

Caesar and Mytilene

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POTAMON OF MYTILENE, son of the philosopher Lesbonax, was an orator of high repute among the citizens of Mytilene in the age of Julius Caesar and Augustus.¹ His reputation rested not only on his oratorical abilities and published works but also on his statesmanlike qualities and personal service to his city. On at least three occasions, and possibly many more, he was selected to represent the city of Mytilene on very important missions to the Roman government. It was a common practice to select orators, philosophers, sophists and others of high intellectual achievement to act as envoys to foreign states, and Potamon was eminently successful.² He was also very well known and respected in foreign cities, including Rome.³ His diplomatic successes appear to have been most notable in the role he played as leader of embassies to Rome and elsewhere in the troubled period after Pharsalus and in the early years of Augustus.

The final honor of a public monument on the acropolis of Mytilene was granted to him as a fitting reward for his many fine services. On the face of the marble blocks of this great monument a grateful city had inscribed copies of the official documents which mentioned his name or activities. The structure remained in place until some

¹ See W. Stegemann in *RE s.v.* Potamon, cols. 1023–1027, to whose bibliography should be added Rostovtzeff, *SEHWW* III, p. 1528 n.98, who has further references. He seems to have been born about 75 B.C. and to have died early in the reign of Tiberius. No fragments of his works are extant, but from the *Suda* we learn that he wrote on Alexander the Great (see Jacoby, *FGrH* II B 147, pp. 815–816) as well as an encomium on both Brutus and Caesar. His oratorical work was entitled *Περὶ τελείου ῥήτορος*.

² For such men chosen as envoys see H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (London 1956) 412, nn. 20 and 21. For philosophers and sophists as envoys many examples will be found in the work of Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, including such men as Leon of Byzantium, Hippias of Elis, Prodicus of Ceos, Scopelian, Marcus of Byzantium, Polemo of Laodicea, Alexander of Seleucia, and Apollonius of Athens. In *SEG XVII.505* an *advocatus* (*σύνδικος*) served as an envoy. In the letter of Claudius to the Alexandrians (*Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* II.153) it may be noted that the envoys mentioned were drawn from the circle of learned men of Alexandria. It was in the interest of the city, of course, to send its most able and gifted men as official representatives.

³ The *Suda* (*s.v.* *Θεόδωρος Γαδαρεύς*) tells about a contest in Rome between Potamon, Antipatros, and Theodoros to decide which one of them would become the teacher of the young Tiberius. Theodoros won.

unknown time when it was destroyed by one of the numerous earthquakes so common to that part of the world.⁴ The blocks were later used in the construction of a Turkish fortress on the site and were for the most part buried from sight until modern times.

In 1884 one of the stones was found and published by E. Fabricius. In 1887–1888 Conrad Cichorius discovered a large number of them, and Paton, in the process of preparing the edition of the Lesbian inscriptions for the *Corpus*, found several more fragments. From Paton's publication (*IG XII,2.35*) the exceptional historical importance of the documents is obvious at first glance, consisting of *epistulae*, a treaty between Rome and Mytilene, and three *senatus consulta*.⁵ The size of the letters (0.020 m.), the elegant engraving and the number of columns (at least five) combine to give the impression of a monument of great size and beauty.⁶ And aside from these Roman documents connected with the activities of Potamon the monument also contained copies of the local decrees and honors which were passed by the city to show her appreciation of Potamon's benefactions and accomplishments.

We are here concerned, however, with only one of the documents, a letter from a Roman of such high rank that he was in command of an army and had the power of giving official answers to the representatives of Mytilene without recourse to higher authority. Here is the text.

TEXT

IG XII,2.35, col. a, from Mytilene:

[Γράμματα Καίσαρος Θεοῦ.]

[Γάιος Ἰούλιος Καίσαρ αὐτοκράτωρ — — τὸ] δε[ύτε]ρον Μυτι[λη-
ναίων ἄρχουσι]

[βουλῆ] δῆμῳ χαίρειν· εἰ ἔρρωσθε, καλῶς ἂν] ἔχοι· κἀγὼ δὲ μετὰ τοῦ
στρατεύ[ματος]

⁴ Cichorius in *SB Berlin* 1889, p. 953, would place this earthquake in the early Byzantine period, but Aelius Aristides (*Orat.* 49.38ff Keil) mentions a devastating quake in the area of Mytilene in the reign of Antoninus Pius. For others see the list drawn up by Capelle in *RE Suppl.* IV. s.v. Erdbebenforschung, cols. 352–356. Cf. Broughton, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* IV (Baltimore 1938) 601–602.

⁵ An additional point of interest is the fact that the celebrated poet Krinagoras was one of the envoys sent by Mytilene along with Potamon. See Geffcken in *RE* s.v. Krinagoras, cols. 1859–1864.

⁶ See Paton in *IG XII,2*, pp. 16–18. The arrangement of the blocks by Cichorius is untrustworthy.

[ύγαινον. Ποτάμων Λεσβώνακτος, -----]καφένους, Κρι-
ναγόρας Καλλίπ[που, Ζ]ωίλο[s]
[Ἐπιγένους -----
Σω]τᾶς Δικαίου, Ὑβρίας Διοφάντου, Ἰστιαῖος
5 [-----
-- Δημή]τριος Τιμαίου, οἱ πρεσβευταὶ ὑμῶν, συνέ-
[τυχόν μοι καὶ τὸ ψήφισμα ὑμῶν ἀπέ]δωκαν καὶ περὶ τῶν
τιμῶν διελέχθησαν
[-----
-----]ν κατωρθώκαμεν, καὶ εὐχαριστήσαντες
[-----
-- ἐνέ]τυχον μετὰ πολλῆς φιλοτιμίας καὶ εἰς
[-----
-----]ων ἔχειν. Ἐγὼ δὲ τοὺς τε ἄνδρας ἐπήνε-
10 [σα διὰ τὴν προθυμίαν αὐτῶν καὶ φιλοφρόν]ως ἀπεδεξάμην, ἡδέως τε
τὴν πόλιν
[ὑμῶν εὐεργετεῖν πειράσομαι καὶ κατὰ τ]οὺς παρόντας καιροὺς καὶ ἐν
τοῖς μετὰ ταῦ-
[τα χρόνοις -----]
αν ἐπιστάμενος ἢ ἔχοντες εὖνοι-
[αν -----
-----] τὸν Ποτάμωνα. vac. [Ἔτι] τε τὴν προ-
[-----
-----] αὐτὸν ἐπ[ὶ τ]οὺς [. . .]οντα[---]

Marble block, 0.41 m. high and 0.59 m. wide, found in the interior wall of a Turkish fortress by Cichorius in 1887. The block is broken on the top and bottom as well as the lower left and upper right corners. The first half of each line was on an adjacent block now lost. Cichorius originally read αὐτὸν ἐπ' . . . ου συ ὄντα in the last line, and Hiller von Gaertringen supplied Σω]τᾶς in line four. Letters are 0.020 m. high.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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pp. 896–897; W. R. Paton, *IG XII,2* (1899) 35a; L. Lafoscade, *De Epistulis Imperatorum Magistratuumque Romanorum* (Lille 1902) no. 4; G. Lafaye, *IGRR IV* (1927) 33. For cols. a–e in part or as a whole see E. Täubler, *Imperium Romanum I* (Leipzig-Berlin 1913) 56 and 456; Hiller von Gaertringen in *SIG³ II* (1917) 764; J. Hatzfeld, *Les Trafiquants Italiens dans l’Orient hellénique* (Paris 1919) 91; F. F. Abbott and A. C. Johnson, *Municipal Administration in the Roman Empire* (Princeton 1926) no. 25; L. Robert, *REG 42* (1929) 426ff; Hiller von Gaertringen, *Gött. Nachr.* [Phil.-hist. Kl.], Fachgruppe I (1934–1936) 121ff; Hiller von Gaertringen in *IG XII Suppl.* (1939) 11; V. Arangio-Ruiz, *Riv. Fil.* 70 (1942) 125ff; S. Accame, *Il Dominio Romano in Grecia dalla Guerra Acaica ad Augusto* (Rome 1946) 90–92 and 95–99; David Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor*, 2 vols. (Princeton 1950) 415ff and 468 with notes; V. Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius* (Oxford 1955) no. 307. The English translation by A. C. Johnson, P. R. Coleman-Norton and F. C. Bourne, *Ancient Roman Statutes* (Austin 1961) no. 111, omits col. a. See also the brief resume by Iacopi in Ruggiero’s *Dizionario Epigrafico s.v. Legatus*, pp. 518–519.

This letter is of a type common to the Hellenistic and Roman age with the customary salutation followed by general remarks of the writer, including the usual mention of the names of the envoys who had come to him, the place of meeting (lines 5–6), acknowledgement of the delivery of the decree, the speech of the envoys, reflections on the conduct of the envoys and final praises for them and their city.⁷ It concludes, as usual, with a formal reply to the honors and the matters mentioned in the decree. The reply here would indicate goodwill toward the city of Mytilene, even though most of the conclusion is missing. The remains of lines 10–11 point to a friendly attitude.

Except for the first line there is very little internal evidence on which to date the document, but the presence of an army (line 2) points to a commander on field duty, and the use of the verb *κατωρθώκαμεν* could refer to the successful completion of a military campaign.⁸ The embassy must have been considered to be an important

⁷ The closest parallels would be *SIG³ 601* (letter of Marcus Valerius Messala to the people of Teos), *SEG I.440* (= *SEG IV.567*, letter of L. Cornelius Scipio and his brother to the people of Colophon), and *SIG³ 780* (letter of Augustus to the Cnidians) to mention only those letters which originated from Roman sources.

⁸ The literary texts regularly show *κατορθοῦν* in the sense of setting a thing straight or accomplishing something successfully. Examine the following: *Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ τῇ μάχῃ κατορθώσαντες* (Plb. 11.3.1); *τῇ μὲν μάχῃ κατώρθωσε* (Plb. 2.70.6); *κατορθώσειν τοῖς ὄλοις* (Plb. 3.48.2); *τοῦτον γὰρ τὸν πόλεμον τελευταῖον κατώρθωσε* (D.C. 43.41.2); *πολλοὺς καὶ μεγάλους πολέμους κοινῇ κατορθῶσαι* (D.C. 44.25.4); *ὥστε ἐκείνον μὲν μάχας ἂν τις φαίη πλεῖστας κατορθῶσαι* (Ael. Aristid. *Orat.* 14.25 Oliver). For other examples where success in war is meant see Plb. 1.52.1 and 3.74.10; D.C. 60.30.2. This list could be easily extended.

one, for ten men were sent out to carry the honorary decree and to present the city's congratulations. One to three men were usually the number of envoys sent out by the cities in the Hellenistic period. Very important missions sometimes required four or five, but ten or more could not have been very common.⁹ Although the present letter is very fragmentary in that part in which the names of the envoys appeared, ten would seem to be the right number to fit the available space. There must have been a powerful and compelling reason for sending out such a large embassy.

Cichorius believed this letter was written by Augustus *ca* 27–25 B.C. while he was in Spain,¹⁰ but Mommsen saw that the remains of the titlature in the first line could not possibly describe Augustus in that period at all. He believed that Julius Caesar was the writer and that the date was the summer of 47 B.C. when Caesar was *dictator* II and engaged in the eastern war against Pharnaces.¹¹ Paton agreed with Mommsen about the authorship but left it an open question whether ὑπατος or δικτάτωρ should be restored in the first line. This is the vital point, for Caesar was *consul* II in 48 B.C. and *dictator* II from

In the inscriptions examine: (1) W. H. Buckler and D. M. Robinson, *Sardis VII: Greek and Latin Inscriptions* (Leyden 1932) no. 8.104–105: *καὶ πάντα {καὶ πάντα} κατορθωσάμενος προσηκόντως*. (2) *Idem* no. 27.7–9: *πολλοὺς κινδύνους καὶ ἀγῶνας καὶ ἐγδικασίας ὑπὲρ τοῦ δήμου ἀναδεξάμενον καὶ κατορθώσαντα*. (3) *SIG*³ 730.28: *πλείστα τῇ πόλει κατορθωσάμενον ἀγαθά*. (4) *IG* V.1.37.7–9: *πρεσβευτῆς εἰς Ῥώμην πρὸς τὸν μέγιστον αὐτοκρά(τορα) Ἀντωνείνων περὶ τῶν πρὸς Ἐλευθερολάκωνας καὶ κατορθώθη*. (5) *IGRR* IV.566.12 (= *ILS* 8805): *τὴν ἡδονὴν ἦν ἐπὶ τοῖς κατ[ω]ρθωμένοις ἔχετε*. When the verb refers to success in war, it is followed either by the dative case (Polybius) or the accusative (Aelius Aristides and Dio Cassius), and its voice is active. Since in our letter it is in the active voice and first person, it could refer to a successful war waged by the writer of the letter. One might therefore restore lines 6–7 as follows: . . . *καὶ περὶ τῶν τιμῶν διελέχθησαν [ἄς ἐψηφίσασθέ μοι καὶ περὶ τοῦ πολέμου δ]ν κατορθώκαμεν, κτλ*. For the word-order see *SIG*³ 785.15–16, and *SIG*³ 810.14–15. The number of letters in each line of the columns on Potamon's monument is difficult to estimate because of the fragmentary nature of the text. The best preserved column (b) shows 61 letters in line 15 and 67 in line 14. There seems therefore to have been an unequal number of letters in each line. Our restoration of line 7 in column a gives a total of 64 letters.

⁹ See the very brief statement by Iacopi in Ruggiero's *Dizionario Epigrafico s.v. Legatus*, p. 521. From my own file of seventy-two embassies, in which there is clear evidence of the number of men sent out on particular missions during the Hellenistic age, I have found that sixteen of them were composed of one man, seventeen of two men, twenty-two of three men, three of four men and seven of five men. *SIG*³ 552 shows seven men, *SIG*³ 618 (= *SEG* II.566) names eight men, *SIG*³ 764 names eight men, *AE* 1933, 260 names nine men, and *OGIS* 11 names ten men. The largest embassies I know are those mentioned in the letter of Claudius to the Alexandrines (*Corp. Pap. Jud.* no. 153) with twelve men and in *SEG* I.329 (= *SEG* XVIII.294) with eleven men. Larger numbers of envoys seem to have become more common in the course of the Empire, for Vespasian limited their number to three each: *Digest* 50.7.5(4).6.

¹⁰ Cichorius, *Rom und Mytilene* (Leipzig 1888) 44 and *op.cit. supra* (n.4) 972.

¹¹ Mommsen, *op.cit.* 896.

late October of 48 to October of 47, the two offices overlapping for a few months.¹² In addition Mommsen thought there was external support for his dating in a suggestion from Paton that IG XII,2.30 (= IGRR IV.30= IG XII Suppl. [1939] p. 9, no. 30) might refer to the same embassy mentioned in the letter. For convenience the pertinent lines (10f) of this inscription may be presented here:

10 --- πρ[ε]σβε[ύ]σαις δὲ [πρὸς Γάϊον Ἰούλιον Καίσαρα ---
 ἐκ] τῷ ἐν Καππαδ[οκία πολέμῳ ---

To judge from the engraving and type of marble, this very fragmentary inscription very likely formed part of Potamon's monument, and for that reason Potamon must have been mentioned in it in some capacity. The implication is, of course, that Potamon travelled to the East to see Julius Caesar and gave him a decree from Mytilene as he was returning from the war in Cappadocia, at which time the letter was written by Caesar. The bare possibility of a connection between these two documents also led David Magie to believe that the letter was written in 47 B.C. while Caesar was returning from the war against Pharnaces.¹³

There is little doubt that Caesar was the author of the letter, but the date is not so easily acceptable, for it rests upon a dubious connection with a fragmentary inscription in which Caesar's name is a mere restoration. IG XII,2.30 may have no bearing at all on the present letter. I believe that there is good reason to date Caesar's letter in the late summer of 48 B.C. not long after Pharsalus. A brief glance at the political history of Mytilene in the first century will lay the foundations of this belief.¹⁴

With the advance of Mithridates into western Asia Minor in 88 B.C., the city of Mytilene was faced with the problem that many other cities had to face at that time, whether to remain loyal to Rome and

¹² See Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* II (New York 1952) 272 with n.1 on pp. 284-285. The date and extent of Caesar's second dictatorship have been the subject of much debate, but the matter seems to have been settled. See the remarks by A. E. Raubitschek in *JRS* 44 (1954) 70. The beginning of his second dictatorship and not its duration is pertinent to our letter, and there is little real doubt that it began in late October.

¹³ Magie, *op.cit.* 415 and n.39 on pp. 1269-70. In his note Magie says, "For Caesar's letter accepting the submission of Mytilene see IG XII, 2.35a=IGR IV.33a, to be dated, on account of the mention of his second dictatorship, not later than April, 46 B.C. (see Drumann-Groebe G.R. III p. 739)." (!)

¹⁴ For the history of Mytilene in this period see the account of Cichorius in *Rom und Mytilene*, pp. 1-9; Hiller von Gaertringen in *IG XII Suppl.* (1939) pp. 70-73; R. Herbst in *RE s.v.* Mytilene, cols. 1412ff; D. Magie, *op.cit.* 245-246, 365, 404, 415-416.

resist or to welcome Mithridates and keep the peace. She had enjoyed freedom and independence from the time of the treaty at Apamea (188 B.C.), but now she turned to Mithridates, put all the Roman settlers to death and handed over to his troops the Roman general Manius Aquilius. The Pontic king himself was cordially received by the citizens on two occasions, the last one at the time when he was fleeing in defeat. At the conclusion of the war Mytilene knew that she could expect no mercy from Rome for her actions and consequently refused to surrender. After a siege the city capitulated in 80 B.C. to the Roman forces and was immediately deprived of all her rights and reduced to the status of a subject.¹⁵ But her punishment was not permanent, for in 62 Pompey restored the city's freedom, largely out of regard for his friend Theophanes of Mytilene.¹⁶ Fate, however, contrived to place the city for a second time in a crucial situation. Because he had given back to the city her precious freedom Pompey and his entire family were hailed as the benefactors of Mytilene, and many monuments bear evidence of her regard. But fourteen years later Pompey fled in defeat from the battlefield at Pharsalus. He found a warm and genuine welcome at Mytilene, where in fact he was invited to stay for his own personal safety. He advised the people there, however, to obey Caesar as the new master of Rome, adding that he was charitable and kindhearted.¹⁷ He then put his wife and friends on board ship and sailed away, first to Pamphylia and eventually to his death in Egypt. Such are the bare facts.

We can imagine what some of the city fathers must have felt when, about the end of August 48 B.C., the victorious Caesar appeared at Sestos on the Hellespont.¹⁸ Many would have remembered the old crisis and the old mistake forty years before. Caesar, followed by his army, was coming directly toward them in pursuit of Pompey, who was now an enemy of the new regime. They had befriended Pompey and had showered many honors upon him in the previous fourteen years, facts well known to all. A decision had to be made immediately. An act of loyalty to Caesar would be the wisest course, and Pompey

¹⁵ For the details see Magie, *op.cit.* 245–246.

¹⁶ Plut., *Pompeius* 42.4.

¹⁷ Plut., *Pompeius* 75.2: τῶν δὲ Μιτυληναίων τὸν Πομπηΐον ἀσπασαμένων καὶ παρακαλούντων εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν πόλιν, οὐκ ἠθέλησεν, ἀλλὰ κάκείνους ἐκέλευσε τῷ κρατοῦντι πείθεσθαι καὶ θαρρεῖν· εὐγνώμονα γὰρ εἶναι Καίσαρα καὶ χρηστόν.

¹⁸ For the itineraries of Pompey and Caesar see W. Judeich, *Caesar im Orient* (Leipzig 1885) 52ff; J. P. Postgate, *Lucani de Bello Civili Liber VIII* (Cambridge 1917) pp. lxxi ff; T. Rice Holmes, *The Roman Republic III* (Oxford 1923) 173ff.

had suggested it. Thus, I think, the circumstances at this tense moment could have prompted the city to assemble an embassy to convey her feelings to Caesar as soon as possible. To delay such an exhibition of loyalty and friendship might prove to be a mistake.

Direct evidence that Potamon and his fellow envoys did actually meet Caesar at this time is lacking, but two facts tend to substantiate it. The first is the very remarkable speed with which many cities of Greece and Asia Minor decreed honors for Caesar in 48 B.C. not too long after Pharsalus (August 9, unreformed calendar). Honorary inscriptions of that early date have been found at Athens, Pergamon, Delos, Ephesos and Chios. Other cities, which also honored Caesar soon after Pharsalus but for which the exact dating is not so assured, are Karthaia on Keos, Samos, Megara, Phocaea and Alabanda.¹⁹ It is noteworthy that Athens and Megara honored Caesar so soon after Pharsalus, for both of those cities resisted him in the war and had to be reduced by force of arms.²⁰ Caesar's victory and the fate of Athens and Megara must have made it quite clear to the Greek world that resistance was useless. These inscriptions indicate an early desire on the part of the Greeks, especially those of Asia Minor, to make known their acceptance of Caesar as the new master of Rome. And Mytilene must have learned long ago through the shedding of her blood that Rome was irresistible. Any doubts she may have had were dispelled by the fate of Athens and Megara. It would be diplomatic, therefore, to join these other cities in honoring Caesar as soon as possible. The customary way to do this was to decree public honors and to communicate them to the recipient by an embassy bearing a copy of the

¹⁹ These inscriptions have been assembled and discussed by A. E. Raubitschek in *JRS* 44 (1954) 65-75, with Plate III. Those which he dates in 48 B.C. after Pharsalus are the following: *Inscriptions de Délos* no. 1587 (Delos); *IGRR* IV.305 (Pergamon); *IGRR* IV.928 (Chios); *SIG*³ 760 (Ephesos); a new inscription from Athens which he publishes for the first time (= *SEG* XIV.121). The others: *IG* XII,5.556 (Karthia on Keos); *IGRR* IV.303 and 307 (Pergamon); *IG* VII.62 (Megara); *IGRR* IV.970 (Samos). These were inscribed on pedestals which once supported statues of Julius Caesar. The inscription on an altar from Mytilene in honor of Caesar (*IG* XII,2.151=*IGRR* IV.57) apparently does not belong to the same early date as these pedestals: see Raubitschek, *op.cit.* 71-72. To the material in this excellent article, full of important information on Caesar, two other inscriptions must be added which L. Robert has republished and restored in *Hellenica* 10 (1955) 257-260. The first of these is from old Phocaea and may be seen also in *AE* 1955, 270 and *SEG* XV.748. It honors Caesar when he had been ὑπατον τῷ δέυτερον, and its date is therefore not positively in the year 48 B.C. The second inscription, from Alabanda (= *SEG* XV.662), is undated but almost certainly dates from the same general period as the others.

²⁰ Q. Fufius Calenus, a legate of Caesar (see Broughton, *Magistrates* II, p. 281), invaded Attica, seized the Piraeus and besieged both Athens and Megara: Dio Cassius 42.14.

decree. I believe that Potamon was sent out at that time for that particular purpose.

The second fact is more precise, but not conclusive. We are told by Appian (*B.C.* 2.89) that after Caesar had crossed the Hellespont he was met by envoys from Ionians, Aeolians and other inhabitants of that region. To these he granted pardon. The full text reads: *Διασωθεὶς δ' οὕτω παραδόξως ὁ Καῖσαρ καὶ τὸν Ἑλλάσποντον περαιωθεὶς Ἰωσι μὲν καὶ Αἰολεῦσι καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ἔθνη τὴν μεγάλην χερρόνησον οἰκοῦσι (καὶ καλοῦσιν αὐτὰ ἐνὶ ὀνόματι Ἀσίαν τὴν κάτω), συνεγίνωσκε πρεσβευμένους ἐς αὐτὸν καὶ παρακαλοῦσι, πυθόμενος δὲ Πομπήμιον ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου φέρεσθαι διέπλευσεν ἐς Ῥόδον.* The importance of this piece of information is that envoys from Aeolian cities actually did meet Caesar at that time and place. Mytilene could have been one of them.

There are, therefore, three good reasons for believing that Potamon led his embassy to Caesar about that same time: the parting admonition of Pompey, the numerous honorary inscriptions from the cities of Asia Minor, and the testimony of Appian. These give merely corroborative and not conclusive evidence, but it is sufficient to outweigh restorations and assumptions from a fragmentary inscription that might have nothing at all to do with the present embassy and letter. The interpretation of *IG XII,2.30* must be sought elsewhere. I prefer to date Caesar's letter very early in the month of September of 48 B.C. and would restore the first line of that letter as follows:

[Γάϊος Ἰούλιος Καῖσαρ ἀτοκράτωρ ὑπάτος τὸ] δε[ύτε]ρον Μυτι[ληναίων
ἀρχουσι]
κτλ.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO

April, 1963