

[FEATURES](#) / [NEWS](#) / [GREECE](#)

# Parthenon Marbles were looted: Experts say there was no Ottoman edict allowing Lord Elgin to remove them



25 February 2019 4:24pm



For years, the British Museum has claimed that there was an Ottoman ferman (edict) that allowed Lord Elgin to plunder the Acropolis and remove the Parthenon sculptures from the monument.

The museum's claim has never been substantiated with actual proof that the Sultan had allowed for the destruction of the monument to take place as there is no document to directly support this. The

the destruction of the monument to take place as there is no document to directly support this. The only document possessed by the British Museum is an Italian translation of a friendly letter from Kaimakam Pasha – not the Sultan – allowing Lord Elgin to take casts of the sculptures without any permission to remove the fabulously crafted marbles that had stood on the monument for 2,200 years.

Honorary General Director of Antiquities Eleni Korca told Greek State Radio and Television (ERT) that the Italian translation not only did not authorise the removal of the sculptures but was also not an official Ottoman document with any legal standing. Kaimakam Pasha was in Constantinople at the time replacing the Grand Vizier.

Another expert, Iranian researcher Sarian Panahi, has researched all official documents of the Ottoman Empire and states that there none that indicate that a ferman existed, meaning that the Parthenon was looted at Lord Elgin's own initiative.

Mr Panahi is one of the few researchers that can read Ottoman texts.

Mr Panahi's claims are confirmed by Turkish researchers Zeynep Aygen and Orhan Sakin who presented the results of their own long-term study and stated that "all the fermans as well as their contents, were written in a special book." The British Museum's claim that permission had been given to remove the sculptures was refuted. The letter was not a ferman because only the Sultan, and not the Pasha, could sign such documents. "There was only a permit to visit," said Mr Sakin.



## More News

NEWS

**UK MPs introduce bill to return Parthenon Marbles to Greece**

DIALOGUE

**Parthenon sculptures lost in translation**

NEWS

**Corbyn: 'The Parthenon sculptures belong to Greece'**

