

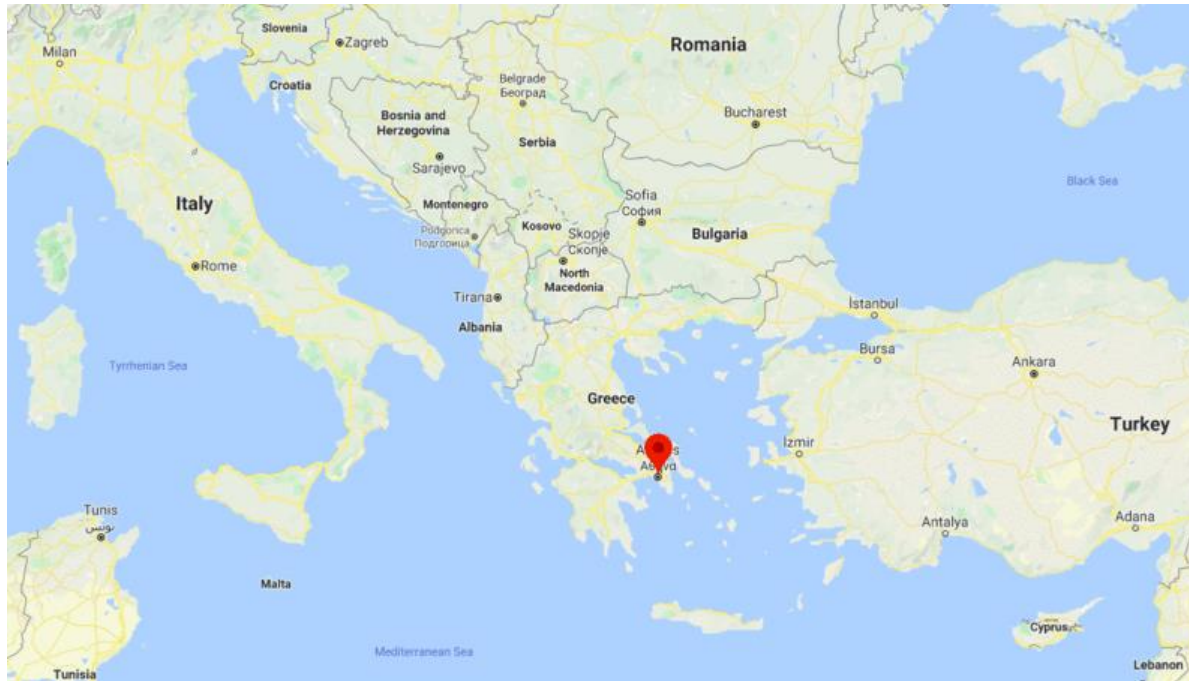
Attic Inscriptions: Education

A workshop for KS 3 enrichment

Greece



Ancient Athens and Its Writing



A modern painting of Athens: Pericles addresses the people, with the acropolis featuring the Parthenon and Propylaea in the background

Ancient Athenian inscriptions in the UK

1. Introduction to ancient Athenian inscriptions in the UK
2. Why are ancient Athenian inscriptions important?
3. Reading Ancient Athenian inscriptions: (a) Words; (b) Numbers; (c) Images (**with activities**)
4. Ancient Athenian Inscriptions in the UK and the History of Medicine (**with activities**)

1. Ancient Athenian Inscriptions in the UK: a selection

Below: dedication of victorious athletic trainer, fourth century BC, now at the

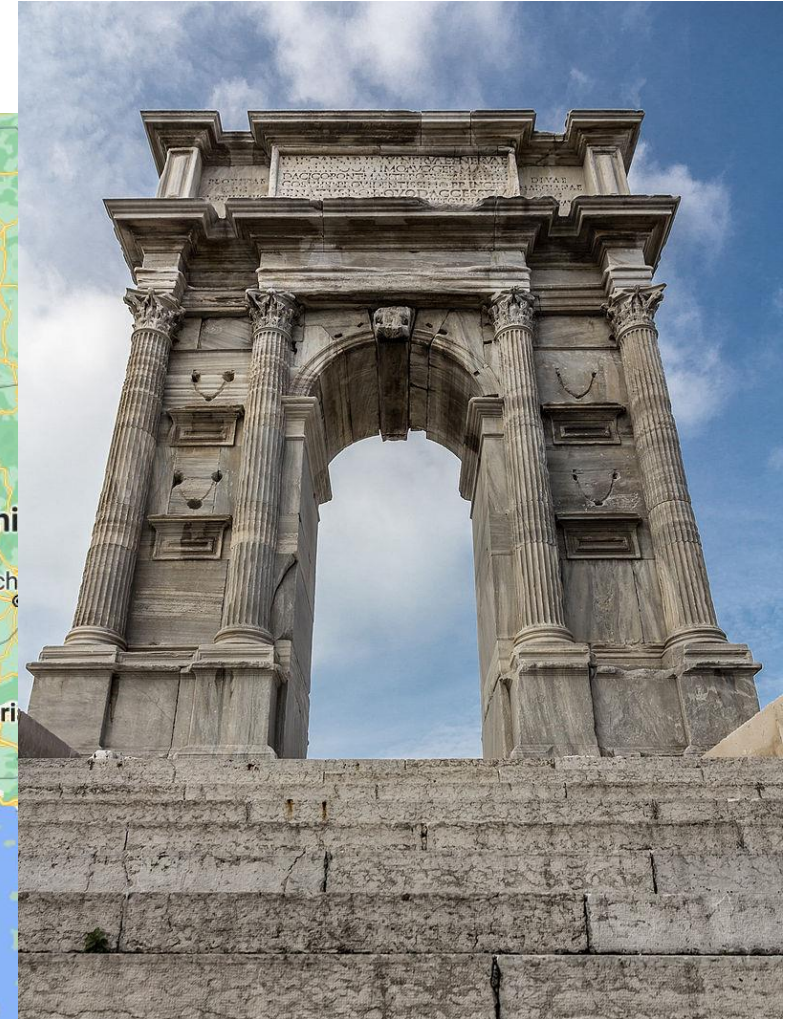


Left: Grave marker of celebrants of the cult of Isis, third century AD, Broomhall (Scotland)

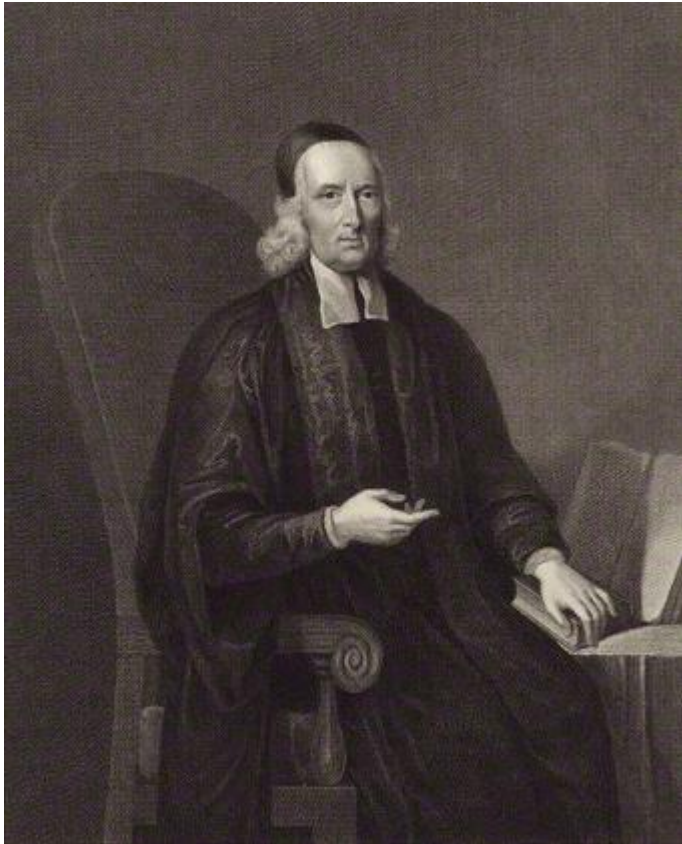


Above: fragment of Athenian Tribute List for 448/7 BC, now at the British Museum.

Cyriacus of Ancona (1391-1453/5)



British Collectors of ancient Athenian Inscriptions: seventeenth – nineteenth centuries



George Wheler
(1651-1724)



Thomas Bruce (Lord
Elgin: 1766-1841)



Mary Hamilton (Lady
Ruthven: 1789-
1885)

Current locations of ancient Athenian inscriptions in the UK in 2021



Sotheby's [BUY](#) [SELL](#) [DISCOVER](#)

ANTIQUITIES

28

PROPERTY FROM AN AMERICAN FAMILY TRUST
A Greek Marble Anthemion
, 2nd quarter of the 4th Century B.C.
Estimate 125,000 – 175,000 USD [LOT SOLD, 116,500 USD](#)



[JUMP TO LOT](#)

Attic Inscriptions in UK Collections



Attic Inscriptions
Online

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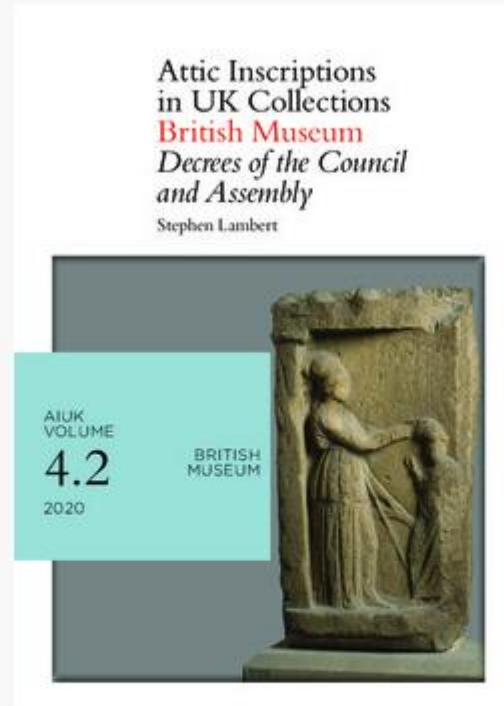
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AIUK 4.2

AIUK vol. 4.2 (2020): British Museum. *Decrees of the Council and Assembly* - Stephen Lambert

This, the second part of our publication of the Attic inscriptions in the British Museum, contains new editions of the seventeen decrees of the Council and Assembly in the collection. All were acquired in Athens by UK aristocrats in the early 19th century and are published here in most cases together with other fragments of the same inscriptions still in Athens. The inscriptions offer a series of illuminating snapshots of the policy preoccupations of Athenian citizens across the entire span of Athenian decree-inscribing, from the early 5th century BC to the early 3rd century AD, and include important documents of the Eleusinian Mysteries and the Athenian Empire as well as characteristic inscriptions of the 4th century BC and Hellenistic and Roman Athens. Introductory sections discuss the history of the collection and locate the inscriptions in the context of Athenian decree-inscribing and Athenian history more broadly. In addition to significant new epigraphical findings this edition includes reassessments of several major inscriptions.

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2. Why are they important? (a) Tell us about human relations.

The monument of Aristophosa (fifth century BC?), now at the British Museum, reads as follows:

‘The gravestone of Aristophosa the mother of Amphenor and Diognetes and Thymilos.

And of Thymilos the son of Naukles. And of Timokrates the son of Amphenor.

Of Thrasykles.’



Why are they Important? (b) They tell us about public life:

Kleinias' decree about tribute
collection, 425/4 or later (now at the
British Museum):

‘Let the city write on a writing tablet the
tribute which it is sending, and seal it
with the token and send it to Athens;
and those conveying it shall hand over
the writing tablet in the Council to be
read when they hand over the
tribute...’

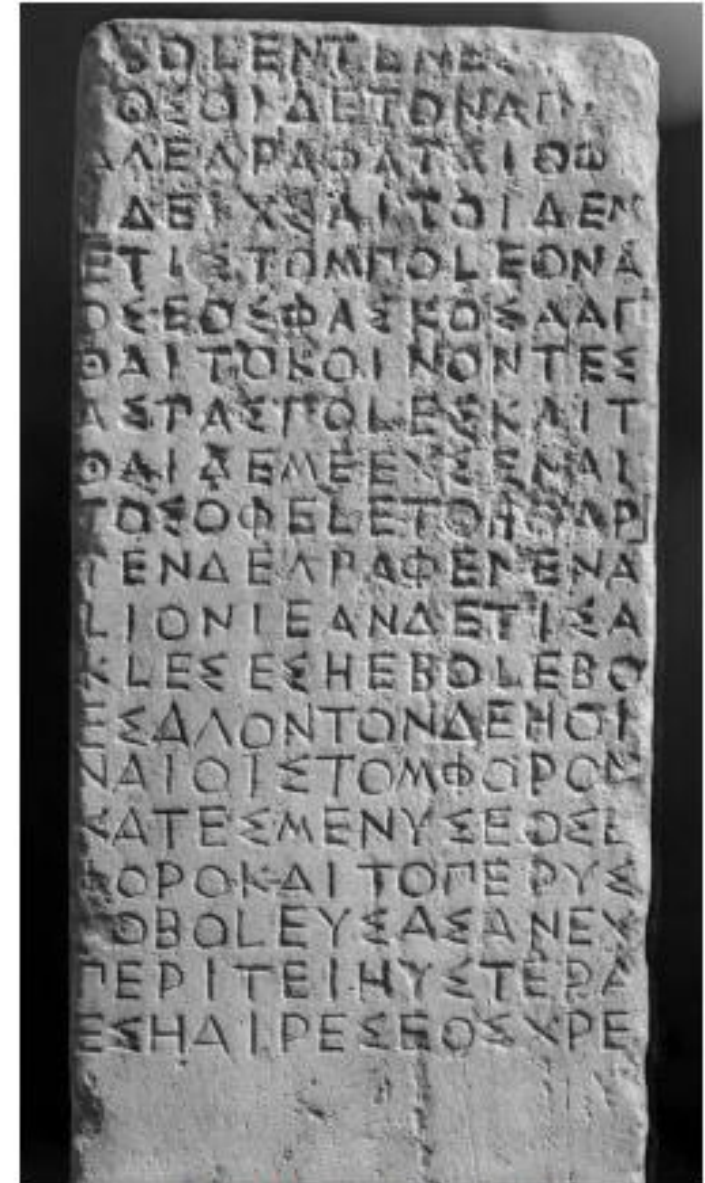


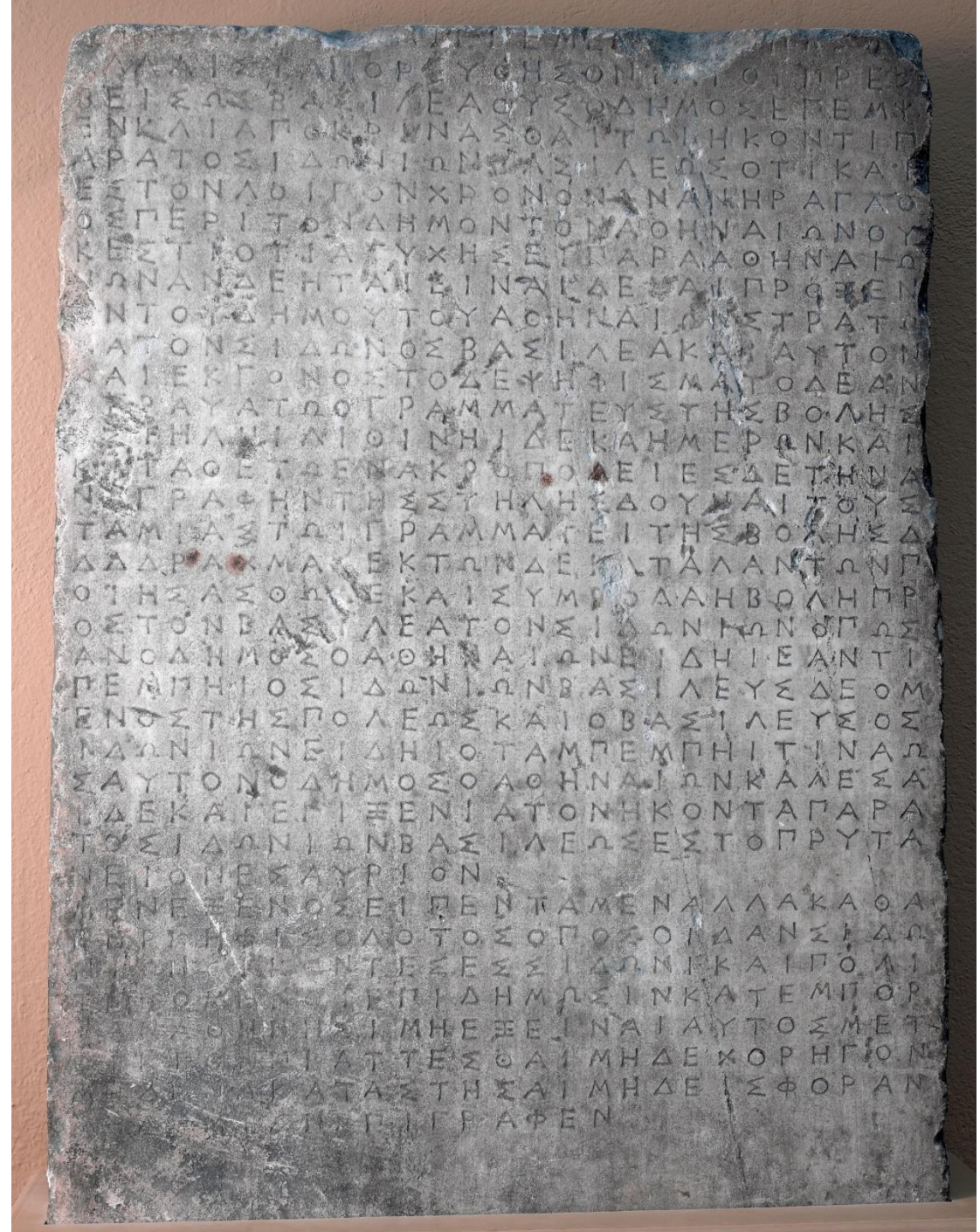
Fig. 5. 5 e © Trustees of the British Museum.

3. Interpreting ancient Athenian inscriptions: (a) words

The decree of the Athenians for Strato the King of Sidon (modern Lebanon)

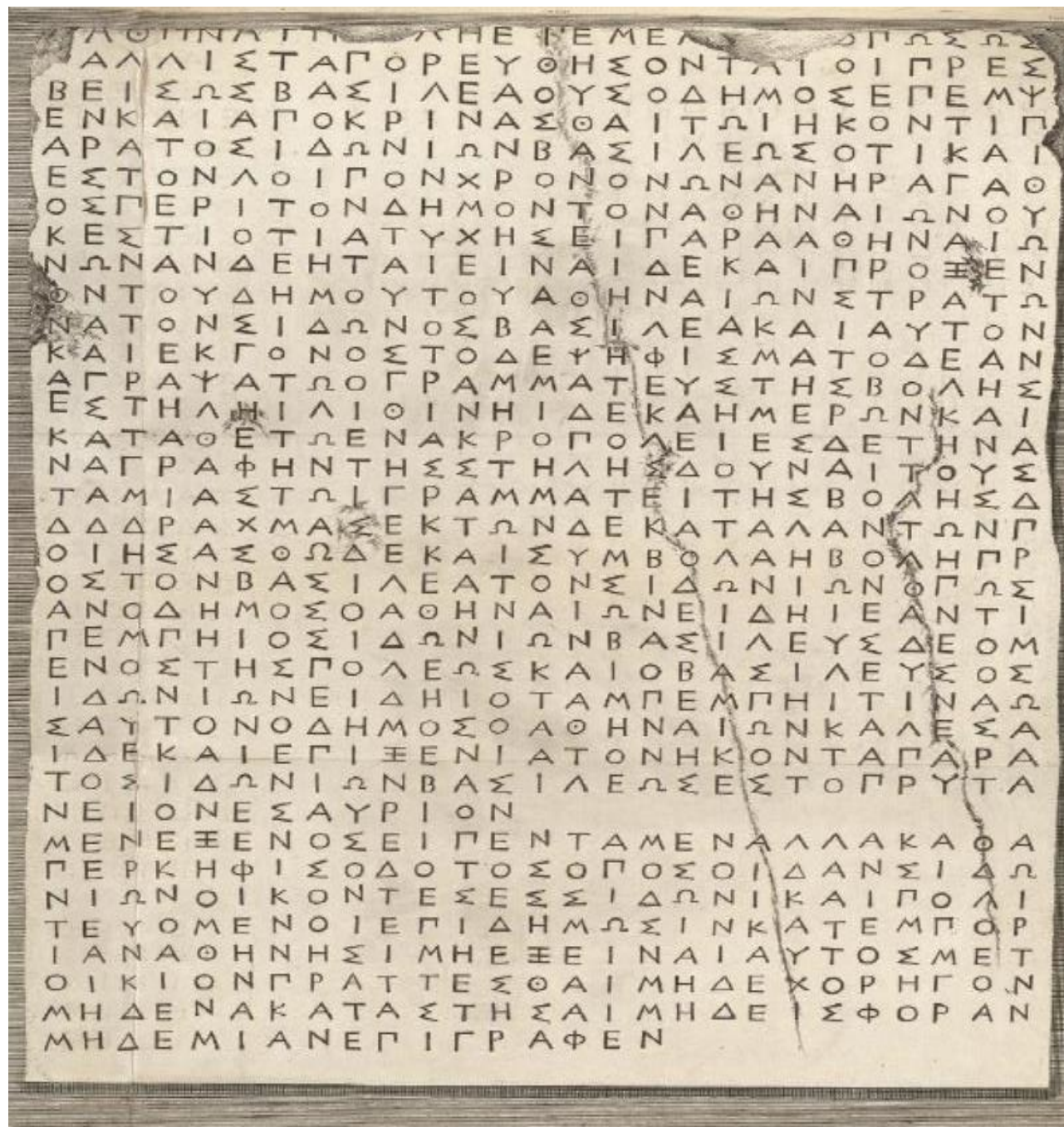
In this inscription the Athenians grant honours including **proxeny** to Strato

[AIUK 11 \(Ashmolean Museum, Oxford\) no. 1](#)



This is an accurate drawing of the same inscription.

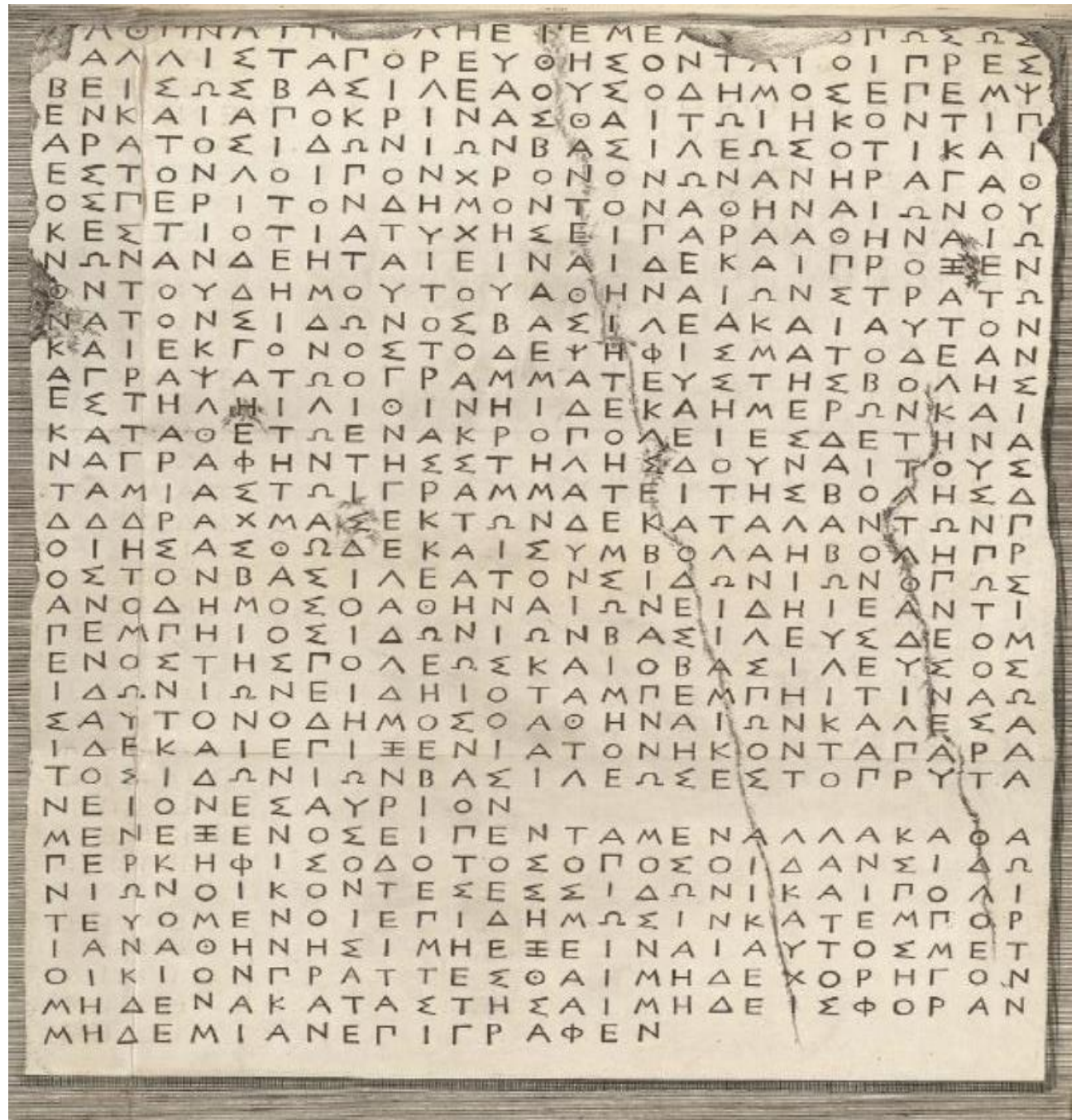
What do you notice about the layout of the words/letters?



This is an accurate drawing of the same inscription.






What do you notice about the layout of the words/letters?

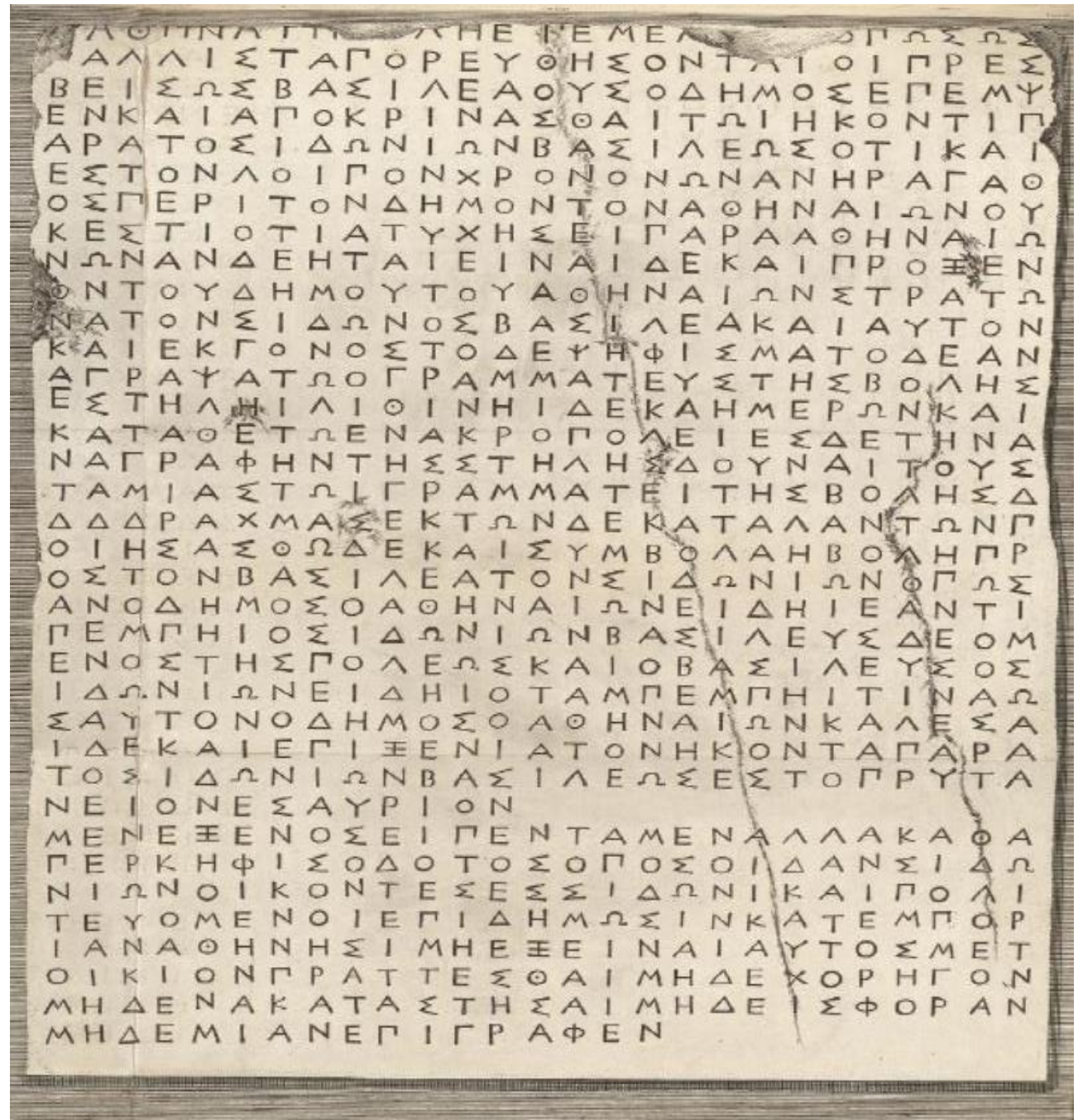
The checkerboard layout is known as 'stoichedon'.



Some letters are the same as English.

Others are different:

-  = D (*delta*)
-  = E (*eta*)
-  = TH (*theta*)
-  = S (*sigma*)
-  = O (*omega*)



Writing Activity

Have a go at copying out the following words in Greek:

ΔΗΜΟΣ

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑΙ

ΔΕΚΑ

Wordsearch Activity

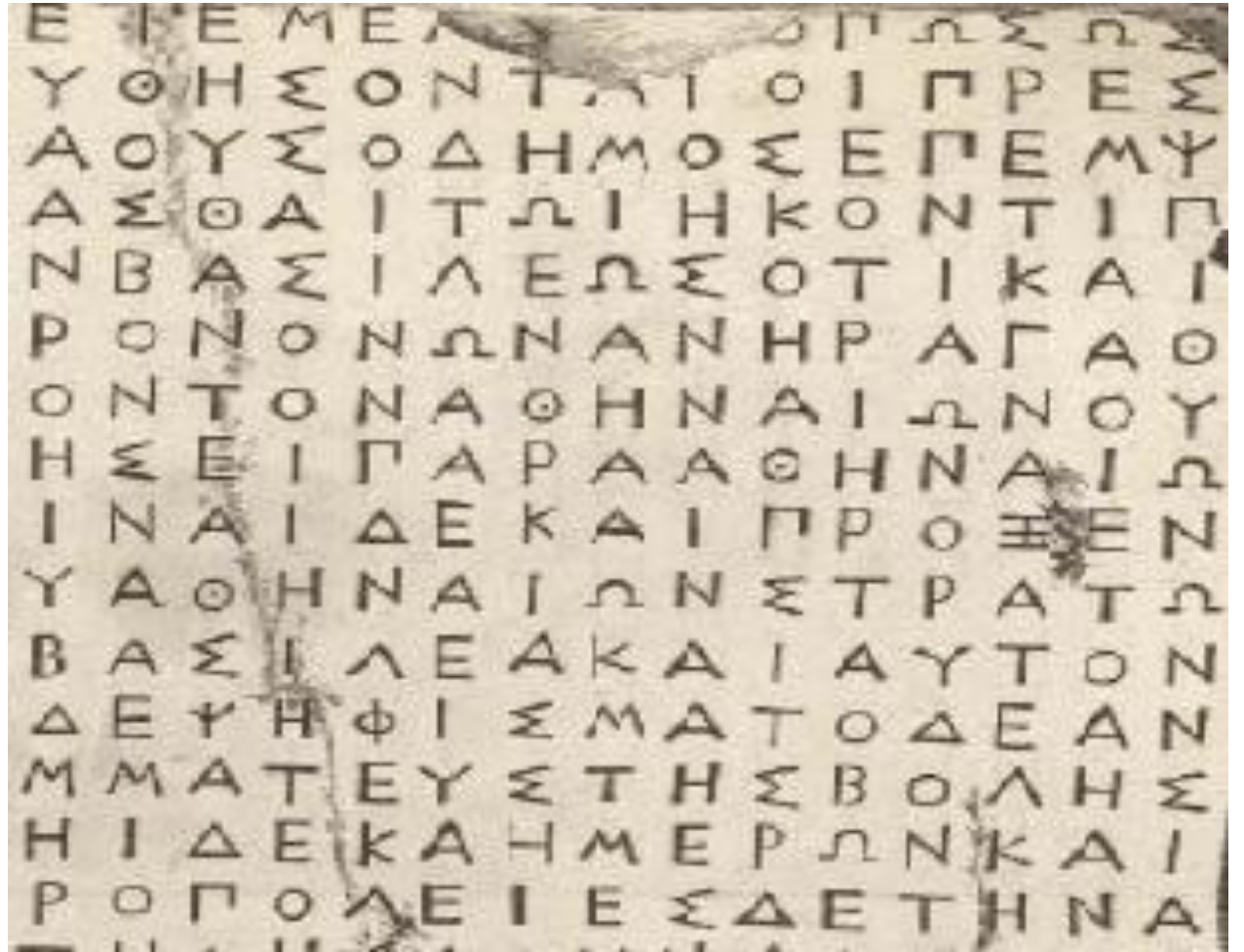
Spot the following words in Greek:

ΔΗΜΟΣ

ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑΙ

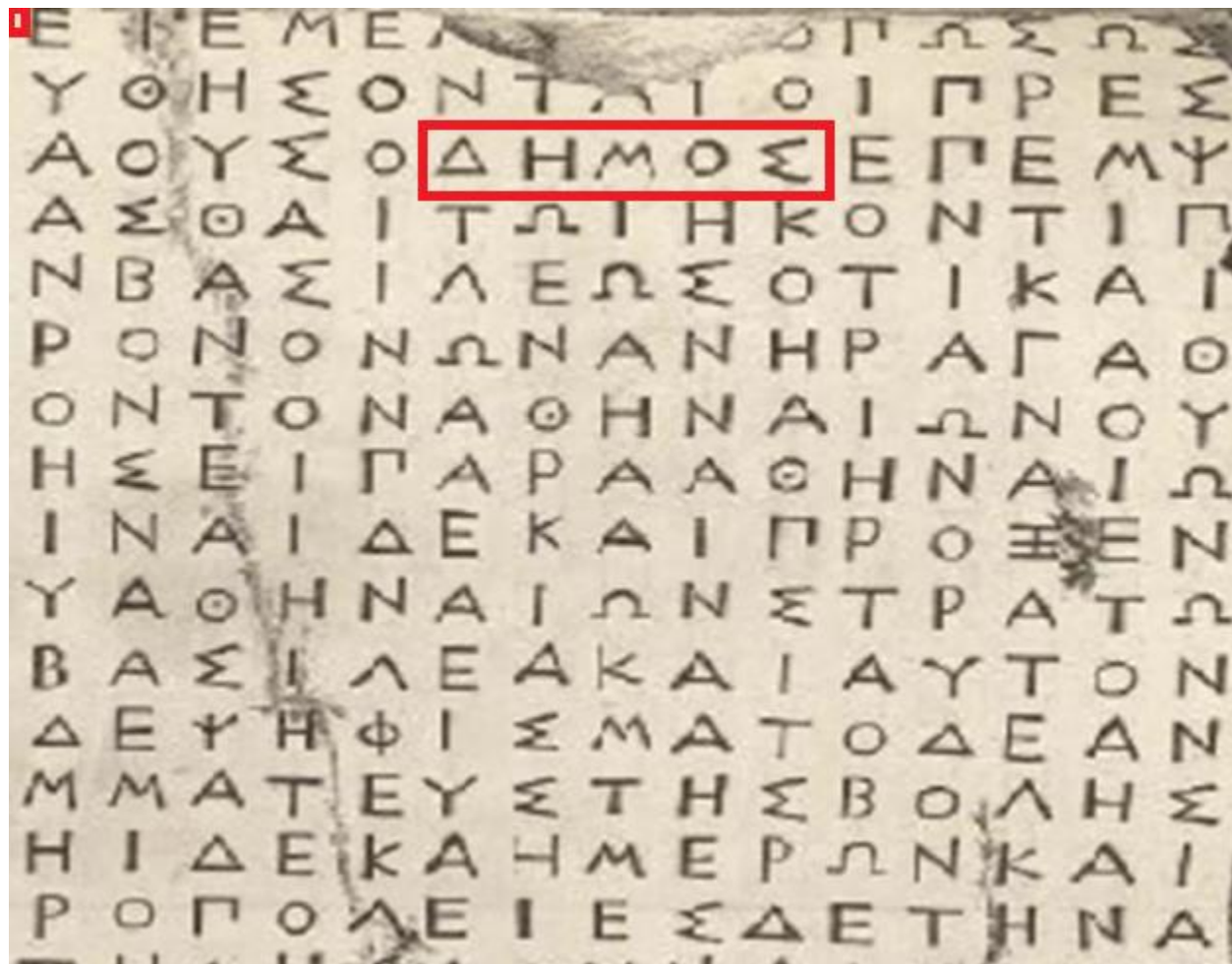
ΔΕΚΑ



Answers follow...

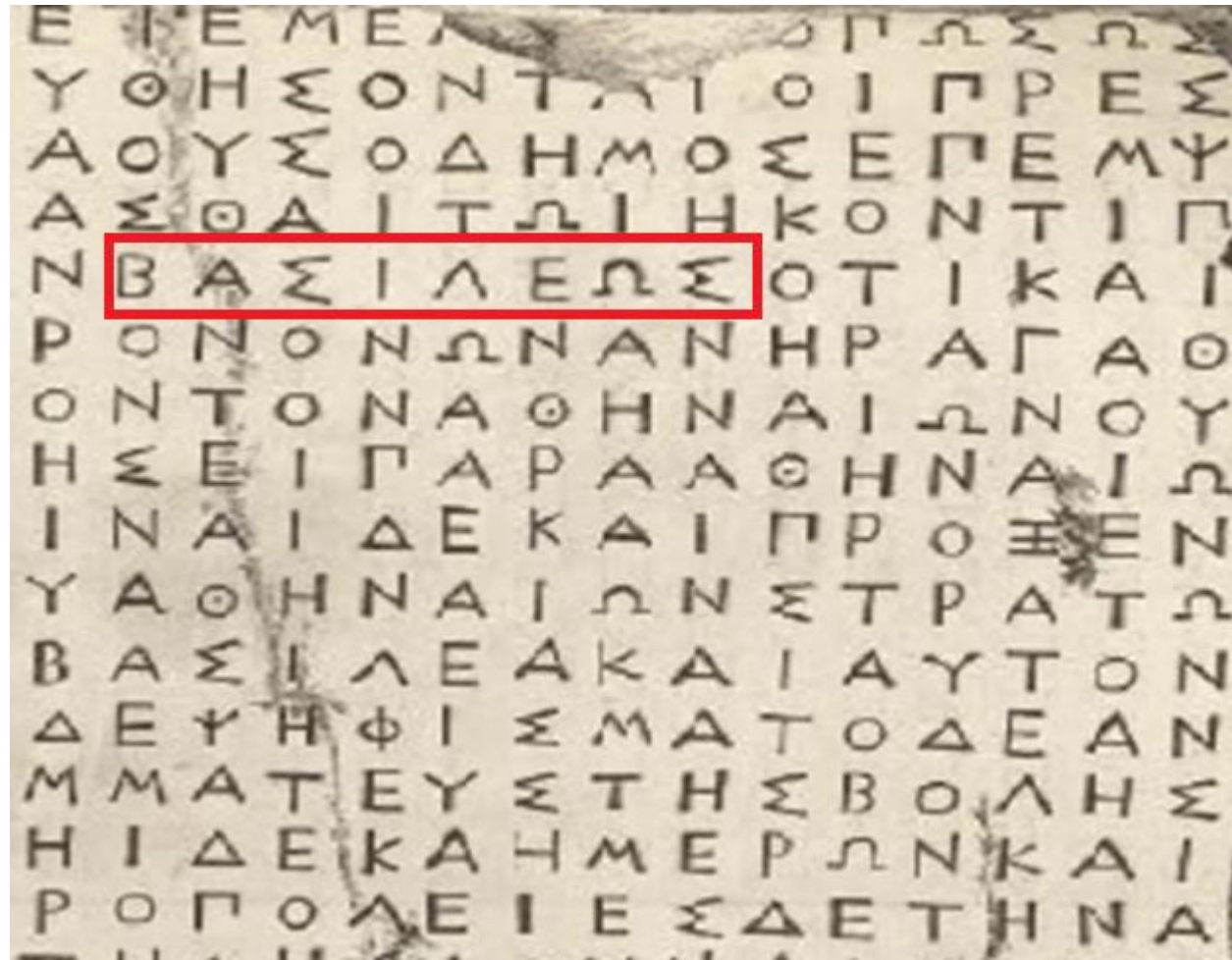
ΔΗΜΟΣ

DEMOS = The People (compare the word DEMOCRACY)



ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ

BASILEOS = (Of) The King



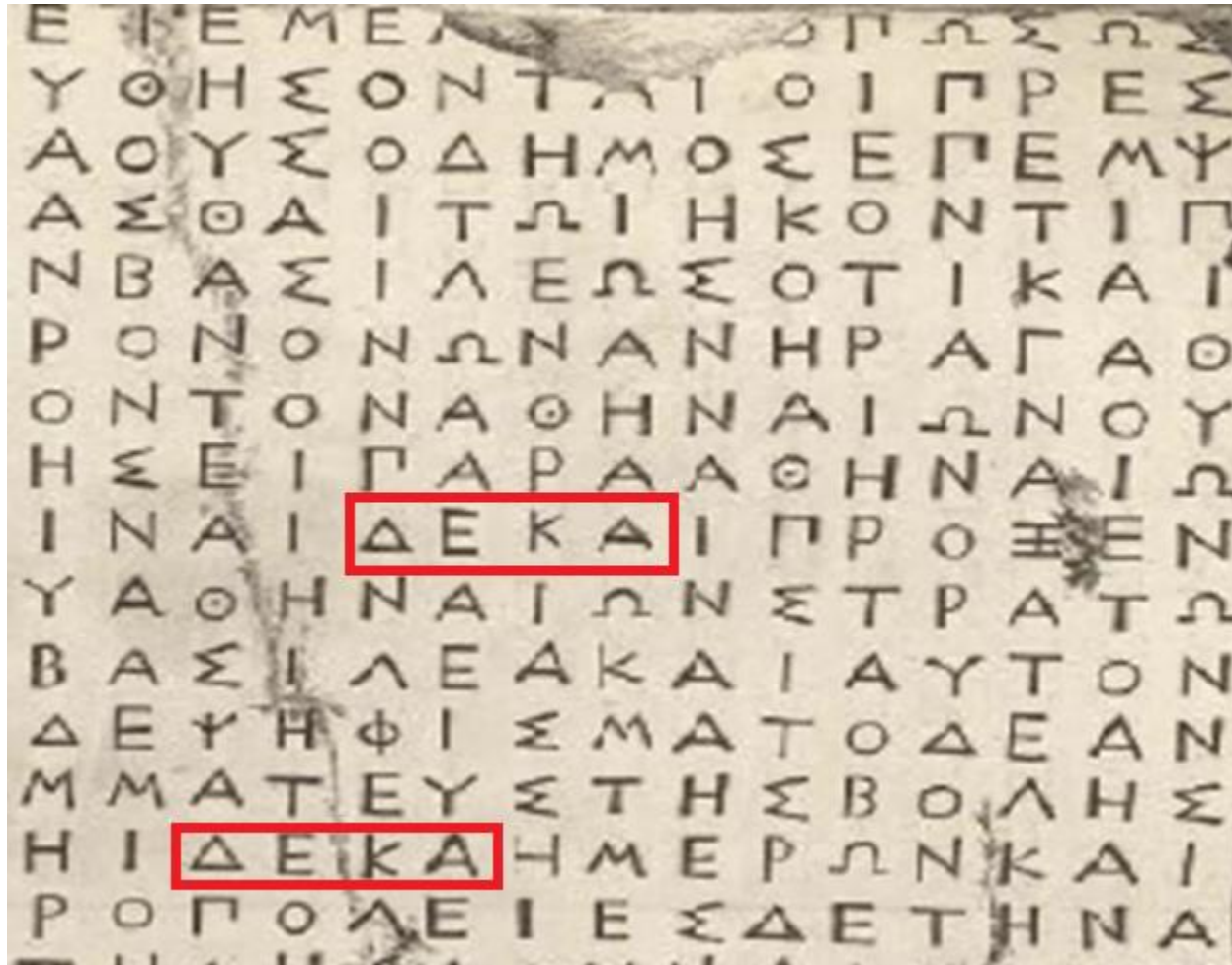
ΑΘΗΝΑΙ

Athenai = Athens

ΕΦΕΜΕΛ... ΟΠΩΣ...
ΥΟΗΣΟΝΤΑΙ ΟΙ ΠΡΕΜΜ
ΑΟΥΣΟΔΗΜΟΜΕΠΕΜΥ
ΑΣΘΑΙΤΩΙΗΚΟΝΤΙΠ
ΝΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣΟΤΙΚΑΙ
ΡΟΝΟΝΩΝΑΝΗΡΑΓΑΘ
ΟΝΤΟΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΩΝΟΥ
ΗΜΕΙΓΑΡΑΑΘΗΝΑΙΩ
ΙΝΑΙΔΕΚΑΙΠΡΟΞΕΝ
ΥΑΘΗΝΑΙΩΝΕΤΡΑΤΩ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΑΚΑΙΑΥΤΟΝ
ΔΕΥΗΦΙΣΜΑΤΟΔΕΑΝ
ΜΜΑΤΕΥΕΤΗΣΒΟΛΗΣ
ΗΙΔΕΚΑΗΜΕΡΩΝΚΑΙ
ΡΟΠΟΛΕΙΕΣΔΕΤΗΝΑ

Δ Ε Κ Α

DEKA = Ten (Compare the word
DECATHLON)



Reading ancient Athenian inscriptions: (b)
numbers

Ancient Greeks had different systems of writing numbers. We will look at the Athenian 'acrophonic' system.

'Acrophonic' means that the symbols for the numerals come from the first letter of the number

∟	Δ	Η	Χ	Μ
Pente	Deka	Hekaton	Khilioi	Murioi
Πεντε	Δεκα	Ηεκατον	Χιλιοι	Μυριοι
5	10	100	1000	10000

With the exception of the symbol for '1':

				∟	∟	∟	∟	∟	Δ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 - 10 in Greek acrophonic numbers									

Bigger numbers









In the Roman system, bigger numbers were made using an additive system.

In Latin, 8 is VIII, the symbol for five followed by three symbols for one.

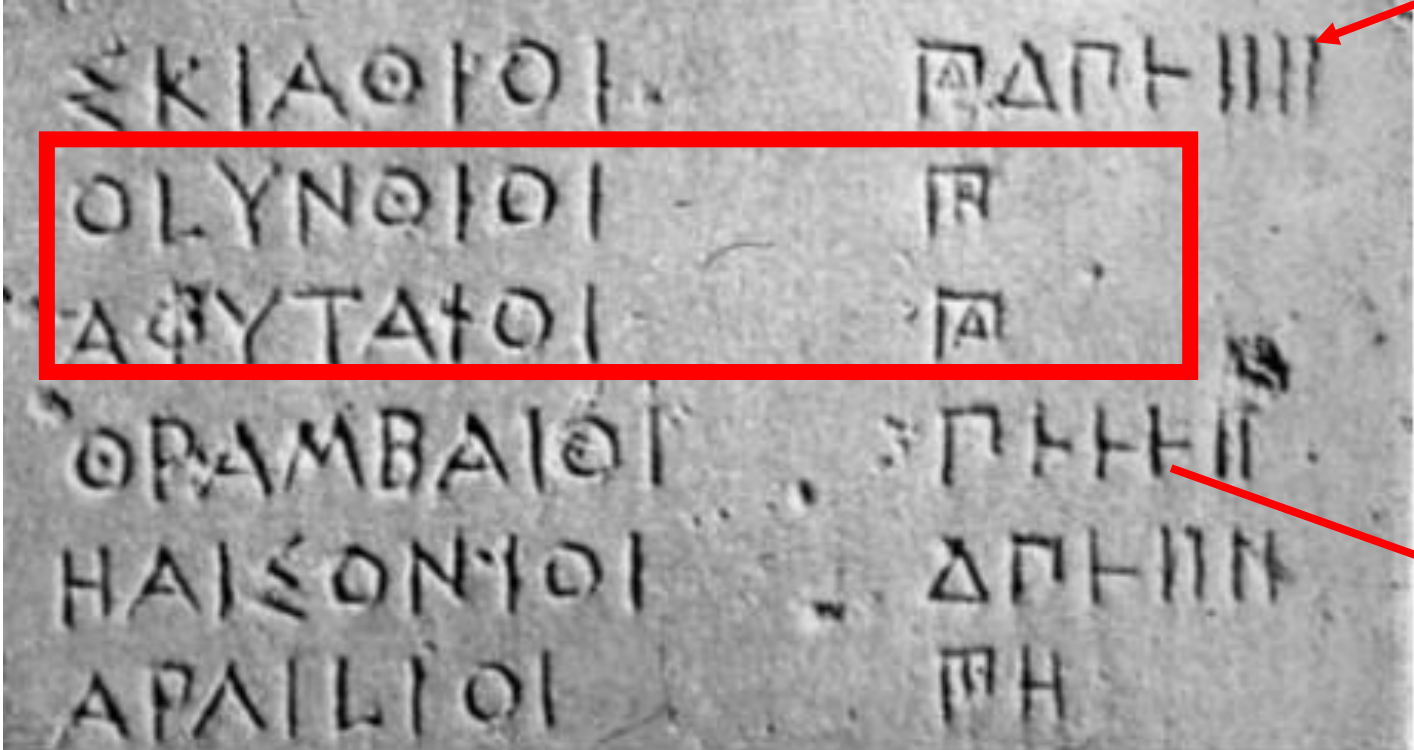
In Greek:

- 8 is ΠΙΙΙ
- 1322 = ΧΗΗΗΔΔΙΙ

BUT: the system had symbols for 50, 500, 5000, and 50000: not new characters but composite symbols made from 5 and the symbols for 10, 100, 1000, 10000 respectively. Here is how the composites were formed:

							
10	50	100	500	1000	5000	10000	50000
Higher numbers and combining acrophonic numerals							

An ancient Athenian example.... From the Tribute Lists, accounting for the amount of tax received by Athena's treasury one year



Obol signs

Olynthioi: 500 (drachmas)

Aphytaioi: 50 (drachmas)

Drachma signs

Writing numbers Quiz

- How many meals do you eat a day (in acrophonic numerals)?
- How many times have Liverpool won the FA Cup (in acrophonic numerals)? (Have a guess if you don't know!)
- How many hours are there in a day (in acrophonic numerals)?
- Can you write the year 2021 in ancient Greek acrophonic numbers?
- Can you write the year of your birth?

⋮	⋮⋮	⋮⋮⋮	⋮⋮⋮⋮	Ϟ	ϟ	Ϡ	ϡ	Ϣ	ϣ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 - 10 in Greek acrophonic numbers									

Ϟ	Δ	Η	Χ	Μ
Pente	Deka	Hekaton	Khilioi	Murioi
Πεντε	Δεκα	Ηεκατον	Χιλιοι	Μυριοι
5	10	100	1000	10000

Δ	Ϟ	Η	Ϟ	Χ	Ϟ	Μ	Ϟ
10	50	100	500	1000	5000	10000	50000
Higher numbers and combining acrophonic numerals							

Writing numbers

- How many meals do you eat a day (in acrophonic numerals)?
- How many times have Liverpool won the FA Cup (in acrophonic numerals)?
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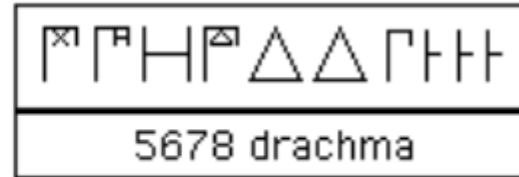
- III (?)
- ΠII (SEVEN)
- ΔΔIIII (24 hours)
- ΧΧΔΔΙ (2021)

Even more about Greek numbers!

Ι	ΙΙ	ΙΙΙ	ΙΙΙΙ	Ϛ	ϛ	Ϝ	ϝ	Ϟ	ϟ
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ΔϚ	ΔΔ	Ϛϛ	Η	Ϛϛ	Χ	Ϛϛ	Μ	Ϛϛ	Ϟ
15	20	50	100	500	1,000	5,000	10,000	50,000	¼
Ϟ	Ϛ	Ϛϛ	Δ	Ϛϛ	Η	Ϛϛ	Χ	Ϛϛ	Ϛϛ
½	one drachma	five talents	ten talents	50 talents	100 talents	500 talents	1,000 talents	5,000 talents	five staters
Δ	Ϛϛ	Η	Ϛϛ	Χ	Μ	Ϛϛ	Α		
ten staters	50 staters	100 staters	500 staters	1,000 staters	10,000 staters	50,000 staters	ten minas		

Even more: currency symbols: drachmas, Talents, Obols

5678 drachmas would be written in this way:



Athenian currency:

6 obols = 1 Drachma

6000 Drachmai = 1 Talent

3807 talents would be written as:



3807 drachmas and 3 obols:



Interpreting ancient Athenian inscriptions: (c) Images on funerary monuments in Scotland and Cheshire



Interpreting ancient Athenian inscriptions: (c) images.



Sirens on funerary monuments in Newcastle (left) and Oxford (right).



Sirens luring individuals to their fate: in *Odyssey* 12 Odysseus had himself bound to the mast of his ship so that his response to the seductive song of the sirens was restricted (*Od.* 12.184-91).

Reading ancient Athenian inscriptions: (c) images. Athena, the Personified Athenian Demos (People), Me[ne]laos (now in Cambridge)



AIUK 3 (Cambridge)
no. 2

Reading ancient Athenian inscriptions: (c) images.
Athena, the Personified Athenian Demos
(People), **Me[ne]laos** (now in Cambridge)



Reading ancient Athenian inscriptions: (c) images.
Rider (Polyaratos of Alopeke) in Lincolnshire on a
dedication.

Why would
someone
depict
themselves on
horseback?



Dedication by trainers of cadets celebrating victory at Eleusis, AD 158/59: **who might this represent? (How do we explain the figure and his pose?) Why would cadets depict him on their celebratory dedication?**

AIUK 11 (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford) no. 7

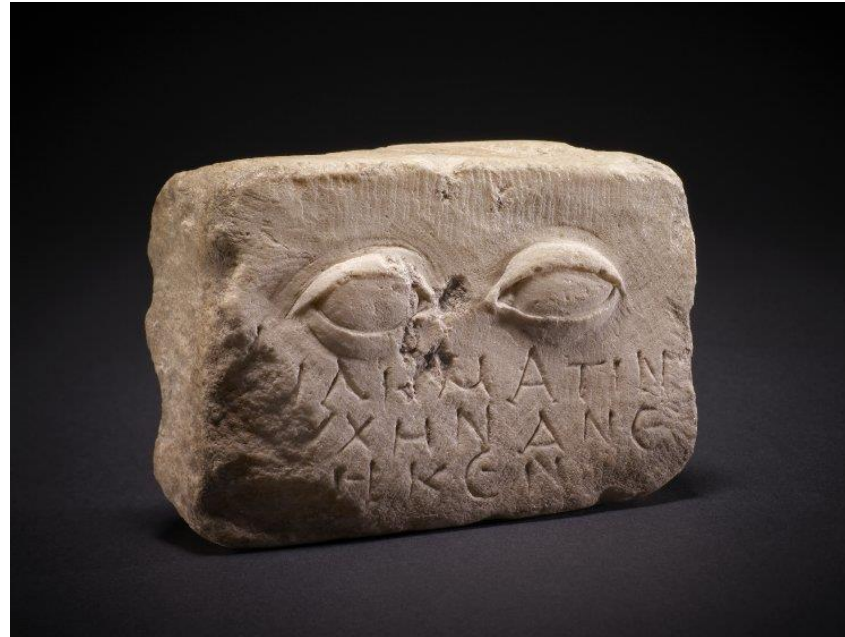


4. Athenian inscriptions and the history of medicine

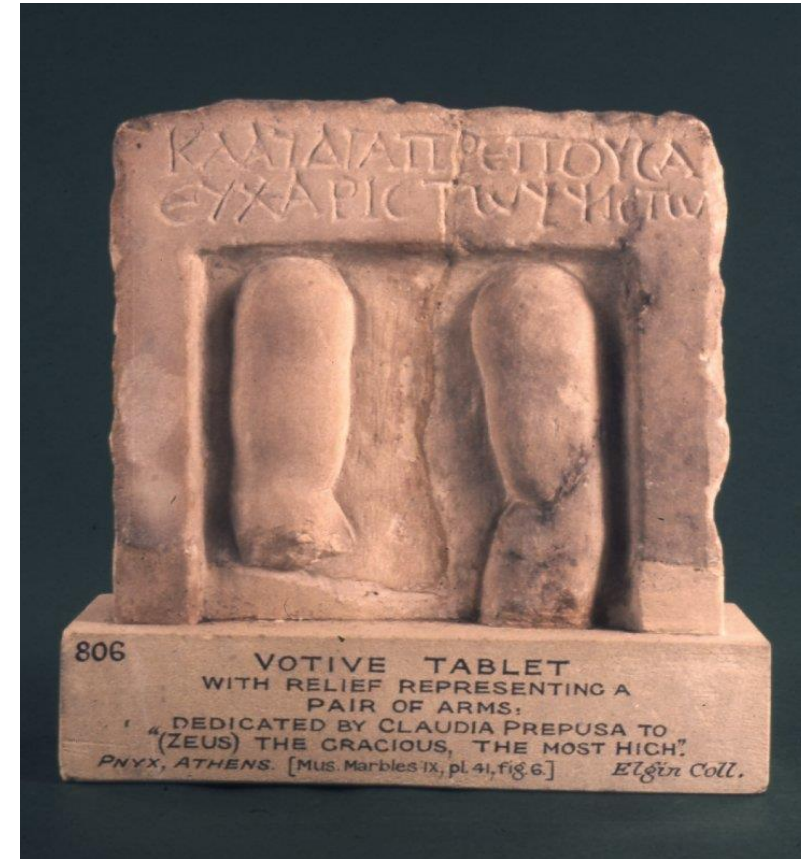
Ancient medicine: science and religion



Some dedications from the Pnyx Hill in Athens (now at the British Museum). **What do you think they were for?**



Above: 'Philematin set up this
vow'

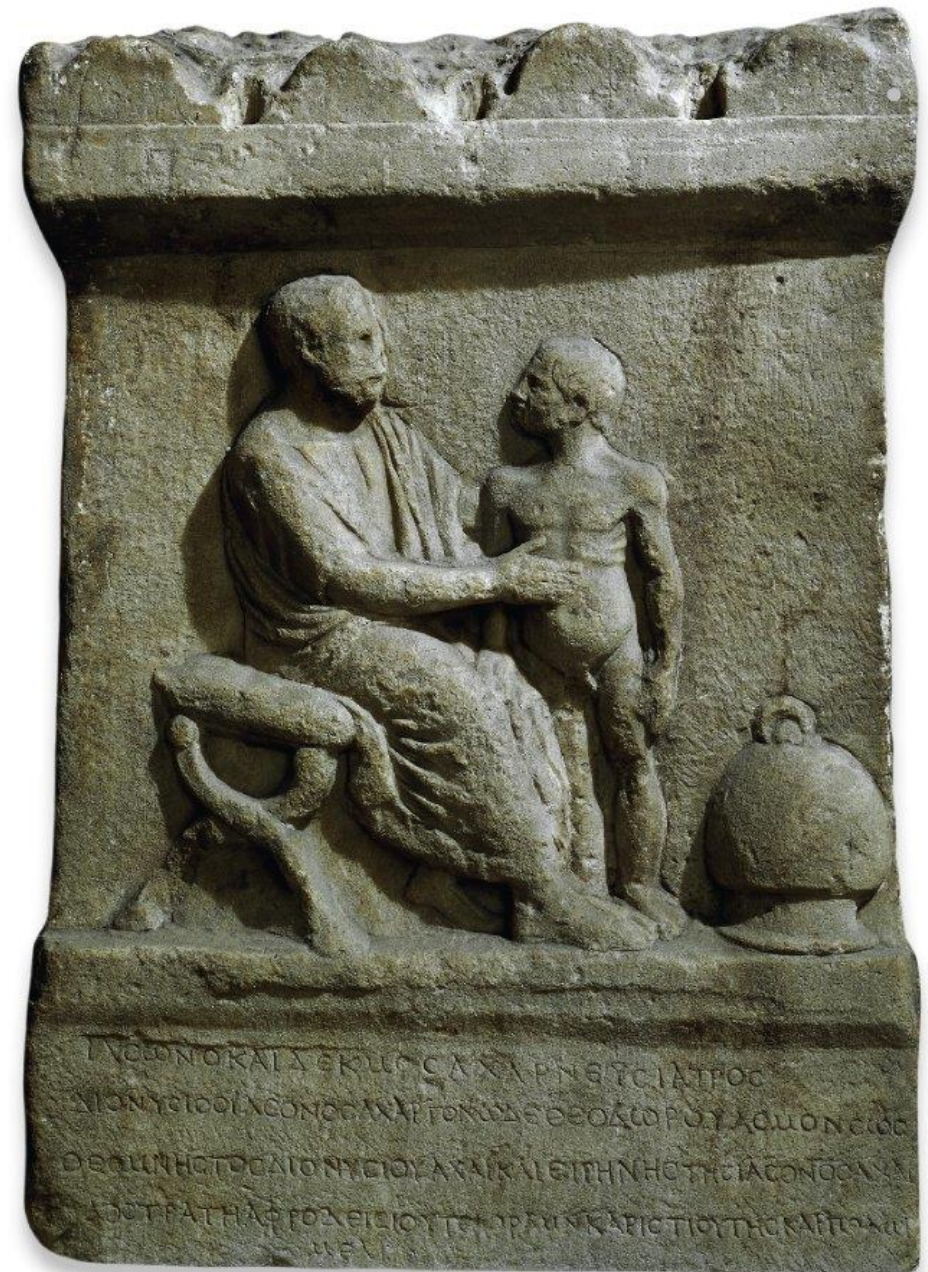


An Athenian monument from the British Museum.

What do you notice here? How can you explain the depiction?



Jason, known also as Dekmos, of Acharnai, a doctor. Dionysios son of Jason of Acharnai, by birth son of Theodoros of Athmonon. Theomnestos son of Dionysios of Acharnai and of Eirene daughter of Jason of Acharnai. Philostrate daughter of Aphrodisios son of Aphrodisios of Rhamnous and of Aristion daughter of Karpodoros of Melite



Any questions?

- Peter.liddel@manchester.ac.uk
- Have a look at our [website](#) and [YouTube channel](#)...