

# Between *Hieron* and *Hosion*: The *Polis* Life in the Parthenon Inventories of 5th Century BC



Duoduo Zhang  
IHAC, NENU, Changchun



Nominally dedicated to me;  
actually, it is sacred property  
of the Athenian *polis*.



what is inscribed  
on this stone?

This is a catalogue of sacred property  
that dedicated to Athena, and is kept  
in Parthenon, inscribed in ancient  
Greek.

The main content of the inscription is  
the information of dedication objects.





# The Athenian system of numerals was acrophonic in Epigraphy

numbers	acrophonic	Greek alphabet
1	Ι	εἰς, μία, ἓν
4	ΙΙΙΙ	τέσσαρες, τέσσαρα
5	Γ	πέντε
10	Δ	δέκα
20	ΔΔ	εἴκοσι(ν)
50	Ξ	πεντήκοντα
100	Η	ἑκατόν
200	ΗΗ	διακόσιοι
500	Ϟ	πεντακόσιοι
1,000	Χ	χίλιοι
5,000	Ϛ	πέντε χιλιάδες
10,000	Μ	μύριοι
50,000	ϛ	πέντε μυριάδες

Cf. R. G. Osborne and P. J. Rhodes, *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 478-404 BC*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, xxvi.

# The layout of the Parthenon's inventories



as the order is that “officers + list of treasures + new treasurers list”.

## 1. formula sentence of officers:

“τοῖς ταμίαισιν, hoῖς Κράτες Λαμπρεὺς ἐγραμμάτευε”

“to the tamiai (treasurers), whose Crates from Lamptreus was secretary”

2. They are special financial officers in Athens. In general, they are responsible for the collection, payment, accounting, and custody of the treasures of *polis*.  
(*Ath. Pol.* 4.1-2; 47.1; 48.1 )

# Treasurers



	<u>Proneos</u>	<u>Hekatompedon</u>	<u>Parthenon</u>
L I V I N G  U T E N S I L S	<p>Wine Utensils: A.bowel: <u>phialai</u> (165) B.cup: drink horns (3) drink cup (11) goblet (1)</p> <p>Cions: silver coins (15)</p> <p>Lamps: portable light (2)</p>	<p>Wine Utensils: A.bowel: <u>phialai</u> (13) B.cup: goblet (2)</p> <p>Cions: golden coins (5) silver coins (2)</p> <p>Burning Utensils: Incense-burner (1)</p>	<p>Wine Utensils: A.bowel: <u>phialai</u> (153) B.cup: drink horns (1) drink cup (1) goblet (2)</p> <p>Burning Utensils: Incense-burner (1)</p> <p>Bed Utensils: bed (25)</p> <p>Seating Utensils: throne(6) Folding chairs (9)</p> <p>Cions: <u>uncoined gold</u> (3) golden coin (3)</p> <p>baskets: a gilded basket made of wooden (2)</p> <p>boxes: a gilded box (1) a gilded box made of ivory(1)</p>
J E W E L L R Y	<p>Crowns: golden crowns(1)</p>	<p>Crowns: golden crowns (20) golden crowns with Nike has(1)</p>	<p>Crowns: golden crowns (4) golden crowns with Nike has(6)</p> <p>Hats: a <u>leathern</u> cap overlaid with gold(1)</p> <p>necklaces: a necklace <u>flowersce</u> (19) small necklace (2) a necklace <u>flowersce</u> made of <u>onyx</u> (1)</p> <p>rings: a gold ring made of onyx (1) overlaid with gold ring(1)</p>
W E A P O N S	/	/	<p>Swords: sword(5)</p> <p>shield: shield made of wooden overlaid (17) bronze shield (31) shield with a mark (7)</p> <p>breastplates (16)</p> <p>chariots (4) helmets (1) , bronze helmet (3)</p>
S T A T U E S	/	A gold maiden on stele(1)	<p><u>Gorgias</u> (1), sea-monster(1), horses <u>tatue</u> (2) , Griffin(2), a bust of Griffin(1), a head of lion(1), dragon</p>
I N S T R U M E N T S	/	/	<p>Lyre (4), gilded Lyre(1)</p>
O T H E R S	/	/	<p>Ivory table (1)</p>



## ἱερον και ὄσιον

“ἱερον”, meaning the affair of the gods;

“ὄσιον”, often referring to human social activity.

As Blok’ s study, there is a distinction between sacred and secular, but more interactive. When the polis needs money, polis can borrow it in the temple; when the city-state’ s treasury is abundant, the money in the public treasury needs to repay the god’ s loan and interest in time.

Cf. J. H. Blok, “Deme Accounts and the Meaning of hosios Money in Fifth-Century Athens”, *Mnemosyne*, Vol. 109 (2014), pp. 61-93.



**Many thanks!**

**Zhang Duoduo**

**[zhangdd992@nenu.edu.cn](mailto:zhangdd992@nenu.edu.cn)**

**Northeast Normal University, Changchun**

**Institute for the History of Ancient Civilizations (IHAC)**