

R. W. PARKER

A GREEK INSCRIPTION FROM LESBOS HONORING A JULIO-CLAUDIAN

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 75 (1988) 175–178

© Dr. Rudolf Habelt GmbH, Bonn

Line 1 : two or possibly three (if one was iota) letters have been lost at the beginning of the line. The lower right portion of the arc of omikron is preserved. The bottom of the centered vertical of upsilon survives. The bottom horizontal and part of the diagonal stroke of the sigma are visible. The bottom right third of the arc of the second omikron survives. A very small portion of the arc of the third omikron is faintly visible. The centered vertical of tau survives. It is quite unlikely that more than a single letter has been lost at the end of the line.

Line 2: the top two-thirds of each leg of delta survive, and the angle formed by them is noticeably greater than that of any preserved alpha or lambda. The top half of the iota is preserved in the narrow space between the letters on either side of it.

Line 3: the top two-thirds of the iota are visible. The top of the vertical and the top part of the upper arc of beta survive. To judge from comparison with lines 1 and 2 some eight to ten letters in the middle of the line were lost when the block was converted into a well-head. Nearly two-thirds of the arc of omega survive.

Line 4: a space equivalent to that occupied by three letters in each of lines 2 and 3 has been left uninscribed at the beginning of the line. A part of the vertical and the top of the upper arc of beta survive; after it between eleven and thirteen letters have been lost. The top of the arc of omega is preserved. The remainder of the line is uninscribed.

The second declension genitives in $-\omega$ make it obvious that the inscription is in Aeolic dialect. The use of Aeolic in inscriptions from Lesbos waned in the third and second centuries before Christ, but was revived in the first.⁴ From the time of Pompey's sojourn in the East until the end of the second century after Christ it was preferred over koine by a wide margin on honorific inscriptions.⁵

It is clear that a relative (surely the father) of a Julio-Claudian emperor was the honorand of this inscription. The remains at the beginning of line 1 are consistent with a single name from the Julio-Claudian house: $\Delta\rho\omicron\upsilon\delta\omicron\nu$. Thus the honorand is Nero Claudius Drusus, brother of the emperor Tiberius and father of Claudius.⁶

⁴ See C.D.Buck, *The Greek Dialects* (Chicago, 1955) 208, 280 for the survival and revival of Aeolic. The barytonesis and psilosis of Lesbian Aeolic were a subject of much discussion among the scholars of Alexandria, and it is generally the custom to employ them in editions of inscriptions written in Lesbian dialect (S.Charitonides, *Αἱ Ἐπιγραφαὶ τῆς Λέσβου* [Athens, 1968] is a notable exception), regardless of their date. It should be pointed out, however, that there is a discrepancy between the practice of epigraphers and that of editors of literary texts in the matter of accentuation. The latter (e.g., E.Lobel and D.Page, *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta* [Oxford, 1955]) treat all oblique cases of the definite article as (proclitic) oxytones. See E.-M. Hamm, *Grammatik zu Sappho und Alkaios* (Berlin, 1957) 44 and F.Bechtel, *Die Griechischen Dialekte* (Berlin, 1921) Vol. I, 7-8. Perispomenon articles were accented with the grave (i.e., τὸ, τὸι τὸν etc.) by Aristarkhos (in Apollonios Dyskolos, dc Syntaxi 51.26), and papyrus discoveries tend to confirm this principle of accentuation. Cf. J.T.Hooker, *The Language and Text of the Lesbian Poets* (Innsbruck, 1977) 18-23 and the review of this book by A.M.Bowie in *LCM* 3 (1978) 23-29.

⁵ "Honorific" inscriptions here include: IG XII, 2 140-267, 654-6; IG XII Supplement 39-63; Charitonides (n.4 above) 38-66; SEG 27.484 and 29.741. Except for the period of (Trajan and?) Hadrian, when they were equally popular, Aeolic was far more popular than koine.

⁶ The order of Drusus' names here is unusual, but not unique. It is found also on an inscription (dated between 14 and 19) from Ilion honoring Antonia, Drusus' wife: see Peter Frisch, *Die Inschriften von Ilion*

The regular nomenclature of the emperor Claudius is easily accommodated in the lacunae in lines 3 and 4 created by the alteration of the block into a well-head, although the identification of him with Zeus Megistos is unique, so far as I have been able to determine.⁷

The inscription, then, is to be dated during the reign of Claudius. It is remarkable that the earliest possible date for the inscription is a full fifty years after Drusus' death in 9 B.C. (Dio Cassius 55.1; Veil. Pater. 2.97.1). Such recognition of long deceased ancestors and family members was characteristic of Gaius as well. At Mytilene there was a dedication (IG XII, 2 172) from the reign of Gaius honoring Marcus Agrippa, Agrippa Posthumus, and the brothers and sisters of the emperor, and at Thera the father of Gaius was honored during his reign (IG XII, 3 472 and Suppl. 1393).⁸

The most likely time for such recognition of Drusus is shortly after Claudius' accession. At that time he, like his predecessor and successor, arranged for a number of honors to be decreed for various members of his family, including games to be held in the Circus on the anniversary of Drusus' birthday.⁹ It is worth noting that, although Drusus was caned a god on an earlier Lesbian inscription honoring his wife, Antonia, he was not so called on the present dedication.¹⁰

(Bonn, 1975) 88 (= IGR IV 206). Velleius Paterculus (writing about A.D. 30) employs this same order in his *Historiae Romanae* 2.95. 1; 97.2, and Δροῦδος Κλαύδιος Νέρων occurs on an inscription from Epidauros, IG IV², 1596. Cf. E.Groag and A.Stein, *Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saec. I, II, III*² (Berlin and Leipzig, 1933) 857.

⁷ For the usual nomenclature of Claudius see Groag and Stein (n.6 above) 942, and, e.g., IG IV², 1 601; 602; IG VII 67, 68, 87, 2439, 2978; IG XII 3 473 etc. Claudius was identified with [Ἀπολλῶνα] Πατρῶνον at Athens on JG II² 3274. At Eresos an emperor was identified with Zeus Megistos on IG XII, 2 542 (see the improved reading with photograph in Charitonides [n.4 above] p.89 and plate 40γ), and IG XII, 2 100 (from Thermi, just outside Mytilene) also honors Zeus Megistos. On Zeus Soter and Zeus Megistos on Lesbos see E.L.Shields, *Cults of Lesbos* (Baltimore, 1917) 24-25, who refers to a prayer (IG XII, 2 278) that associates ὁ κράτιστος [καὶ] / μέγιστος θεῶν Ζεὺς with ὁ θεὸς Σεβαστὸς. Claudius is called [τ]ὸν σεβαστὸν [καὶ] μέγιστον καὶ κράτιστον on IG XII, 3 1395.

⁸ Gaius was also associated with Gaius and Lucius Caesar on a dedication, IG XII, 2 Suppl. 49, and IG XII, 2 210, 212 and 213 honored other members of his family. Apparently it was the custom at Mytilene to put groups of dedications in compartments on a single stone so that, for example, Pompey, Caesar, Augustus, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Agrippa and Agrippa Posthumus are all honored on IG XII, 2 164. See also IG XII, 2 163, 165-167, 169-171, and cf. C.C.Vermeule, *Roman Imperial Art in Greece and Asia Minor* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968) 204.

⁹ Suetonius, *Divus Claudius* 11.2-3; Dio Cassius 60.5.1-2. Suetonius, *Gaius* 15.2-3, and Tacitus, *Annales* 13.10, relate similar actions taken by Gaius and Nero, respectively, in honor of their natural fathers shortly after their own accessions. Another possible occasion for recognition of Drusus may be associated with the letter of Claudius to Mytilene between the years 47 and 50. IG XII, 263 preserves a fragment of this document.

¹⁰ IG XII, 2 207 (from Thermi). For Drusus' dedication elsewhere see Tacitus, *Annales* 2.7 (an altar near the Weser); IG II² 3120, 3176, 3543, 3572, 3587 and IG IV², 183, 84 (a priesthood of Drusus at Athens that persisted into the second century); IGR III 680 (a priesthood of Germanicus and Drusus at Patara in Lycia). Claudius himself was, perhaps, the object of cult at Eresos, if IG XII, 2 541 is correctly restored. Cf. IG XII, Suppl. p.40 (at 542) and Charitonides (n.4 above), p.89.

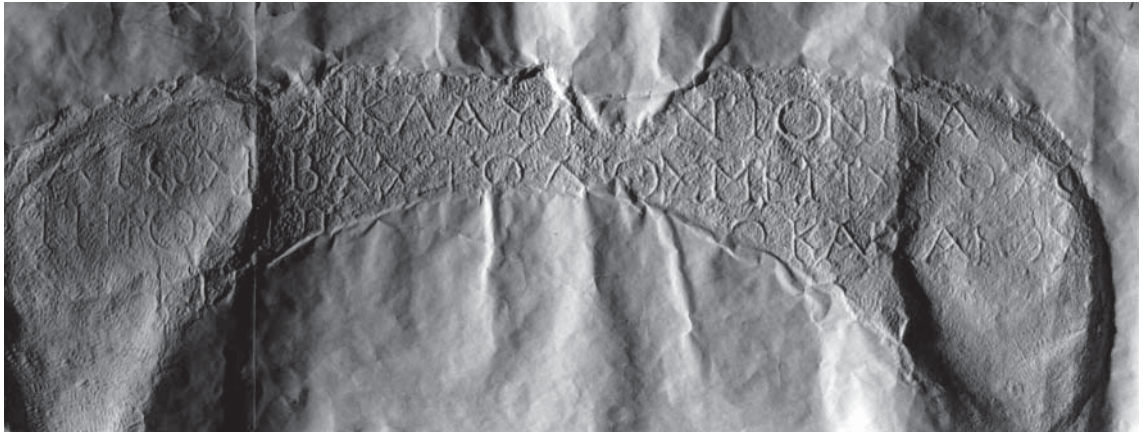
That there were close ties between a number of prominent Mytilenaians and the imperial family extending over several generations is well documented.¹¹ The inscription honoring Drusus Claudius is yet another example of how Lesbos, and Mytilene in particular, surpassed the other Greeks in expressing its gratitude to its friends in Rome.¹²

London, Canada

R.W.Parker

¹¹ First by C.Cichorius, *Rom und Mytilene* (Leipzig, 1888). Sources are gathered in IG XII, 2 Suppl. pp.71-76. Notable Mytilenaians include the poet Krinagoras (see Cichorius, *Rom und Mytilene* 58; Geffcken, RE s.v. Krinagoras, cols. 1859-1864; A.F.S.Gow and D.L.Page, *The Garland of Philip* Vol. II, 210 n.1), Potamon the rhetor (see W.Stegmann, RE s.v. Potamon (3) cols. 1023-1027; M.I.Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* [Oxford, 1959] Vol. III, p.1528 n.98), and Theophanes (see R.Laqueur, RE s.v. Theophanes (1) cols. 2090-2127; F.Jacoby, FGrHist 188 Theophanes; L.Robert, CRAI 1969,42-64), who himself and his descendants held positions of the greatest importance in Roman government and politics from the time of Pompey until at least the reign of Marcus Aurelius (see IG XII, 2 Suppl. p.73 for stemma and R.Hodot, ZPE 34 [1979] 221-237).

¹² See Vermeule (n.8 above) 204-6 and 445-6 for a list of dedications to the imperial family, who writes that "This island, and particularly its city of Mytilene, has produced the largest number of Julio-Claudian altars or dedications of any site in the Greek imperial world" (204).



Inscription aus Mytilene