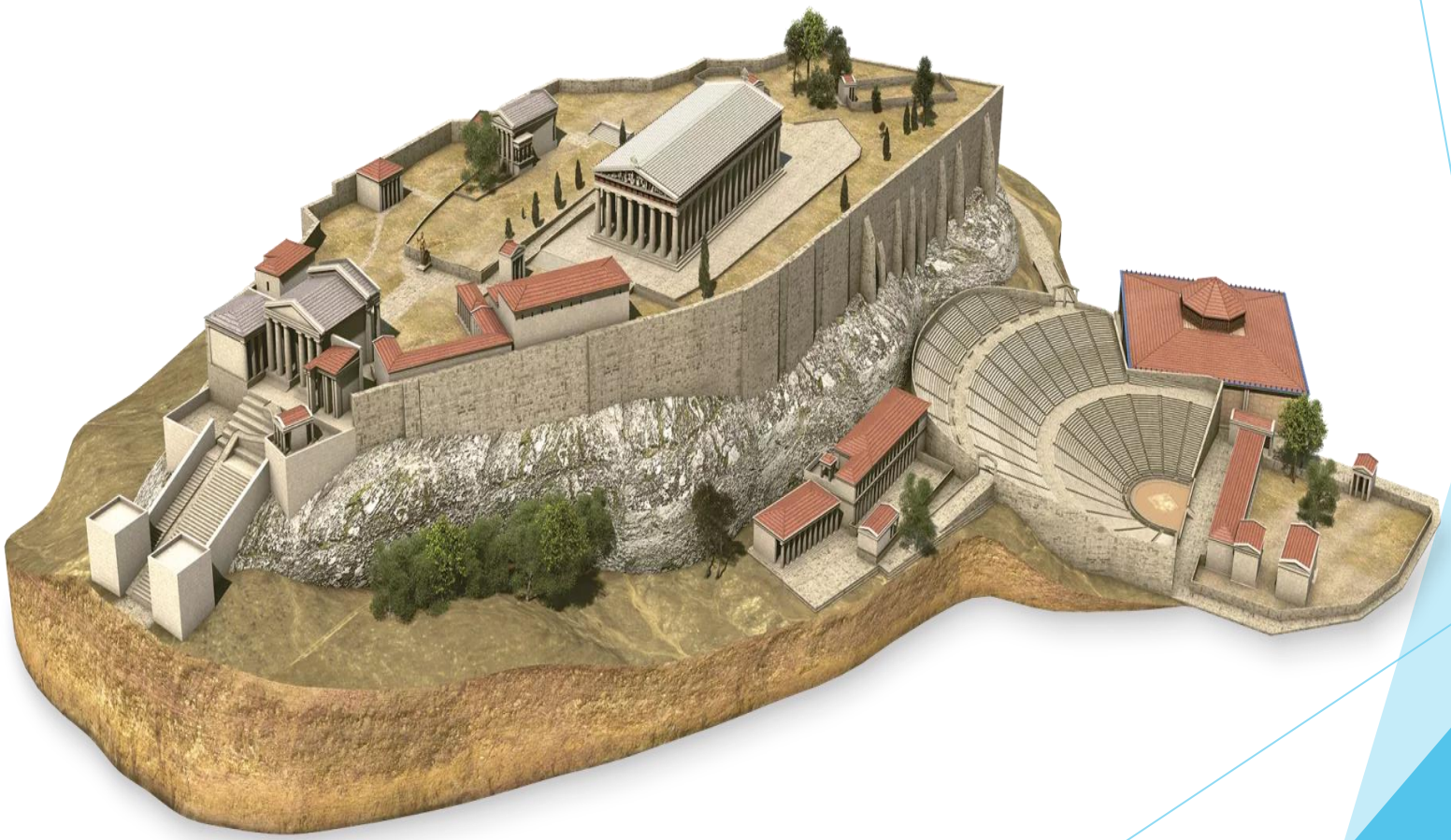
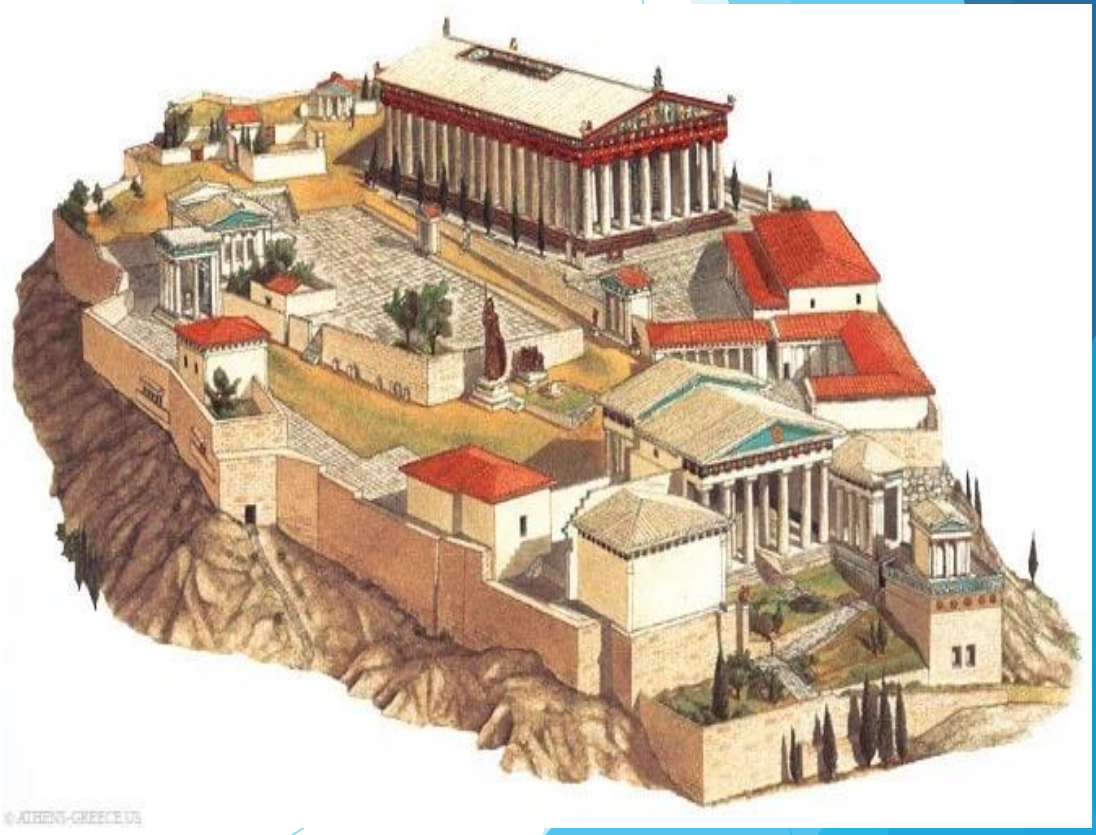
The Acropolis



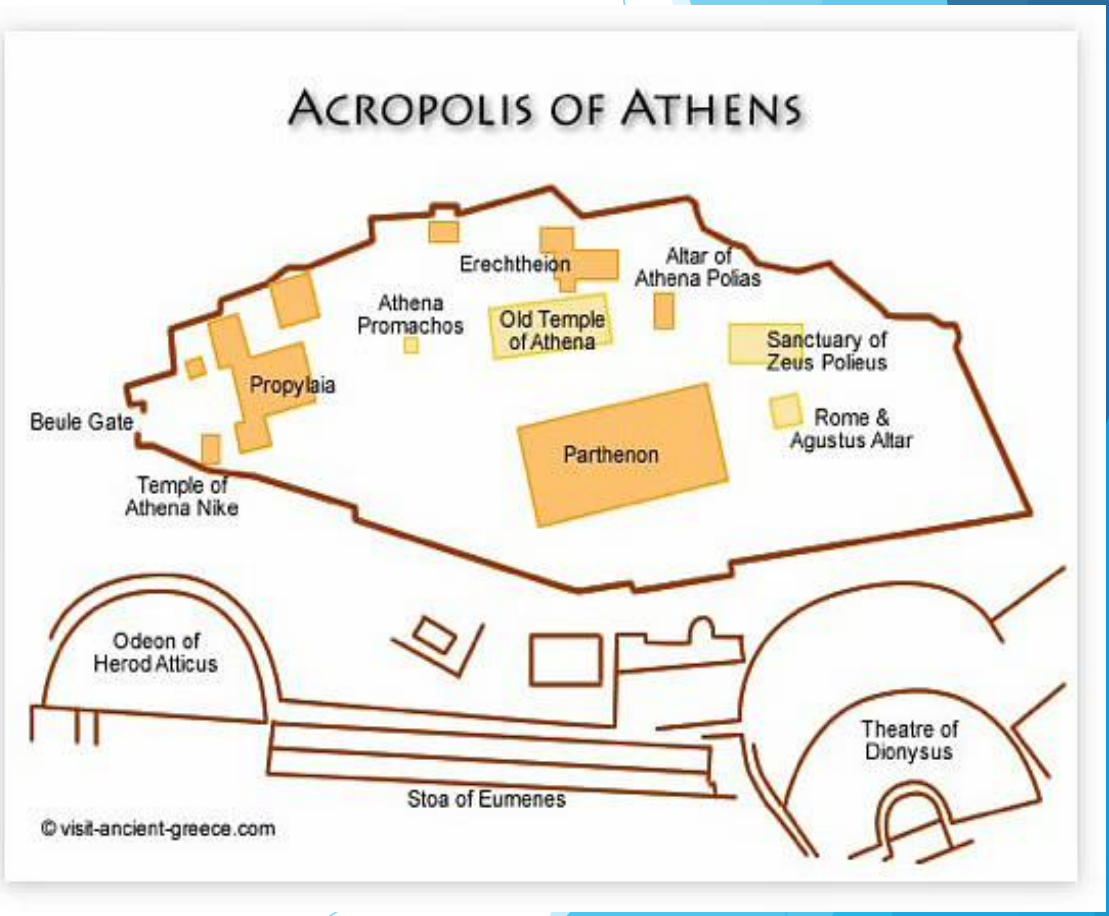
The Acropolis

- The acropolis is a term that means high city in Greek.
- It refers to the many natural strongholds which were constructed on rocky, elevated ground in Greece in the town of Athens.
- The acropolis of Athens is made of limestone rock which is located on the Attica plateau which includes four hills of likavitos, the hill of Nymphs, Pynx hill, and the Philapappos hill.



The key elements of the Acropolis plan

- The key element of the plan of the Acropolis that was constructed was:
  - The Propylaea which was a new entrance of the building.
  - The sanctuary to Athena Nike.
  - The temple called the Erechteion.
  - The Parthenon.



When and how it came about

- The Acropolis of Athens was built during the second half of the 5th century BC.
- The Acropolis flat top was a result of thousands of years of construction dating back to the Bronze Age.
- The Mycenaeans are believed to have built a massive compound surrounded by a great wall on the top to house the local ruler and his households.
- The Athenians later built the Doric temple made of limestone called the Bluebeard Temple in the honor of the Goddess Athena.
- At around 490 B.C .the Athenians built the old Parthenon made of majestic marble. The Persians attacked and demolished the Bluebeard Temple.

Why the Acropolis was constructed

- The Acropolis was originally seen as a fortress.
- It was constructed to protect Athens from attacks.
- The people of Athens wanted it to be seen as the beautiful symbol of Athens.
- The Parthenon was mainly constructed as a temple for the Goddess Athena who was the chief deity worshipped by the residents of Athens.
- Since it was built on higher ground, it was believed to be closer to heaven. It showed a sense of hierarchy.
- It was really for religious and political officials but also annual ceremonies were held concerning Athena.

Positive impacts of the Acropolis

- The Acropolis of Athens and the monuments surrounding it are seen as universal symbols of the classical spirit.
- It is a sign of civilization which forms the greatest architectural and artistic complex by the Greek Antiquity to the world.
- The Acropolis is a major tourist attraction since many people visit the acropolis.
- The acropolis makes much of its money from tourism taxes which help Greece pay its debts.

Negative impacts of the Construction of Acropolis

- The effect on pollution.
- Archeologists have also caused another major problem.
- The iron bars used to connect the marble pieces, the expansion and contraction due to temperature change split the marble.

The vision behind the urban intervention of the Acropolis

- The acropolis was constructed with impressive speed.
- The Parthenon was not only beautiful but it was built to last.
- Through the long periods of bombardments, occupations, vandalism, and even earthquakes, the Parthenon and the other structures of the acropolis have remained standing due to the sophisticated methods used during construction.

Success/failure of the plan

- Following the win of the Athenians against the Persians in the marathon, they began constructing the pre-Parthenon.
- The Acropolis became the seat of the Athenian League and Athens the greatest cultural center during the Golden Age of Pericles.
- Today, the most important monuments of the Acropolis were built during ancient times under the supervision of the great architects in including the Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Erechtheion, and the temple of Athena Nike.
- Even after destruction, the Acropolis retained its prestige.

References

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