

# Parthenon marbles

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Marbles are a collection of classical Greek marble sculptures, inscriptions and architectural members. This collection was originally part of the Parthenon temple and other buildings around it on the Acropolis of Athens, Greece. They are a masterpiece for ancient Greek art and a treasure for the world. Those statues have always been part of the Pantheon complex until the Turkish conquered Greece and gained the power over its artifacts and properties.

It had been relatively easy for Thomas Bruce, the seventh earl of Elgin, Britain, to buy from the Ottomans' ambassador a wide range of art pieces for a low price. He removed 56 pieces from the temple's frieze, 15 metopes, and 17 pediment sculptures, plus a caryatid and a column from a nearby temple; and he exported them to his own courtyard. After a few years he found himself forced to sell the collection to the British nation which deposited it in the British Museum for safekeeping, where it is still today.

But long before their arrival in England those statues had been battered by wars, fires, earthquakes, whippings, destructions by sawing off chunks of sculptures and other kind of damage. They have been scrubbed, cleaned with abrasive substances and eventually reburied again with stained wax. Since Greece got back its independence, the folk and the political leaders have been fighting to take the Pantheon Marbles back home as well as Britain has fought to keep them in the British National Museum. The case had been brought even to the European Union's

Court of Justice but the marbles are still nowadays so far from their native place. Throughout the history of the world many nations have lost important

pieces of their art as well as other countries and populations have stolen them. Whether it's right to keep those masterpieces or give them back to their owner is a very controversial issue and the world hasn't found the 'right answer' yet. Everyone just cares about their own business and they both want to keep other's populations piece of art and have back theirs own.

First of all I think we should stop seeing ancient art as a producer of money but as a precious gift to admire. Second of all we should stop seeing those artifacts as a property of that state instead of the other but as a property of the entire world. Having said that I think that every piece of art could have been more enjoyed and admired in its own primal place. And I don't mean just the country where it's from, but when possible, even the building where it had been placed.

I think it should be an extraordinary emotion to see what and how it should look like many years before us, in the place where that object was made up for, its real home. Many years ago I visited the pyramids, I was a kid so I don't remember it very clearly but I do remember how sad I was when I found out that inside they were almost empty. I expected to find a mummy, sarcophagus, canonic urns and all the stuff that belonged to that pharaoh and that pyramid. I was so disappointed that someone had just took them away, to bring them who knows where. Years later I the best Egyptian collections I have ever seen.

But when I was there I felt so sad, I felt like a thief because that pieces were not from Turin and neither from Italy and then it didn't look so good as it could look in the pyramids, the real place where they belong. I think art is

not just the piece itself, self-standing, but related to the environment it was designed for. Only in that way it could be admired for its own beauty and purpose. So if I had the power, I'd give every piece of art back to their primal home, and not because of the money or whatever but because there it can shine as nowhere else in the entire world.