

# Studying Greek History through Inscriptions

# The Epigraphy of Honour

The image features a white background with two decorative curved lines. One line is in the top right corner, curving from the top towards the right edge, with a color gradient from orange to blue. The other line is in the bottom left corner, curving from the bottom towards the left edge, with a color gradient from blue to orange.

# The inscriptions of honour

- Honorific decrees (subclass: proxeny decrees)

They often include a citation of the exact text to be inscribed on a stele or base

- Honorific inscriptions
- Honorific dedications

## WHICH WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE HONOURS?

“in order that the other citizens, seeing that some gratitude is imparted to such men, may be eager to adopt a similar attitude”

# The Epigraphy of Honour

## Who honours?

Cities

Leagues/confederacies

Demes

Associations

Family

# The identity of the honorands

- Citizens
- Non-citizens – benefactors
- Athletes, actors, doctors, philosophers etc.
- Hellenistic kings
- Roman magistrates
- Roman emperors
- An entire community

# Concepts justifying the award of honours/privileges

- bravery (*andragathia*)
- virtue (*arete*)
- justice (*dikaiosyne*)
- devotion (*eunoia*)
- piety (*eusebeia*)
- willingness (*prothymia*)
- welfare (*pronoia*)
- zeale (*spoude*)
- love of honour (*philotimia*)

# Honours/privileges

- Praise (*epainos*)
- Crowns (*stephanos*)
- Statues (*agalma, eikon, andrias*)
- Lunch at the *prytaneion* for foreigners (*sitisis*)
- Cultic/heroic honours (for kings, Roman magistrates, Roman emperors and in the late Hellenistic period some very prominent citizens)



- honorific seat in the theater (*proedria*)
- priority of trial (*prodikia*)
- inviolability and security (*asylia, asphaleia*)
- rights of citizenship
- *Proxenia*: an arrangement whereby a city honours a citizen of another city with this honorific title and some privileges (like *asylia, ateleia, eisplous/ekplous*) under the condition that in return for that he would host its citizens in his own city at his own expense.
- priority to oracles (*promanteia*)
- priority to sacrifices (*prothysia*)
- exemption from fees and taxations (*ateleia, aphorologesia*)
- right to acquire immovable property (*enktesis*)
- grazing rights (*epinomia*)
- free entrance to and exit from the city (*eisplous kai ekplous*)

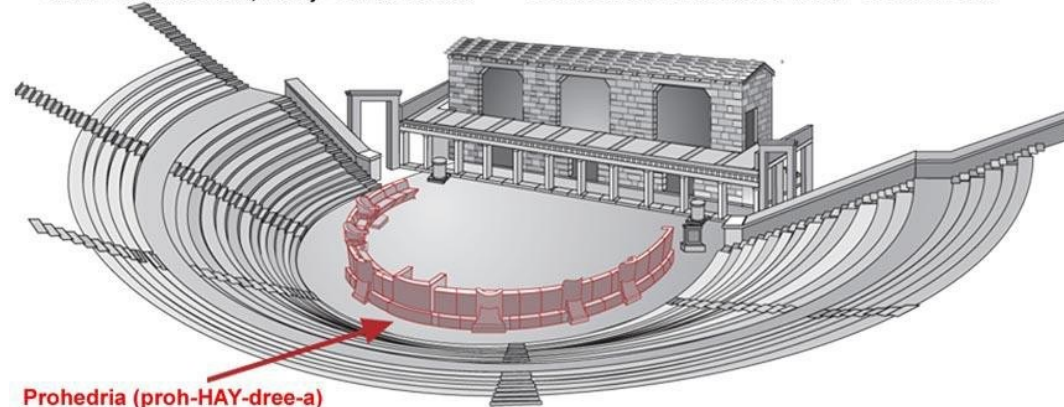
# Proedrie



Greek Theatre at Priene, Turkey - Prohedria Detail



Roman Theatre at Hierapolis, Turkey - Bisellium Detail



**Prohedria (proh-HAY-dree-a)**

(Greek: front seating; pl. prohedriai) Seat of honor directly in front of or around the orchestra; in the Greek theatre, prohedriai were honorific seats reserved particularly for priests, notably the priest of Dionysus, and dignitaries.

**Bisellium (bih-SELL-ee-um)**

Latin: seat of honor for two, but generally occupied by one; pl. bisellia) Ornate, centralized seats of honor in front of or surrounding the orchestra in the Roman theatre; awarded for municipal services in provinces.

# Inscribed crowns



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## **Right of property**

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*FDelphes III 1, 33, Delphi, ca. 235 BC*

(The city of) Delphi gave to Kleukritos, son of Perikles, from Mantinea, to him and to his descendants, *proxenia, promanteia, proedria, prodikia, asyilia, ateleia* from all and all the other (privileges) that they give to the other *proxenoi*.  
When archon was Eudokos and members of the council Alkamenes, Lyson, Aischriondas.

# Honours for Asandros of Macedon, Athens, 314/3 BC

## *IG II<sup>2</sup> 450*

- **Fragment a**

In the archonship of Nikodoros , in the sixth prytany, of Kekropis; on the eleventh of Gamelion, the twenty-sixth of the prytany. Assembly. Of the presiding committee Aristokrates son of Aristodemos of Oinoe was putting to the vote and his fellow presiding committee members. Thrasykles son of Nausikrates of Thria proposed: the People shall decide **to praise Asandros** son of Agathon of Macedon, because he is a good man individually towards Athenians who come to his own country, and collectively towards the Athenian People, and on visiting the city he provided his own ships and soldiers to the Athenians to meet their needs. . .

- **Fragment b**

. . . returned them to their own land at his own expense; and **to grant him also dining rights in the city hall and priority seating in all the city's competitions, and for his eldest descendant; and he shall be permitted to set up a bronze likeness of himself on horseback in the Agora wherever he wishes except beside Harmodios and Aristogeiton.**

# Honours for the doctor Pheidias, Athens, 304/3 BC

## IG II<sup>2</sup> 483

- In the archonship of Pherekles, in the seventh prytany, held by the tribe Oineis, to which Epicharinos son of Demochares of the deme of Gargettos was secretary; on the twenty-second day of Gamelion, the twenty-ninth day of the prytany; assembly; of the presiding committee Phylaxias son of Phanios of the deme of Anagyrous was putting to the vote and fellow members of the presiding committee; Resolved by the People; Euboulides son of Euboulos of the deme of Eleusis proposed; since the doctor Pheidias always acted in the interests of the people of Athens and treated with love of honours any Athenian in need and now has offered himself to be a public doctor without compensation, demonstrating the good will which he has towards the city, for the good fortune be it resolved by the People **to praise Pheidias**, son of Apollonios of Rhodes of his good will and professional care that he continually shows to the Athenian People and **to crown him with an olive wreath**. The prytany secretary shall **inscribe this decree on a stone stele and set it up in the sanctuary of Asklepios**.



## Honours by the deme of Aixone for two choregoi, Glyfada, 313/2 BC, SEG 36, 186

- Gods. As proposed by Glaukides son of Sosippos; since the choregoi Auteas son of Autokles, and Philoxenides son of Philippos, well and honourably served in the choregia: it is resolved by the demesmen to crown each of them with a golden crown worth 100 drachmas in the theatre during the comedies *in the year* after Theophrastos was archon, in order that the other choregoi who will serve in the choregia may seek honour too; and that the demarch Hegesilaos and the treasurers shall also give to them 10 drachmas for a sacrifice; and that the treasurers shall engrave this resolution on a stone stele and erect it in the theatre, in order that the Aixonians may always stage the Dionysia in the best manner possible.



**Honorific decrees including verbatim the text of an  
honorific inscription and the announcement of the  
honours**

# Kolophon honours Menippos, Klaros/Ionia, c. 120-110 B.C., *SEG* 39, 1244

Therefore, **so that the council and people may be seen to honour good men appropriately for the benefits that they have received**, it is resolved by the council and the people **to praise** Menippos son of Apollonides, by birth son of Eumedes, of the Prometheos deme and the Seleukis tribe, **and to crown** him with a crown of gold and with **a golden statue** on account of his virtue and his righteousness towards the people; and that **the honours shall always be announced in the contests at the Dionysia and the Klaria festivals**, and that the prytanis shall take care of the announcement at the Dionysia and the agonothete shall take care of it at the Klaria in the war-dance {pyrrhikē} and the gymnastic contests; and the herald shall proclaim as follows: **'The people crowns Menippos son of Apollonides, by birth son of Eumedes, with a crown of gold and a golden statue, who is our benefactor and zealous concerning the state and virtuous, and who led his fatherland in critical times.'**

- It is resolved to **praise** him also because, seeing that the city is in difficult circumstances, upon receiving this honour from the people and acting in accordance with his previously mentioned behaviour, **he has offered to pay the cost incurred in erecting the statue from his own resources, although the people would have willingly covered the cost on account of its zeal towards Menippos.** He shall be **invited to privileged seating at the games** that the city holds whenever the other benefactors are invited; and he shall be given **meals in the prytaneion**; and his statue shall be set up in the temple of Apollo Klarios in the place indicated by the treasurer, and the stated announcement shall be **inscribed** on it; and a stele containing this decree shall be **placed** next to it.

## Decree issued by the *hypostoloi* in honour of Kriton, Demetrias/Thessaly, ca. 117 BC, IG IX 2, 1107b

The *hypostoloi* proposed: Whereas Kr[iton, son of Kriton], appointed by the [city] as a priest of Sarapis, conducted himself with respect to the Gods in a manner worthy of both his own virtue and of the city and without falling short of zeal and generosity towards the *therapeutai* (he) continuously made generous and zealous [expenses]. And wanting to make his good [intensi]on be remembered by the coming generations, he offered from his own resources to both the worship of the gods and to the association of the *hypostoloi* a thousand silver drachmas, so that the annual meeting of the *hypostoloi* can be held and by [spending] the interest the honours for the gods may be strengthened even further and the *hypostoloi* may enjoy the appropriate benevolence for ever. For these reasons, it shall be resolved by the *hypostoloi* to crown Kriton, son of Kriton, **with a gold crown** and (to honour him) with a **painted image** and **to allow him to share for life all the privileges granted by the *hypostoloi* and to [crown] him perpetually in all meetings of the *hypostoloi* in the sanctuary**. And (it shall be resolved) to dedicate this decree and the crown in the most prominent place of the Sarapieion, where also **his image shall be placed, with the following inscription: “the *hypostoloi* (honour) Kriton, son of Kriton, the priest of Sarapis, for his kindness and goodwill towards themselves and for his piety towards the divinity”**.

**HONORIFIC INSCRIPTIONS /  
TITULI HONORARII**

**HONORIFIC DEDICATIONS**

## *Lindos II 383, Lindos, c. 10 BC*

Lindioi honoured Euphragoras, son of Galestes, Ladarmios with a praise, a golden crown and a bronze statue, having given him the public announcement of the honours forever, because of his virtue and the devotion that he has towards the people of the Lindians.

Hekaton, son of Hekaton, Kruasseus, made (the statue)



Λίνδιοι ἐτείμασαν  
Εὐφραγόραν Γαλέστευς Λαδάρμιον  
ἐπαίνωι, χρυσέωι στεφάνωι καὶ εἰκόνι  
χαλκέᾳ, δεδώκαντι δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ ἀναγόρευ-  
5 σιν τᾶνδε τᾶν τειμᾶν εἰς τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον  
ἀρετᾶς ἔνεκα καὶ εὐνοίας ἂν ἔχων διετέ-  
λει εἰς τὸ πλῆθος τὸ Λινδίων.

vacat  
8 Ἐκάτων β Κρουασσεὺς ἐποίει.

**V. Kontorini, *Anekdotas Epigraphes Rhodou* II (1989) no. 74,  
Rhodos, 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD**

Leon, son of Pausanias

Myonides and Pausanias, sons of Pausanias, their brother,

Artemo, daughter of Aristarchos, his son,

Hierokles, son of Aristarchos, the son of her sister,

because he has won in a race with a young horse at the crown-contest of  
the Halieia,

(dedicated) to the gods.

Ploutarchos, son of Heliodoros, from Rhodos, made (it)

Λέοντα Πausανία

Μυωνίδης νnnν καὶ

Πausανίας Πausανία

τὸν ἀδελφὸν

5

[Ἄ]ρτεμὼ νν Ἀριστάρχου

τὸν υἱὸν

Ἰεροκλῆς νν Ἀριστάρχου

τὸν τᾶς ἀδελφᾶς υἱὸν

νικάσαντα κέλητι πωλικῶι

10

τὸν στεφανίταν ἀγῶν[α]

τῶν Ἀλιείων

vacat

θεοῖς.

[Πλούτα]ρχος Ἡλιοδώρου [Ῥόδιος ἐποίησε].

**E. Bernand, *Inscriptions grecques d'Alexandrie ptolémaïque* (2001) no. 24, Egypt, 221-204 BC**

For the king Ptolemaios and the queen Arsinoe, Gods Philopatores [i.e. who loved their father] (dedicated) to Anoubis, the older of the millers, the priest Amenneus, Pachos, Psapis, Papsorthis, Pathrous, Petosiris, Pesiechon.

ὑπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου  
καὶ βασιλίσης Ἀρσινόης,  
θεῶν Φιλοπατόρων, Ἀνούβει  
οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῶν ὄλυροκό-  
πων. ἱερεὺς Ἀμεννεύς.

5

Παχώς

Παψώβθης

Πετοσίρις.

Παᾶπις

Παθβοῦς

Πεσιέχων.

**HONORIFIC  
INSCRIPTIONS IN  
DELOS**



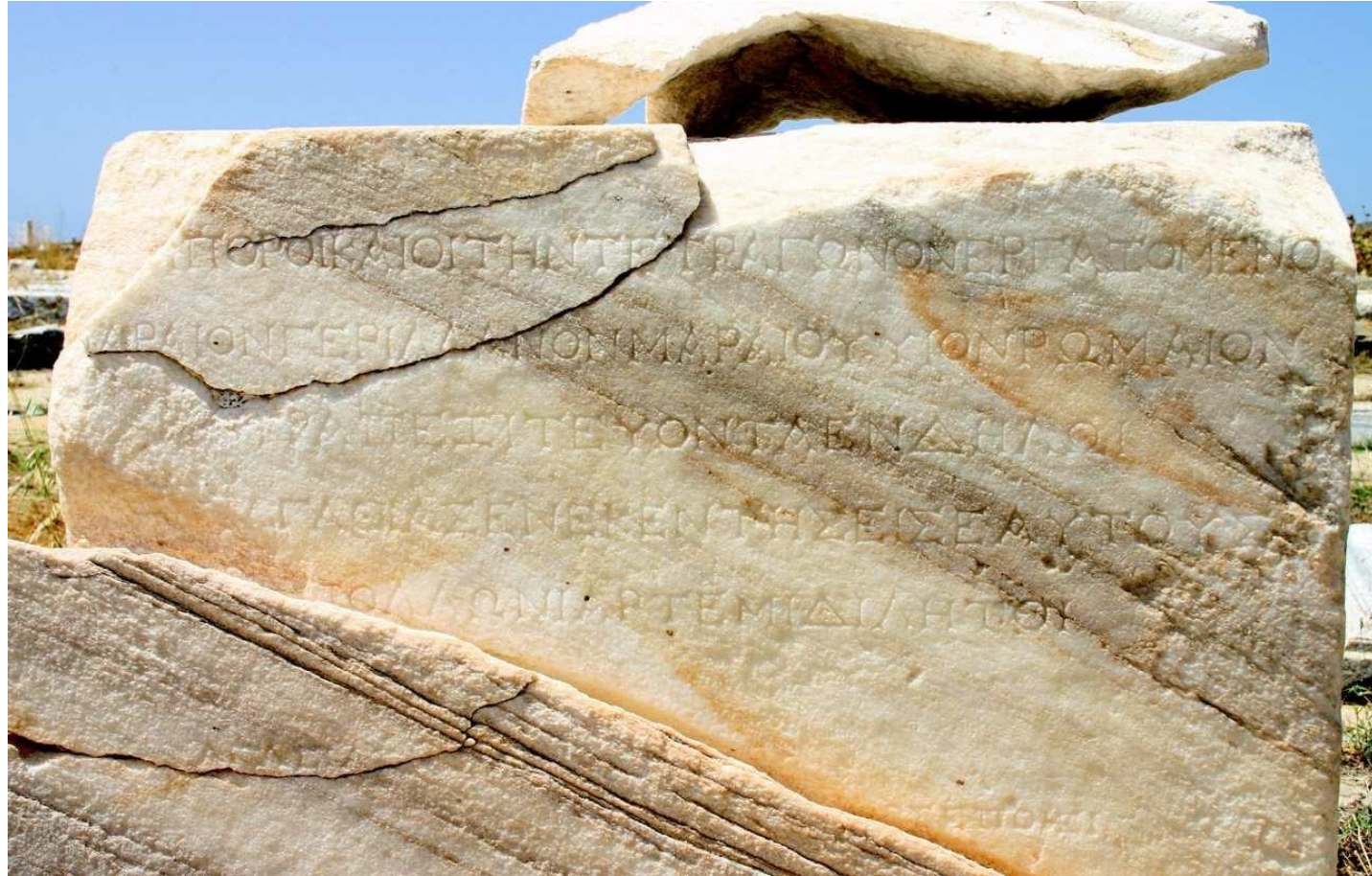
# Plan of Delos







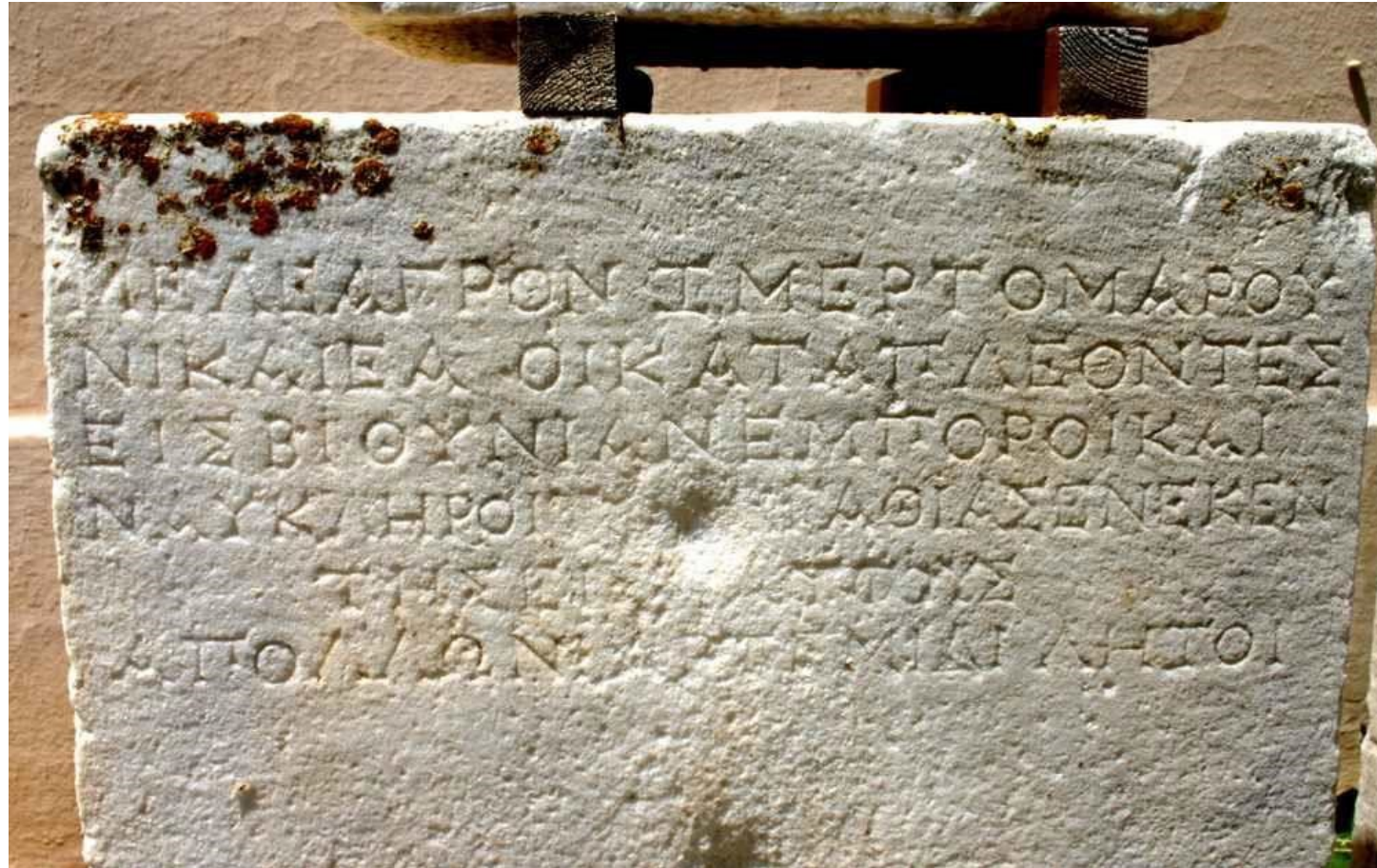
***I. Delos 1725, Delos, beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC***



The merchants (*emporoi*) and those working (*hoi ergazomenoi*) in the Rectangular Market **set this up for Maraesus Gerillanus son of Maraesus**, Roman working as a banker on Delos, **because of his generosity towards them**. This was dedicated to Apollo, Artemis, and Leto. Agasias son of Menophilos, Ephesian, made this.

οἱ ἔμποροι καὶ οἱ τὴν τετράγωνον  
ἐργαζόμενοι  
Μαραῖον Γεριλλανὸν Μαραίου  
υἱὸν Ῥωμαῖον  
τραπεζιτεύοντα ἐν Δήλῳ  
[καλοκ]ἀγαθίας ἕνεκεν τῆς εἰς  
ἑαυτούς,  
5 [Ἄ]πόλλωνι, Ἀρτέμιδι, Λητοῖ.  
Ἀγασίας Μ[ηνοφίλου Ἐφέσι]ος  
ἐποίει.

*I. Delos 1705, Delos, after 166 BC*



The merchants (*emporoi*) and shippers (*nauklēroi*) who sail into Bithynia honored Meleagros son of Zmertomaros from Nikaia, on account of the goodness he has shown towards them, dedicating this to Apollo, Artemis, and Leto.

Μελέαγρον Ζμερτομάρου

Νικαιέα οἱ καταπλέοντες

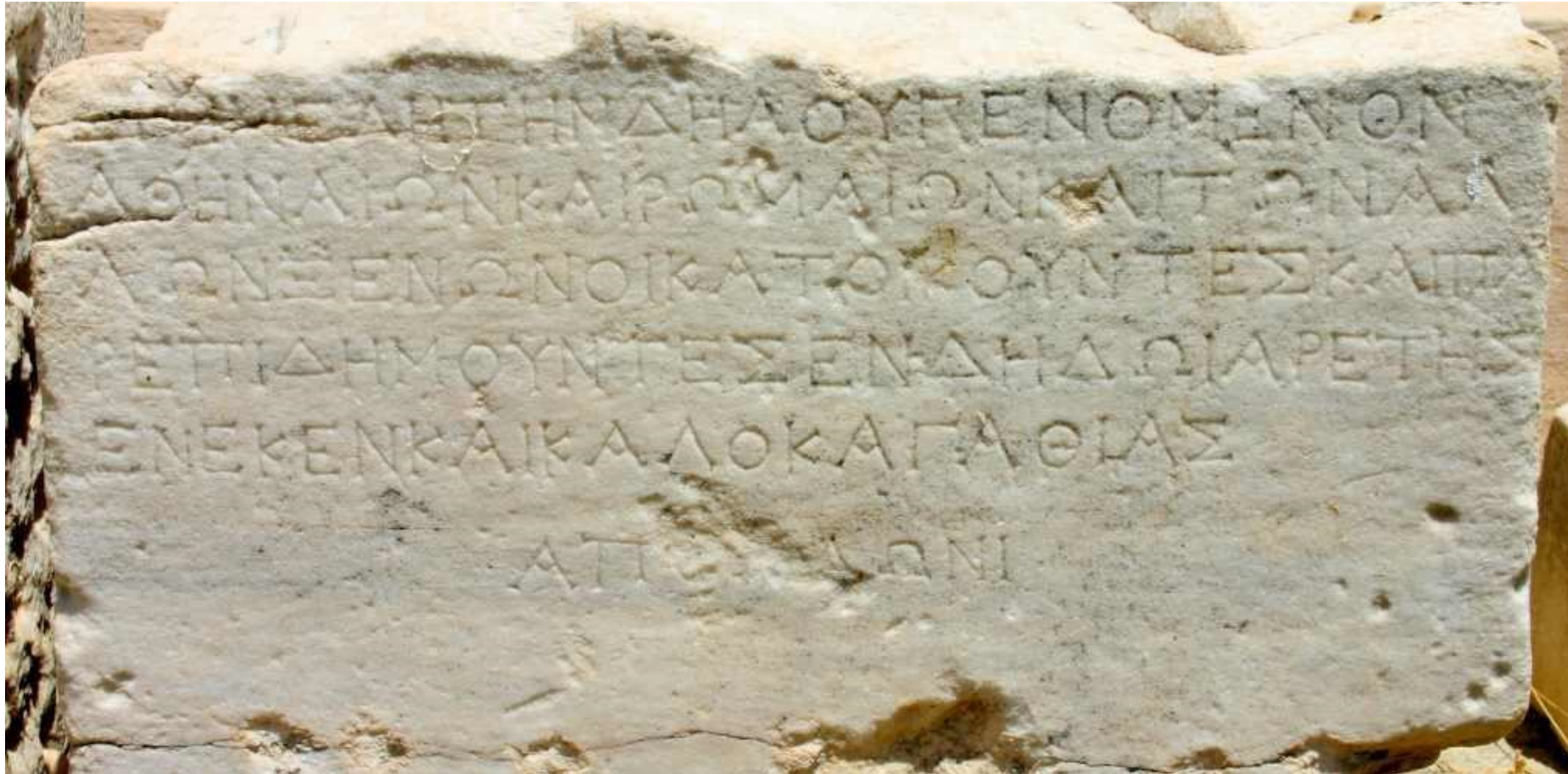
εἰς Βιθυνίαν ἔμποροι καὶ

ναύκληροι ...αγαθίας ἔνεκεν

5 τῆς εἰς ἑαυτούς,

Ἀπόλλωνι, Ἀρτέμιδι, Λητοῖ.

*I. Delos 1646, Delos, 126/5 BC*

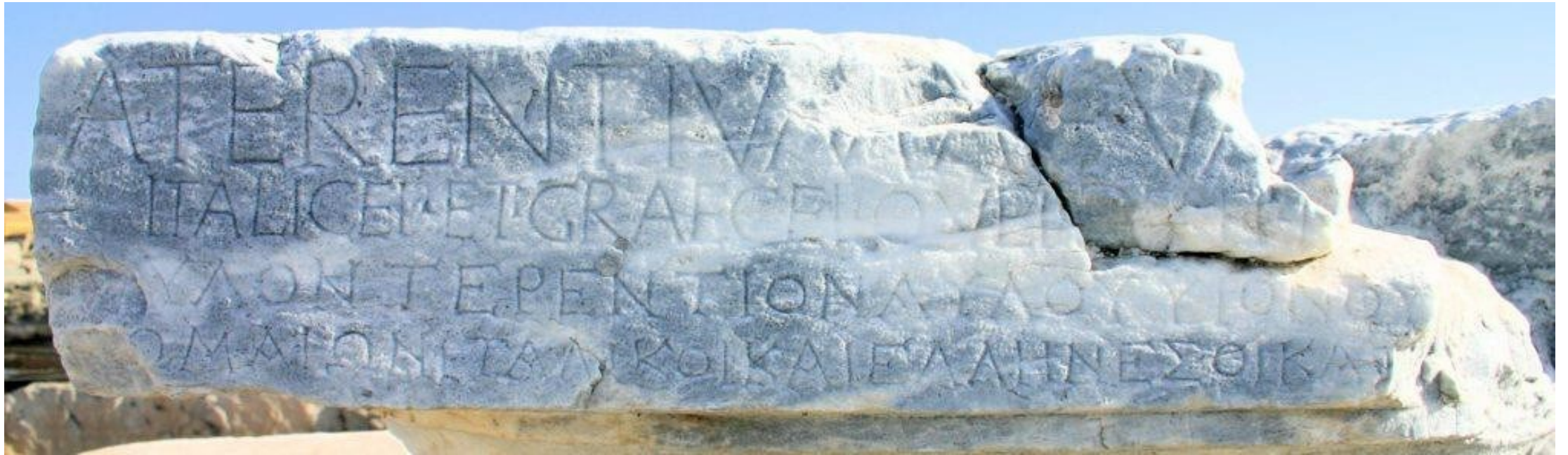




The inhabitants of Delos and the bystanders among the Romans, Athenians and other foreigners, (dedicated a statue of) Theophrastos, son of Herakleitos, from the deme of Acharnai because of his virtue and goodness and his piety towards the gods, to Apollo.

Θεόφραστον Ἡρακλείτου Ἀχαρνέα,  
ἐπιμελητὴν Δήλου γενόμενον, Ἀθηναίων  
καὶ Ῥωμαίων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ξένων  
[οἱ] κατοικοῦντες καὶ παρεπιδημοῦντες ἐν Δήλῳ,  
5 ἀρετῆς ἕνεκεν καὶ καλοκάγαθίας καὶ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς  
θεοὺς εὐσεβείας ἀνέθηκαν  
Ἀπόλλωνι.

*I. Delos 1698, Delos, ca. 82 BC*



- (*Latin*) Italians and Greeks who are engaged in business (*negotiantur*) on Delos set this up for A. Terentius Varro son of Aulus, legate.
- (*Greek*) Italians and Greeks who are settled (*katoikountes*) . . . on Delos (?). . . set this up for Aulus Terentius Varro son of Aulus. . . legate (?). . . of the Romans.