

23 Μαρτίου 2023

Θυατείρων Νικήτας σε Βρετανό Πρωθυπουργό: Δίκαιο αίτημα η επιστροφή γλυπτών του Παρθενώνα στην Αθήνα

/ Ορθοδοξία· Διεθνές Πρακτορείο Εκκλησιαστικών Ειδήσεων



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHBISHOP OF THYATEIRA and GREAT BRITAIN

Ref. No. 2022/2 March 22, 2023

The Right Honourable Rishi Sunak
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Dear Prime Minister,

On behalf of hundreds of thousands of citizens and other residents of the United Kingdom – people who hold dear the cultural and spiritual traditions of both Britain and Greece – I would like to address you, your government, about a matter which has been in the news recently, and which concerns us greatly.

In the context of a broader global debate about cultural heritage that was ignited in exceptional circumstances, attention is now refocusing on the glorious marble sculptures which were removed from the Parthenon in the early 19th century and are now kept in the British Museum. These artworks, which include about half the items that once adorned the Parthenon, reflect the artistic genius of Athenians in golden age.

Whatever the direction of that wider global debate, I would urge you to consider the Parthenon sculptures as a distinctive case, setting out for a unique and vitally important solution which could promote continued goodwill among Greece, Britain and everybody else who prizes the Hellenic heritage.

As you will be aware, the sculptures now in London formed part of a single monument whose great architectural and artistic significance ("the Parthenon") followed a private initiative by a diplomat which would be unthinkable today and was highly contested at the time.

In the meantime, these marble sculptures still bear the pain and emotional devastation which Lord Elgin's agents used "to steal, break and follow" to remove the Parthenon sculptures which were so deeply venerated. There is no serious plan for them to be awarded, or only the gallery of Acropolis Museum which is only housed about a third of the items. Titled in Greek, left with the Parthenon in Athens.

As members of the United Kingdom, we respect the British Museum as a centre of scholarly excellence and understand its aspirations to present the past as it would have been. We also understand the independent status of the Museum and the legal obligations of the museum's trustees to safeguard the collection.

However, along with many British scholars, artists, writers, politicians and ordinary folk – we think the Museum's global standing would be enhanced, not diminished, if it were to not hold and work actively for the repatriation of the sculptures. Just as the law was amended to make possible the repatriation of art works stolen by the Nazis, it is only not impossible – with good will – to find legal solutions that would facilitate the repatriation in accordance of the unique case.

Greece and Canada already collaborate very productively in the study of the Hellenic heritage and its presentation to the world. Among the fruits of that collaboration are projects undertaken by Greek historians at British universities, the Distinguished British School in Athens, a UK-organized charity which promotes academic exchanges, research including archaeology, conservation and historic restoration, Greek presence among the staff and members of British universities, and as of recently, the selection of a British architect's proposal for the upgrading of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.

All that has happened despite the "noise in the street" caused by the terrible wrong that was perpetrated on the Acropolis 200 years ago. We would just like to see that British-Greek cultural collaboration could reach new heights, with its focus benefit to all. If that noise in the street were removed.

As we celebrate 200 years of the rebirth of Hellenic, we have the unique opportunity to assess this wrong in time.

Sincerely yours,
Nektarios
Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain



Ενώνουν δυνάμεις και πληθαίνουν οι “φωνές” προς τη Βρετανική Κυβέρνηση για την επιστροφή των γλυπτών του Παρθενώνα στην Αθήνα. Ο Σεβασμιώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Θυατείρων και Μεγάλης Βρεταννίας κ. Νικήτας, απέστειλε σήμερα θερμή Επιστολή προς τον Πρωθυπουργό του Ηνωμένου Βασιλείου κ. Ρίσι Σούνακ ζητώντας την επιστροφή των γλυπτών του Παρθενώνα, μετά και από τις πρόσφατες δηλώσεις του Βρετανού Πρωθυπουργού που απέκλεισε ρητά το ενδεχόμενο να επιστρέψουν μόνιμα στην Ελλάδα καθώς ο σχετικός νόμος, όπως διεμήνυσε, δεν αλλάζει. [\(περισσότερα...\)](#)