting-pages/providing-free-public-access-to-national-museums-and-galleries>. However, see Gibson (2008: 250) and O'Neill (2008) for the failure to broaden the social spectrum of groups visiting the museums.
- ¹² Quoted on BCRPM (2009) 'New Acropolis Museum Opens in June', *British Committee for the Reunification of the Parthenon Marbles*, 16 June, 2009 (<http://www.parthenonuk.com/index.php/2009-news-archive/129-new-acropolis-museum-inauguration-live-on-museum-s-portal>), and *Elginism* (2009) 'Greece Will Step Up Efforts to Reunify Elgin Marbles When New Acropolis Museum Opens', *Elginism*, 21 May, 2009 <http://www.elginism.com/new-acropolis-museum/greece-will-step-...-elgin-marbles-when-new-acropolis-museum-opens/20090521/2001/>
- ¹³ European Commission (2014) 'Summaries of the National Chapters from the European Anti-Corruption Report', *Europea.eu Press Releases Database*, 3 February, 2014. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-67_en.htm.

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