

Reuniting the Parthenon Sculptures

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We are in the dawn of the 21st Century where taking spoils of war by conquering nations is no longer an acceptable rule of law that justifies the pillage of the cultural treasures of a conquered people. Today, as an enlightened society we must strive to protect our cultural patrimony ... our history... from graverobbers and looters of the present and the past.

The Parthenon Sculptures, also known as the "Elgin Marbles," are a collection of some of the most acclaimed and symbolic sculptures that the world has ever known. For Generations the Parthenon and her Marbles have served as a paradigm of modern art and architecture and, without question, are the cultural property of Greece. The sculptures were an integral part of the temple that adorned the walls of the Parthenon for nearly 2,500 years until they were forcibly removed between 1801 and 1810 by the British Lord Elgin. The taking is the foremost example of 19th Century looting that has filled the trophy cases of the British Museum with looted treasures and spoils of war amassed at the height of European Colonialism. The taking occurred at a time when Greece was occupied by the Ottoman Empire, as she had been for nearly four centuries prior thereto; at a time when she was without the power to stop the pillage. The circumstances surrounding the taking, the documented bribery and extortion employed by Elgin and his men to effect the dismemberment and to box and ship Greece's most prized piece of cultural property is what has made this debate the cause celebre amongst all restitution claims in the world.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and Honorary Members, I would like to invite you to visit our site and I hope you are interested in helping our cause (www.parthenonmarblesusa.org). Help us in righting a historical wrong. Help us in reclaiming looted cultural property and returning these treasures to their country of origin. Help us return the Parthenon Sculptures to their rightful home in Athens, not London. Remember, it is our history we are fighting for.

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