



Detail of the frieze

The University building together with the Greek Academy and the National Library -which were built later but were designed by the Hansen Brothers in the 1840s- are known as the Athenian Trilogy. The Athenian Trilogy is an excellent sample of imposing neoclassical architecture intended to elegantly improve the city with a building complex representing the prestige and power of King Otto's dynasty. Today, they are among the best known city locations, visible to both visitors and passers-by.



Inner view of the Main Entrance



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
**National and Kapodistrian
 University of Athens**
 — EST. 1837 —

Propylaia

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

30 El. Venizelou (Panepistimiou) Ave.
 106 79 Athens



Detail of the frieze



Great Ceremony Hall





Great Ceremony Hall

The central building of the University of Athens, known as Propylaia, is one of the most emblematic landmarks of the capital city of the Greek state. The neoclassical building and its monumental precinct bring up the most acknowledged highlights of Greek national history. The halls of the building were learning, conversing and protest spots.

Its indoors and precincts have hosted a number of ritual events (statue and monument creating, anniversary celebrating etc.), while the city location has supremely favoured mobilizations, demonstrations and political gatherings.

The Propylaia building was established in 1839 and designed by the Danish architect Hans Christian Hansen (1803-1883). It was originally intended to be the venue of the newly-born University of Athens (established 1837), previously hosted at the mansion of the architect

Exterior night view



Stamatis Kleantis, in Plaka, and currently hosting the University museum. A considerable part of the building cost was covered by donations of Greek expatriates, foreign rulers and numerous citizens.

The year 1842-43 completed the front annex of the building, the ground floor of which hosted four teaching rooms. In 1846, donations and state subsidies gave rise to the back annex and the ceremony hall, which was completed in 1851. Decorating the building commenced at the same time, with the most typical fresco being the one on the internal facade.

Baron Symeon Sinas funded the fresco design in 1861, which was assigned to the painter Carl Rahl. Expatriate Stergios Dounbas, from Wien, finally funded the fresco which was finalized in 1888. The fresco depicts Otto on the throne, surrounded by revived Disciplines in the newly-born state.

Sciences appear as female figures in the Renaissance fashion. Ancient world is narrated on the left and right of the fresco scene, commencing with Prometheus, with ancient Greek philosophers, warriors, politicians and poets following. Apostle Paul also appears and symbolizes the transition from idolatry to Christianity.

The Ceremonial Hall decoration plan includes Greek scholars who disseminated the works of the ancient world.

As the external part of the building was finalized in the 1870s, the internal design kept changing to meet different needs in space use. Teaching halls aside, rooms were turned into libraries, museums, laboratories, anatomy halls, chemical laboratory rooms, administrative offices etc. - even Parliament rooms.

Throughout the 20th century and up until recently, thousands of university students used the desks, and university precincts, and protested in front of the building. The building today hosts the University administration.

Improving the University precincts was a project complementary to the architectural and painting programme - statues of important modern historical figures and dead fighters' monuments were those of Rigas Ferraïos by Ioannis Kossos in 1871; of Patriarch Grigorios the 5th by Georgios Fytalis, in 1872; of Adamantios Korais by Ioannis Kossos and Georgios Broutos in 1874; of philhellene Gladstone by Georgios Vitalis in 1888; of Ioannis Kapodistrias by Georgios Bonanos in 1931; there are monuments of dead fighters in the Greek-Turkish war by Georgios Papagiannis in 1897 and monuments of dead fighters in World War I by the same sculptor in 1919.



Ceiling detail