“Nestor’s Cup”
later 8th c. B.C.

- This graffito is on a crude cup found in a grave in the Bay of Naples (not at all physically comparable to the one in *Iliad* 11.631-636!). It is the earliest surviving Greek alphabetic inscription of this length.
- The continuous use of right-to-left writing is virtually unique. (On the other hand, there are many examples of inscriptions whose writing snakes along continuously, in alternating lines of left-to-right and right-to-left. This is called *boustrophedon* since it goes along like the “turning of oxen” who plow a field: an example is included in this packet.)
- The complete part of the image is a reconstruction from the damaged original.

Νέστορος: ε[   ]ι: εὔποτον: ποτέριον:

In the first line *eiμι* is perhaps a more likely restoration than *ἐρροι* (“Nestor’s cup begone! This cup is better.”).

With the alphabet/spellings familiar to us:

Νέστορός είμι εὖποτον ποτήριον:

I am Nestor’s cup, good to drink from.
Whoever drinks from this cup, straightaway desire for beautiful-crowned Aphrodite will seize him.
An example of boustrophedon writing:
a funerary inscription on a statue base in the Kerameikos of Athens, ca. 550’s B.C.
deceased = Chairedemos
dedicator = his father Amphichares
sculptor = Phaidimos

← Χαιρεδεμο: τοδε σεμα: πατερ εστε[σε]
→ [θ]ανοντος: Ανφιχαρ<ε>σ: αγαθον: παιδα σ-
← λοφυρομενος Φαιδιμος εποιε

Χαιρεδήμου τοδε σήμα πατήρ ἔστησε
θανόντος Αμφιχάρης ἀγαθὸν παῖδα
ὀλοφύρομενος. Φαίδιμος ἐποίει.

This tomb of Chairedemos his father Amphichares erected after he
died, lamenting a good child. Phaidimos made it.
Athens honors Oiniades
408/7 B.C.

- Note the use of iota adscript not subscript (e.g. ἄι ὦι ἳ, not ἄ ὦ ἳ).
- Cases where ο is written for ου or ε is written for ει are boldfaced and underlined.

Resolved by the Boule and the People, Antiochis held the prytany, Euklides was Secretary, Hieroklides presided, Euktemon was Archon. Dieitrephes made the motion: Since he is a good man, Oiniades of Palaiokistiathos, to the city of the Athenians, and zealous to do whatever good he can, and is of benefit to (any) Athenian who comes to Skiathos, commendation shall be given him and he shall be recorded as proxenos and benefactor of the Athenians and his descendants (as well); and...

1 ἔσκιάθον = εἰς Σκίάθον
Odios and Epistrophos led the Halizones from Alybe far away, where silver was first begotten. Chromis, with Ennomos the augur, was lord of the Mysians; yet his reading of birds could not keep off dark destruction but he went down under the hands of swift-running Aiakides in the river, as he slew other Trojans beside him. Phorkys and godlike Askanios were lords of the Phrygians from Askania far away, eager to fight in the onfall. Mesthles and Antiphos were leaders of the Maionians,