

Article

Use and Protection of Archaeological Sites in Greece: Policies and Practices 1975–2018

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Abstract: The use of archaeological sites in Greece today is a controversial subject, often stirring public discussion and dispute. This paper, which presents some results of the author's PhD research, focuses on the use of archaeological sites for artistic and creative purposes. More specifically, it examines the use of ancient theaters and the use of archaeological sites for filming through the study of the relevant legislation, the policies and practices adopted by the Greek state administration, as well as relevant examples. Furthermore, it aims to identify shifts in ideological perceptions and policies, which have possibly taken place within the time scope of the research, covering the period from 1975 to 2018.

Keywords: archaeological heritage; law; administrative practice; contemporary life

1. Introduction

The use of archaeological sites is a topic which often receives attention in mainstream media and social networks in Greece, as well as a subject of heated political debate. This has been especially true in the past few years, given the country's arduous financial situation, which has increased pressure towards exploiting its rich cultural heritage as an economic resource. However, the topic has received little academic attention so far [1–3], while much of the existing research is centered on questions of perception of antiquities and their role in identity-shaping, without particularly focusing on the practical implications of the matter [4–6]. This work aims to contribute to the relevant discussion by addressing the particular topic of artistic and creative uses of archaeological sites, from a legal, ideological, and political point of view. It examines the basic elements of the legal framework for the use of archaeological sites in Greece, namely those belonging to the state, and brings attention to ideological aspects of the content of legal texts [7], drawing on the existing literature on the national symbolic value attributed to archaeological heritage in Greece [4–6]. Moreover, it explores how ideology interferes with law implementation and administrative practice, thus shaping relevant state policies. Further on, it discusses a few representative examples with reference to the use of ancient theaters and filming in archaeological sites, in an attempt to enable better understanding of the practical implications of the matters in question. Finally, the study concludes with an attempt to determine the extent to which current policies contribute in achieving a balance between use and preservation, thus enabling the integration of archaeological monuments and sites in contemporary life, in accordance with both Greek and international legislation.

This work is not meant to offer an exhaustive analysis of the topic at hand, which would require a much more detailed elaboration than the length and nature of an article allows. Rather, it aims to present some aspects of the topic, based on results of the author's currently ongoing PhD research, which aims to cover the subject in a more thorough way. The study is based on a multidisciplinary approach which combines law and political science and history and social anthropology. Primary sources include state archive documents, the press, interviews, and audiovisual material, which are combined and analyzed in search of answers to the questions related to the subject

of study. The research covers a time frame of approximately 40 years, from 1975 to 2018. The choice of the period is accounted for by the fact that its starting point coincides with the entry into force of a new Constitution in Greece, following the abolition of the 7-year military Junta one year earlier, and the re-establishment of democracy; these events marked the transition of the country to an era of political changeover, which is characterized by distinct policies regarding the management of archaeological heritage and its uses, compared to the policies of the preceding period [8,9].

2. Legal and Administrative Framework

According to Greek legislation, the responsibility for granting permission for the use of an archaeological site belonging to the state lies on the Archaeological Service [10]. This is the name generally used with reference to the services of the Ministry of Culture, which are responsible for all matters concerning archaeological heritage in Greece [11,12]. Relevant requests are addressed to regional services, the Ephorates of Antiquities. Depending on the requested monument and the type of requested use, requests are normally dealt with on a local level, according to a Ministerial Decree which allows the transferring of certain responsibilities of the Minister to regional services of the Ministry of Culture [13]. However, in some cases, requests are forwarded to central services, the General Directorates, particularly when the requested site or the request itself is considered as too important to be dealt with locally. The responsible General Directorate, in turn, refers the matters for discussion to the Central Archaeological Council (CAC), a top-rank advisory board consisting of academics and experts on archaeological heritage, which plays a pivotal role in policy-shaping and decision-making within the function of the Archaeological Service [5,14]. After discussing the matter in question, the Council will advise on whether the request should be accepted or declined. The Minister then issues a decision, which is not bound by the Council's advice. However, thanks to the Council's prestigious position, its counsel is respected almost every time. But how is the Council's opinion formed?

According to article 46 of Law 3028/2002 [10], in order for the state administration to grant permission for using an archaeological site, two basic requirements must be fulfilled. The first requirement involves protecting the site from potential physical damage which could result from its use. According to the second requirement, the use should be compatible with the character of the site. The notion of 'character' is, however, elusive, as it transcends material [15] and relates more to symbols and ideals, therefore making it open to subjective interpretation.

In order to grasp the meaning of this notion within the context of Greek legislation, it is of critical importance to understand the circumstances under which certain antiquities have received the status of national symbols in Greece [4–6]. Many archaeological sites and monuments in Greece are perceived as ancestral works and sacred symbols linked to Greek national identity—notably, though not exclusively, those considered as remnants of Greek classical antiquity [5,16,17]. Such sites include the Acropolis of Athens or the ancient theater of Epidaurus, which hold significant symbolic value. As a consequence, the types of uses of such monuments, for which permission can be granted by state authorities, are generally limited. At the same time, for monuments of lesser national significance, often monuments considered as remnants of historical traditions which do not make part of the Greek national narrative [11] (pp. 61–66, 84–85), for instance, Ottoman [18], Venetian [19] or Roman—an example of the latter being the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, which is being discussed in the next section of this article—the requirements are less strict and uses of these sites are more easily authorized for a larger variety of purposes.

At this point, it is necessary to point out that state policy concerning which sites are to be conceded for use and which are not, as well as the types of uses allowed, is not the result of concrete planning, based, for instance, on chronological criteria forming distinct categories of monuments (e.g., prehistoric, classical, Roman, Byzantine, and so on), which, accordingly, may or may not be conceded for particular uses. Rather, it has largely been shaped with respect to demand as reflected in submitted requests. Therefore, in attempting to define state policy, this work looks at the responses of the administration to

relevant requests. As we shall see, the uses allowed are largely dependent not only on their posing no threat of physical damage, but also on their being compatible with the perceived character of each specific site. As discussed previously, the character of archaeological monuments and sites constitutes an elusive concept, which cannot be defined in a general context but seems to be closely connected to the symbolic status of each monument or site. The study of the minutes of the sessions of the Central Archaeological Council has provided valuable information and numerous examples related to the matter discussed. Among these, representative examples with respect to the use of ancient theaters and film shooting in archaeological sites, are being discussed below, so that the practical implications of the policy described above can be understood.

3. The Use of Ancient Theaters

Ancient theaters constitute a particular case, as they can be used today for the very same purpose for which they were originally built, that is, to house cultural events. The reuse of long-abandoned ancient theaters in Greece dates from the 19th century and is connected with efforts to revive ancient Greek drama [20–22]. Originally, ancient Greek drama performances were mostly held in indoor venues, while ancient theaters were not preferred [23,24]. However, this trend was gradually reversed; the Delphic Festival of 1927 created an impressive momentum towards reusing ancient theaters. The Festival comprised numerous events with the participation of important contributors, culminating with Aeschylus' "Prometheus Bound" at the ancient theater of Delphi, the most thorough attempt to present an ancient Greek drama performance up until then. This performance was greeted with great acclaim and such was its impact, that it ignited a heated conversation as to whether ancient Greek drama should be performed in open spaces, namely the surviving ancient theaters, where it was originally born. Subsequently, in the years that followed, ancient Greek theaters were gradually established as the spaces par excellence for staging ancient Greek drama, which was also seen as a way to attract foreign visitors as tourists [20,21,23–28].

This development must have somehow led to the establishment of the idea that ancient theaters should be used solely for ancient Greek drama performances. In the period studied (1975–2018), this idea first appears in the minutes of the Central Archaeological Council in 1976, when a theatrical company submitted a request to present a modern Greek play in various archaeological sites, among which some ancient theaters. The request involved performances of Vassilis Rotas' "Kolokotronis", a historical drama first published in 1955 [29], narrating an episode from the life of Theodoros Kolokotronis, one of the most prominent heroes of the Greek war of independence, namely his victory in the historic battle of Dervenakia in 1822. The Council's answer was that the requested permission cannot be granted for ancient theaters, on the grounds that these can only be used for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy performances. However, the theatrical company was allowed to use sites other than ancient theaters [30]. Later in the same year, the Council reconsidered this view and decided that ancient theaters could be used for classical music concerts in exceptional cases, each of which would be separately examined by the Council [31]. Thus, in that same session, permission was granted for a classical music concert at the ancient theater of Epidaurus, which was organized by a travel agency and would be attended by tourists.

But why is classical music considered appropriate for staging in ancient theaters, along with ancient Greek drama? The explanation seems to be lying behind the idea that archaeological sites, including ancient theaters, and notably the ancient theater of Epidaurus, which is one of the most prominent among them, act as tangible symbols of an ideal image of modern Greece, formed from two elements: Greek classical antiquity and western civilization, of which the former is considered the cradle [5,17,32,33]. As one of the greatest cultural products of western civilization, classical music was seen as belonging to what was considered as "high culture" of "the West"—a view reflecting the idea of distinction between "high" and "low" culture, which was prevalent at the time [34,35]—and thus was considered worthy of the status of an ancient theater [36]. On the other hand, plays by modern Greek writers, which were not perceived as directly linked to any of the two aforementioned cultural

traditions, seemed to be considered as an extraneous element, incongruous with ancient theaters and their symbolism. This stance reveals an unavowed contempt towards modern Greek culture, which has been also noted in the case of folk culture [37] and architecture [38,39], regarded as inadequate when compared to the ancient Greek past or modern European civilization [32,40].

As the number of requests for permission to use ancient theaters for various types of events other than ancient Greek drama performances and classical music concerts increased, the Council was impelled to revise its views and policy. As a consequence, the idea that ancient theaters should only be used for ancient Greek drama performances and classical music concerts was gradually abandoned from 1978 onwards. This shift took place over a period of time during which the Council examined each request separately, treating each case differently according to various criteria, including how important the requested site was considered, how well-known the artist was, the type of event for which permission was requested, as well as the level of quality of the event as perceived by the members of the Council [41]. Most of these criteria are more or less still applied today as a customary compilation of unwritten empirical rules, which are usually presented as legally justified by the explicit requirement of article 46 of law 3028/2002 that the events held in archaeological sites should be compatible with the site's character, as seen previously. In addition, the Ministerial Decree of 2018 regarding the terms and procedures for the temporary concession of the use of archaeological sites, requires that cultural events hosted in archaeological sites be of high artistic quality [42]. These vague formulations allow for subjective interpretations of the legal texts, thus giving state officials in charge the possibility to make judgments based on their personal taste, as well as ideas commonly shared among state administration staff, which usually reflect the official state narrative concerning the symbolic significance of archaeological sites. This may leave one wondering whether the state administration is legitimized in making such evaluation on artistic creation, and according to what criteria a particular cultural event may be considered as being of high quality, thus worthy of being hosted in archaeological sites.

The roman Odeon of Herodes Atticus or Herodeion in Athens has often become the center of media attention within this context; an issue of this kind received important media coverage in 2009, when the Council was reluctant towards granting permission for some renowned Greek singers to perform on the site. The Council originally opposed permission to those particular artists, on account of the fact that their genre is popular Greek music, which is often looked down on by individuals who consider themselves as intellectuals, and who like to present themselves as involved only in what they deem as high culture [43]. However, the Council finally gave their consent after inviting the organizers of these concerts to assist the Council's session and explain their reasons for choosing the Odeon for the events in question [44]. With time, things seem to be moving towards a more progressive direction. Today, the Herodeion hosts a variety of cultural events annually and requests for performances by artists representing popular music genres are considered with greater receptivity by the Council, as can be seen, for example, in the list of events of autumn 2018 [45]. In addition, the authorization of the rock concert held by the Foo Fighters in the premises in July 2017 can be considered a bold move on behalf of the state administration [46].

Fashion events constitute yet another example of changing perceptions and policies over time. This type of use for archaeological sites has generally been avoided until recently, as fashion is usually seen as a commercial industry. Given that archaeological sites and monuments in Greece are generally considered as *res sanctae* and therefore, incompatible with practices belonging to the market economy, they cannot become objects of commercial transaction [47]. As a result, uses connected with fashion have been deplored as demeaning for archaeological sites, amid concerns that they would most probably result in the commodification of cultural heritage and the loss of its symbolic value. As an example, a request to host a dance performance in the context of launching a new Calvin Klein fashion brand at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus was not granted permission in 1998, because it was perceived as an event of commercial character. What is quite interesting in this particular case is that the Minister had originally granted permission for the event, ignoring the Central Archaeological

Council's advice against it, which is indeed a very rare occurrence [48]. However, both the request and the permission were soon withdrawn due to harsh criticism, as can be inferred from the press of the time [49].

More recently, in 2014, a request to host an event showcasing theatrical costumes by designer Pierre Cardin was considered as incompatible with the character of the site and was not granted permission, even though the organizers did not ask to use the Odeon itself, but rather the courtyard in front of its entrance [50]. Four years later, in 2018, a different stance was adopted: Two events of a similar kind were granted permission for the same spot in front of the Odeon [51,52]. However, a contributing factor to the positive stance of the administration towards these requests must have been the fact that both shows involved fashion collections inspired by ancient Greece. At any rate, according to a statement by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Culture and CAC President at the time, the use of the courtyard of the Herodeon could possibly be allowed for similar or other events in the future, though not very frequently and only in a few cases, depending on the outcome of the permissions recently given [53]. This is an indication that the administration is willing to open up and broaden the scope of events for which the use of this specific site can be allowed. However, at the same time, it expresses cautiousness and reservation, so that the permission granted recently should not become a binding precedent for similar future requests.

The above developments do not make part of a general trend; as mentioned earlier, the policies for the use of archaeological sites are directly linked to the perceived significance of each site. Thus, for monuments of different significance, a different approach is adopted. As a case in point, unlike the Roman Odeon of Herodes Atticus, the classical ancient theater of Epidauros, the most well-preserved theater in Greece, which is considered a masterpiece of ancient Greek architecture and features in the UNESCO World Heritage List, is still almost solely reserved for ancient Greek drama performances, conforming to standards set by the Central Archaeological Council back in the early 1980s [36]. As for fashion events, they seem rather unlikely to be authorized on sites other than the courtyard of the Herodeon, as illustrates the case of Gucci, who requested to organize a fashion event on top of the Acropolis hill next to the Parthenon in February 2017. Considering that the Acropolis hill is a site of utmost national and international significance, regarded as one of the greatest symbols of western civilization and treated by many as a sacred space [4,16,54,55], it is not surprising that the case became the center of media attention and the topic of a heated public debate in Greece. As one might expect, the Council did not authorize Gucci's request on the grounds that this kind of use is not compatible with the special cultural character of the site, which cannot be used for commercial purposes [56,57].

4. Filming in Archaeological Sites

The use of archaeological sites as filming locations constitutes yet another interesting example. According to the relevant Ministerial Decision of 2012 [58], in order to obtain permission for filming at an archaeological site, it is mandatory for those interested to submit the film script. The script is submitted in order for the responsible authorities to examine whether its content is appropriate, and then accordingly decide on approving or not the filming on the site. The origins of this legal provision can be traced back to administrative practices dating from the late 1970s, which were gradually consolidated and integrated in legislation. As an example, in 1978, the Council authorized the shooting of a film on Delos island, on condition that the actors be dressed in "decent attire" [59]. However, preliminary control of the film script content did not appear until 1979 [60,61] and had become an established practice by 1981 [62], despite dissenting voices from few Council members who denounced it as censorship [63,64]. A nude photo shoot of renowned Greek actress Zoe Laskari on Delos in 1985 constitutes an exceptional case, in that it did not have official permission [65].

The control of the film script or film content for "appropriateness" is conducted according to a number of seemingly random criteria. However, the careful study of the minutes of the Council and the Archive of the Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens (EACA) has revealed some sort of consistency throughout the studied period until today. Thus, the criteria applied can be summarized

as follows: (a) Accuracy of information about the archaeological site, (b) respect towards the character of the archaeological site, and (c) respect towards the archaeological profession in general, the Greek Archaeological Service in particular, and Greece as a country. In addition, films whose content seems supportive of Greek positions on issues of national interest often receive more favorable treatment, while films referring to more or less sensitive political matters are treated with skepticism. The above principles apply to all kinds of films, whether documentary or fiction.

In practice, the requirement (a) that the script should present real and accurate information about the archaeological site in question, that is, in compliance with what is dictated by state administration officials, means that using an archaeological site as backdrop to a film scene without any textual reference to it, or as a film setting representing a different place, whether fictional or real, is normally not acceptable [66–68]. This practice would have made it impossible to shoot productions such as the “Passion of the Christ” (2004) by Mel Gibson, “The Gospel According to St. Matthew” (1964) by Pier Paolo Pasolini, both shot in Matera, Italy, or the “Game of Thrones” series (2011–) in Dubrovnik. Indeed, it has been reported that the producers of the series had chosen Meteora, Greece, as a possible location for shooting. However, they did not succeed in getting the necessary permission because of bureaucracy issues related to the fact that Meteora is a protected area and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Therefore, they resorted to using digitally altered photographs of the area [69,70].

In addition, if the film script does refer to the site itself, the information provided has to be “scientifically accurate” and approved by Council members or other state officials appointed for this task [71,72]. If the script is found to contain “inaccuracies”, authorization for filming is not granted unless the script is revised as indicated [73–75]. Behind this practice lies the prevalent perception of many members of the Archaeological Service that one of the most important aspects of archaeological heritage is its potential to educate society and instill in the public the highest principles and ideals of Greek antiquity. Therefore, those who see themselves as specialists of ancient Greek heritage feel that it is their ultimate duty to defend the “scientific truth” about archaeological heritage, to prevent dissemination of whatever is considered as inaccurate information and, thus, preserve the educational role of Greece’s cultural heritage, as they see it [63,64]. This kind of scientific truth is promoted as the single truth, which derives exclusively from the results of archaeological work, most of the time without leaving room for other readings or interpretations of heritage.

The second requirement (b), which concerns respect towards the character of the archaeological site, is a recurrent theme in state administration documents and CAC Acts. Films have to be compliant with this requirement, or filming on the archaeological site may not be authorized. The “character” in itself seems to be some sort of unquestionable, self-evident, inherent property of archaeological sites, which is always invoked but almost never explained [64]. Thus, if a state official who is in charge of proofing a script deems its content inappropriate or offensive according to their personal views, they may well reject it on the grounds of incompatibility with what they perceive as the character of the site. In 1979, for instance, the Council did not authorize the shooting of some scenes on the Acropolis hill for a film regarding the life of Pierre de Coubertin, with the aim of “protecting the sacredness of the site” [76]. In another example, a filming request was rejected in 1984 due to the fact that the script was considered “sloppy”, with “banal and corny jokes” [77]. The shooting of some scenes for Volker Schlöndorff’s 1990 film “Voyager” or “Homo Faber” in archaeological sites was exceptionally granted authorization only due to the fact that the director was held in high esteem by CAC members, notwithstanding concerns about the inappropriateness of the plot, which involved a story of inadvertent incest [78]. Finally, shooting on the Acropolis for the 2014 Hindi film “Bindaas” by Rajib Biswas was not authorized due to the fact that the Parthenon would be used only as backdrop to a scene with people singing and dancing, which was deemed incompatible with the character of the site [79]. Oddly enough, a similar request for another Hindi film, “Tiger Zinda Hai” (2017) by Ali Abbas Zafar, was authorized for shooting in front of the “Portara” (which means “The Great Door” in Greek) on the island of Naxos, an iconic archaic monument which constitutes a typical local representational image. Surprising though it may seem, this inconsistency compared to the case

describe above confirms that the uses allowed depend on the particular symbolic status of each site or monument, which may vary greatly. In addition, the positive stance of the local community seems to have played an important role in securing the approval of the film shooting request, an attitude which is not irrelevant to the potential benefits entailed for the local economy [80]. Similarly, in 1983, the joint intervention of local stakeholders, motivated by the prospect of a tourism boost and the expected economic benefits involved, had resulted in the authorization of a filming request for the BBC series “The Dark Side of the Sun” in the Palace of the Grand Master in Rhodes, which had originally been declined [81].

Regarding the third requirement (c), the Council did not authorize a request for filming at the archaeological site of Elateia in 1989, due to the fact that the plot was considered offensive towards the work of archaeologists and the Greek Archaeological Service [82]. Around the same period, another filming request featured foreign archaeologists being confronted by Greek antiquities looters, while performing excavations at an archaeological site. In this case, the film was considered offensive towards Greek people and Greece as a country and was therefore not granted permission for filming in the requested archaeological sites [83]. Finally, the Council and the Archaeological Service in general seem to be favorably predisposed towards requests for films promoting Greek positions on matters of national importance, such as Greek–Turkish relations [74], the issue of the name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) [84] or the return of the Parthenon marbles [85,86], with the 2014 film “Promakhos” by Coerte and John Voorhees being a recent example of the latter [87]. The special interest of the Council for such topics, however, could prove a disadvantage, as in such cases, Council members tend to be more demanding in terms of political correctness and scientific accuracy as indicated [88]. On the other hand, film scripts overtly touching on political matters are met with reluctance, as archaeological sites in Greece have long been considered as places that should be kept clear of politics [36,89]. This proposition could seem futile if one considers that archaeological heritage in Greece has repeatedly been used for political purposes [5,90,91], with the case of Amphipolis in 2014 being one of the latest and most blatant examples [92].

Apart from archaeological sites, similar requirements are applied for filming in archaeological museums as well, as in the case of a request in 1979, for which filming was not authorized at the archaeological museum of Delphi, due to the film plot involving an attempt to steal archaeological exhibits from the museum, which was considered “absolutely contraindicated” [60]. In another case, only a few years ago, in 2012, the Association of Greek Archeologists (in Greek: Σύλλογος Ελλήνων Αρχαιολόγων) produced a spot with the aim of raising public awareness on the danger of looting and illicit trade of antiquities, in view of security issues resulting from state funding cuts and austerity measures. The spot featured the symbolic disappearance of the statue of the kore “Phrasikleia” from the National Archaeological Museum at Athens and had drawn inspiration from a theft earlier that year, in which more than 70 exhibits had been taken from the Archaeological Museum of Olympia, the birthplace of the ancient Olympic Games [93]. Using a reasoning similar to that of 1979, the Central Archaeological Council did not authorize TV transmission of the spot, on the grounds that the video promotes an image of museums as unsafe places for visitors and for exhibits. In addition, the direct political message of the spot as well as the fact that it could be deemed derogatory for the image of the country abroad seem to have been additional reasons for the Council’s refusal to grant the requested permission [94,95].

Clearly, all of the above takes the form of censorship on what is narrated about archaeological sites, in an attempt to impose respect on what is perceived as the special character and values ascribed to the monuments, directly linked to their status as symbols of national imagination. In addition, such an effort to control what is said reveals a desire to promote the official narrative dictated by state administration, while suppressing alternative discourse on heritage [96]. Given that, the Council has often been criticized for being too reluctant over granting permission for film shooting in archaeological sites, especially fiction films. On the other hand, it should be acknowledged that most filming requests are actually authorized, as can be seen in Table 1, which presents data on filming requests submitted

to the Central Archaeological Council in the period 1975–1989. Unfortunately, similar data could not be collected for the years that followed, due to inaccessibility of the relevant archive during the period when the research was conducted. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that this trend most probably continued in the following years. In addition, it is noteworthy that the number of filming requests displays an impressive rise, especially towards the end of the period. A comparison with data published by the Ministry of Culture for the years 2011–2018 indicates that the numbers kept on rising, as can be seen in Table 2. Taking into consideration the above, the increase in the number of requests should suggest a proportionate increase in authorizations, though this is only a hypothesis that could be examined in the future if the relevant information becomes available for research. Meanwhile, with all due reservations, an indication of this could possibly be the fact that a site of utmost symbolic significance, such as the Acropolis, has increasingly been featuring in films, especially in recent years, namely the “New York Stories: Life without Zoe” (1989) by Francis Ford Coppola [97], “My Life in Ruins” (2009) by Donald Petrie [98], “The Two Faces of January” (2014) by Hossein Amiri [99], “Promakhos” (2014) by Coerte and John Voorhees, which has already been mentioned [87], and “The Little Drummer Girl” series (2018) by Park Chan-wook [100]. This, however, does not minimize the importance of matters such as the irrelevance of the criteria implemented and the tedious and lengthy procedures required in order for the necessary permission to be obtained, which often discourage prospective interest.

Table 1. Filming requests submitted to the Central Archaeological Council (CAC), 1975–1989 [101].

Year	Accepted Requests	Declined Requests	Total Number of Requests/Year
1975	0	0	0
1976	0	0	0
1977	0	0	0
1978	4	0	4
1979	11	2	13
1980	12	0	12
1981	5	1	6
1982	3	0	3
1983	10	0	10
1984	13	4	17
1985	12	1	13
1986	16	1	17

Table 2. Filming and other requests submitted to the CAC, 2011–2018 [102].

Year	A. Number of Requests for Photograph and Film Shooting/Digitisation/Use of Images for Electronic Publication	B. Number of Requests for Photograph and Film Shooting (Subtotal of A.)
2011	16	*
2012	76	*
2013	154	*
2014	168	*
2015	191	*
2016	195	124
2017	182	134
2018	219	104

* no data is available for these years.

5. Conclusions

In light of the above, the regulations and policies concerning the use of archaeological sites in Greece aim not only to protect them from potential physical damage, but also to ensure that the values ascribed to them are respected. Inevitably, these values are defined by the state administration and notably the Central Archaeological Council, who are responsible for archaeological heritage

according to Greek Law. These values usually reflect prevalent perceptions on antiquities as national symbols, a view the origins of which can be traced back to the 19th century and the making of modern Greece and which is still present and largely endorsed. In this context, the persistent adherence to the idea of respect of the character of archaeological monuments and sites leads to the perpetuation of obsolete administrative practices. In close connection to the above, the rationale and the criteria according to which requests for use of archaeological sites are dealt with seem at least irrelevant with current developments, if not absurd. This stance fails to take into account alternative discourse on heritage [3,96,103] and often results in impeding creative uses of archaeological sites and their integration in contemporary life, the latter being a requirement of international conventions on the protection of cultural heritage such as the UNESCO Paris Convention of 1972 [104] and the Granada Convention of 1992 [105], as well as Greek legislation (article 3 of Law 3028/2002) [106]. Overcoming this situation should by no means entail succumbing to the commodification of cultural heritage, which is a fear very often expressed in Greece. However, it is necessary to acknowledge that there is a fine line between allowing more democracy and diversity in the uses of archeological heritage and allowing it to become a purely commercial object. In view of the above, it seems that a rational approach on the matter would involve a combination of open-mindedness and vigilance, so as to allow alternative discourse and creative uses of archaeological heritage, without turning it into a commodity. At the same time, it would be unrealistic to ignore the economic role of archaeological heritage, especially its impact on tourism [107]. Instead of focusing solely on the dangers of using archaeological sites and trying to keep them forever unchanged as if they were frozen, timeless entities [17,108], it would be meaningful to treat them as dynamic spaces which can respond to changes in the social, economic, and ideological significance of archaeological heritage, and thus strike the right balance between use and protection.

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Abbreviations

CAC	Central Archaeological Council
DNAM	Directorate of the National Archive of Monuments
EACA	Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens

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