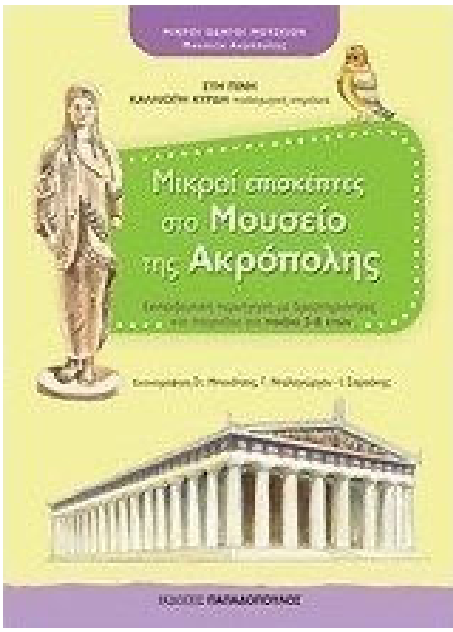
Katerina Volioti, "Entry on: Young Visitors to the Acropolis Museum [Μικροί επισκέπτες στο Μουσείο της Ακρόπολης (Mikroí Episképtes sto Mouseío tīs Akrópolīs)] by Kalliope Kyrdi, Evi Pini", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/96. Entry version as of November 10, 2026.

Kalliope Kyrdi , Evi Pini

Young Visitors to the Acropolis Museum [Μικροί επισκέπτες στο Μουσείο της Ακρόπολης (Mikroí Episképtes sto Mouseío tīs Akrópolīs)]

Greece (2010)

TAGS: Acropolis Caryatids Erechtheus Giants Hekatompedon Hephaestus Metis Olympus Ouranos / Uranus Pandrosos Poseidon Zeus



Courtesy of the Publisher.

General information	
Title of the work	Young Visitors to the Acropolis Museum [Μικροί επισκέπτες στο Μουσείο της Ακρόπολης (Mikroí Episképtes sto Mouseío tīs Akrópolīs)]
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Author of the Entry	Katerina Volioti, University of Roehampton, Katerina.Volioti@roehampton.ac.uk

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Creators



Kalliope Kyrdi (Author)

Kalliope Kyrdi studied Law and Pedagogy at the University of Athens, and has worked in primary school education. Kyrdi has been responsible for cultural matters in the 1st Directorate of Primary Education, Athens, since 2007.

Source:

Profile at the epbooks.gr (accessed: June 27, 2018).

Bio prepared by Katerina Volioti, University of Roehampton, Katerina.Volioti@roehampton.ac.uk



Evi Pini (Author)

Athens-born Evi Pini studied Archaeology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Pini has been working for the Greek Ministry of Culture since 1990, specialising in children's educational programmes.

Sources:

Information about the Author, see here (accessed: June 26, 2018).

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Additional information

Summary

Both authors show that a museum guide should be informative, interactive, fun, and far from a long catalogue of exhibits. In addition to children of pre-school and early school age, the target audience is parents and teachers. The latter will find “ideas” for organising the museum visit on the opening page and additional information about the Museum, the Acropolis, and the Parthenon at the end of the book. Indeed, the book’s content is exceptionally rich. There is information about the past in terms of ancient history, art (architecture and sculpture), and social and religious life.

More importantly, perhaps, there is extensive use of mythology in this book. Mythology accounts for the meaning and function of buildings and statues, such as the Caryatides. The book revolves around Athena, her myths, and her artistic representations. Glafki, a fun illustration of Athena’s owl, welcomes children to the museum, promising to take them on a journey back in time. Moreover, in the opening pages, we see a drawing of Glafki’s great-great-great-grandmother, an early fifth-century piece of sculpture in the Acropolis Museum. Finally, Glafki invites us to get to know Athena, a warrior female with a helmet, shield, and spear.

Adults are pointed to the back of the book, where the authors explain why they start with the goddess. Athena Polias, the protector of the city, was worshipped on the Acropolis from the 8th century onwards. Athena always remains at the forefront. A bird’s eye view of reconstructed buildings on the Acropolis is entitled “The goddess Athena on the Acropolis.” Subsequent book sections have “Athena” in their title too.

As the book becomes more detailed in educating children about the Great Panathenaia and the Parthenon’s frieze, the focus on Athena becomes more effective.

The children’s section closes with interactive activities after the museum visit. These can be completed at home or school; all of the activities have been prepared by Glafki. The exercises here seem to test children’s memory and attention to detail, as well as creative thinking.

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Analysis

Background information about Athena Polias is most useful for non-specialists, who may assume that the Acropolis is all about the Classical Parthenon. Scholarly debates are left out of the book. For example, whether the Ancient Temple (the *arkhaios naos*) was destroyed by the Persians remains contested in scholarship*.

An understanding of statues as "Gifts for goddess Athena" encourages children to appreciate the function of works of art. The authors present iconic images of Archaic sculpture, the Calf Bearer, the Peplos Kore, and the Persian Horse Rider**. The different representations of people offer a balanced view. Focusing on a foreigner in ancient Athens, who could be a Persian or a Skythian, as we are told most accurately in the caption, may reflect Kyrdi's background in intercultural education. Children are asked to observe statues closely and search for traces of colour. This is commendable and in line with the latest scholarship***. In noticing details, colour, and the extent of fragmentation for these three Archaic statues, children are made to think that this is not art for art's sake. Instead, the statues were pieces that negotiated the relationship between mortals and divine entities.

The emphasis on the divine makes it easier for children to envisage that temples and pedimental sculptures related to religious practice. The drawings that show a ritual procession with humans and sacrificial animals to the Erechtheion may also help here. Mythology is needed to identify the figures in the pediments, such as Athena combating the Giants in the Ancient Temple. We are led to believe that mythology was entangled with how the ancients understood the world. Athena gave her name to the city, as we see in a reconstructed view of the Parthenon's west pediment because there was a mythological contest between Athena and Poseidon. We read about this myth in a suitably coloured textbox below the pediment.

The peplos, children read, was a precious gift for Athena, worn not only by the goddess but also by Athenian women. This is suggestive, once again, of the enduring relationship between mortals and gods. The information about the Parthenon for adult readers at the back of the book is rather dense. Nevertheless, the authors have also managed to include myths and context about the Lapiths and Centaurs.

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The illustrators have done a superb job with their detailed and accurate drawings, which recall photographs considerably. In addition, the depiction of humans in reconstructions of buildings is beneficial in appreciating the large scale of architecture on the Acropolis. The dates and inventory numbers offered in captions below museum exhibits are also helpful, especially in looking up works of art online (as on the online database of the Acropolis Museum).

* See Gloria Ferrari, "The Ancient Temple on the Acropolis at Athens", *American Journal of Archaeology* 106 (2002): 11–35.

** See theacropolismuseum.gr (accessed: August 2, 2018).

*** See, for example, Jan Stubbe Østergaard & Anne Marie Nielsen eds., *Transformations: Classical Sculpture in Colour*, trans. Neil Martin Stanford, Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and www.theacropolismuseum.gr/peploforos (accessed: August 2, 2018), 2014.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Acropolis Caryatids Erechtheus Giants Hekatompedon Hephaestus Metis Olympus Ouranos / Uranus Pandrosos Poseidon Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Heritage History Knowledge Names Religious beliefs Talking animals

Further Reading

Information about the book at epbooks.gr, published in Greek on 17 July 2010 (accessed: August 2, 2018).

Ferrari, Gloria, "The Ancient Temple on the Acropolis at Athens", *American Journal of Archaeology* 106 (2002): 11–35.

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Stubbe Østergaard, Jan and Anne Marie Nielsen, eds., *Transformations: Classical Sculpture in Colour*, trans. Neil Martin Stanford, Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and www.theacropolismuseum.gr/peploforos (accessed: August 2, 2018), 2014.

Addenda

Illustrations by Stamatis Bonatsos.

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