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Contents

Bengt E. Thomasson	
The Eastern Roman Provinces till Diocletian. A Rapid Survey	1
Christopher Jones	
Memories of the Roman Republic in the Greek East	11
Jean-Louis Ferrary	
Rome et la géographie de l'hellénisme: réflexions sur "hellènes" et "panhellènes" dans les inscriptions d'époque romaine	19
A. D. Rizakis	
La constitution des élites municipales dans les colonies romaines de la province d'Achaïe	37
Maria Kantiréa	
Remarques sur le culte de la <i>domus Augusta</i> en Achaïe de la mort d' Auguste à Néron	51
Kostas Buraselis	
Two Notes on Theophanes' Descendants	61
Mika Kajava	
Vesta and Athens	71
Simone Follet & Dina Peppas Delmousou	
Les dedicaces chorégiques d'époque flavienne et antonine à Athènes	95
Petros Themelis	
Roman Messene. The Gymnasium	119
Maurice Sartre	
Romains et Italiens en Syrie: Contribution à l'histoire de la première province romaine de Syrie	127
Olli Salomies	
Honorific Inscriptions for Roman Senators in the Greek East during the Empire. Some Aspects (with Special Reference to Cursus Inscriptions)	141
Heikki Solin	
Latin Cognomina in the Greek East	189
Index	
1. Persons	203
2. Greek personal names	205
3. Latin personal names	206
4. Geographical names	206
5. Inscriptions and papyri	209
6. Selected topics	217
Plates	219
Maps	229

Two Notes on Theophanes' Descendants

Kostas Buraselis

I. Behind *Graeca adulatio*

Tacitus, *Annals* VI.18.2 mentions in the year A. D. 33, in the context of other political condemnations of the era after Sejanus' fall and Tiberius' grim turn, the fate of a lady and four men of her family: *etiam in Pompeiam Macrinam exilium statuitur, cuius maritum Argolicum, socerum Laconem, e primoribus Achaeorum, Caesar adflixerat; pater quoque inlustris eques Romanus ac frater praetorius, cum damnatio instaret, se ipsi interfecere. Datum erat crimini, quod Theophanen Mytilenaeum proavum eorum Cn. Magnus inter intimos habuisset, quodque defuncto Theophani caelestes honores Graeca adulatio tribuerat*. This text has often been studied and especially most of its prosopographical aspects clarified, while the alleged motives for the emperor's rigour have usually earned quite understandable disbelief or rejection. It will be the purpose of this note to look closer at the possible reasons for those persons' harsh treatment by Tiberius.

It is clear that this grave disgrace struck members of two distinguished provincial Greek families with an already elevated Roman status: the Euryclids of Laconia and the descendants of Pompeius' Greek right-hand man, Theophanes of Mytilene. Pompeia Macrina was their human link. Her husband, Iulius Argolicus, and her father-in-law, Iulius Laco, the son of Augustus' notorious Greek friend, Eurycles, seem to have been punished first (*adflixerat*), although Laco reappears later (under Claudius) in an important imperial post in the Peloponnese.¹ So the blow for Laco, Argolicus and Macrina was severe but not fatal. The case with her father and brother was different as they obviously had reasons to fear the worst and prefer suicide to execution. Tacitus does not name them but mentions their status, so their identity has been persuasively spotted:² another Greek friend of Augustus was Pompeius Macer, entrusted by the first emperor with the organization of his libraries at Rome (*Suet., Iul., 56.7*). He seems to be one of those exciting political and intellectual liaisons between the Greek world and the Roman empire: he should be the same man with M. Pompeius, the great Theophanes' son, mentioned by Strabo, XII.2.3 (618) as procurator of Augustus in Asia who remained an *amicus principis* under Tiberius, possibly also with Ovid's friend *Iliacus Macer* (*Pont., IV.16.6*).³ So the Tacitean *inlustris eques Romanus*

¹ *Corinth* VIII.2, no. 67. Cf. P. Cartledge-A.J.S. Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta*, London 1989, 102.

² All relevant evidence, the - by now more or less - standard identifications and the main bibliography most recently in the careful articles by K. Wachtel in *PIR*², VI (1998), P 625: Cn.(?) Pompeius Macer; ib. 626: Q. Pompeius Macer. Cf. also H. Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum bis zum Ende des 2. Jhdts. n. Chr.*, Göttingen 1979, I, 1a (p.100); G. Labarre, *Les cités de Lesbos aux époques hellénistique et impériale*, Lyon 1996, 147-53; the works cited in the following notes.

³ Especially this last identification has been categorically rejected by P. White, 'Pompeius Macer and Ovid', *CQ* 42 1992 210-18 (215-8), on rather insufficient grounds (the fact e.g. that Ovid included his friend Macer in a list of contemporary poets who are otherwise known to have written in Latin cannot exclude that Macer could have composed his major work in Greek: poetic talent and personal relationship might explain his place there).

perfectly suits both status and age of this person. His son and ex-praetor has also been recognized with great probability as the praetor Q. Pompeius Macer who consulted Tiberius on launching some new *iudicia maiestatis* (*Tac., Ann.*, I.72.3) in A. D. 15 - a true irony of history. Of course, Tacitus' term *proavum* to describe the relation of Macrina and her brother with Pompey's favourite is then inexact by one generation as Syme had first the courage to demonstrate.⁴ More recently, Bertrand has been able to conclude from a fragmentary inscription of Priene the existence of another probable Augustan member of the family in imperial service, a Cn. Pompeius Theophanes (cognomen partly restored), *hyparchos* of Augustus in Asia about 20 B. C., who may have been the elder brother of the praetor of A. D. 15.⁵ So there seem to have been at least three descendants of Theophanes advanced to important posts under Augustus and Tiberius until A. D. 33.

While the prosopographical landscape has been so reasonably cleared, the doom of these members of Theophanes' progeny in Tiberius' twilight years remains a puzzle. Bowersock has actually underlined the enigma by showing that Pompeius Macer very probably belonged to Tiberius' circle of Greek friends in the latter's Rhodian period who backed the future princeps decisively in his rivalry with Caius Caesar and accompanied him then after A. D. 2 to Rome and the way to the throne.⁶ Tiberius' late anger against such an old friend and partisan, and his relatives, seems to ask for a more specific explanation than the haunted mind of the old monarch after Seianus' end. On the other hand, an attempt to coordinate this and other contemporaneous punitive measures of Tiberius into a reasonable, general plan of persecution against Drusus', Germanicus' and Agrippina's last adherents (understood as a sort of "party") in the empire has certainly overstated the extant issues, and encountered justified criticism.⁷

What about the official incrimination in Tacitus? Syme was explicit: it "appears unduly trivial".⁸ There were further such reactions: Koestermann in his commentary on the *Annales* thought that the accusation "nicht ernst genommen werden kann";⁹ Seager in his biography of Tacitus remarked: "It is incredible that these can have been the only grounds for the prosecution", to concur then in the generally psychological or psychiatric interpretation of Tiberius' turn against old friends;¹⁰ most recently Guy Labarre in his useful synthesis of our data on Hellenistic and Roman Lesbos has lucidly

⁴ R. Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford 1958, II.748f. Cf. also his later, more decided statements of this view in: *id.*, *History in Ovid*, Oxford 1978, 73f.; 'Tacitus' Sources of Information. (8) The descendants of Cn. Pompeius Theophanes', *JRS* 72 (1982), 79f.

⁵ J.-M. Bertrand, 'A propos de deux disparus: Cn. Pompeius Theophanes, M. Pompeius Macer', *ZPE* 59 (1985), 173-6.

⁶ G. W. Bowersock, 'Augustus and the East: The Problem of the Succession', in: F. Millar & E. Segal, *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects*, Oxford 1984, 169-88 (178-85). Some Lesbian connection of Tiberius in the period of his Rhodian withdrawal might be discerned in his eponymous prytany (as Claudius Nero) at Eresos: *IG XII Suppl.* 124.5 = Labarre (n. 2), Choix, no. 78 (pp. 351-2; cf. 115).

⁷ B. Levick, *Tiberius the Politician*, London 1976, 98ff.

⁸ *JRS* 72 (1982), 80.

⁹ E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus, Annalen, Bd. II: Buch 4-6*, Heidelberg 1965, 283-284.

¹⁰ R. Seager, *Tiberius*, Berkeley 1972, 232. Cf. also the older analysis by F. B. Marsh, *The Reign of Tiberius*, Oxford 1931, 291-5, also assuming that the initial charges in this and similar cases were used simply "to prejudice the senate against the accused" (292).

expressed the apparent fragility of that crimen: "Cette argumentation peut apparaître comme un prétexte. Pourquoi attendre 33 p.C. pour reprocher à cette famille d'avoir été dans la clientèle de Pompée alors qu'elle occupa jusque là des fonctions importantes dans l'Empire? Les honneurs divins après la mort étaient chose courante en Grèce. Le culte impérial n'était pas sur un pied d'égalité avec les cultes civiques".¹¹ So even this latest study preferred simply to recognize the only real fault of these persons in an unspecified and unsubstantiated connection with the family of Germanicus and Agrippina.

However, the question is at least legitimate whether the official charge against the condemned could be in fact so glaringly irrelevant whatever the possible further ramifications of their apparent breach of imperial order with the political scene of the period might have been. To study and estimate this crucial aspect we should now rather turn to the political context of contemporary Mytilene and Asia. There are actually two questions to answer here: (a) when was Theophanes deified and how long did his divine celebration last? (b) what was the possible connection of these honours for him with the contemporaneous status of his home city and the parallel tenure of imperial positions of influence by members of his family?

The evidence for Theophanes' deification apart from the passage of Tacitus cited consists of one inscription and a group of coins. A base from Mytilene at the British Museum (Syll.³ 752/4) preserves a Greek tripartite dedicative text (in datives), arranged in three columns: the left refers to Cn. Pompeius Cn. f. Magnus imperator (αὐτοκράτορι), then styled in the traditional Greek way as *euergetas*, *soter* and *ktistas*. The middle column concerns the latter's friend Theophanes who appears not simply deified (Θέω) but identified with *Zeus Eleutherios* and additionally styled as *philopatris*, *soter*, *euergetas* and "second founder of the fatherland" (κτίστα δευτέρω τῆς πατρίδος). The right column names a local prominence, Potamon, son of Lesbonax, styled as *euergetas*, *soter*¹² and *ktistas* of the city. We should rather understand that the base supported some form of representation of the three men honoured. It is also clear that Theophanes is the most honoured of the three, in place and terms: he has been given the central position, he is a god between mortals, and not just "(the) founder", that is one of the "founders" of Mytilene, but specifically its "second founder", that is the first person deserving that title after the mythical *ktistas* of it, who should be, of course, a traditional local hero.¹³

The monument postdates Theophanes' death according to Tacitus' *defuncto Theophani*: so it is later than 44 B. C. when we find the last mention of Theophanes in Cicero's correspondence.¹⁴ Richard Laqueur in his *RE* article on Theophanes was the first to establish that the three texts of the monument must have been inscribed

¹¹ Labarre (n. 2), 148.

¹² The genitive σώτηρος (instead of the syntactically correct form σώτηρι) is a telling slip, probably owed not just to the easy confusion of genitive and dative in the Aeolic dialect (so Dittenberger, *ad loc.*): it actually borrows a form from the alternative expression of the whole text in genitive, that is in a purely honorific and not dedicative sense.

¹³ The foundation of the city was attributed either to Mytilene, daughter of Makar, or to Mytilēs/Myton, son of Poseidon and Mytilene: Steph.Byz., s.v. Μυτιλήνη; Herodian, 332.28ff. Lentz. Cf. R. Herbst, *RE* XVI.2 (1935), s.v. Mytilene, 1412. W. Leschhorn, "Gründer der Stadt". *Studien zu einem politisch-religiösen Phänomen der griechischen Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1984, 378. On the title δευτερος κτίστης cf. now also J.-L. Ferrary, 'The Hellenistic World and Roman Political Patronage', in: P. Cartledge et al. (eds.), *Hellenistic Constructs. Essays in Culture, History and Historiography*, Berkeley 1997, 119, n. 57.

¹⁴ *Ad Att.*, XV.19.1.

simultaneously.¹⁵ He also tried to pin down its date: as Sextus Pompeius, Pompey's son, fled from Octavian to the East and sought refuge and a new base of action against Antonius in the summer of 36 B. C. at Mytilene, where the loyalty to his house remained alive,¹⁶ Laqueur thought this should be the best historical context of the threefold inscription. However, he erroneously thought that Potamon's diplomatic activity for his home city could only set a *terminus ante quem* at 45 B. C. for the monument. As Potamon was still on an embassy to Augustus in 27-25 B. C., when a new Mytilenaeen alliance with Augustan Rome was achieved, Potamon's inclusion in this sort of honorific triptych may well be later. Much later, indeed, as Potamon's longevity (he died ninety years old, according to Lucian¹⁷) and the article on him in the Suda, placing him in Tiberius' times,¹⁸ render possible. So the erection of the monument and the respective actuality of Theophanes' divine honours in Mytilene may belong, as far as Potamon's life is concerned, to Augustan or early Tiberian times. Of course, the possibility of an even later date inside Tiberius' reign cannot be excluded if Potamon were also dead by the erection of the monument, which could so glorify in a unitary way three departed but decisive benefactors of Mytilene and its status.

Besides, a date later than the situation of 36 B. C. is suggested by the contents of the dedication itself where the real place of honour does not belong to Pompey but to Theophanes: certainly, this cannot have been the best method to exalt the dead emperor and win his son's favour. One has much more the impression that Pompey appears in a subordinate role, somewhat as the Roman patron of both Mytilene and Theophanes, who is represented as *the* benefactor and new personification of Zeus Eleutherios for his city.

The numismatic evidence indicates a similar temporal framework. The bronze coins of Mytilene representing and naming Theophanes have been systematically treated by Salzmann in 1985.¹⁹ There are two distinct groups of them: the later one, generally dated to the Severan period, presents a bust of Theophanes with the upper end of his chlamys near the neck (legend: ΘΕΟΦΑΝΗC) on the obverse and Artemis hunting a deer on the reverse (legend: ΜΥΤΙ-ΛΗΝΑ-ΙΩΝ). The earlier one bears a bust of Theophanes (head uncovered) with the legend: ΘΕΟΦΑΝΗC²⁰ ΘΕΟC on the obverse and the bust of a lady (head covered) with the legend: ΑΡΧΕΔΑΜΙC - ΘΕΑ on the reverse. It is an old and certainly right inference that Archedamis was Theophanes' wife. Before Salzmann's study this second group was usually placed in the Tiberian period but he showed that there were no cogent reasons for this date and preferred to remove at least its beginnings into the Augustan period, that is subsequently to Theophanes' death. On the other hand, Salzmann himself noticed the existence of a

¹⁵ R. Laqueur, *RE* V A.2 (1934), s.v. Theophanes (1), 2093-4. Cf. L. Robert, 'Théophraste de Mytilène à Constantinople', *CRAI* 1969, 42-64 (49). The lettering style of the three texts is the same, as visible on the photograph published by Salzmann (n. 19), pl. 100.5.

¹⁶ Cass. Dio 49.17.5: τῶν δὲ Λεσβίων προθυμότερα αὐτὸν (sc. Σέξτον) διὰ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μνήμην καὶ δεξαμένων καὶ κατεχόντων ...

¹⁷ *Macr.*, 23.

¹⁸ s.v. Ποτάμων Μιτυληναῖος, υἱὸς Λεσβώνακτος, ῥήτωρ, ἐσοφίστευσεν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐπὶ Καίσαρος Τιβερίου. Καὶ ποτε αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν πατρίδα ἐπανιόντος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐφοδιάζει τοιοῖσδε γράμμασι· "Ποτάμωνα Λεσβώνακτος εἴ τις ἀδικεῖν τολμήσει, σκεψάσθω εἴ μοι δυνήσεται πολεμεῖν".

¹⁹ D. Salzmann, 'Cn. Pompeius Theophanes. Ein Benennungsvorschlag zu einem Porträt in Mytilene', *MDAI(R)* 92(1985), 245ff. (253-60).

²⁰ ΘΕΠΦΑΝΗC ib. 259 is a misprint (cf. the illustrations on pls. 101-2, 104).

great number of obverse and reverse dies for these coins, suggesting a longer period for their emission.²¹

What is now equally noteworthy is that while the deified Theophanes (and his wife) should so probably appear on Mytilenaeen coins already under Augustus, the appearance of Roman emperors on them had to wait considerably. As Andrew Burnett has ascertained in his entry on Mytilene in *RPC*,²² this happens with a bronze issue in the last years of Tiberius. There are three denominations of it: the largest one presents on the obverse Tiberius in a typical Roman libating posture and the legend TI(BEPIOC) KAICAP ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟC, MYTI(ΛΗΝΑΙΩΝ); on the reverse we see Augustus on an elephant quadriga and the legend KAICAP ΘΕΟC ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟC. The other two, and smaller, denominations both present on the obverse Tiberius' laureate head and the legend TI ΘΕΟC ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟC, MYTI, while on the reverses appear respectively Augustus and Livia as ΘΕΟC/ΘΕΑ. The elephant chariot of Augustus on the largest denomination, where Tiberius is not yet styled Theos, has been convincingly recognized by Burnett as an imitation of a Roman sestertius of A. D. 34/5-36/7, so his date "c. AD 35" for this and the two other, probably a little later series must be accepted.

Let us now reconstruct what all this means historically. Up to c. A. D. 35 there seem to have been only two gods²³ exhibited on Mytilenaeen coins: Theophanes and his wife. Just two years after the Tacitean events we started from the situation changes: first the deified Augustus and the reigning Tiberius in sacerdotal posture appear, probably a little later also Tiberius himself and Livia expressly deified. The temporal relation seems too close to be accidental. The expression of the cult of Theophanes on the coins of Mytilene is very probably succeeded after the fall of Theophanes' first descendants by the orthodoxy of imperial cult. So Theophanes' cult cannot have been as politically trivial and inoffensive as one might have thought.

To return to the sole preserved piece of epigraphic evidence for it, we may notice that Theophanes as Zeus Eleutherios, manifestly outbidding the parallel honour of Pompey the Great on local Greek level, is also a sign of a strong Mytilenaeen self-confidence and pride. As we saw, we cannot exclude that the date of that triple iconostasis of Mytilenaeen freedom also falls into Tiberius' reign, even if the inception of Theophanes' cult may well be much older, that is directly subsequent to his death after 44 B. C. Anyway, an impressive projection of the local political god of Mytilene under Augustus or Tiberius results here, too. The fact that we also possess rich inscriptional evidence on the cult of Caesar, Augustus and members of his house (e.g. M. Agrippa), often identified with traditional Greek gods (as e.g. Zeus Olympios) at Mytilene²⁴ does not detract, I think, from the importance of this conclusion. It is exactly in a passage of the well-known, fragmentary decree of the Mytilenaeans for the foundation of a local cult of Augustus (26 B. C.)²⁵ that we find a passage unintentionally betraying the inappropriateness of an ongoing divine cult for a

²¹ *Ib.*, 254f.

²² A. Burnett - M. Amandry - P. P. Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*, I, London/Paris 1992, 396f.

²³ The coins of Mytilene celebrating Germanicus and Agrippina as gods have now been persuasively attributed to the reign of their son, Caligula, by Burnett, *ib.* Of course, even this late appearance supports the thesis of a permanent bond between Agrippina's family and Lesbos, cf. below.

²⁴ So e.g. *IG* XII.2.164-169 and the inscriptions cited in the next notes.

²⁵ *Ib.* 58 = Labarre (n. 2), Choix, no. 21, b.3-9: ... ὅτ[ι] τοῖς οὐρανίου τετε[λ]χόσι δόξης καὶ θεῶν ὑπεροχὴν καὶ κράτος ἔχουσιν οὐδέποτε δύναται συνεξιωθῆναι τὰ καὶ τῇ τύχῃ ταπεινότερα καὶ τῇ φύσει.

Mytilenaeen glory: the Mytilenaeans humbly ask there for Augustus' understanding "that those who have achieved celestial glory and divine superiority and might never can be matched by offerings lower by fortune and nature". It was actually something of a self-contradiction on the part of the Mytilenaeans to go on claiming that divine level on the basis of political grace for one of their past fellow citizens. The discrepancy would emerge even more clearly if the restoration of the epithet *Eleutherios* in another Mytilenaeen dedication to Augustus is correct:²⁶ a latent competition of Mytilene's great political benefactors would result. So we might come more and more to realize that the development to imperial exclusivity of political divinity does not need to have been always a smooth one.

Now, the critical factor in the case of Mytilene must have been the not simply local but imperial status of Theophanes the god's descendants. As mentioned above, no less than three of them had been already integrated into the Roman imperial administration (and there may have been more in lower positions). Two of them must have been active in Asia under Augustus, that is, in the province to which the *civitas libera* Mytilene was practically attached. So their connection with Mytilene must have been important for the city and may have decisively contributed to Theophanes' posthumous distinction there. Another important, specific aspect was that Lesbos was naturally and closely connected with Agrippina who bore there Julia Livilla during the eastern tour of Germanicus in A. D. 18.²⁷ Such a personal relation was not at all negligible in Greek loyalties since much older times (it may suffice to recall the special position of Kos towards Philadelphos and the rest of the Ptolemies splendidly cherished in local loyalty and Alexandrian policy and poetry). So indigenous and empire-wide bonds of Lesbos and Lesbians might cause understandable concern to Tiberius' already shaken confidence in his most familiar persons and himself.

A remark on the difference of fate between Theophanes' and Eurycles' descendants initially mentioned also suggests itself: we should perhaps notice that there is a marked difference between Eurycles' posthumous celebration in Laconia and Theophanes' one at Mytilene under Tiberius. In the well-known Gythian *lex sacra* under Tiberius²⁸ regular divine honours are decreed for Augustus, Livia, the reigning emperor (his own expressed reluctance to such honours²⁹ just corresponding to his name's not being associated with the title of "god" or the cult of a traditional divinity) and the princes of the dynasty (Germanicus and Drusus). For Eurycles and his son Laco just the honour of two additional days of theatrical performances "after the days of the gods and hegemonas" is reserved, respectively "to the memory" of the former styled just as "euergetes of our *ethnos* (Eleutherolakones) and city in many cases" and "to the honour" of the latter described as "tutor (κηδεμόνος) of our *ethnos* and the safety and preservation of our city". The Euryclids, whatever other inopportune imperial connections and local mischiefs they might indulge in, probably earlier and better discerned the marking line between heroes of local politics and the exclusive gods of imperial level. They knew to acquiesce in an inoffensive, safer place of religious hierarchy for the heads of their *genos*.

We may so conclude that it was not "Greek adulation" but rather the capacity, pride and imperial as well as local connections of Roman aristocrats of Greek origin

²⁶ IG XII.2.156: Ἀντοκράτορι Καίσαρι Σεβαστῷ Ἐλε[υθερίῳ.]

²⁷ Tac., *Ann.*, II.54.1. Cf. n. 23 above.

²⁸ J.H.Oliver, *Greek Constitutions of Early Roman Emperors from Inscriptions and Papyri*, Philadelphia 1989, 15 I.

²⁹ Ib. II.

that were well known to and able to disquiet Tiberius' *saeva et lenta natura*³⁰ against Theophanes' descendants in the princeps' sunset of fear and terror.

II. *Neos Theophanes* and new Lesbian troubles.

Another important, much later descendant of Theophanes of high imperial status appears in the second century A. D. under the name M. Pompeius M. f. Macrinus Neos Theophanes. The basic elements of his considerable Roman career had been long known from an inscription of Mytilene,³¹ one from Tegea³² and one from Iotape in Cilicia:³³ praetor about 105, legatus of the Legio VI Victrix before 110, then first legatus Augusti pro praetore in Cilicia and later proconsul of Sicily, consul suffectus in 115 and proconsul of Africa about 130. These data reappeared and important new ones were added with the publication in 1979 by Hodot of a new inscription with the cursus of the same man from Mytilene.³⁴ Although just the left upper part of the whole has been preserved, it is clear that this Macrinus' Roman career is here sandwiched between local functions, titles and services. So just after his name we have in ll. 2-4 (according to the most recent edition by Labarre based on Hodot's text and proposed restorations): ... ὁ εἰρονόμας καὶ [ca. 14-15 εὐεργέτας καὶ κτίσ]/τας τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἀπύγον[ος Γναίω Πομπηίω Θεοφάνη, ὀγκεκομίσμε]/νος τὰν τε πόλιν ἀμμέων καὶ [ca. 11-13 ὕπατος ... Again ll. 11-15 offer the following elements of local relevance: ... π[ρεσβεύσαις πόλλακις ὑπερ τῆς διατη]/ρήσιος καὶ συναυξήσιος τῆς τε ἐλευθερίας ἀμμέων καὶ τῆς ὑπαρχοῖσας φιλίας πρὸς τὸν / μέγιστον καὶ ἐπιφανέστατον τῶν ἀπ' αἰῶνος [πρίγκιπα αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα Τίτον Αἴλι]/ον Ἀδριάνον Ἀντώνεινον Σέβαστον Εὐσ[έβεια, τὸν εὐεργέταν καὶ κτίσαν τῆς πόλιν], / καὶ προφήτας Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθίω, Σεβασ[τοφάντας ca. 27]ν.

It is clear that Macrinus Neos Theophanes is invested here with important hieratic titles although their precise significance in regard to place and time unfortunately escape us. However, this would not be the only case where the extraordinary authority of a local magnate finds inoffensive expression in an exalted sacral position, with at least an ingredient of imperial cult, in the Greek cities of the Roman Empire (cf. the older Mytilenaeian example of Potamon and C. Stertinius Xenophon's position on Kos under Nero). Not less significant and here mainly relevant is what Macrinus was able to achieve for Mytilene's status. We cannot be certain which participle should be restored at the end of l. 3 and the beginning of l. 4 and which word followed the conjunction (καὶ) where the preserved part of l. 4 ends. Nevertheless, even if the restoration [ὀγκεκομίσμε]/νος, inspired by the similar expression in a honorific inscription for the Republican Theophanes,³⁵ is not without possible alternatives (e. g. σεσώσμε]νος or ἀποκαταστάμε]νος), the meaning should emerge that Macrinus has

³⁰ Suet., *Tib.*, 57.1.

³¹ *IG* XII.2.135= Labarre (n. 2), Choix, no. 42.

³² *IG* V.2.151= *IG* XII Suppl., p.75.

³³ *AE* 1965, 319. Cf. on his whole career most recently K. Wachtel, *PIR*², P 628.

³⁴ R. Hodot, 'La grande inscription de M. Pompeius Macrinus à Mytilène', *ZPE* 34 (1979), 221-37. The text (p. 224) also in: *SEG* 29 (1979), 741; Labarre (n.2), Choix, no. 43.

³⁵ Robert, *Théophane* (n. 15), 52f.= Labarre (n. 2), Choix, no. 18: ... ἀνακομισσάμενον παρὰ τῶν κοινῶν εὐεργετῶν Ῥωμ[αί]ων τὰν τε πόλιν καὶ τὰν χώραν καὶ τὰν πάτριον ἐλευθερίαν ...

put his community of descent with its territory/the whole island (see below) greatly in his debt. This view is further strengthened by the discernible contents of ll. 11ff. The restoration π[ρεσβεύσαις ... in l. 11³⁶ is the only that would give sense in this part of the text and διατη[ρῆσις] in ll. 11-12³⁷ could only be replaced by συντη[ρῆσις] with actually the same sense, although worse style perhaps.³⁸ The meaning of this part of the text should undoubtedly be that Macrinus achieved the preservation and enlargement of Mytilene's freedom and possible parallel privileges. It would simply not do to see here in all this just a vague reference to specific privileges and not to the *libertas* of the city, obviously a question of great interest at that very time.³⁹ What is more, the byname of Macrinus, Neos Theophanes, seems to me to have been greatly underestimated so far. It has already been shown that it could not mean just the resumption of the name of a famous ancestor among his descendants, so that "New" and "Old" Theophanes could have been distinguished.⁴⁰ It is clear that "New Theophanes" is here a honorific byname, as e.g. in the well-known attribution of the title "New Themistocles" to C. Julius Nicanor who gave back Salamis to the Athenians in the Augustan period.⁴¹ Therefore, we should rather understand that the "New Theophanes" did for Mytilene something so important that its value could be paralleled and his personality fittingly compared to his famous ancestor, the "liberator" of Mytilene *par excellence*, through this byname.

Despite these clear indications of the new inscription on Macrinus Neos Theophanes previous scholars have been apparently reluctant to recognize the seriousness of the situation from which this man saved Mytilene and gained his eloquent local title.⁴² A reason for this attitude may be that Hadrian was often celebrated as *Eleutherios* at Mytilene,⁴³ which has hesitantly been connected with a possible restoration of political liberty in his reign:⁴⁴ so renewed problems on this issue under his successor might seem at first improbable.

Fortunately, the clear indications of Macrinus' new Mytilenaeen *cursus* may be turned into certainty by a contemporary's testimony overlooked so far. Aelius Aristides addressed in about A. D. 149 a speech "To the Rhodians on Concord" (Ῥοδίοις περὶ

³⁶ I have been able to verify the rest of the initial *pi* on the stone at the Museum of Mytilini (July '98).

³⁷ Again I have verified on the stone the clear rest of a *rho* at the beginning of l. 12.

³⁸ Cf. already Hodot (n. 34), 226, n. 21.

³⁹ *Contra* Labarre (n. 2), 144.

⁴⁰ See Hodot (n. 34), 230 with n. 41.

⁴¹ See G.W. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World*, Oxford 1965, 96; C. P. Jones, 'Three Foreigners in Attica. I. Julius Nicanor', *Phoenix* 32 (1978), 222-8.

⁴² Hodot (n. 34), 231 with n. 45; Labarre (n. 2), 144. According to G. Alföldy, *Chiron* 9 (1979), 529, n. 74 he apparently owed his byname to the fact that he was the "new founder" of his family after the eclipse since Tiberius. However, this misses the important local relevance of the title.

⁴³ The certain epigraphic testimonies collected in Hodot (n. 34), 235, n. 64.

⁴⁴ So first V. Chapot, *La province romaine proconsulaire d'Asie*, Paris 1904, 118. Cf. later: W. Weber, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrianus*, Leipzig 1907, 136; F. Hiller v. Gärtringen, *IG XII Suppl.*, p. 75; Hodot (n. 34), 235. Labarre (n. 2), 142-4 evades the specific question although he seems to believe in the permanence of Mytilenaeen *libertas* during the whole period of the Empire.

ὁμονοίας).⁴⁵ Aristides tried with this sort of epistolary preaching to help the Rhodians recover the normal rhythm of their political and social life, which had been seriously disturbed in the years after the severe earthquake of A. D. 141 or 142. As it becomes such a genre, he arrayed positive and negative examples, often taken from literary and historical tradition, to reach his purpose. Among these he mentioned the importance of collaboration and common spirit on warships as in the heyday of Rhodian power. Then we find the following part (§ 54-56) that deserves to be quoted here: Εἴτα ἐν νηὶ μὲν στάσις οὐχὶ σωτήριον, ἐν δὲ πόλει καὶ ταύτῃ περιρρύτῳ φθείρειν ἀλλήλους συνεζευγμένους σῶφρον ἢ τὰ Λεσβίων καὶ τὰ Μυτιληναίων κακὰ μιμῆσθαι 'Ροδίουσ' ὄντας; 'Αλλὰ πολλῶ βέλτιον ἦν ἐκείνους τῆς ὑμετέρας εὐνομίας ἐπιθυμήσαντας ὁρᾶσθαι ἢ τῆς ἐκείνων δυστυχίας ὑμᾶς ὑπομῆναι μιμητὰς γενέσθαι. (55) Καίτοι πρόποντα μὲν ἂν τις ἔχοι καὶ πρὸς ἐκείνους εἰπεῖν καὶ ἰκνούμενα· "ἄνδρες Λέσβιοι, ποῖ προήχθητε; Οἱ φατὲ μὲν τὴν νῆσον ἅπασαν ὑμῖν εἶναι μουσικὴν καὶ τούτου τὴν 'Ορφῆως κεφαλὴν αἰτιᾶσθε, αὐτοὶ δὲ οὐκ αἰσχύνεσθε οὕτως ἀμούσως διακείμενοι; Καὶ κιθαρωδοῖς μὲν ποτε τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἐνικᾶτε, τῷ δὲ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν μὴ δύνασθαι βουλευσασθαι κινδυνεύετε ἡττᾶσθαι καὶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων; Καὶ πρότερον μὲν παρ' ὑμῶν ἐτέρωσε βαδίζοντες ἔπανον τὰς στάσεις, νῦν δὲ οὐδὲ παρ' ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς γνῶναι δύνασθε;" Ταῦτ' ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ τις ὀρθῶς (ἂν) καὶ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν εἰπεῖν νοουθετῶν. (56) Οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ἐκείνοις μὲν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐκ παλαιοῦ τὸ ἄλογον τοῦτο τῆς δυστυχίας συνείμαρται καὶ πολλάκις ἠλέγχθησαν οὐχ ὡς δεῖ διακείμενοι, ὑμῖν (sc. 'Ροδίοις) δὲ οὐδαμῶθεν προσήκει τὸ νόσημα ...

"The evils of Lesbians and Mytilenaeans" should so work as a deterrent from similar situations for the Rhodians, possessing a very different tradition of political harmony. Now, one could first think that the time of these Lesbian and Mytilenaeans troubles, eliciting from Aristides this *en passant* admonition, belongs to the historical past, e.g. Alkaios' era and its notorious strifes. One could then just possibly understand the temporal antithesis expressed through νῦν δὲ in § 55 as opposing the time of Terperandros, who went to Sparta to promote its internal peace in the seventh century B. C. to Alkaios' and Pittakos' turbulent period in the next century, that is, as an antithesis *between past situations*, just given in its second part the literary force of a historical present for greater emphasis. However, even by such a strained interpretation a second, unequivocal antithesis between past and real present of the Lesbians exists in the expression ἐκ παλαιοῦ in § 56, which implies a traditional and *current* difference in the political behaviour of Lesbos and Rhodes.⁴⁶

So we may conclude that Aristides integrated into his conciliatory address to the Rhodians a similar and obviously not less badly needed "spot" of political wisdom for his contemporary Lesbians and Mytilenaeans. As in his description of the Rhodian problems⁴⁷ Aristides avoids precision. However, he mentions a situation of political misery on Lesbos (Lesbian δυστυχία opposed to Rhodian εὐνομία), actually a sort of political paralysis as the Lesbians should be unable "to decide for themselves" (τῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν μὴ δύνασθαι βουλευσασθαι), even to "know each other" (οὐδὲ παρ' ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς γνῶναι δύνασθε), in other words to keep proper contact

⁴⁵ XXIV Keil. Cf. K. Buraselis, 'Aelius Aristides als Panegyriker und Mahner. Von Theorie und Praxis des politisch-sozialen Gleichgewichts im griechischen Osten der Kaiserzeit', in: W. Schuller (Hrsg.), *Politische Theorie und Praxis im Altertum*, Darmstadt 1998, 192ff.

⁴⁶ Cf. already Ch. A. Behr, *P. Aelius Aristides. The Complete Works*, vol. II, Leiden 1981, 370, n. 43 (on τὰ Λεσβίων καὶ τὰ Μυτιληναίων κακὰ): "They (:the Lesbians) were notorious for the factions behavior immortalized in the poems of Alcaeus, c. 600 B. C. ... However, a real current event may be alluded to".

⁴⁷ Cf. Buraselis (n. 45), 193.

with each other. It is, of course, understandable that if Rhodes of the better tradition is represented in another passage of the same speech⁴⁸ as running the risk of losing its free status through political disorder, Lesbos and Mytilene were in more acute danger of such a loss.⁴⁹ Against this enriched background then Neos Theophanes' engagement and achievement for the city of his forefathers is wholly justified. The old involvement of Theophanes' family in Roman politics cost the island some agonies but also served it well in preserving its status of privilege.

⁴⁸ § 58. Cf. Buraselis (n. 45), 198f.

⁴⁹ Another possible aspect of Aristides' reference to the troubles of "Lesbians and Mytilenaeans" can be the contemporary situation of the Lesbian Koinon, which existed in Potamon's times (*IG* XII Suppl. 7 = Labarre (n. 2), Choix, no. 22 with bibl.), apparently under Mytilenaeen leadership, but seems to have been split in the Flavian period as Mytilene and possibly the rest of the island's cities as Καλληνεῖς build separate political units in the still enigmatic dues (?) list of Asia from Ephesos (*SEG* 37 (1987), 884, II.9-11, on which see Labarre's (n. 2) attractive hypothesis, 137ff.). As the Koinon reappears and mints, apparently for the first time, during the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus (*BMC* Troas, Aeolis and Lesbos, London 1894, pp.169f.), one might think of an inter-city crisis on Lesbos also superseded in the preceding period of Antoninus Pius. We cannot say more by the present evidence.