

The Politics of Buried Treasure

The Athens Unification of Archaeological Sites Theme Park & the New Museum of Acropolis

Georgia Paizi

Postgraduate Student // Spatial Theory & Cultural Studies
Faculty of Architecture // National Technical University // Athens // Greece
georgia.paizi@gmail.com // 0030 211 7150202, 0030 6909853355
85, Amfitritis str., 175 62 P. Faliro, Athens, Greece

Which are the consequences of the silent turning of the center of Athens to a theme park of antiquity? How does the unification of the archaeological sites function as a quasi-public space? Is this the scenography of our contemporary national narrative? With the contribution of the New Museum of Acropolis (who's single reason d' être is expecting the Marbles), a triplex of concentric visitable representations is created, where the city of Athens, its theme park and its museum contain each other spatially and conceptually.

Under the umbrella of cultural heritage law, the (public) space of the Unification is impliedly adjusted to an open museum, defined by a constitute state of quandary over the publicness, commonness, openness, or even just negativeness of the spaces that intervene from monumental era to monumental era. Within this outspreading theme park which can potentially swallow the city as whole, an important expanse of the center is been absorbed under the vision of continuum monumental ground, unable to preserve its state of public.

So which is our theme for this park? Contemporary Athens in moments of political crisis has been always treated as a parasite-city (a paracity) over ancient Athens(es). As long as ancient Athens (es) await in fragments - beneath us or in several European capital museums - to be one day emerged in full restoration, within this metaphysical Great Idea (Megali Idea) ancient Athens(es) constitute the place contemporary Athens refers to in crave of reobtaining. In its largest part sleeping beneath parking-lots, warehouses, the drainage, or even abroad, this incomplete and thus infinite antiquity park stages our self-evidential past as fundamental to the continuum of athenian democracies. This eternally expected city, this sit(y), is the grounds that contemporary Athens roots down to. As a mechanism of political acquiescence and national cohesion, this policy of buried treasure stands stronger than any national attainment.