



*You must understand what the Parthenon Marbles mean to us. They are our pride. They are our sacrifices. They are our noblest symbol of excellence. They are a tribute to democratic philosophy. They are our aspirations and our name. They are the essence of Greekness.*

(Melina Mercouri, 1986)

Cover image: 1952 Tourism poster: Parthenon, Athens. Published by GNTO. Printed by M. Pechlivanides and Co. From *Greek Tourism Posters: A Journey in Time Through Art* (GNTO 2007) no. 23



The Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney holds the largest collection of antiquities in Australia. It was founded in 1860.

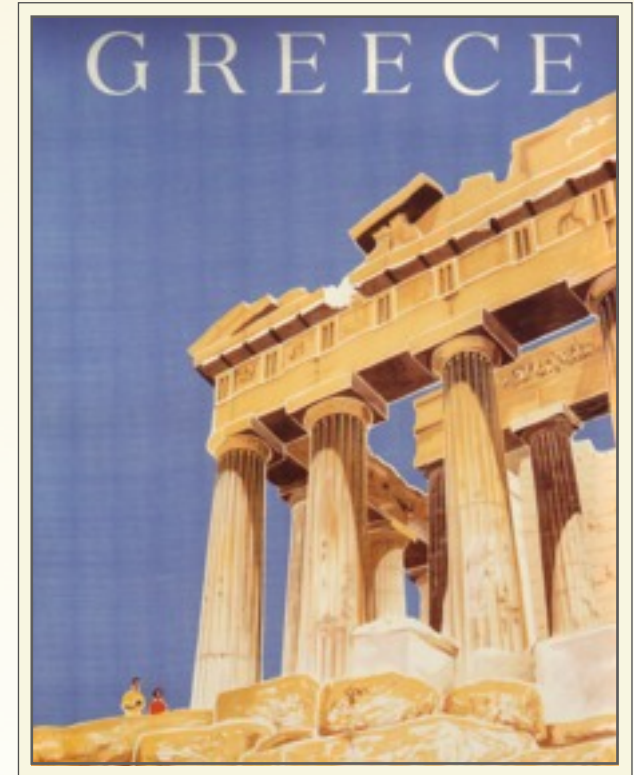
The collection also includes nearly 2000 historic glass plate photographs taken by Professor William J. Woodhouse, curator of the Museum between 1903 and 1937. The majority are of Greece in the 1890s-1900s - many are in turn of Athens, its buildings, and its people, as can be seen above.



The University of Sydney

# THE PARTHENON

## Context & Controversy



THE NICHOLSON MUSEUM  
COURSE IN A DAY

SATURDAY 7 MARCH 2009



## The Parthenon: Context & Controversy

THE NICHOLSON MUSEUM COURSE IN A DAY

The Parthenon in Athens, one of the world's truly iconic buildings, continues to court controversy. With the imminent opening of the New Akropolis Museum, focus will once again return to the question of ownership of its decorative frieze, the majority of which, the so-called Parthenon (or Elgin) Marbles, is currently in the British Museum.

The day will consider the Parthenon in its context. Where and why was it built? What did its decoration look like and mean? What happened to the building with the rise of Christianity and later Ottoman rule? How has the building influenced modern thought? And finally, who owns what, and why?

**WHEN:** SATURDAY 7 MARCH 2009  
10AM - 4.30PM

**WHERE:** THE NICHOLSON MUSEUM AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

**WHAT:** 5 LECTURES PLUS PANEL DISCUSSION  
LUNCH & MORNING TEA

**COST:** \$100

**BOOKING:** 9351 2812 or m.turner@usyd.edu.au

For more details: [www.usyd.edu/museums](http://www.usyd.edu/museums)

During lunch there will be a chance to handle original artefacts from the Nicholson Museum's collection.

### PROGRAMME

10.00-10.40 FILM  
**'Greece: Losing Their Marbles'**  
First shown on ABC TV Foreign Correspondent 7 Oct 2008

10.40-11.25 ELIZABETH BOLLEN  
**Why was the Parthenon built?**

11.25-11.45 **Morning Tea**

11.45-12.30 CRAIG BARKER  
**Understanding the art and architecture of the Parthenon**

12.30-1.15 MICHAEL TURNER  
**What happened next?: to Elgin and beyond (including a showing of some previously unseen photographs of the Parthenon taken in the 1890s)**

1.15-2.00 **Lunch**

2.00-2.45 VRASIDAS KARALIS  
**The Parthenon in modern imagination and popular culture**

2.45-3.30 THEODORA MINAS GIANNIOTIS  
**Ethics, ownership and nationalism**

3.30-3.45 **Afternoon Tea**

3.45-4.30 PANEL DISCUSSION WITH Q&A  
**Should they be returned?**



**Dr Craig Barker** is Manager of Education and Public Programs for Sydney University Museums. A regular on the ABC's afternoon Drive Time show with Richard Glover, he's an archaeologist and specialist in the perception of antiquity in modern culture, especially film. Craig is also Co-Director of The University of Sydney's Archaeological Excavations of the theatre site in Paphos, Cyprus.

Dr Elizabeth Bollen is Curatorial Assistant at the Nicholson Museum, where she is currently working on *The Sky's the Limit*, a new exhibition on astronomy in the Ancient World. She has worked on excavations in Greece, Cyprus and Australia. Elizabeth is particularly interested in the transition of the Parthenon from the symbol of a city to the symbol of a nation.



**Theodora Minas Gianniotis** is a lawyer with a keen interest in Antiquities and the Law. She was the organiser of the *Parthenon Project 2007*, an exhibition hosted by the Nicholson Museum on the Parthenon Restoration and the New Akropolis Museum. She is passionate about the restitution of significant items of cultural heritage around the world.

**Assoc. Prof. Vrasidas Karalis**, teacher, author, translator was born in Greece. He graduated from the University of Athens in 1983 after studying Classical, Byzantine and Modern Greek Culture and Literature. He is the co-editor of the journal *Modern Greek Studies of Australia and NZ* and president of the Sydney Society of Literature and Aesthetics.



**Michael Turner** is Senior Curator of the Nicholson Museum. He is currently working on a new Egyptian exhibition focusing on Herodotus' travels and has recently co-authored the first Australian edition of the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*. Michael has been quoted in the Greek press as saying, 'I am English, and I say, 'Give the Marbles back'. Has he changed his mind?!