

Research paper on the acropolis

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



The awakening of art and architecture began to take place around 520 and 420 B. C.. This awakening spawned a competition between artists and architects of the time to produce greater works than ever before. Athens became a gathering place for great artisans. They brought their works together in an area of Athens known as the Acropolis. By looking at the different architectural and artistic styling's one can gain a better understanding of Greek culture.

The Acropolis is one of the well-known architectural wonders of the world. The entrance is a giant gateway called the Propylaea. Stepping through this gateway almost seems to transport one back in time when the natives gathered to worship their Gods and Goddesses within the walls of these magical places.

These wonderful feats of architecture were built over eight acres. The most well-known structures in the Acropolis are the Erechtheon, Propylaea, and the Parthenon. All three held great religious significance to the citizens of Hellenistic Greece (Rhodes). They served as a public place for worship and shrines for their many Gods and Goddesses. The gigantic structures show the Greek cultures obsession with showing off the power of their society. The opulence and great expense of the project reflects both the ingenuity as well as the economic well-being of Greece. New building techniques suggest the forward thinking ways of the Greek culture and the lengths they went to for their religious beliefs.

The Acropolis is unique in that it incorporates several different architectural and artistic styles. Influences of both Ionic and Doric architectural styles illustrate new ideas regarding the mixing of these two styles. The Parthenon

is a perfect example of Doric architecture. The Doric style gives the idea that the structure was supported by the columns, with the columns appearing wider at the bottom without a base. The Parthenon is a masterpiece in terms of perspective (King). Careful attention was given to make the columns appear straight to the eye, despite being a curved structure. Used as a place of worship, perhaps this attention to detail shows the high standards Greek's set in terms of their areas of worship. The Erechtheon uses an Ionic style. Ionic architecture has columns with bases with more ornamentation than the Doric style. Some of the columns even took on a womanly shape adding to its mystique. The temple is a shrine to many of the myths told by Greek culture. Each carefully placed piece of sculpture or decoration relates a visual story of mythology. The Propylaea was the entrance to the Acropolis. It incorporated both the Doric style of the Parthenon and the Ionic style of the Erechtheon. With the blending of styles, it was perhaps the Propylaea were an attempt to unify the two structures. The large, imposing gateway was surely meant to inspire awe in all who visited it. Any who viewed the gate would understand just how powerful the Greeks were.

The Acropolis is also renowned for its art that chronicles the lives and myths of the Greek people. The structures themselves were not the only feats of artistic brilliance in the Acropolis. Many sculptures and statues helped bring into context the reasons these structures were built. The most famous of the statues Athena, is no longer positioned inside the Parthenon. The influence of Athena can still be seen in the surviving art found throughout the Acropolis. Her story seems to be the predominate myth displayed. The main statue was long destroyed she was a model for the beauty and idealism of

Greek sculpture (Gombrich). The Parthenon metopes were reliefs that surrounded the exterior of the Parthenon. All illustrate scenes from Greek mythology. They depict Olympian gods seated while the citizens of Athens were carved in lesser detail around them. This shows the power of the Gods over the citizens (Sporre). The pediments and friezes are also testaments to these myths. The Temple of Athena is full of art depicting the goddess, most notably the friezes. The temple introduces a new means of artistic expression with more free-flowing style than carvings in other areas of the Acropolis (Beard). In examples of art in the Acropolis, the figures were very anatomically correct with an idealist sense of beauty. They use action and movement to convey the stories of their religion. While some of these great works can still be seen at the Acropolis, most remain caught within the limbo of Greece and Britain's conflict.

In conclusion, I feel that there should be more investigation into the matters at hand. Normally I would support that the British keep the marbles if they truly are legally obtained. Based on the research I have had access to, it would seem like there are many inconsistencies with the story of how the pieces were obtained. Many British officials at the time confessed their own concerns as to the conditions the marbles were purchased under. No accurate legal documents exist, and with Greece under control of the Ottoman Empire at the time of the agreement it seems logical to question who had the authority to sell the pieces in the first place.

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