

# Who Saved the Parthenon?

A New History of the Acropolis  
Before, During and After the  
Greek Revolution



WILLIAM ST CLAIR



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William St Clair, *Who Saved the Parthenon? A New History of the Acropolis Before, During and After the Greek Revolution*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0136>

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ISBN Paperback: 9781783744619

ISBN Hardback: 9781783744626

ISBN Digital (PDF): 9781783744633

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 9781783744640

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 9781783744657

ISBN XML: 9781800642997

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0136

Cover image: Figure 2.7. 'View of the Acropolis from the banks of the Illysus, Sep<sup>r</sup> 1824.' Chromolithograph from a contemporary amateur picture. From: William Black, L.R.C.S.E., Surgeon, H.M.S. Chanticleer, *Narrative of Cruises in the Mediterranean in H.M.S. "Euryalus" and "Chanticleer" during the Greek War of Independence (1822–1826)* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1900), frontispiece. The chromolithograph was made by McLagan and Cumming of Edinburgh c.1900. Public domain.

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# Appendix F

## Four Local Descriptions of Athens from the Long Millennium

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### 1. 'A Relation of the Antiquities of Athens'

*A manuscript from Venice translated into English shortly before 1671 from an unidentified language, probably Greek, now first published.*<sup>1</sup>

Imprimis Some two miles from the Citie at a place now called Pattissia was Platoes Schoole, & over against it at Sepolia was his Academie.

Somewhat higher eastward in a place now named Ampelookipi [*Ampelikopoi*] was the Schoole of Zeno

Towards the south on the other side, on the Hill Imitio [*Hymettos*], now called Trelodoumi [transcription uncertain] [*Trellóvouno*] a place much assoomed by ye Botomomis [*Botanists*] for the simples there growing, was the Schoole of [*a gap where a word has been omitted*] and a little beneath near the Amphitheatre was that of Aristofanes [*not identified*]

Within the City was the Schoole of Socrates, who was poyson'd by the Athenians meerly for the Envy they carryed towards his rare virtues. Now it hapning that a great Plague afflicted the City that same yeare, they deemed it a punishment on them, for their unworthy carriage towards Socrates, to expiate w[*hic*]h they erected to his memory, a very noble Sepulcher, all over covered, consisting of 8 Angles, wherein were placed the 8 windes cutt in human formes. w[*hich*] all remains intire. [*Tower of the Winds*]

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1 Transcribed from a manuscript in the British National Archives, Kew, SP 99/49, folio 84, 'letters from Venice, February 1671, received 18 March.'

In front of the Castle on a little Rising ground stands ye Areopagus where s[ain]t *[the word 'Paul' apparently omitted in error]* preached to convert St Dyonisius *[Dionysius the Areopagite]*. Here the Senators held the Council for all public matters. There yet remanes some Marbles *[word indecipherable]* with Triumphal Chariots and Lating Inscriptions relating to Julius Caesar *[Monument of Philopappos]*

Under the set Rising ground were the Schools of the ?Talambian *[not identified, perhaps an error of transcription]* Stoics, and over against them those of the Tragedians under Euripides & Pindar, and that of Sophocles.

Beneath the Castle were the Schooles of the Peripatetical Philosophers so called from their manner of walking, when they Taught, or disputed, There are divers parts of these Schools yet Standing but little or nothing of Aristotles, which stood next to it and was then called Licaum

As you enter the City on the west side, there remaynes Demosthenes Lantorn *['or Lampe' inserted in margin]* intire, *[Choragic Monument of Lysicrates]* here it was he remayned Lockd up 6 months together, & would not be seen by the Peeple, for which he cutt of the one half of his Beard, and all was to show he might during that time overcome some difficulties in his Speech

At the entrance into the Cittie on the North side, as the Citie now is, is a great lion of marble, in the forme of a lion Couchant or sleeping there were two others one in the Castle and one towards the Sea, both passant guardant now they used anciently to say; That as long as those two did watch, the first might rest secure

Neer the said place, stood anciently the Gran Piazza of the Cittie and not far from it the Public magnificent Sepulchres, where they buried the famous & Eminent men. *[Cerameikos]* And there it was that ye earth opened as s Pauls prayers and swallowed up the Scribe *[a story at variance with the account in the Acts of the Apostles and also with local ecclesiastical tradition]*

A little higher stands Theseus temple. beautified wth. divers Columns of Marble and antique figures now dedicated to St George *[Theseion now generally known as the Hephaisteion, that until the Revolution, was the principal church in Athens]*

Some farther within the Citie is stood those stately Edifices of Polemarius & Themistocles *[Doric arch and Hadrian's Library]*. There are yet extant several noble antique pillars with Greek inscriptions. And

one Table of marble of Adrians time wherein are ingraven, the laws of the sd. Adrian for the politic government of the Citty, the weights and measures of Buying and Selling

In the other part of the Citty towards the South, stood that remarkable Pallace which was built upon 365 Marble Pillars and had been beatified and adorned by 12 several Kings but more especially by Theseus & Adriannus, [*Olympian Zeus*] as appears by a Greek inscription on the Portico upon one side [*The inscription on Hadrian's gate correctly transcribed in Greek characters perhaps in another hand*] And on the other side without [*This inscription also correctly transcribed in Greek characters*]

Not far from thence is the fountaine of the Nine Canals [*Enneakrouni but probably the Klepsydra*] where the Idolators went to wash themselves, before they intend to worshipp, into Junos' temple wh. was built all of marble somm. higher, and is still standing in good part [*Paved Court and chapel*]

Over against those remaines are two Pillars wh. sustain a portico, with inscriptions in latine, to the mem. of Ju. Caesar who had given to the Athenians certain Aqueducts which came to that place [*?Hadrian's aqueduct on Lycabettos*]

And a little higher stood the great famous Brazen statue of Pallas.

As you go into ye. ffort is Pan's Temple, & on the top of it, a Statue representing a Gorgon. A little of one side are two pillars one having a Neptune & the other a Pallas on it. [*The Cave and Thrasyllos Monument on the south slope. The suggestion that the two pillars were mountings for statues of Poseidon and Athena, even allowing for the rhetorical enargeia of reporting the whole description in the present tense, is plausible and not offered elsewhere as far as I can ascertain*]

Within the ffort stands the Noble Temple of the Goddess Pallas in a manner all intire, with many Pillars and Statues of that famous Architect & Sculptor ffidias, who lived before Aristotles time. [*Parthenon*]

Many say how within the Castle stood the Temple of the Unknown God called in Greek [*Greek characters correctly written in, perhaps by another hand*] mensiond by St Paul. Though others hold the said Temple stood in the midst of the Citty

Beneath the Castle stands the Archbishops Palace, and is the same where Dyonisius the Areopagite lived, and hard by ye set House or too is the well, where St Paul hid himself, when he escaped the furie of the

Athenians [*another local story at variance with the account in the Acts of the Apostles*]

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An Accompt of the little trade there

English cloths of Red, skie & Purple sell indifferent well & some few Gowns. [*A gap in the manuscript where a word or words omitted*] So dooth Pepper, Indico, Cloves, & Mace as also Lead and Tynn. But alass, in small quantities for ready mony the Countrie being miserable poore. Though sending a shipp with one half of these Comodities and a good sum of ready pieces of 8 one might load back dying weeds, woolls, Choos, Annis & Cummin seeds, fordovans [?], Silk, Ruggs, wax, Bulls & Buffaloes hydes

## 2. 'About Attica'

*Manuscript in the National Library, Paris, in Greek, thought to have been written down c 1671, long known, but now first translated into English.*<sup>2</sup>

'The castle [kastro] is the acropolis. The mosque is the temple [naos] of Athena Pallas. The golden cave is the cave of the Pan. The two columns. On one [column] was the statue of the Athena with the Gorgon's head, and on the other was the statue of the Zeus. Below which is a marble calendar [sundial]. A little further down was the Lykeion school of Aristotle. At the saint George of Alexandria in the Plaka is the marble lantern of Demosthenes. The great arch is the gate of the city. The columns of the Kalleroes were the theatre and scene of Aristophanes. At the two columns at the mountain were a curtain [kouti for kourti?] of Trajan the king with the Latin inscription. At the plain [teia] of Priam was the temple [naos] and school of Socrates has on each side the twelve winds and the seasons. At the saint George the tireless was the Keramikon and the temple of Theseus. At the marble lion was the great school of the Athenians and the monuments of the heroes. At the basilica was the school of the Cynics. At the Academy was the school of Plato.'

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2 Cod. Graec 1631. A BI 158. Translated from the version edited by Wachsmuth 142–44. Author's translation.



### 3. 'Theatres and Schools of Athens', Sometimes Known as 'Anonymous of 1460' First Published in the Nineteenth Century, Now First Translated into English<sup>3</sup>

1. We first note the Academy in the quarter of the Basilicas; secondly the Eleatic school in the quarter of Ampelokipoi; thirdly the school of Plato at the Paradeision (pleasure garden) [*Patissia*]; in fourth place, that of Diodorus, close to the latter.
2. In the inner city is the school of Socrates, where figures of men and winds are represented all around. To the west of this school are the palaces of Themistocles, and in their neighbourhood the sumptuous houses of the Polemarch. Close by stand the statues of Zeus. In front of them is a temple where the winners in pankration contests and at the Olympic Games received their funeral honours. It was there where orators usually went to read their funeral prayers.
3. To the north of this temple was the first town square, where the apostle Philip plunged the scribe in the water. There also were the rich houses of the Pandionides tribe. On the south side was a school of Cynic philosophers, and near it a school of tragic actors. Outside the Acropolis, just to the west, lived the ...; and near this place was the school of Sophocles; and to its south Ares Hill
4. (Areopagus) stood; it was there where Poseidon's son, Halirrhothios, was put to death by the god Ares.
5. To the east of the hill there were the palaces of Cleonides<sup>4</sup> and Miltiades, and close to them the school said of Aristotle still exists at present. Above this school stand two columns: on that located to the east was placed the statue of Athena, and on that to the west the statue of Poseidon. It is said that in the

3 From Laborde's edition, now also available from Gallica at [http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k132954g/f46.image.r=laborde athenes](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k132954g/f46.image.r=laborde%20athenes)

4 The name in the manuscript is Κλεονιδους, *Cleonides*; but this name, which is without precedents, could have easily replaced *Cleomedes*, which is much used.

middle of the two there was a Gorgon head within an iron niche.<sup>5</sup> There is also a marble day clock (sundial).<sup>6</sup>

6. In front of this clock, to the south, there was a school said to be of Aristophanes, and, to the east, there is still the lantern of Demosthenes. Near the school there was also at that time the house of Thucydides, that of Solon, and the second square, the house of Alcmaeon, as well as a very large bath; and south of it, the main square of the city, and many temples, worthy of admiration, towards the south gate, on the jambs of which are represented nineteenth figures of men ... pursuing a ...<sup>7</sup> The royal bath was also there, where they tried to distress the great king<sup>8</sup> by making noise. In the same area was the house of Mnesarchus.
7. To the east of the house is a very large and beautiful arch; there are the names of Hadrian and Theseus. Within the walls one finds ...<sup>9</sup> which is very large. Here the royal residence stood, supported underneath by a great number of columns, and whose elegant construction was undertaken by order of the twelve kings who built the citadel.
8. To the south of this building is a house both royal and beautiful, where the duke sometimes went to indulge in the pleasure of the table. Here there is also the fountain Ennacrounos (with nine springs), formerly called the fountain Callirhoe. The duke, after having bathed there, ascended to the sanctuary

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5 The Greek text is ενδονκουβουκλειονσιδηρου. Κουβουκλειον and κουβουκλιον is used in Late Antiquity as an equivalent of *cubiculum*, *cubiculum* of which it reproduced the material form. However, what may be the meaning of *an iron room*? M. L. Ross in the German commentary which accompanies the publication of the Greek text of this topography (Wien, 1840) has translated this word as: in einem eisernen Kaefig, *in an iron cage*. Let us try to further clarify. The Latins called *cubiculum* also the void space intended for the insertion of a block in the masonry, in particular for the construction in reticulated work, as seen in Vitruvius (II, 8). I think then that the reference here is to such a void, a sort of an iron niche framed in one of the walls, undoubtedly a memory of that golden aegis, in the middle of which was a gilded Gorgon's head, and that was visible, according to Pausanias's report, in the southern wall of the citadel (I, 21, 4).

6 Μαρμαρτιτικον. This is a new example of this form to be noted.

7 There are two gaps here.

8 Τον μεγαν βασιλειον. I read βασιλεα.

9 There is a gap here.



said of Hera and there made his prayer. Today this sanctuary has been converted by the Orthodox Christians into a temple of the most holy Mother of God.

9. To the east of this temple is the theatre of Athens (amphitheatre), circular in shape, about a mile in circumference, with two entries. The northern entrance is enriched ... another ... . The southern entrance has the most ....<sup>10</sup> The theatre was adorned by a hundred circular marble steps from which the seated people watched the athlete and the wrestling.
10. Exiting this amphitheatre by the eastern gate, we find another square and two aqueducts that Julius Caesar built to please the Athenians, and by which he brought water from afar. There is still another aqueduct running towards the side of the northern gate, that Theseus built with care ...<sup>11</sup> And these monuments, as Abaris and Herodotus say, were carefully built by the twelve kings, after the establishment of the kingdom in the city of Athens. Kekrops, of double nature,<sup>12</sup> greatly embellished the growing town by adding various ornaments.<sup>13</sup> He raised the walls, paved the ground of different marbles, gilded the interior and exterior of the temples, and called this city Athens.<sup>14</sup>
11. Then entering the Acropolis, we find a small school, which was that of the musicians and that was founded by Pythagoras of Samos. Opposite is a very large palace, and below there is a great number of ...<sup>15</sup> and enriched with marble ceilings

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10 We had to mark several gaps in this section.

11 I think that there is a gap of at least a few words in this section, although it is not indicated. The author had to describe the citadel and its monuments, that he vaguely indicates by ταῦτα. He had already mentioned earlier the citadel that had been built by the twelve kings.

12 Διφυής (of δύο φύσεις ἐχών). We have explained this epithet in many different ways and it would be too long to report them here.

13 Ἐν ποικίλῃ δοξῇ, — Δοξα is used here with a very peculiar and unusual meaning; it seems synonymous with ωραιότης, *beauty, ornament*, which is to be found in the following paragraph: “Ἐν ποικίλῃ ωραιότητι.”

14 The original town was, in fact, built on the hill where the citadel was raised.

15 There is a gap here; it was probably followed by κιονες, as at paragraph 4: “Ἰστανται δύο κιονες.”

and walls. To the north ...,<sup>16</sup> the chancellery<sup>17</sup> was built in marble and adorned with white columns. To the south of this building,<sup>18</sup> was the portico with diverse ornaments, gilded all around and on the exterior, and embellished with precious stones. It is from this portico that the *Stoic* philosophers, who gathered there to learn, derived their name. In front of the portico flourished the school of the Epicureans.

12. As for the temple of the Mother of God, that Apollos and Eulogius built for worshipping the *unknown God*, this is how it is: It is a very large and spacious temple,<sup>19</sup> very extended in length. Its walls are of white marble, and consist of tetragonal masonry; they are built without mortar and lime, united with iron and lead only. Outside the walls, the temple is enriched with very large columns that surround its cella all around. Between two of these columns, it encloses an oblique space, and towards the beautiful door there is its high altar, both to the south-west...,<sup>20</sup> contains the location of these columns, extending considerably in height. The capitals of the columns have been chisel sculpted in shape of palmette, they are redone, and above these capitals, the beams (the architrave) of white marble, which extend along the walls, in the connection to the walls have (undoubtedly below them) sculpted slabs, whose convexity presents in the upper part a sort of ceiling. There is also a very handsome wall supported by columns.<sup>21</sup>

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16 There is a gap here.

17 Καγγελάρια, *chancellery*. This word, together with κουβουκλειον, is a date for the age of the writing of this topography.

18 M.L. Ross proposes to read here κατά νωτον, *from behind*, im Rücken, instead of κατά νοτον, *to the south*. I believe that the position of the premises is not certain enough to allow such a change; in addition, I notice that the topographer repeats every moment, in its description κατά ανατολας, κατά δυσιν, κατά αρκτον, κατά το νοτιον μέρος, *to say to the east, to the west, to the north, to the south*.

19 Δρομικωτάτος. Δρομικός usually means *who excels at the race*, but it means here *place specific for the race*, and by extension, *spacious*; undoubtedly because of the oblong shape of the temple, which made it look like the stadium, δρομος. Besides we notice that in Late Antiquity the temples were called δρομικά, because of their oblong shape. Ducange (word Δρομικά) quotes several examples.

20 There is a gap here.

21 The entire end of this paragraph, that we have tried to translate word by word, is obscure, and it is difficult to draw a clear and rational meaning from it.

#### 4. Two Letters from Synesius of Cyrene to his Brother, c.395<sup>22</sup>

'A great number of people, either private individuals or priests, by moulding dreams, which they call revelations, seem likely to do me harm when I am awake, if I do not happen with all speed to visit sacred Athens. Whenever, then, you happen to meet a skipper sailing for the Piraeus, write to me, as it is there I shall receive my letters. I shall gain not only this by my voyage to Athens — an escape from my present evils, but also a relief from doing reverence to the learning of those who come back from Athens. They differ in no wise from us ordinary mortals. They do not understand Aristotle or Plato better than we, and nevertheless they go about among us as demi-gods among mules, because they have seen the Academy, the Lyceum, and the Poecile where Zeno gave his lectures on philosophy. However, the Poecile no longer deserves its name, for the proconsul has taken away all the pictures, and has thus humiliated these men's pretensions to learning.'

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'I hope that I may profit as much as you desire from my residence at Athens. It seems to me that I have already grown more than a palm and a finger's length in wisdom, and I can give you at once a proof of the progress I have made. Well, it is from Anagyrus that I am writing to you; and I have visited Sphettus, Thria, Cephisia, and Phalerum. But may the accursed ship-captain perish who brought me here! Athens has no longer anything sublime except the country's famous names! Just as in the case of a victim burnt in the sacrificial fire, there remains nothing but the skin to help us to reconstruct a creature that was once alive — so ever since philosophy left these precincts, there is nothing for the tourist to admit except the Academy, the Lyceum, and by Zeus, the Decorated Porch which has given its name to the philosophy of Chrysippus. This is no longer Decorated, for the proconsul has taken away the panels on which Polygnotus of Thasos has displayed his skill. Today Egypt has received and cherishes the fruitful wisdom of Hypatia. Athens was aforetime the dwelling-place of the wise: to-day the bee-keepers alone

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22 Letters 54 and 136 transcribed from Fitzgerald's edition.

bring it honour. Such is the case of that pair of sophists in Plutarch who draw the young people to the lecture room — not by the fame of their eloquence, but by the pots of honey from Hymettus.'