Greek Words and Alphabet

There are several interesting facts about Greek words. One concerns the words *Greece* and *Greeks*. The people we call Greeks never used these words. In the *Iliad* of Homer these people were called Achaeans. Later they were called Hellenes. The country was called Hellas.

Our words for Greece and Greeks come from the Latin. There was a minor Greek tribe that founded a colony at Cumae. The Romans called these people *Graeci* and were soon using this term for the people and country we call Greeks and Greece.

Approximately twelve percent of our words come from Greek roots. *Stoic, school, drama, barbarian, academy, despot, history* and *chronology* are all words derived from Greek.

The Greek alphabet, taken from Phoenician script about eighth century B.C., eventually had several forms. The East Ionic alphabet was used by all of Greece at the end of fifth century B.C.

The word *alphabet* comes from *alpha* and *beta*, the first two letters of the Greek alphabet.

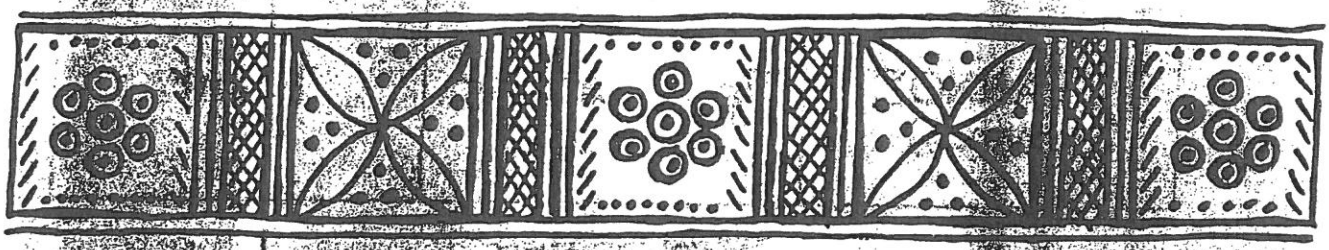
Greek Alphabet

A	alpha	a	I	iota	i	P	rho	r
B	beta	b	K	kappa	k	Σ	sigma	s
Γ	gamma	g	Λ	lambda	l	T	tau	t
Δ	delta	d	M	mu	m	Υ	upsilon	u,y
E	epsilon	e	N	nu	n	Φ	phi	ph
Z	zeta	z	Ξ	i	x	X	chi	ch
H	eta	e	O	omicron	o	Ψ	psi	ps
Θ	theta	th	Π	pi	p	Ω	omega	o

Greek Words

stoikos—stoic

schole—school



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