

# THE LAPIS PRIMUS AND THE OLDER PARTHENON

## ABSTRACT

The first two sets of Athenian tribute quota lists recording *aparchai* offered to Athena were inscribed on unusually large blocks of marble that have no parallel among other Greek inscriptions. The author argues that the block used for the first set of lists most likely was originally quarried for use as an architrave on the Older Parthenon, and that the second block may also have been intended for a building, perhaps the Parthenon. The reuse followed the well-attested practice of recycling architectural material held to be the property of a deity, and the monumental size of the blocks enhanced the dedicatory character of the lists of *aparchai*.

Most visitors to the Epigraphical Museum in Athens feel some awe upon first seeing the reconstructed *lapis primus*, which towers over everything else in the museum, its top nearly touching the ceiling (Figs. 1, 2).<sup>1</sup> On this very large, upright rectangular block were inscribed lists of the payers and amounts paid of one-sixtieth of the *phoros* (tribute) to Athens for at least 15 years, from 454/3 to 440/39 (*IG I<sup>3</sup>* 259–272). The one-sixtieth represented the *aparche* (first-fruits offering) given to the goddess Athena and entrusted to her treasurers. The inscribed fragments of the tribute quota lists, as they are known, have been central to reconstructions of Athenian history in the 5th century.<sup>2</sup> Why was such an enormous stone, not easy to erect in the first place, and not easy to inscribe with additional accounts in subsequent years, used to record the annual gifts paid to Athena? Was it a deliberate monument to the iron grip of Athens on her allies, a statement

1. I thank M. Lagogianni, director of the Epigraphical Museum in Athens, for permission to scrutinize, measure, and photograph the inscriptions, and I am grateful to the many readers who have helped me with suggestions, in particular R. S. Stroud. All photographs are my own. All dates are B.C.

2. *IG I<sup>3</sup>* 259–272 provides the

current standard text and bibliography; the fundamental study of this and subsequent lists is *ATL*. For the reconstruction and the problems of conservation and study that it presents, see Stroud 2006, pp. 11–16; for an overview of the organization of the texts of this and related inscriptions, see Paarmann 2004, who argues (pp. 89–91)

that the treasurers of Athena were responsible for the lists; for comments on the method of reconstruction and difficulties in the later lists, see Kallet 2004. For questions surrounding probable *aparchai* to Apollo from earlier tribute quotas prior to 454, presumably gathered and stored on Delos, see Chankowski 2008, pp. 37–43, 317–323.



Figure 1. *Lapis primus* (IG I<sup>3</sup> 259–272), front of block

of imperial control that was foreseen by the Athenians in 454 to stretch well into the future?

There is no parallel among known Greek freestanding inscriptions for the scale of this inscribed block. I argue here that the original purpose for which it was quarried was architectural, not epigraphical, and that it was likely a leftover architrave block intended for the Older Parthenon. It would have been selected from a store of blocks belonging to the goddess and kept in her sanctuary, and reused to make this impressive epigraphic monument. The store of blocks was accumulated in accordance with the formal civic obligation to retain a deity's property, illustrated in Athenian and other Greek sanctuaries both archaeologically and epigraphically.





Figure 2. *Lapis primus* (IG I³ 259–272),  
back of block

## THE *LAPIS PRIMUS*

The *lapis primus* as it stands today consists of some 183 fragments, held together in a matrix of plaster over an iron armature (Figs. 1, 2). The physical reconstruction was completed in 1927 and the texts on the front surfaces of the fragments have been assiduously studied in the course of subsequent decades. At present, the sides and backs of the fragments are not accessible, and there are few published photographs of the inner surfaces.<sup>3</sup> My concern here is not with the texts and the many problems in their reconstruction and interpretation, but rather with the original shape, size, and likely origin of the block on which the texts are inscribed.

The authors of *The Athenian Tribute Lists (ATL)*, the principal publication of the fragments, provide a brief description of the reconstructed block: its minimum height was estimated at 3.663 m in 1927, and adjusted to 3.583 m by the elimination of five lines of text in 1953; its width is reported as 1.109 m and its thickness as 0.385 m.<sup>4</sup> No fragment preserves a trace of the bottom surface. Some fragments with blank surfaces are set within the plaster matrix as part of the lower, uninscribed area of the block. The authors of *ATL* provide no description of the top of the block. In 1964 W. K. Pritchett suggested that it was surmounted by a crowning member or finial; the suggestion has not won support, but it has nonetheless brought attention to the upper surface of the block.<sup>5</sup>

A new inspection of the block as it appears today yields the following observations:

1. The thickness of the block at certain points seems secure, given the links in several places between fragments on both sides. Published measurements range from 0.385 to 0.39 m. (The difference of 0.005 m may be due simply to variations in the plaster matrix.)
2. The width of the block, which varies from 1.109 to 1.14 m in published measurements, has been considered secure by the authors of *ATL* on the basis of their reconstruction of the text. If we look only at the stone fragments themselves, however, without regard for the text, it is clear that the block could have been somewhat wider originally, although probably not narrower. In other words, there are no visible physical joins from fragment to fragment that limit the possible width. Thus, 1.14 m should be regarded as a minimum, not a fixed, width, at least until any inner joins that might confirm a fixed width can be inspected.

3. It is therefore impossible to test any proposed changes to the current arrangement. Recently found fragments are better illustrated, and some have been inserted into the plaster matrix where possible (e.g., those found in the excavations of the Athenian Agora: Camp 1974, pp. 314–318). Some uninscribed fragments likely belonging to

the block are noted in *ATL* 1, p. viii, and Stroud 2006, pp. 15–16.

4. *ATL* 1, p. 3; restated in Meritt 1966, p. 134. The height is given as 3.663 m again in Meritt 1972a, p. 403. Pritchett (1964a, p. 129; 1964b) challenged the measurements and suggested that the stone tapers downward slightly in width, from 1.14 to 1.109 m; in fact,

the variation is caused not by taper but by irregularities in the modern plaster matrix that supports the fragments in their current positions.

5. Pritchett 1966; 1967, pp. 113–115, 119; 1972, pp. 153–159; *contra*, Meritt 1966; 1972a, pp. 403–405, with an excellent photo on pl. 100.





Figure 3. *Lapis primus* (IG I<sup>3</sup> 259–272), detail of left side and back of block, showing fragment 157 as reset in 1974

6. Meritt 1966, p. 134.

7. A fragment (no. 181) found in the Agora excavations in 1972 proved to join other fragments of the left lateral face, but the new spacing of the text required that another nonjoining fragment (no. 157, a piece that includes part of the lower, uninscribed portion of the back) be repositioned some 5 cm lower on the left side. M. F. McGregor had the base of the reconstructed block altered in 1974 to accommodate the lower position of the fragment (Meritt 1972b, pp. 420–421; McGregor 1976, pl. 28:b).

8. The closest parallels are the rough quarry surfaces visible on the exterior faces, and especially the lifting bosses, of unfinished marble blocks on the Acropolis that have been assigned to the Older Parthenon.

3. Since the time of the initial publication, the current height of the block, reported by B. D. Meritt as 3.583 m, has been regarded as a minimum.<sup>6</sup> The repositioning of a fragment on the left side in 1974 extended the height by ca. 5 cm (Fig. 3).<sup>7</sup> The original block could have been at least half a meter longer at its bottom, which would have allowed it to be set within a secure base on the Acropolis.
4. If we disregard the reconstructed text and speculate without knowing whether there are any interior joins, the placement of the fragments vertically within the overall height of the block could vary somewhat from the present arrangement, on both the front and the back.
5. The top of the block is preserved only on parts of some fragments from the front side; nothing remains of the upper surface of the back or lateral faces. Along the top of the block at its front edge is a drafted margin, ca. 0.032 m wide, probably chiseled with a dove; behind it, and projecting above it to a height of ca. 0.035 m, are parts of a roughly picked quarry surface, weathered and pocked (Figs. 4, 5).<sup>8</sup> The drafted margin was cut through the quarry surface to give the block a squared edge on this face. It seems safe to assume that a similar drafted margin was cut along the top of the other sides of the block, because the drafted edges give the block its precisely squared shape.



Figure 4. *Lapis primus* (IG I<sup>3</sup> 259–272), detail of top, showing drafted margin along front side

It appears that no additional piece of stone sat on top of the block, as Pritchett suggested, for the surface is not prepared to receive one. Since the surface is still as quarried, it is clear that the block, if originally intended for an architectural purpose, had not yet been prepared for placement in a building; otherwise we would see anathyrosis rather than the simple drafted margin cut into the top to give it a squared shape.

Before it was broken into bits, then, the block was ca. 4.00 m or more in length, with a minimum width of 1.14 m and a thickness of ca. 0.39 m when it was inscribed. Quarrying such a huge marble block would have been a difficult, time-consuming job. The quarry master had to identify areas of the quarry that had no fissures and as few micaceous veins as possible, if the block was intended for an architectural purpose. Optimally, the grain or foliation planes of the marble should be parallel to the proposed weight load. (In its present, upright position, the grain of the marble runs more or less vertically along the long axis of the block; in a horizontal position, this would have been the weight-bearing axis, and the grain would have run approximately parallel to the load.) In the quarry, the perimeter of an area of marble larger than the proposed block had to be chiseled out, separated from the quarry bed on each of the four sides, and then—the most challenging operation of all for a block of this length—removed from the bed. The procedure in antiquity is well documented by traces left in quarries, as well as by blocks preserved at various stages of work both in quarries and on building sites.<sup>9</sup> Because of the perceived value of “pure” areas of marble and the labor-intensive effort needed to extract it, premodern quarrying was a conservative endeavor, with as little wastage as possible. It would be surprising if such an enormous block had been quarried and transported from Mount Pentele specifically to be used for inscriptions of lists. There are no parallels for such a use.

9. On quarries and quarrying, see Martin 1965, pp. 146–151; Orlandos 1966–1968, pp. 15–20; Dworakowska 1975; Korres 1995 (with extensive bibliography); Pike 1996. On the mechanical aspects of stresses caused by loads in marble beams, see Papantonopoulos 2006. The architrave blocks of the Parthenon are estimated to weigh nine and a half tons (Coulton 1974, p. 15). During the current restoration of the building, the working team has sometimes had to wait as long as three years for a suitable replacement architrave block from the Dionysos quarry on the opposite side of Mount Pentele; even today it is not an easy procedure (L. Lambrinou, pers. comm.).





Figure 5. *Lapis primus* (IG I³ 259–272), detail of top, showing drafted margin along front side and quarry surface remaining behind

## THE OLDER PARTHENON

B. H. Hill's reconstruction of the Older Parthenon in 1912 was a landmark in our understanding of the Acropolis in the 5th century, and recent studies by M. Korres have added many new observations.<sup>10</sup> The immediate predecessor to the existing Parthenon, the Older Parthenon was probably begun soon after the battle of Marathon, and it was the first major architectural project to use Pentelic marble. Hill was able to reconstruct its plan and establish some facts about the elevation on the basis of close observation of the podium of the present Parthenon, together with an analysis of other blocks preserved on the Acropolis. The podium, constructed originally for the Older Parthenon, is built of ca. 8,000 blocks of limestone quarried at Piraeus; on the south side the foundations are 25 courses deep.<sup>11</sup> On top of the platform, the lowest step of the Older Parthenon was built of Kara limestone (the southwest corner block is still in situ), with two additional steps of marble above.

Hill identified some 250 marble blocks that were certainly intended originally for the Older Parthenon. Many of these were reused in the present Parthenon; some were built into walls around the Acropolis; others were

10. Hill 1912; Korres 1993, pp. 59–75; 1994b, pp. 54–58; 1995 (important observations and excellent illustrations); 1997 (proposed sequences of constructions); 1999, pp. 85–91. See also Dinsmoor 1934; Tsira 1940; Orlandos

[1976–1978] 1995, pp. 64–89. Early but still useful observations are found in Penrose 1888, pp. 1, 6, 98–102.

11. I agree with the long-standing opinion that the Older Parthenon was the first large temple on this site; *contra*,

Korres 1997, with p. 221, fig. 1. For overviews of the problem, see Hurwit 1999, pp. 105–135; Kissas 2008, pp. 99–110 (with additional evidence).

simply lying about on the summit of the hill, where they are still visible today.<sup>12</sup> He found that some of the dimensions of the present Parthenon were planned to be identical with those of the Older Parthenon, so that its blocks could be reused; these include the height of the steps and stylobate of the peristyle, and that of the steps leading to the cella. He noted further the close correspondence of the height of the columns.<sup>13</sup> The Classical Parthenon is a rare Greek temple whose superstructure includes a substantial amount of reused material from its predecessor.

The plan of the Older Parthenon as deduced by Hill has  $6 \times 16$  columns above a three-stepped crepidoma, with a tetrastyle amphiprostyle inner building. The inner building is divided into two chambers, like that of the present Parthenon. The interaxial spacing of the outer colonnade, estimated as 4.53 m (4.40 m at the corners), establishes the minimum length of the architrave blocks. The capitals of the Older Parthenon were slightly larger than those of its successor, with an abacus 0.20 m wider, and the architrave was probably slightly higher than that of the existing Parthenon, which is 1.348–1.35 m high on the exterior, and 1.043–1.05 m on the interior.<sup>14</sup> The architrave of the Parthenon is made up of a series of three parallel blocks: a front block, the outer face of which was decorated with a taenia and guttae; a back block, which was left plain; and a center block, of which only the soffit would have been visible. The peristyle required 138 blocks placed in sets of three over 46 intercolumniations.<sup>15</sup> This arrangement of three parallel blocks may have been inherited from the Older Parthenon and some of the architrave blocks used in the existing Parthenon could have been quarried originally for its predecessor: only some trimming would have been necessary to reuse them, since the interaxial spacing of the later building is slightly shorter on normal intervals, and reduced further at the corners because of the greater corner contraction.<sup>16</sup> With a plan of  $6 \times 16$  columns, and at the scale indicated by the remains of the crepidoma and platform, the peristyle of the Older Parthenon would have required 120 exterior architrave blocks, placed in sets of three to span the 40 intervals between the columns.

Korres found positive evidence that some of the columns of the Older Parthenon were in place in 480, up to at least three drums. He has observed thermal fractures in blocks of the crepidoma and in the substructure of the toichobate on the north side of the temple; this damage was later concealed

12. Blocks recorded by Hill (1912, p. 535, n. 1) include 177 in the north wall of the Acropolis, 38 scattered on the summit, and 35 built into the existing Parthenon. Blocks originally intended for the Older Parthenon may be identified by the type of marble and by their dimensions, shape, workmanship, and degree of finish. Some rectangular blocks subsequently reused in the present Parthenon are also identifiable by cuttings for half of a double T-clamp, made and used when the blocks were set in the Older Parthenon, but not

used in their current settings, where they are adjacent to blocks with no matching cuttings.

13. That the columns in the opisthodomos of the Parthenon are built of reused blocks from the Older Parthenon was suggested first by Penrose (1888, p. 8, n. 6).

14. The architrave dimensions used here and below are those given by Orlandos ([1976–1978] 1995, pp. 199–205, figs. 126, 128, 139, pls. 30, 31). The overall depth of the architrave of the Older Parthenon would have

been narrower, in keeping with its earlier date.

15. The exterior architraves (over the peristyle) are 4.30–4.70 m long  $\times$  1.348–1.35 m high  $\times$  0.555–0.576 m deep; the interior architraves (over the porches) are 3.854–4.357 m long  $\times$  1.043–1.05 m high  $\times$  0.453–0.57 m deep.

16. The interaxial spacing of the Older Parthenon was an estimated 4.53 m (4.40 m at the corners); that of the present Parthenon is 4.2965 m (3.66 m at the corners).



by the builders of the present Parthenon.<sup>17</sup> The Older Parthenon must have been covered with wooden scaffolding (to its full intended height, as was customary) at the time of the Persian sack in 480, and it was easy for the Persians to set fire to it when they burned the Acropolis.<sup>18</sup>

Although many column drums, capitals, and step blocks, as well as some toichobate blocks (bearing a distinctive Ionic molding) and orthostates for the lower walls, are readily identifiable, architrave blocks from the Older Parthenon have not yet been identified in published discussions. Quarry masters typically look at a whole project and cut blocks for a variety of uses; since the architrave blocks (and the long lintels over the doors) posed the greatest challenge, it seems safe to assume that they were anticipated, quarried, and prepared from the beginning of the project, as it went along—that is, the quarrying was done pragmatically, not according to the strict sequence of courses in the building itself. Hence some, at least, of the 120 blocks for the outer architrave should have been quarried and delivered by the time of the Persian invasion. If the architrave blocks were not in place on the temple before its destruction, presumably they were not burned, since it was the scaffolding that provided fuel for the fire; it is likely that they were stacked instead in a marble pile. The other possible use for a block the size of the *lapis primus* would have been as a lintel over one of the doors, which in the typical sequence of temple construction would be built later, after the outer peristyle was constructed.<sup>19</sup>

It seems safe to assume that a large quantity of cut marble blocks remained from the Older Parthenon immediately after the Persian invasion. The first priority for the Athenians after the destruction of the city was to rebuild the walls (Thuc. 1.93.1–3). During the Themistoklean reconstruction, many architectural blocks from both the Older Parthenon and the Old Temple of Athena Polias were built into the north wall of the Acropolis, where they remained clearly visible as a sort of memorial (Fig. 6).<sup>20</sup> The cleaning up of the Acropolis, the burial of broken votive statuary in pits supported by the north wall, and the sorting of architectural blocks thus was begun in the early 470s. The blocks considered unsuitable for future architectural use because of structural or fire damage or possible interior faults were built into walls.<sup>21</sup> Because only damaged blocks were used in the north wall and elsewhere in retaining walls on and around the Acropolis, we may infer that future use of undamaged architectural blocks was anticipated.

Before the Parthenon was constructed, Iktinos and his coworkers must have made a careful inspection and inventory of the usable blocks

17. Korres 1994a, pp. 54–58; 1995, p. 111, fig. 34:1, 2; 1999, p. 91, fig. 3:15.

18. For the Persian destruction of the Acropolis and the lower city, see Hdt. 8.52–55, 9.13; Thuc. 1.89.3. The archaeological evidence from the Agora is discussed in Shear 1993.

19. The lintel for the preserved back door of the existing Parthenon is composed of four long blocks, 7.774 m long × 1.043 m high × 0.50 m deep, set

parallel and spanning the opening of 4.90 m at the top of the door (Orlandos [1976–1978] 1995, pp. 425–426, fig. 269, pl. 30). The doors of the Older Parthenon were presumably slightly narrower, as in Orlandos's plan comparing the two temples ([1976–1978] 1995, pl. 3), but they would still have required very long blocks.

20. See Hill 1912, pp. 557–558, with remarks on the sorting of the

blocks; Korres 2002, which shows that most of the north wall of the Acropolis is in fact “Themistoklean”; Kousser 2009, pp. 270–272, with reflections on the memorial character of the blocks. For the circuit wall around the city, see Theodoraki 2007, pp. 17–21, 379–385; 2011; for Piraeus, Conwell 2008, p. 41, n. 16, and pp. 57–59.

21. For the damaged blocks from the Older Parthenon, see Korres 2002.



Figure 6. The north wall of the Acropolis, with damaged column drums from the Older Parthenon at left and pieces of the entablature of the Old Temple of Athena Polias at right

remaining from the Older Parthenon, which by then had been in storage for some 20 years. In 409/8 a similar situation faced the *epistatai* for the Temple of Athena Polias (Erechtheion), who made an inventory of available building material, including finished, partly finished, and unset blocks, as well as blocks still in the rough (from quarries) and reused blocks.<sup>22</sup> In the Parthenon, some reused blocks that were deemed faulty or potentially weak had clamps added where they would not be visible to hold them together under stress.<sup>23</sup> Many others, such as capitals and probably architraves as well, were trimmed slightly for reuse in the later building. This was the great challenge for Iktinos: to build a new temple that would reflect contemporary proportions and his own ideas about optical refinements, but at the same time to reuse an old platform and as many of the old blocks as possible. It seems likely that this civic requirement had religious aspects.

22. *IG I<sup>3</sup> 474*. Worked blocks are described as *ἡμιτέργα*, *ἄθετος*, *ἀρραβ-δότος*, *ἀκαταχρῆστος*, etc.; for blocks in the rough no description is given, only overall dimensions (lines 213–237, with discussion in Caskey 1927, p. 315). The list includes reused blocks from a stoa (e.g., lines 156–159, discussed in Caskey 1927, pp. 316–317, with a list of

the reused material). Foundations for an earlier stoa near the north wall of the Acropolis, west of the Erechtheion, were noted by Hill (Caskey 1927, p. 317); they appear in Kavvadias and Kawerau 1907, pl. 3.

23. A capital and a geison block so clamped are illustrated in Korres 1995, p. 110, fig. 3:3. Detailed measurements

of the Parthenon first taken by Penrose (1888) show a notable variety of lengths and widths among blocks of similar type in many of the courses (discussed in Korres 1994a, pp. 79–80; Korres 1994b, pp. 64–68; Barletta 2005, pp. 74–78); these variations are best explained by the need to reuse material intended for the earlier building.



## THE BLOCKS INSCRIBED WITH THE *APARCHAI* TO ATHENA

When the appointed treasurers required a piece of marble for the inscription of the *aparchai* to Athena in 454, they likely requisitioned one from Athena's stockpile on the Acropolis.<sup>24</sup> Because of its shape and size, I suggest that this first block, the *lapis primus*, may have been originally intended for an architrave. Although there is no proof of this, the dimensions of the block do fit within the estimated dimensions of the architrave blocks of the Older Parthenon. We can only speculate about why the block was not reused in the later Parthenon: perhaps it had been damaged in some way, making it unsuitable for architectural use. By choosing a block left over from the abortive project partly destroyed by the Persians, the treasurers avoided the additional expense of purchasing a stele that had to be newly quarried, transported to the city, and brought up onto the Acropolis. The large block was used for annual lists of *aparchai* until 440/39, when a second block was selected.

The *lapis secundus* (IG I<sup>3</sup> 273–280; 439/8–431/0 B.C.) is also unusual in shape and size, and it too may have been intended originally for some architectural purpose, perhaps in the existing Parthenon (Fig. 7). By this time, presumably, the most useful rectangular pieces left over from the Older Parthenon had already been built into its successor, the structure of which was nearly complete in 439/8. Although part of the top surface of the *lapis secundus* is preserved above the upper right corner of the front of the block, it is covered by thin layers of plaster and paint and currently is not visible. The block was cut into two pieces sometime after it was set up as an inscription, and was rejoined by D. Fimmen, with further modifications by the authors of *ATL*, who give its width (determined by the spacing of letters in a restored prescript) as 1.471 m, its thickness as 0.34 m, and its estimated minimum height as 2.192 m.<sup>25</sup> The front surface is partly abraded, but the bottoms of some letters are still visible (Fig. 8); the block was therefore at least a millimeter or two thicker when inscribed. Its thickness, measured in 2010 at various places where the marble is best preserved, varies from 0.324 to 0.336 m.

Only the restored prescript demands a width of 1.471 m; nothing else about the preserved fragments visible in the plaster matrix indicates that the block was so wide, and there are large blank spaces in the centers of both the front and back sides. The thickness of the block and its estimated overall size suggest that it might have been intended to be set horizontally, either as a slab for ceiling coffers (0.345 m high in Orlandos's series B) or as a *thranos*, or ceiling bearer (0.34 m high). Blocks of this thickness, with an overall size comparable to that of the *lapis secundus*, are documented in the Parthenon.<sup>26</sup> These upper courses of the temple would have been under construction around the time of the inscription of the first list on the *lapis secundus*; if the block was not needed or not considered suitable for the temple, it might have been available for use to record the *aparchai*.

In contrast to the first two blocks, the fragments of the lists of *aparchai* currently assigned to subsequent years seem to have belonged to stelai of

24. Paarmann (2004, pp. 89–91) argues that the actual receivers of the *aparchai*, and the board that drew up the lists, were the treasurers of Athena, not the Hellenotamiai; it is not clear who was responsible for erecting the stele. For the precise date of 454, see Kallet 2004, p. 471, n. 24.

25. Fimmen 1913; *ATL* 1, p. 67.

26. Orlandos [1976–1978] 1995, p. 488, fig. 315, p. 496, fig. 325, pls. XXa, XXIII. The ceilings of the peristyle on the facades consist of six sets of three coffered slabs on each side; hence 36 blocks were required. The *thranoi*, which support the ceiling, have varying widths and lengths; this course sits above the sculptured frieze that extends around the entire *sekos*, and is composed of many blocks.



relatively modest and unexceptional sizes (*IG I*<sup>3</sup> 281–291; 430/29–ca. 415 B.C.). The preserved thicknesses vary from 0.094 to 0.184 m. By the 420s, after the construction of the Parthenon and Propylaia, any surplus architectural blocks may have been used up, with the result that stelai had to be purchased, evidently of a fairly standard shape and size.

Because the *lapis primus* is so very large, and because in 454 there were likely many blocks on the Acropolis to choose from, one still might ask, why this one? Although modern scholars have used the inscriptions to reconstruct the *phoros* that helped fuel the Athenian empire, it is worth noting again that this tall marble block, set up in a sanctuary, records not the *phoros* itself, but the *aparchai* given to Athena by some 150 cities, most of

Figure 7. *Lapis secundus* (*IG I*<sup>3</sup> 273–280), front of block





Figure 8. *Lapis secundus* (IG I<sup>3</sup> 273–280), detail of upper left side, with abraded surface on front

them in the Aegean.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the block was initially presented as a record of communal dedications, evidently intended (in light of its unparalleled size) to be monumental. It may have been remembered that the block was originally destined for the temple burned by the Persians when still under scaffolding. Despite recent setbacks in Egypt, in 454, when the inscribed block was hoisted into place, the record of offerings to Athena implicitly commemorated the success of the Athenian-led alliance that defended the Aegean from further Persian invasion. Now in its twenty-fifth year, the alliance was placed directly under the aegis of Athena for its continued success. As L. Samons has noted, however, for Greek visitors to the Acropolis who were not Athenian, the vast blank space below the first list on the tall block might have had daunting implications for the future collection of tribute.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps this assertion of power was intended in the selection and vertical positioning of the block.

27. As Parker (1996, p. 144) notes, the religious aspect of the donation to Athena was significant enough that allies were required to contribute the *aparche* even when the tribute itself was remitted, as indicated in the Methone decrees of the 420s (IG I<sup>3</sup> 61, lines 5–9,

30–32). For discussion of other unusual arrangements concerning the *aparche*, see Smarczyk 1990, pp. 653–660. The number of cities represented in the first list is between 135 and 141, depending on the restorations; Meiggs (1943, pp. 29–30) states that ca. 170 cities

appear in later lists on the same block.

28. Samons 2000, p. 36. For discussion of the “memorial” and “archival” character of this and other inscriptions, see, e.g., Thomas 1994, pp. 37–45; Pébarthe 2006, pp. 268–275, 300–304.

Where on the Acropolis the *lapis primus* and the other inscribed lists of the *aparchai* stood is unknown, because there is no way to determine the original size or shape of their bases or to match them to the many cuttings preserved on the surface of the hill. Because the first two blocks are so large, they would have required bases constructed of several additional blocks supporting and surrounding them. Inasmuch as they record the goddess's property, we may assume that the *lapis primus* and its successors were set up near the location of the treasury of Athena. In 454, this might have been in the west end of the remains of the Old Temple of Athena Polias (which is likely to be the "Opisthodomos" mentioned in later inscriptions).<sup>29</sup> Wherever it stood, the great size of the *lapis primus* must have occasioned frequent comment, as it does today, and over time the inscribed block itself became a memorial of the Athenian role in the control of the Aegean.

## THE REUSE OF ARCHITECTURAL BLOCKS

The suggestion that the original purpose of the *lapis primus* was architectural, not epigraphical, should be considered within the broader context of the custom of reusing architectural material in Greek sanctuaries, known both from observation at excavated sites and from inscribed building accounts. This custom is a consequence not merely of fiscal prudence, but of the formal obligation that derived from the ancient Greek concept of ownership of property by a deity.

Throughout the Acropolis older material has been reused in the substructures of subsequent buildings, as in the Propylaia, the foundations of which incorporate blocks from earlier structures, and in the Erechtheion, where reused blocks, possibly from the earlier Propylon, are set beneath the north porch and north door.<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere, archaeological investigation in many Greek sanctuaries has documented the common practice of reusing architectural material from older buildings in the foundations of newer constructions, especially during the 5th and 4th centuries. Notable examples include the Sikyonian treasury at Delphi (ca. 525), built on foundations that incorporated 542 blocks in seven courses from two earlier Archaic buildings, including sculpted metopes from one of them; Temple E at Selinous (ca. 460), which contains extensive parts of at least two earlier temples in its substructures; the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion (ca. 440), where blocks from the Archaic temple are built into the foundations and a supporting terrace on all sides; and the east front of the Temple of Ennodia at Pherai in Thessaly (late 4th century), where columns and blocks from at least one and perhaps two Archaic temples are embedded beneath the steps.<sup>31</sup>

29. On the problem of the Opisthodomos, see Paton 1927, pp. 470–474; Harris 1995, pp. 40–41; Hollinshead 1999, pp. 210–212; Gerding 2006, pp. 389–391; Linders 2007. The term is first attested in the decrees of Kallias (*IG I<sup>3</sup>* 52; 433 or 431 B.C.).

30. Reused blocks are visible in the foundations of the west side of the Propylaia, and under the northwest

wing on its east side. For blocks possibly from the earlier Propylon, see Korres 1997, p. 243, n. 99.

31. Delphi: Laroche and Nenna 1990, pp. 241–280; Selinous: Gullini 1985, pp. 422, 431–433, pls. II, III; Sounion: Dörpfeld 1884, pp. 329–336; Pherai: Østby 1992, pp. 86–88; 1994, pp. 139, 142; Graninger 2009, pp. 117–120. These examples provide a sense of

the range of date and place; many others could be cited. Reused architectural blocks in formal buildings of the Classical period may be seen occasionally outside sanctuaries as well, as in the foundations of the Stoa Basileios (Shear 1971, pp. 243–250) and the west euthynteria of the Stoa Poikile (Shear 1984, p. 14) in the Athenian Agora.



The so-called Hekatompedon inscription (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 4*) provides an example analogous to that of the *lapis primus* of the use of part of a temple for inscriptions that concern cult matters. Usually dated to 485/4 on the basis of the archon's name (partly restored), these regulations governing behavior on the Acropolis are inscribed on two reused Hymettian marble metopes from a series identified as part of the "H-architecture," belonging to an Archaic temple usually referred to as the Hekatompedon.<sup>32</sup> The temple had been dismantled, probably in order to construct the Old Temple of Athena on its reused foundations, and others of its metopes were reused as backer blocks for a bench near the entrance to the Acropolis.<sup>33</sup>

Architectural contracts, audits, and inventories from Eleusis illustrate legal aspects of ownership by deities of architectural blocks, building supplies, tools, and other equipment. An opisthographic account and inventory of the late 5th century, for example, provides a vivid picture of building material stored at Eleusis, some of it under a tent (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 386–387; 408/7–407/6 B.C.*). Described carefully in the lists is a large quantity of architectural blocks that had been "taken down from the temple," that is, from the Late Archaic Telesterion (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 387*, line 113).<sup>34</sup> T. L. Shear Jr. demonstrates that architectural blocks, wooden epistyles and rafters from the interior, three pairs of doors, and some 1750 marble roof tiles from the Late Archaic Telesterion were dismantled and stored. He argues that this took place prior to the Persian invasion of 480/79, in anticipation of new construction, and that because they were in stockpiles they escaped the extensive damage described by Herodotos (9.13, 65.2).<sup>35</sup> If this is correct, the architectural blocks listed in the inventory had been stored for close to a century.

Other blocks from the Late Archaic Telesterion were used in the construction of a bridge built to facilitate the transportation of *ta hiera* by the priestesses in the processions over the Rheitoi, the two lakes belonging to Demeter and Kore (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 79*, lines 5–11; 422/1 B.C.).<sup>36</sup> Although in this case the blocks were used in a structure built outside the sanctuary, they were still intended to ensure the proper conduct of the Eleusinian festival, and set on property that belonged to the goddesses. Other inscriptions of the 5th and 4th centuries concerning the sanctuary at Eleusis and the City Eleusinion in Athens specifically list building material to be sold or reused.<sup>37</sup>

32. Date: Stroud 2004; description of fragments: Butz 1995a, pp. 300–313; 2010, pp. 133–159; new fragments: Matthaiou 2000–2003; use of Hymettian marble: Butz 1995b; Butz, Maniatis, and Polikreti 1999; *SEG XLVI* 36.

33. Shear 1999. The location of the Hekatompedon has been much debated; for new evidence and discussion, see Kissas 2008, pp. 99–110.

34. For a full commentary, see Cavanaugh 1996, pp. 119–209. The inscription is republished in Clinton 2005, pp. 64–70, no. 52, with additional commentary in Clinton 2008, pp. 72–82. The connection with the

Late Archaic Telesterion was noted by Noack (1927, pp. 57–61). The same lengthy inventory and account of 408/7 lists an expenditure for the preparation of a stele for the previous year's records, at a cost of 62 drachmas, which included the cutting and painting of the letters (*IG I<sup>3</sup> 386*, lines 165–167 = Clinton 2005, pp. 64–70, no. 52, face A, col. III, lines 44–46; see Clinton 2008, p. 81).

35. Shear 1982, pp. 138–140. Clinton (2008, p. 76) comments that some "old" column drums from the Archaic Telesterion may be traced well into the 4th century, and may be the ones listed

in *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1672*, line 310 (= Clinton 2005, pp. 188–206, no. 177, line 439).

36. Clinton 2005, pp. 54–55, no. 41. Other existing blocks still in the sanctuary at Eleusis have been identified within various walls and foundations (listed in Shear 1982, pp. 134–135).

37. Examples cited by Clinton are *IG I<sup>3</sup> 393* (= Clinton 2005, pp. 51–52, no. 37), lines 4–5 (ca. 430–425? B.C.), and *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1672*, lines 309–310 (= Clinton 2005, pp. 188–206, no. 177, lines 438–439) (329/8 B.C.); for commentary, see Clinton 2008, pp. 76–77.

In the contracts for the 3rd-century Temple of Zeus Basileus at Leba-deia, the status of architectural blocks within the sanctuary is recorded in explicit detail. If the contractor damages a block during transport, he must remove it from the sanctuary within five days; otherwise, the block becomes *hieros* and must remain in the sanctuary (a provision that implies that building materials are not instantly considered *hieroi*).<sup>38</sup> Here we read a precise, contractually defined statement about the way in which new architectural blocks destined for a temple were viewed by the *naopoioi*. The time limit may have served as a practical way to ensure the prompt removal of damaged blocks, but what is of interest here is the implicit assumption that, in order to enforce the threatened confiscation, the supervisors had the power to declare the block *hieros*, and thus the god's property. What seems to be the reverse situation is indicated in another account from Eleusis, concerning the porch of the Late Classical Telesterion, which records that on one occasion during the transportation of material from Mount Pentele to the sanctuary, a drum, apparently rejected, was actually returned to the quarry after having been hauled all the way to Eleusis (*IG II<sup>2</sup> 1673*, lines 80–82; 336/5 or 333/2 B.C.).<sup>39</sup>

Ownership by deities of obvious valuables, including dedications, votive offerings, grain, land, and sums of money, is a familiar phenomenon, well known from literary and epigraphical testimonia such as treasury inventories, financial accounts of loans made by deities, and the records of *aparchai* in the Athenian tribute quota lists themselves.<sup>40</sup> While temples and their component parts are clearly part of that property in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, by the 1st century evidently even intended building material could be considered “dedicated.” Diodoros (8.11) reports a local tradition about a consecrated place in Syracuse called *Embrontaion* (struck by lightning): an *epistates* had appropriated the building stone intended for a temple for use in his own house and suffered the consequences. Although the story may be interpreted in various ways, it suggests that in Diodoros's time building material itself, in the form of quarried blocks, could be considered sacred property simply on the basis of its intended use, regardless of any financial transactions.<sup>41</sup>

38. *IG VII 3073*, col. I, lines 36–37; similar provisions in *IG VII 3074*, lines 14–15; Choisy 1896, pp. 318–325, col. I, lines 32–33. These texts are gathered in Turner 1994, pp. 151, 269–337, nos. 263.1, 2, and 6, and are being prepared for republication by R. Pitt. For further discussion of divine “ownership,” see Ridgway 1999, p. 206.

39. Clinton 2005, pp. 163–169, no. 159, with commentary in Clinton 2008, pp. 151–164. No explanation is given for the rejection of the drum and its return to the quarry at the sanctuary's expense. Those who hauled the drums (perhaps slaves) had to undergo initiation, which was paid for on their

behalf, since the job required entering the sanctuary; they also made group sacrifices (Clinton 2008, p. 158).

40. For discussion of the concept of “sacred” or “sacral” treasuries, see Samons 2000, app. 6, pp. 325–329; for “sacred laws,” see Parker 2004.

41. The story reflects a range of social and juridical anxieties about *luxus*, private vs. public use of property, and sacrilege, with respect to private architecture. These same anxieties are found in 1st-century discussions of captured statuary and other art as spoils of war, particularly in Cicero's *Verrines*; see Miles 2008, pp. 152–210.



## CONCLUSION

Like other dedications and more portable accumulated valuables in a sanctuary, temples and their blocks were considered the property of the deity. Architectural blocks, whether of limestone or marble, were intrinsically valuable because of the cost of quarrying, transporting, and shaping them, and their storage and use were part of the economy of a sanctuary, accountable as the deity's property. Occasionally architectural blocks could be sold off or recycled as raw material, but the regular custom was to make use of the property within the sanctuary, just as discarded or broken dedications were normally buried within the sacred precinct. For the most part, old blocks were consigned to foundations and thereby also buried, but in some cases such material was reused in more visible contexts. In Athens in the early 5th century, recycled marble metopes from the Hekatompedon were inscribed with regulations of the sanctuary and lined part of the approach to the principal entrance to the Acropolis. Damaged architectural blocks from the temples burned by the Persians were displayed deliberately and conspicuously in the north wall of the citadel, while usable parts of the Older Parthenon were built into the superstructure of its successor. In the case of the *lapis primus* (and later the *lapis secundus*), the exceptional decision to inscribe a large block originally intended for a temple might have been motivated by the content of the text. The *aparchai* to Athena represented one-sixtieth of the *phoros*, and the great size of the selected block thus took on a metaphorical significance.

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