
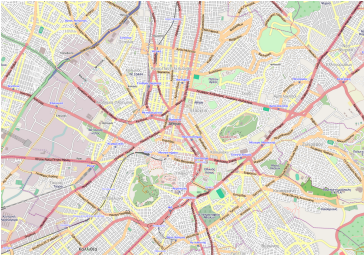


Parthenon

Parthenon	
Παρθενών (Greek)	
	
The Parthenon	
	
Location within Greece Athens central	
General information	
Type	Greek Temple
Architectural style	Classical
Location	Athens, Greece
Coordinates	37°58′12.9″N 23°43′20.89″E﻿ / ﻿37.9702500°N 23.7224722°E﻿ / 37.9702500; 23.7224722
Current tenants	Museum
Construction started	447 BC ^[1] [2]
Completed	432 BC ^[1] [2]
Height	13.72 m (45.0 ft)
Technical details	
Size	69.5 by 30.9 m (228 by 101 ft)
Other dimensions	Cella: 29.8 by 19.2 m (98 by 63 ft)
Design and construction	
Owner	Greek government
Architect	Iktinos, Kallikrates
Other designers	Phidias (sculptor)

The **Parthenon** (Ancient Greek: Παρθενών) is a temple on the Athenian Acropolis, Greece, dedicated to the Greek goddess Athena, whom the people of Athens considered their patron. Its construction began in 447 BC and was completed in 438 BC, although decorations of the Parthenon continued until 432 BC. It is the most important surviving building of Classical Greece, generally considered to be the culmination of the development of the Doric order. Its decorative sculptures are considered some of the high points of Greek art. The Parthenon is regarded as an

enduring symbol of Ancient Greece and of Athenian democracy and one of the world's greatest cultural monuments. The Greek Ministry of Culture is currently carrying out a program of selective restoration and reconstruction to ensure the stability of the partially ruined structure.^[3]

The Parthenon itself replaced an older temple of Athena, which historians call the Pre-Parthenon or Older Parthenon, that was destroyed in the Persian invasion of 480 BC. Like most Greek temples, the Parthenon was used as a treasury. For a time, it served as the treasury of the Delian League, which later became the Athenian Empire. In the 5th century AD, the Parthenon was converted into a Christian church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. After the Ottoman Turk conquest, it was turned into a mosque in the early 1460s, and it had a minaret built in it. On 26 September 1687, an Ottoman Turk ammunition dump inside the building was ignited by Venetian bombardment. The resulting explosion severely damaged the Parthenon and its sculptures. In 1806, Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin removed some of the surviving sculptures, with the Ottoman Turks' permission. These sculptures, now known as the Elgin Marbles or the Parthenon Marbles, were sold in 1816 to the British Museum in London, where they are now displayed. The Greek government is committed to the return of the sculptures to Greece, so far with no success.^[4]

Etymology

The origin of the Parthenon's name is from the Greek word "παρθενών" (*parthenon*), which referred to the "virgin's apartments" in a house and in the Parthenon's case seems to have been used only for a particular room of the temple;^[5] it is debated which room this is and how the room acquired its name. The Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon states that this room was the western cella of the Parthenon. Jamauri D. Green holds that the parthenon was the room in which the peplos presented to Athena at the Panathenaic Festival was woven by the *arrephoroi*, a group of four young girls chosen to serve Athena each year.^[6] Christopher Pelling asserts that Athena Parthenos may have constituted a discrete cult of Athena, intimately connected with, but not identical to, that of Athena Polias.^[7] According to this theory, the name of Parthenon means the "temple of the virgin goddess" and refers to the cult of Athena Parthenos that was associated with the temple.^[8] The epithet *parthénos* (Greek: παρθένος), whose origin is also unclear,^[9] meant "maiden, girl", but also "virgin, unmarried woman"^[10] and was especially used for Artemis, the goddess of wild animals, the hunt, and vegetation, and for Athena, the goddess of strategy and tactics, handicraft, and practical reason.^[11] It has also been suggested that the name of the temple alludes to the virgins (*parthenoi*), whose supreme sacrifice guaranteed the safety of the city.^[12]

The first instance in which *Parthenon* definitely refers to the entire building is in the 4th-century BC orator Demosthenes. In 5th-century building accounts, the structure is simply called *ho naos* ("the temple"). The architects Mnesikles and Kallikrates are said to have called the building *Hekatompedos* ("the hundred footer") in their lost treatise on Athenian architecture,^[13] and, in the 4th century and later, the building was referred to as the *Hekatompedos* or the *Hekatompedon* as well as the Parthenon; the 1st-century AD writer Plutarch referred to the building as the *Hekatompedon Parthenon*.^[14]

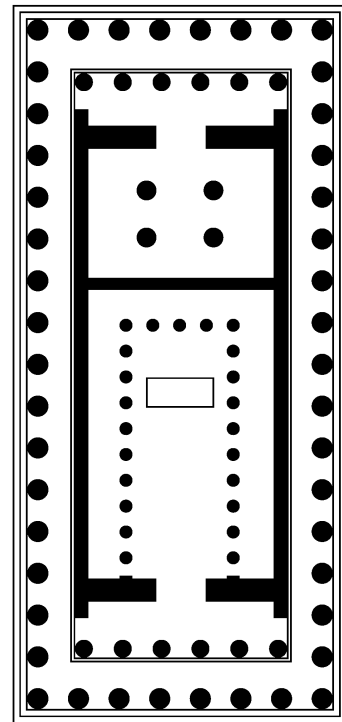
Architecture

The first endeavor to build a sanctuary for Athena Parthenos on the site of the present Parthenon was begun shortly after the Battle of Marathon (c. 490–488 BC) upon a muscular limestone foundation that extended and leveled the southern part of the Acropolis summit. This building was replaced by a hekatompedon (meaning "hundred-footer") and would have stood beside the archaic temple dedicated to the Athena Polias. The Older or Pre-Parthenon, as it is frequently referred to, was still under construction when the Persians sacked the city in 480 BC and razed the Acropolis.^[15] ^[16]

In the mid-5th century BC, when the Athenian Acropolis became the seat of the Delian League and Athens was the greatest cultural centre of its time, Pericles initiated an ambitious building project that lasted the entire second half of the century. The most important buildings visible on the Acropolis today—the Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion and the temple of Athena Nike—were erected during this period. The Parthenon was built under the general supervision of the sculptor Phidias, who also had charge of the sculptural decoration. The architects, Iktinos and Kallikrates, began in 447 BC, and the building was substantially completed by 432, but work on the decorations continued until at least 431. Some of the financial accounts for the Parthenon survive and show that the largest single expense was transporting the stone from Mount Pentelicus, about 16 kilometres from Athens, to the Acropolis. The funds were partly drawn from the treasury of the Delian League, which was moved from the Panhellenic sanctuary at Delos to the Acropolis in 454 BC.

Although the nearby Temple of Hephaestus is the most complete surviving example of a Doric order temple, the Parthenon, in its day, was regarded as the finest. The temple, wrote John Julius Cooper, "Enjoys the reputation of being the most perfect Doric temple ever built. Even in antiquity, its architectural refinements were legendary, especially the subtle correspondence between the curvature of the stylobate, the taper of the naos walls and the *entasis* of the columns."^[17] *Entasis* refers to the slight bulge of the columns as they rise, though the observable effect on the Parthenon is considerably more subtle than on earlier temples with their noticeably cigar-shaped columns. The stylobate is the platform on which the columns stand. As in many other classical Greek temples,^[18] it has a slight parabolic upward curvature intended to shed rainwater and reinforce the building against earthquakes. The columns might therefore be supposed to lean outwards, but they actually lean slightly inwards so that if they carried on, they would meet exactly a mile above the centre of the Parthenon; since they are all the same height, the curvature of the outer stylobate edge is transmitted to the architrave and roof above: "All follow the rule of being built to delicate curves," Gorham Stevens observed when pointing out that, in addition, the west front was built at a slightly higher level than that of the east front.^[19] It is not universally agreed what the intended effect of these "optical refinements" was; it may serve as a sort of "reverse optical illusion".^[20] As the Greeks may have been

0 5 10 15 20 m



Floor plan of the Parthenon



Reconstruction of the Acropolis and Areus Pagus in Athens, Leo von Klenze, 1846

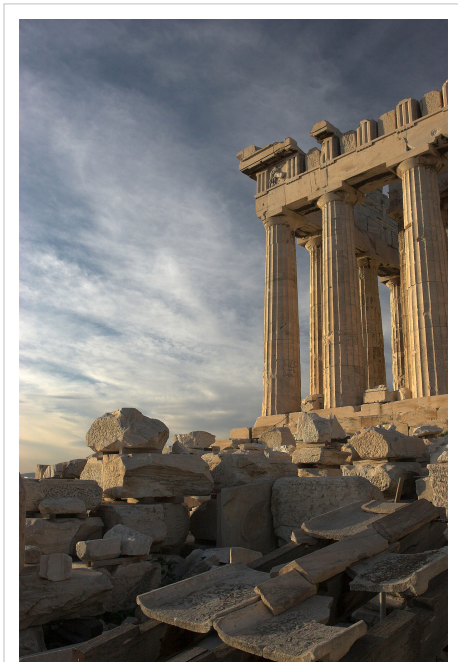
aware, two parallel lines appear to bow, or curve outward, when intersected by converging lines. In this case, the ceiling and floor of the temple may seem to bow in the presence of the surrounding angles of the building. Striving for perfection, the designers may have added these curves, compensating for the illusion by creating their own curves, thus negating this effect and allowing the temple to be seen as they intended. It is also suggested that it was to enliven what might have appeared an inert mass in the case of a building without curves, but the comparison ought to be with the Parthenon's more obviously curved predecessors than with a notional rectilinear temple.

Some studies of the Acropolis, including the Parthenon, conclude that many of its proportions approximate the golden ratio. The Parthenon's facade as well as elements of its facade and elsewhere can be circumscribed by golden rectangles.^[21] This view that the golden ratio was employed in the design has been disputed in more recent studies.^[22]

Measured at the stylobate, the dimensions of the base of the Parthenon are 69.5 metres by 30.9 metres (228.0 x 101.4 ft). The cella was 29.8 metres long by 19.2 metres wide (97.8 x 63.0 ft), with internal colonnades in two tiers, structurally necessary to support the roof. On the exterior, the Doric columns measure 1.9 metres (6.2 ft) in diameter and are 10.4 metres (34.1 ft) high. The corner columns are slightly larger in diameter. The Parthenon had 46 outer pillars and 23 inner pillars in total. The stylobate has an upward curvature towards its centre of 60 millimetres (2.36 in) on the east and west ends, and of 110 millimetres (4.33 in) on the sides. The roof was covered with large overlapping marble tiles known as imbrices and tegulae.

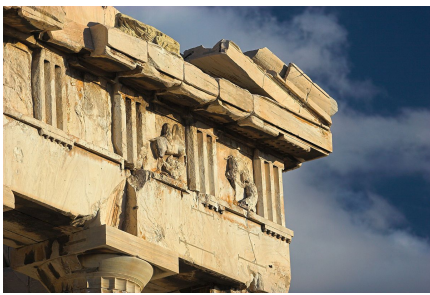
Sculpture

The Parthenon, an octostyle, peripteral Doric temple with Ionic architectural features, housed the chryselephantine statue of Athena Parthenos sculpted by Phidias and dedicated in 439 or 438 BC. The decorative stonework was originally highly coloured.^[23] The temple was dedicated to Athena at that time, though construction continued until almost the beginning of the Peloponnesian War in 432. By the year 438, the sculptural decoration of the Doric metopes on the frieze above the exterior colonnade, and of the Ionic frieze around the upper portion of the walls of the cella, had been completed. The richness of the Parthenon's frieze and metope decoration is in agreement with the function of the temple as a treasury. In the *opisthodomus* (the back room of the cella) were stored the monetary contributions of the Delian League, of which Athens was the leading member.



The Parthenon from the south. In the foreground of the image, a reconstruction of the marble imbrices and tegulae (roof tiles) forming the roof is visible, resting on wooden supports.

Metopes



Detail of the West metopes, illustrating the current condition of the temple in detail after 2,500 years of war, pollution, erratic conservation, pillage and vandalism

The ninety-two metopes were carved in high relief, a practice employed until then only in treasuries (buildings used to keep votive gifts to the gods). According to the building records, the metope sculptures date to the years 446–440 BC. Their design is attributed to the sculptor Kalamis. The metopes of the east side of the Parthenon, above the main entrance, depict the Gigantomachy (mythical battles between the Olympian gods and the Giants). The metopes of the west end show Amazonomachy (mythical battle of the Athenians against the Amazons). The metopes of the south side show the Thessalian Centauromachy (battle of the Lapiths aided by Theseus against the half-man, half-horse Centaurs). Metopes 13–21 are missing, but drawings from 1674 attributed to Jaques Carrey indicate a series of

humans; these have been interpreted as scenes from the Lapith wedding, scenes from the early history of Athens and various myths.^[24] On the north side of the Parthenon, the metopes are poorly preserved, but the subject seems to be the sack of Troy.

The metopes present surviving traces of the Severe Style in the anatomy of the figures' heads, in the limitation of the corporal movements to the contours and not to the muscles, and in the presence of pronounced veins in the figures of the Centauromachy. Several of the metopes still remain on the building, but, with the exception of those on the northern side, they are severely damaged. Some of them are located at the Acropolis Museum, others are in the British Museum, and one can be seen at the Louvre museum.

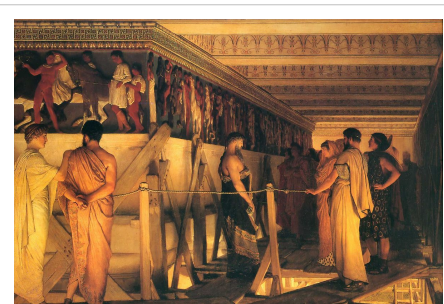
In March 2011, it was announced that five metopes of the Parthenon had been discovered in the south wall of Acropolis which had been extended when the Acropolis was used as a fortress. According to "Eleftherotypia" daily, the archaeologists claim that the metopes have been placed in the 18th century, when the Acropolis wall was being repaired. The experts discovered the metopes, while processing 2250 photos with modern photographic methods as the white Pentelic marble of which they are made differed from the other stone of the wall. It was previously presumed that the missing metopes had been destroyed during the Morosini explosion of the Parthenon, in 1687.^[25]

Frieze

The most characteristic feature in the architecture and decoration of the temple is the Ionic frieze running around the exterior walls of the cella. The bas-relief frieze was carved in situ; it is dated in 442 BC-438 BC.

One interpretation is that it depicts an idealized version of the Panathenaic procession from the Dipylon Gate in the Kerameikos to the Acropolis. In this procession held every year, with a special procession taking place every four years, Athenians and foreigners were participating to honour the goddess Athena, offering sacrifices and a new peplos (dress woven by selected noble Athenian girls called *ergastines*).

Joan Breton Connelly has recently argued for another interpretation of the frieze, in which she attempts to prove that the iconography of the frieze is based on Greek mythology. This interpretation postulates that the scenes depict the sacrifice of Pandora, youngest daughter of Erechtheus, to Athena. This human sacrifice was demanded by Athena to save the city from Eumolpus, king of Eleusis, who had gathered an army to attack Athens.^[26]



Phidias Showing the Frieze of the Parthenon to his Friends, 1868 painting by Lawrence Alma-Tadema

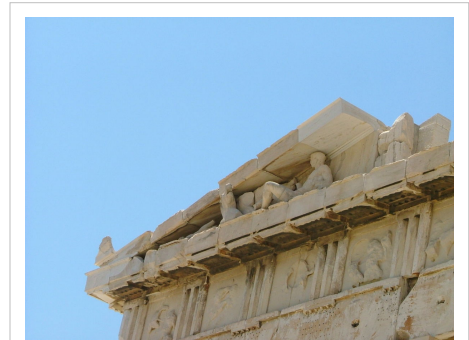
Pediments

The 2nd-century traveller Pausanias, when he visited the Acropolis at the end of the 2nd century AD, only mentioned briefly the sculptures of the pediments (gable ends) of the temple, reserving the majority of his description for the gold and ivory statue of the goddess inside.

East pediment

The east pediment narrates the birth of Athena from the head of her father, Zeus. According to Greek mythology, Zeus gave birth to Athena after a terrible headache prompted him to summon Hephaestus' (the god of fire and the forge) assistance. To alleviate the pain, he ordered Hephaestus to strike him with his forging hammer, and when he did, Zeus's head split open and out popped the goddess Athena in full armour. The sculptural arrangement depicts the moment of Athena's birth.

Unfortunately, the centrepieces of the pediment were destroyed even before Jacques Carrey created otherwise useful documentary drawings in 1674, so all reconstructions are subject to conjecture and speculation. The main Olympian gods must have stood around Zeus and Athena watching the wondrous event, with Hephaestus and Hera probably near them. The Carrey drawings are instrumental in reconstructing the sculptural arrangement beyond the center figures to the north and south.^[27]



Part of the east pediment still found on the Parthenon

West pediment

The west pediment faced the Propylaia and depicted the contest between Athena and Poseidon during their competition for the honor of becoming the city's patron. Athena and Poseidon appear at the center of the composition, diverging from one another in strong diagonal forms, with the goddess holding the olive tree and the god of the sea raising his trident to strike the earth. At their flanks, they are framed by two active groups of horses pulling chariots, while a crowd of legendary personalities from Athenian mythology fills the space out to the acute corners of the pediment.

The work on the pediments lasted from 438 to 432 BC, and the sculptures of the Parthenon pediments are some of the finest examples of classical Greek art. The figures are sculpted in natural movement with bodies full of vital energy that bursts through their flesh, as the flesh in turn bursts through their thin clothing. The thin chitons allow the body underneath to be revealed as the focus of the composition. The distinction between gods and humans is blurred in the conceptual interplay between the idealism and naturalism bestowed on the stone by the sculptors.^[28] The pediments no longer exist.

Athena Parthenos

The only piece of sculpture from the Parthenon known to be from the hand of Phidias^[29] was the statue of Athena housed in the *naos*. This massive chryselephantine sculpture is now lost and known only from copies, vase painting, gems, literary descriptions and coins.^[30]

Older Parthenon

The first endeavour to build a sanctuary for Athena Parthenos on the site of the present Parthenon was begun shortly after the Battle of Marathon (c. 490–88 BC). This building replaced a hekatompedon (meaning "hundred-footer") and would have stood beside the archaic temple dedicated to Athena Polias. The "older Parthenon", as it is frequently referred to, was still under construction when the Persians sacked the city in 480 BC and razed the Acropolis. The

existence of the proto-Parthenon and its destruction were known from Herodotus,^[31] and the drums of its columns were plainly visible built into the curtain wall north of the Erechtheum. Further material evidence of this structure was revealed with the excavations of Patagiotis Kavvadias of 1885–90. The findings of this dig allowed Wilhelm Dörpfeld, then director of the German Archaeological Institute, to assert that there existed a distinct substructure to the original Parthenon, called Parthenon I by Dörpfeld, not immediately below the present edifice as had been previously assumed.^[32] Dörpfeld's observation was that the three steps of the first Parthenon consisted of two steps of Poros limestone, the same as the foundations, and a top step of Karrha limestone that was covered by the lowest step of the Periclean Parthenon. This platform was smaller and slightly to the north of the final Parthenon, indicating that it was built for a wholly different building, now wholly covered over. This picture was somewhat complicated by the publication of the final report on the 1885–90 excavations, indicating that the substructure was contemporary with the Kimonian walls, and implying a later date for the first temple.^[33]

If the original Parthenon was indeed destroyed in 480, it invites the question of why the site was left a ruin for thirty-three years. One argument involves the oath sworn by the Greek allies before the Battle of Plataea in 479 BC^[34] declaring that the sanctuaries destroyed by the Persians would not be rebuilt, an oath from which the Athenians were only absolved with the Peace of Callias in 450.^[35] The mundane fact of the cost of reconstructing Athens after the Persian sack is at least as likely a cause. However, the excavations of Bert Hodge Hill led him to propose the existence of a second Parthenon, begun in the period of Kimon after 468 BC.^[36] Hill claimed that the Karrha limestone step Dörpfeld took to be the highest of Parthenon I was in fact the lowest of the three steps of Parthenon II, whose stylobate dimensions Hill calculated to be 23.51 by 66.888 metres (77.13 ft × 219.45 ft).

One difficulty in dating the proto-Parthenon is that at the time of the 1885 excavation the archaeological method of seriation was not fully developed; the careless digging and refilling of the site led to a loss of much valuable information. An attempt to make sense of the potsherds found on the acropolis came with the two-volume study by Graef and Langlotz published 1925–33.^[37] This inspired American archaeologist William Bell Dinsmoor to attempt to supply limiting dates for the temple platform and the five walls hidden under the re-terracing of the Acropolis. Dinsmoor concluded that the latest possible date for Parthenon I was no earlier 495 BC, contradicting the early date given by Dörpfeld.^[38] Further Dinsmoor denied that there were two proto-Parthenons, and that the only pre-Periclean temple was what Dörpfeld referred to as Parthenon II. Dinsmoor and Dörpfeld exchanged views in the *American Journal of Archaeology* in 1935.^[39]

Function

Although the Parthenon is architecturally a temple and is usually called so, it is not really one in the conventional sense of the word.^[40] A small shrine has been excavated within the building, on the site of an older sanctuary probably dedicated to Athena as a way to get closer to the God,^[40] but the Parthenon never hosted the cult of Athena Polias, patron of Athens: the cult image which was bathed in the sea and to which was presented the *peplos*, was an olivewood *xoanon*, located at an older altar on the northern side of the Acropolis.^[41]

The colossal statue of Athena by Phidias was not related to any cult^[42] and never inspired any recorded religious fervour.^[41] It did not seem to have any priestess, altar nor cult name.^[43] According to Thucydides, Pericles once referred to the statue as a gold reserve, stressing that it "contained forty talents of pure gold and it was all removable".^[44] The Athenian statesman thus implies that the metal, obtained from contemporary coinage,^[45] could be used again without any impiety.^[43]

The Parthenon should then be viewed as a grand setting for the votive statue of Phidias rather than a cult site.^[46] It also served as a treasury: the funds of the Delian League, transferred from Delos to Athens in 454 BC, were housed in one of its rooms.

Later history

Christian church

The Parthenon survived as a temple to Athena for close to a thousand years. It was certainly still intact in the 4th century AD, by which time it was already as old as Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is now, and far older than St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. But by that time Athens had been reduced to a provincial city of the Roman Empire, albeit one with a glorious past. Sometime in the 5th century AD, the great cult image of Athena was looted by one of the Emperors, and taken to Constantinople, where it was later destroyed, possibly during the siege of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade in 1204 AD.



Image of Parthenon at night

Shortly after this, the Parthenon was converted to a Christian church. In Byzantine times it became the Church of the Parthenos Maria (Virgin Mary), or the Church of the Theotokos (Mother of God). It was the fourth most important pilgrimage in the Eastern Roman Empire after Constantinople, Ephessos and Thessalonica.^[47] In 1018, the emperor Basil II went on a pilgrimage to Athens directly after his final victory over the Bulgarians for the sole purpose of worshipping at the Parthenon.^[47] In medieval Greek accounts it called the Temple of Theotokos Atheniotissa and often indirectly referred to, as famous without explaining which temple they were referring to precisely, thus

establishing that it was indeed well known.^[47]

At the time of the Latin occupation, it became for about 250 years a Roman Catholic church of Our Lady. The conversion of the temple to a church involved removing the internal columns and some of the walls of the cella, and the creation of an apse at the eastern end. This inevitably led to the removal and dispersal of some of the sculptures. Those depicting gods were either possibly re-interpreted according to a Christian theme, or removed and destroyed.

Islamic mosque

In 1456, Athens fell to the Ottomans and a portion of the Parthenon was converted into a mosque. The Ottomans were respectful of ancient monuments in their territories and did not willfully destroy the antiquities of Athens, but at the same time made no special effort to protect them. A minaret was added to the Parthenon, and its base and stairway are still functional, leading up as high as the architrave and hence invisible from the outside. Otherwise, the Ottomans did not further modify the building. European visitors in the 17th century, as well as some representations of the Acropolis hill, testified that the building was largely intact.

Despite the existing tensions the 17th century, Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi published one of the most poetic appraisals ever made of its enduring beauty. He concluded with a fervent prayer that the Parthenon, “a work less of human hands than of Heaven itself, should remain standing for all time.” Just a few years later, it was all but annihilated in the worst moment of its history. In the evening of 26 September 1687, a well-armed band of Venetian invaders surrounded the Acropolis, intent on capturing these historic heights from the Turks. As the Turks huddled for safety inside the ancient monument, more than 700 Venetian cannonballs found their mark against the marble. But not only Turks sheltered here: So did their stores of gunpowder—until a Venetian volley crashed through the roof and exploded the Turkish magazine. Three hundred perished, and the roofing, columns, and interior rooms were severely damaged.^[48]

Destruction

In 1687, the Parthenon suffered its greatest blow when the Venetians under Francesco Morosini attacked Athens, and the Ottoman Turks fortified the Acropolis and used the building as a gunpowder magazine. On 26 September a Venetian mortar, fired from the Hill of Philopappus, blew the magazine up and the building was partly destroyed.^[49] Morosini then proceeded to attempt to loot sculptures from the ruin. The internal structures were demolished, whatever was left of the roof collapsed, and some of the pillars, particularly on the southern side, were decapitated. The sculptures suffered heavily. Many fell to the ground, and souvenirs were later made from their pieces. Consequently some sections of the sculptural decoration are known only from the drawings made by Flemish artist Jacques Carrey in 1674.^[50] After this, much of the building fell into disuse and a smaller mosque was erected.

The 18th century was a period of Ottoman Turk stagnation; as a result, many more Europeans found access to Athens, and the picturesque ruins of the Parthenon were much drawn and painted, spurring a rise in philhellenism and helping to arouse sympathy in Britain and France for Greek independence. Amongst those early travellers and archaeologists were James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, who were commissioned by the Society of Dilettanti to survey the ruins of classical Athens. What they produced was the first measured drawings of the Parthenon published in 1787 in the second volume of *Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated*. In 1801, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, the Earl of Elgin, obtained a *firman* (edict) from the Sultan to make casts and drawings of the antiquities on the Acropolis, to demolish recent buildings if this was necessary to view the antiquities, and to remove sculptures from them. Although the existence of the firman is doubtful, as the original document has not been rescued, he took this as permission to collect all the sculptures he could find. He employed local people to detach them from the building itself; a few others he collected from the ground, and some smaller pieces he bought from local people. The detachment of the sculptures caused further irreparable damage to what was left of the building, as some of the frieze blocks were sawn in half to lessen their weight for shipment to England.

Independent Greece

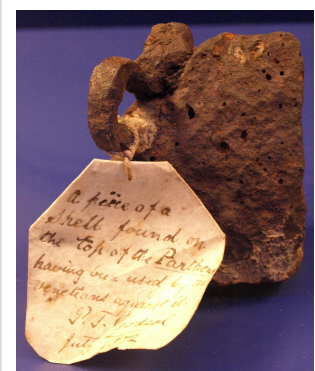
When independent Greece gained control of Athens in 1832, the visible section of the minaret was demolished from the Parthenon, and soon all the medieval and Ottoman buildings on the Acropolis were destroyed. However the image of the small mosque within the Parthenon's cella has been preserved in Joly de Lotbinière's photograph, published in Lerebours's *Excursions Daguerriennes* in 1842: the first photograph of the Acropolis.^[51] The area became a historical precinct controlled by the Greek government. Today it attracts millions of tourists every year, who travel up the path at the western end of the Acropolis, through the restored Propylaea, and up the Panathenaic



The southern side of the Parthenon, which sustained considerable damage in the 1687 explosion



"View of the Parthenon from the Propylea", Edward Dodwell, *Views in Greece*, London 1821, depicting buildings of the time within the Acropolis

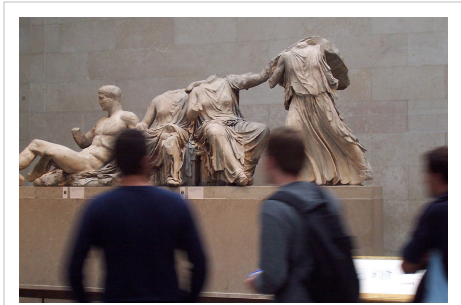


Fragment of an exploded shell found on top of a wall in the Parthenon, thought to originate from the time of the Venetian siege

Way to the Parthenon, which is surrounded by a low fence to prevent damage.

Dispute over the marbles

The dispute centres around the Parthenon Marbles removed by the Earl of Elgin, which are in the British Museum. A few sculptures from the Parthenon are also in the Louvre in Paris, in Copenhagen, and elsewhere, but over fifty percent are in the Acropolis Museum in Athens.^[52]^[53] A few can still be seen on the building itself. The Greek government has been campaigning since 1983 for the British Museum sculptures to be returned to Greece.^[52] The British Museum has steadfastly refused to return the sculptures,^[54] and successive British governments have been unwilling to force the Museum to do so (which would require legislation). Nevertheless, talks between senior representatives from Greek and British cultural ministries, and their legal advisors took place in London on 4 May 2007. These were the first serious negotiations for several years, and there were hopes that the two sides may move a step closer to a resolution.^[55]



Life-size pediment sculptures from the Parthenon in the British Museum

Reconstruction

In 1975, the Greek government began a concerted effort to restore the Parthenon and other Acropolis structures. After some delay a Committee for the Conservation of the Acropolis Monuments was established in 1983.^[56] The project later attracted funding and technical assistance from the European Union. An archaeological committee thoroughly documented every artifact remaining on the site, and architects assisted with computer models to determine their original locations. Particularly important and fragile sculptures were transferred to the Acropolis Museum. A crane was installed for moving marble blocks; the crane was designed to fold away beneath the roofline when not in use. In some cases, prior re-construction was found to be incorrect. These were dismantled, and a careful process of restoration began.^[57] Originally, various blocks were held together by elongated iron **H** pins that were completely coated in lead, which protected the iron from corrosion. Stabilizing pins added in the 19th century were not so coated, and corroded. Since the corrosion product (rust) is expansive, the expansion caused further damage by cracking the marble.^[58] All new metalwork uses titanium, a strong, light, and corrosion resistant material.

The Parthenon will not be restored to a pre-1687 state, but the explosion damage will be mitigated as much as possible, both in the interest of restoring the structural integrity of the edifice (important in this earthquake-prone region) and to restore the aesthetic integrity by filling in chipped sections of column drums and lintels, using precisely sculpted marble cemented in place. New Pentelic marble is being used from the original quarry. Ultimately, almost all major pieces of marble will be placed in the structure where they originally would have been, supported as needed by modern materials. While the repairs initially show as white against the weathered tan of original surfaces they will become less prominent as they age.



Restoration works, 2002



Partial reconstruction (work in progress) of the Parthenon, Athens, to ensure structural stability, 2007



A reconstructed architrave block of the Parthenon.

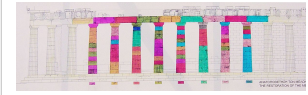


Diagram of reconstruction of north side



Wide-scale restoration in 2010.

Notes

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- [6] Hurwit, *The Athenian Acropolis*, 161–163.
- [7] Research has revealed a shrine with altar pre-dating the Older Parthenon, respected by, incorporated and rebuilt in the north pteron of the Parthenon (Pelling, *Greek Tragedy and the Historian*, 169).
- [8] "Parthenon". *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.
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- [11] Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 18
- [12] Whitley, *The Archaeology of Ancient Greece*, 352
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- [19] Penrose *op. cit.* pp 32–34, found the difference motivated by economies of labour; Gorham P. Stevens, "Concerning the Impressiveness of the Parthenon" *American Journal of Archaeology* 66.3 (July 1962:337–338).
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External links

- The Acropolis of Athens: The Parthenon (http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/2/eh251.jsp?obj_id=912) (official site with a schedule of its opening hours, tickets and contact information)
- (Hellenic Ministry of Culture) The Acropolis Restoration Project (http://www.yppo.gr/4/e40.jsp?obj_id=123)
- The Athenian Acropolis by Livio C. Stecchini (<http://www.metrum.org/key/athens/index.htm>) (Takes the heterodox view of the date of the proto-Parthenon, but a useful summary of the scholarship.)
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre – Acropolis, Athens (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/404>)
- Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County – The Parthenon (<http://www.nashville.gov/parthenon/index.htm>)
- Google Sketchup 3D Model of Parthenon (simplistic) (<http://sketchup.google.com/3dwarehouse/details?mid=8174b921338882e8816a3771436c8474>)
- Parthenon virtual tour (<http://www.vgreece.com/index.php?entry=entry050714-163859>) Interactive 360° panoramas in high resolution.
- The Friends of the Acropolis (<http://www.acropolisfriends.gr/index.php?lang=en>)
- Illustrated Parthenon Marbles (<http://people.hsc.edu/drjclassics/lectures/ParthenonMarbles/marbles.shtml>) – Dr. Janice Siegel, Department of Classics, Hampden-Sydney College, Virginia
- Parthenon:description, photo album (<http://travels.co.ua/engl/greece/athens/acropolis/parthenon/index.html>)
- A Wikimedia video of the main sights of the Athenian Acropolis
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