



ANCIENT AGORA MUSEUM OF THE STOA OF ATTALOS

ATHENS





The Agora was a large square on the northwest slope of the Acropolis, where social and religious activities, commerce, outdoor theatrical performances and athletic contests were held. In other words, it was the heart of the ancient city. But above all it was the center of Athenian democracy, since it was there that the most important administrative and judicial functions and political assemblies took place. From the 6th c. BC onwards, the open space, which was traversed by the Panathenaic Way, was gradually surrounded by many public buildings, and it was adorned with temples, altars, stoas, fountains, portraits, and statues. It acquired its final form in the 2nd c. AD.

The Agora's main buildings include the Royal Stoa (Stoa Basileios), the Bouleuterion (Council House), the Tholos, the Metroon, the Altar of the Twelve Gods, the Monument of the Eponymous Heroes, the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios, the Strategeion, the Painted Stoa (Stoa Poikile), the Stoa of Attalos, the Library of Pantainos, the Odeion of Agrippa, and others.

A number of important roads ended in the Agora, including Piraeus Street, which connected the city with Piraeus, Areopagus Street, and others.

To the South and West, the Agora was framed by the hills of the Areopagus and Kolonos Agoraios, respectively. The Areopagus accommodated Athens' oldest court, the sanctuary of the Semnai ("the vengeful ones") or the Eumenides ("the kindly ones"), a part of the Kydathenaion quarter, and the Christian church dedicated to Dionysius the Areopagite. The hill of Kolonos Agoraios is dominated by the classical temple dedicated to Hephaestus and Athena Ergane. Southwest of the Agora, developed a residential area that formed part of the ancient demes of Kollytos and Melite, while the sanctuary of Eleusis grew up southeast of the site.

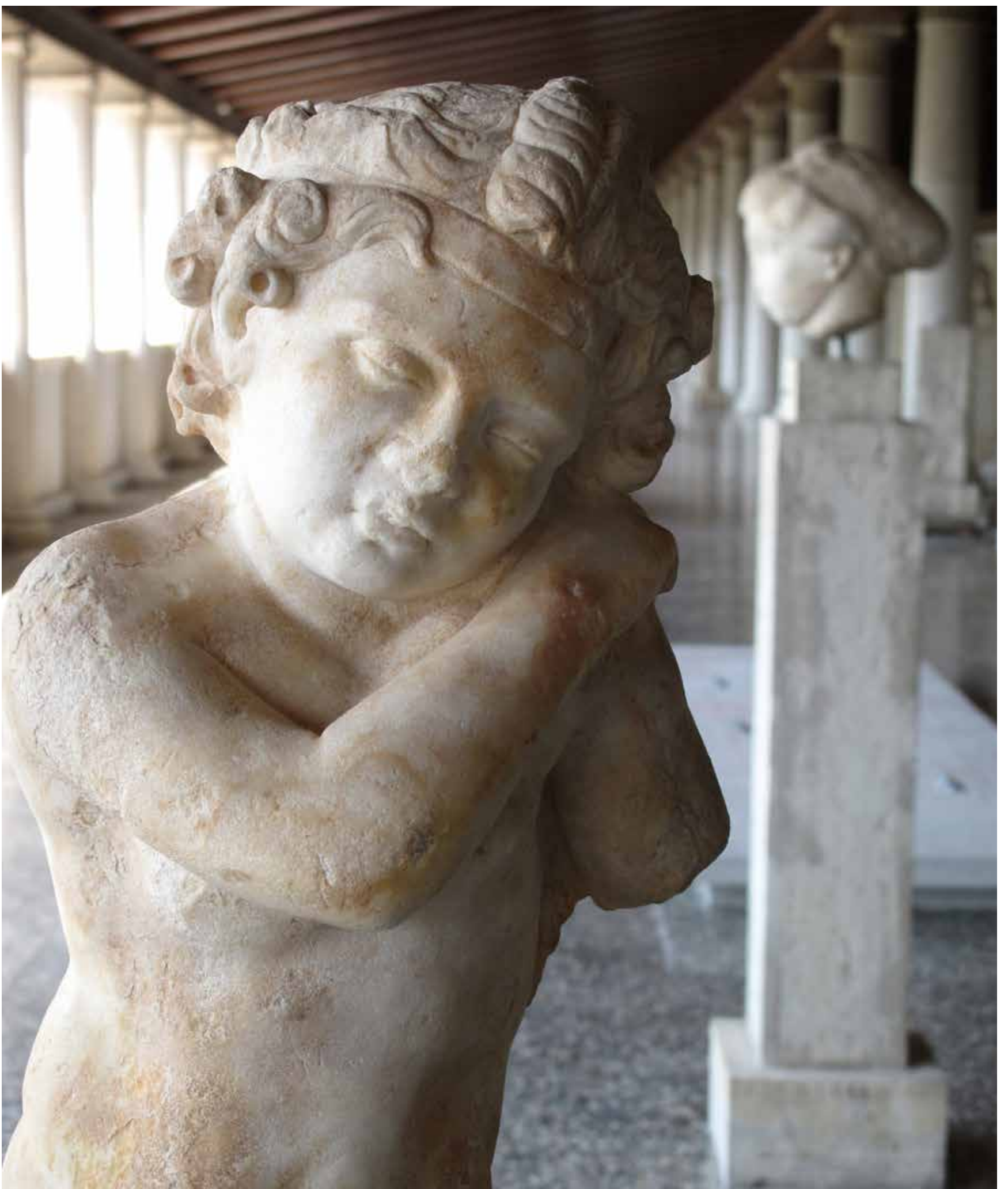
The Athenian Agora was repeatedly destroyed and pillaged: by the Persians (480 BC), the Romans under Sulla (86 BC), the Herulians (AD 267), and the Slavs (AD 580). In the 10th c. AD, following a long period of desertion, a Byzantine neighborhood grew up in the Agora area, and the Church of the Holy Apostles was built. The area was again destroyed in 1204 by invaders under Leon Sgouros, ruler of Nauplion, and in 1826-27 during the Greek War of Independence.

In the late 19th c., the Agora was buried under the "Vrysaki" quarter of modern Athens, the capital of the newly-formed Greek state, with its densely built-up "Vlazarou" and "Agion Apostolon" (Holy Apostles) neighborhoods. The first

excavations at the site were carried out in the 19th c. by the Archaeological Society and German archaeologists, but the organized excavation of the Agora has been conducted from 1931 to the present by the American School of Classical Studies. Since 1957, the archaeological site has operated under the supervision of the Greek Archaeological Service.

The Museum of the Athenian Agora is housed in the reconstructed Stoa of Attalos, a 2nd c. BC building that was restored (1952-56) by the American School of Classical Studies to house the finds from excavations at the site. The building commands the eastern side of the Agora; it is two-storied, with a double colonnade on its façade and 21 shops at its rear on each floor. The Stoa was built by Attalos II, King of Pergamon (159-138 BC), and functioned as a place for meetings and walks, and as a commercial center. The Museum was renovated by the Ministry of Culture in 2003-04 within the program of the modernization of museums for the Athens Olympic Games.

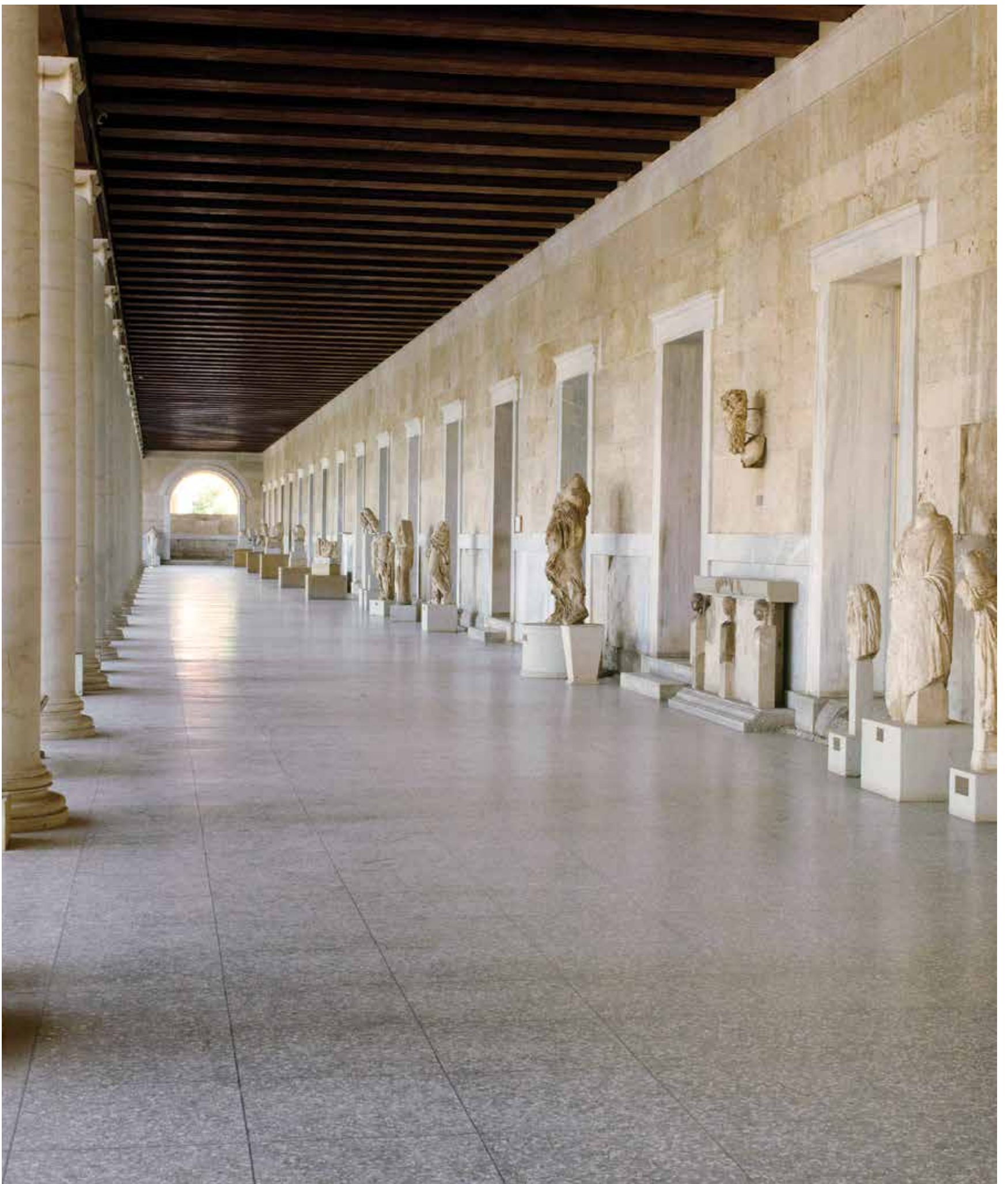
The exhibition on the ground floor is deployed in a large oblong gallery that resulted from joining 10 of the Stoa's ancient "shops", in the lower open



stoa, and on the terrace. The exhibition in the main gallery is arranged in chronological and thematic groups, on the one hand to present to visitors the public life of Athenian citizens through objects representing each of their political and administrative activities, and coming from the excavations of public buildings. On the other hand it presents the Athenian citizen's daily life through the finds discovered in houses of the ancient city within the archaeological site as well as in tombs, since in early times the area was used as a cemetery.

The oldest items on exhibit, including vases, figurines, and weapons, date back to the Neolithic period, the Early and Middle Bronze Age, and the Mycenaean and Geometric period. These come primarily from burials and wells.

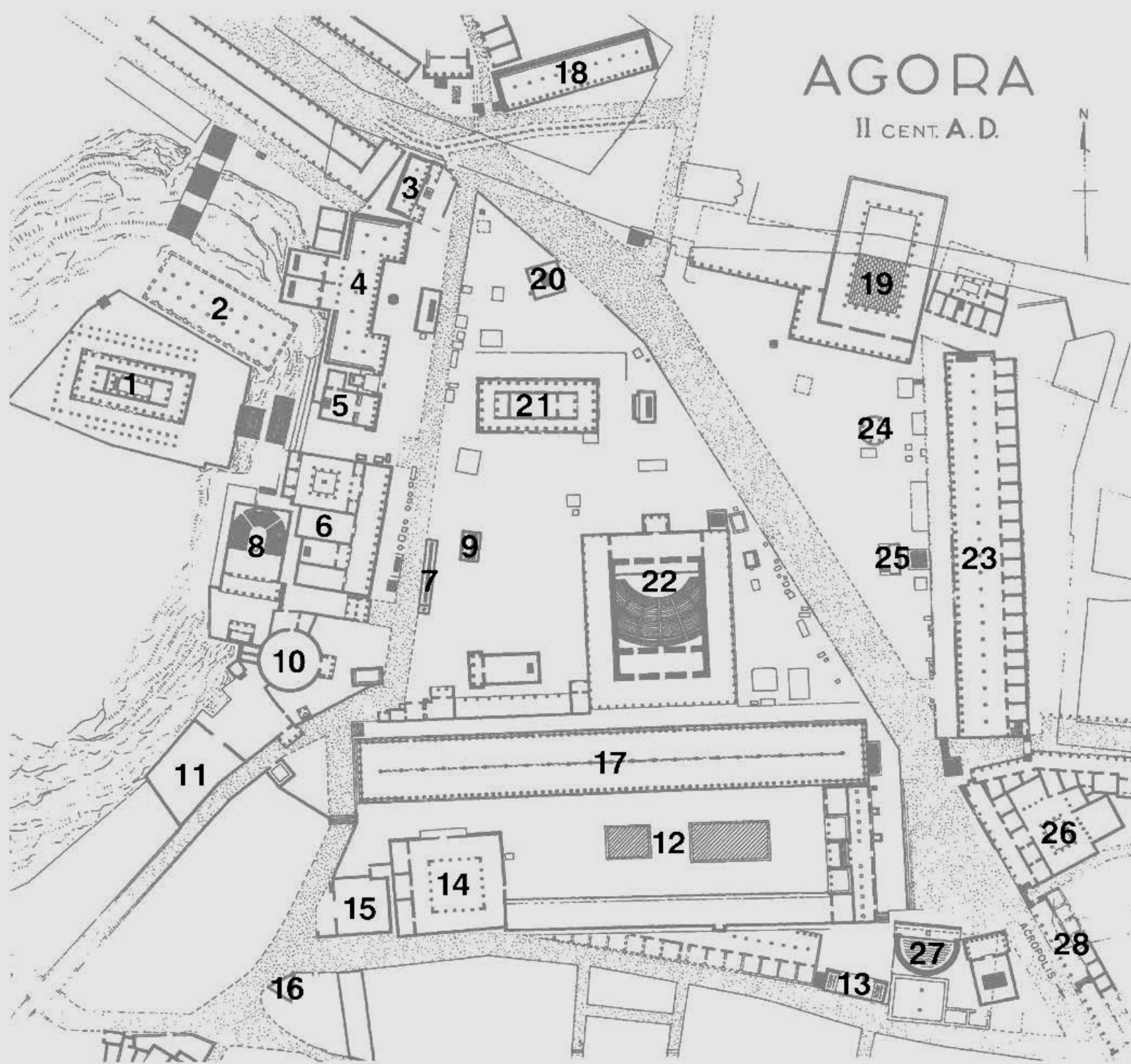
The most important exhibits in the Museum are connected with the functions of Athenian democracy and date to the Classical and Late Classical period. They include: clay public measures, official bronze weights, part of a marble ballot-box, jurors' ballots, a clay klepsydra-water clock for timing



speeches, ostracism ostraka incised with the names of ancient politicians, and important inscriptions like the marble stele (337/6 BC) depicting Demos and Democracy with inscribed decree of the Assembly of the Deme against tyranny. The exhibition is complemented by black- and red-figure vases, the works of well known vase painters like the krater by Exekias, vessels for everyday use, figurines, lamps, coins and miniature sculpture such as an ivory statuette which is a copy of the Apollo Lykeios attributed to Praxiteles. Votive reliefs, inscriptions and sculptures coming primarily from the decoration of temples and public buildings in the Agora are on display in the lower open stoa. These include the cult statue of Apollo Patroos, a work by Euphranor (4th c. BC), a colossal statue of Aphrodite dating to the Classical period, an exceptionally fine torso of Themis (4th c. BC), sculptures from the decoration of the Hephaesteion and the temple of Ares, the winged Nike (Victory) from the acroterion of the Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios (5th c. BC), and the Roman statues which are personifications of the Iliad and Odyssey from the Library of Pantainos.

The exhibition on the 1st floor of the Stoa of Attalos, inaugurated in 2012, has been organized in six units that present to the public a representative collection of Athenian sculptures, with a special focus on the important group of portraits from the Athenian Agora excavations.





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| 1. Temple of Hephaistos (5th c. BC) | 15. South-west Fountain House (4th c. BC) |
| 2. Arsenal (3rd c. BC) | 16. Triangular Shrine (5th c. BC) |
| 3. Stoa Basileios (460 BC) | 17. Middle Stoa (2nd c. BC) |
| 4. Stoa of Zeus Eleutherios (5th c. BC) | 18. Poikile Stoa (460 BC) |
| 5. Temple of Apollo Patroos (340-320 BC) | 19. Basilica (2nd c. AD) |
| 6. Metroon (2nd c. BC) | 20. Altar of the Twelve Gods (522-521 BC) |
| 7. Monument of the Eponymous Heroes (4th c. BC) | 21. Temple of Ares (440 BC) |
| 8. Bouleuterion (5th c. BC) | 22. Odeion of Agrippa (15 BC) |
| 9. Altar of Zeus Agoraios (4th c. BC) | 23. Stoa of Attalos (159-138 BC) |
| 10. Tholos (460 BC) | 24. Monopteros (AD 150) |
| 11. Strategeion (5th c. BC) | 25. Tribunal (2nd c. BC) |
| 12. South Square (2nd c. BC) | 26. Library of Pantainos (AD 100) |
| 13. South-east Fountain House (6th c. BC) | 27. Nymphaion (AD 150) |
| 14. Heliaia (460 BC) | 28. South-east Stoa (150 BC) |

OPERATING RULES

Please be informed that the following is strictly prohibited:

(Law 3028/2002 and Official Government Gazette 88/B/23.1.2004)

- to collect, remove or damage any kind of object, including ancient and contemporary works of art as well as any natural item,
- to consume food or beverages,
- to smoke,
- to produce litter of any kind,
- to behave, dress or act in a way not compatible with the nature of the archaeological site/museum,
- entrance to people under the influence of substances (intoxicants, narcotics, etc.),
- entrance to pets, except for dogs accompanying people with disabilities,
- entrance to all vehicles, except for emergency vehicles and those used for conducting archaeological works.

Furthermore, visitors and guides are kindly requested:

- to comply with the instructions and indications of the security guards,
- to follow the signs, walk along marked routes and avoid entering restricted areas,
- not to touch any work of art,
- to be very careful whilst being near areas of high risk or areas where works are in progress.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

(Official Government Gazette 1138/B/10.04.2012, 3046/B/30.12.2011 and 648/B/07.03.2012)

- Photography and filming with professional cameras as well as aerial photography and filming, with or without human presence, are allowed only after a special permit has been issued and fees have been paid.
- Photography and filming with amateur cameras are permitted for free unless they are to be used for commercial purposes.
- Photography with the use of supplementary lighting systems inside a museum is not allowed, unless permission is granted.

**Non-compliance with the above rules can lead to the eviction
of recalcitrant visitors.**

The archaeological site is partially accessible to visitors with disabilities using a wheelchair, with the assistance of an escort. The Museum is fully accessible.



ANCIENT AGORA

MUSEUM OF THE STOA
OF ATTALOS

ATHENS



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