# Lord Elgin and the marbles

# Oxford University Press - Lord Elgin and the Marbles

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Elgin marbles

Elgin, Thomas Bruce, Earl of, 1766-1841Lord Elgin and the marbles

-Lord Elgin and the marbles

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#### Lord Byron was right

XV When Elgin returned to England from captivity in 1806, he started unpacking his precious marbles and exhibited them in Glouster House at the corner of Park Lane and Piccadilly. The museum movement depended on collection, on moving objects from their original location, and on allowing them to be understood in relation to different traditions of art and cultural forms. This letter, handed out unofficially as a

favour, could only urge the Turkish authorities in Athens to allow Elgin's men to make drawings, take casts and conduct excavations around the foundations of the Parthenon, where some part of an inscription or relief might be buried, with the inevitable proviso that no harm be caused to the monuments.

#### **BBC**

That is not the case with these blocks of marble. The Parthenon Marbles date back over 2,500 years and were first constructed in honor of the Greek goddess, Athena.

### Lord Elgin and the Parthenon Marbles

Using his connections as the British ambassador to the Ottomans, who at this time was in control of Greece, Elgin was allowed only to cast and make paintings of the sculptures. But the colonist did not believe this. The weaker arguments do neither side much credit.

### Lord Elgin and the Parthenon Marbles

Some 300 women and children were amongst those killed, and the building itself was ruined. By his own account, he was concerned about damage being done to important artworks in the temples of, then under Ottoman sway. His name is Hugh Hammersley, and he had taken part in the debate in the British Parliament that had to decide whether the Elgin Marbles should be purchased and displayed in the British Museum.

## Lord Elgin and the Parthenon marbles

When Byron came to Greece, one afternoon, he went as a pilgrim to visit the Acropolis of Athens but was shocked at the plight of the Parthenon, the temple of goddess of wisdom Minerva.

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