

L. GELLIUS MAXIMUS, PHYSICIAN AND PROCURATOR

THE private physicians of the Roman emperors with the exception of Galen are shadowy figures whose origins, friends, and political influence can only rarely be glimpsed. C. Stertinius Xenophon obtained immunity from taxation for his native island of Cos,¹ and T. Statilius Criton may have secured certain privileges from Trajan for the Museum of Ephesus,² but these are isolated instances. Their social position is similarly hard to define: no doctor entered the senate and equestrian rank was the most that could be obtained. But, if social prejudices prevented them from becoming senators, their descendants were free from such restraints, and in the turbulent Roman society of the late second century upward mobility was not difficult.

In A.D. 219 Gellius Maximus, the legate of *leg. IV Scythica* in Syria, was defeated and killed in an attempt to raise a revolt against Elagabalus. Cassius Dio in a cutting aside proclaims this as a clear indication of the disgraceful state of contemporary affairs, when everything is turned upside down and when the son of a doctor can take it into his head to aim at the Empire.³ The identity of the pretender long remained undisclosed, and Dio's disparagement of his origins would have prevailed but for the discovery by Ramsay and his associates of several inscriptions from Pisidian Antioch. The first to be published was an acephalous fragment which read:⁴ se[] | arch[] | sancti [] | domini n | Antonini | Aug ducena|rio et a musio | sac perpet | dei Aesculapi | pa[]. Hirschfeld's supplement to line 2, *arch[ierei]*, a reference to the high priesthood of Egypt,⁵ gained authority from its presence in *CIL* iii. 6820, but later finds were to prove this wrong. Ramsay copied an inscription erected to L. Gellius Maximus, *φίλος καὶ ἀρχίατρος* of Caracalla or Elagabalus, by Aelius Ponticus upon whom he had conferred some benefit,⁶ and Calder published another dedication to him by Aur. Gellius Lucius of Sagalassus.⁷ In this the recipient's titles, *[ἀ]ρχί[ατρ]ος ἀπὸ Μουσείου καὶ δουκηνάριος*, correspond closely to those on the Latin inscription, and there can be little doubt of the identity of the persons commemorated, especially as on a fourth inscription L. Gellius Maximus is called a 'servant' or 'successor' to Asclepius.⁸ Stein swiftly noticed that this imperial doctor must be the father of the usurper and pointed out the

¹ Tac. *Ann.* 12. 61. R. Herzog, 'Nikias und Xenophon von Kos', *HZ* cxxv (1922), 230, erred in thinking that he also secured *libertas* for Cos. On his equestrian career, H. G. Pflaum, *Les Carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le haut-empire romain*, n. 16. This work will henceforward be referred to as *CP*.

² The honorific inscription, *JOAI* xxiii (1926), *B.263*, is inscribed in the same year as a *diatagma* of Trajan giving privileges, *Forschungen in Ephesos*, iv. 80 n. 1.

³ Dio 80. 7. 1. He may well be identical with the Gellius who was said to have been executed under Macrinus, SHA *Diadumenianus* 9. 1 and *PIR*² G.123.

⁴ T. Mommsen from Ramsay's copy in *Eph. Ep.* v (1884), 579 n. 1346: a better version was given by J. R. S. Sterrett, *An Epigraphical Journey in Asia Minor*, n. 109.

⁵ O. Hirschfeld, *Die kaiserlichen Verwaltungsbeamten bis auf Diokletian*, p. 363 n. 1.

⁶ First published as an annotation to the following inscription, and later by D. M. Robinson, *TAPA* lvii (1926), 224 n. 48.

⁷ *JRS* ii (1912), 96 n. 25. This inscription may reveal a further cognomen, [Poly]-histor, but Calder and Stein, *PIR*² G.131, were rightly sceptical.

⁸ *JRS* xiv (1924), 199 n. 35. Ramsay read δ[εὸς], Crönert at *SEG* vi. 563 δ[ιὰδοχος].

Antiochene origins and connections of his family.¹ Thus, far from being the son of an ordinary doctor, as Dio might suggest, the younger Gellius Maximus came from a similar background to that of the historian, a well-to-do family in a flourishing city, and he was the son of a personal physician to the emperor.²

The failure of the son has obscured the successes of the father, whose career has never received the attention it deserves.³ As will be shown, the problems that it raises merit more than a passing remark, and a re-examination of all the evidence is especially appropriate since recent writers have gone far to supply a context into which this educated physician must be placed. There are two major difficulties to be resolved: to which Museum did Gellius belong, and what was the post which gave him the salary of a *ducenarius*?

The early editors assumed without hesitation that Gellius was a member of the Museum of Alexandria, a conclusion which Hirschfeld's supplement seemed to confirm, but the weighty and confident denial of Stein soon found support.⁴ His arguments were never propounded in detail, but he was clearly influenced by the important discoveries of Josef Keil, the leader of the Austrian excavations at Ephesus.⁵ The position of Ephesus as one of the chief centres of the sophistic movement of the second century was already clear from the pages of Philostratus,⁶ and the new epigraphic finds gave greater precision and clarity to the intellectual organization that existed there under the name of the Museum. The evidence for the teachers and doctors who formed its members stretches from the first to the third century and reveals both academic and social interests. On the one hand, the members of the Museum watched over the tombs of former members, enjoyed legacies and similar benefits, and performed the appropriate religious duties;⁷ on the other, they held medical contests, regulated the professional conduct of their fellow members, and possibly carried on the teaching of medicine within the walls of the Museum.⁸ T. Statilius Criton may have been a student or a member there before becoming private doctor to Trajan, for he received an honorary decree from the doctors at the Museum, possibly for some benefit conferred upon them by the emperor at his request.⁹ His relative, Statilius Attalus, came from Heraclea under Salbace to study medicine there and two Ephesians, Soranus and

¹ A. Stein, *Der römische Ritterstand*, pp. 402-3. The assertion is made less confidently at *PIR*² G.131.

² On Dio, F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio*, pp. 8 ff.

³ As Pflaum, *CP*, discusses in detail only those careers that show more than one post, Gellius is not discussed, and he is also omitted from the *Fasti* of procurators.

⁴ A. Stein, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Verwaltung Aegyptens unter römischer Herrschaft*, p. 122. Although he still denied Alexandrian membership at *PIR*² G.131, he was less certain of Ephesian. His original view was maintained by B. M. Levick, *Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor*, p. 127 n. 6.

⁵ Keil published the records of the medical contests in 'Ärzteinschriften aus Ephesos', *JÖAI* viii (1905), 128-38.

⁶ Philostratus, *VS*, pp. 526 ff., 605 ff.

⁷ The inscriptions are respectively: J. T. Wood, *Inscriptions from Ephesus*, Tombs 8 n. 7 (*Forschungen in Ephesos* ii. 115 n. 21) (cf. ii, n. 65) and *CIL* iii. 14195a (*Forschungen in Ephesos* iii. 150 n. 68).

⁸ *JÖAI* viii (1905), 128-38; *JÖAI* xxx (1937), B.200: Keil's view that the medical contests were final examinations was refuted by P. Wolters, *JÖAI* ix (1906), B.295, and his attempts to locate the Museum at the site of the 'Doppelkirche' and to discover rooms for teaching were rejected by E. Reisch, *Forschungen in Ephesos* iv/1. 3 ff. and by F. Miltner, *Ephesos*, p. 91.

⁹ *JÖAI* xxiii (1926), B.263, and see the comments of W. H. Buckler, 'T. Statilius Criton, Trajani Aug. medicus', *JÖAI* xxx (1937), B.5 ff.

Rufus, wrote medical textbooks that long remained classics.¹ The lavish benefactions of sophists, the imposing library of Celsus, the many inscriptions to senators and distinguished citizens, all testify to the city's prosperity and the Museum may have shared in its good fortune.²

Although at first sight this seems a suitable organization in which to place a doctor as eminent as Gellius, there are several objections which impose caution and invite another solution. It is important to remember that our knowledge of the Ephesian Museum is without parallel, not because similar groups did not exist elsewhere, but because no such detailed epigraphic records have survived. In the fragmentary state of our knowledge an argument *ex silentio* is dangerous and delusive, and, as similar Museums have been discovered, it is possible to conjecture that their activities were similar. Stein's suggestion that Gellius belonged to the Museum of Ephesus was made when the choice lay between Alexandria and Ephesus, and his arguments became less cogent when other claimants appeared.³ Smyrna, the great cultural rival of Ephesus, had its own Museum, which contained lawyers and probably doctors:⁴ a medical student came thither from the Black Sea town of Tieion, and a fragmentary inscription may hide medical contests comparable to those of Ephesus.⁵ A Museum has been located at Athens, although some have expressed doubts,⁶ and other Eastern cities may have sheltered similar intellectual groups. Tarsus shows a tradition of medical instruction, and there were sophists teaching at Byzantium.⁷ Indeed, the presence of sophists, philosophers, and doctors at Pergamum, where the Vespasianic rescript giving privileges to intellectual organizations was discovered, suggests that a Pergamene Museum on the Alexandrian model is not out of the question.⁸ The choice is thus broader than Stein at first suspected, and Ephesus becomes but one candidate out of many. Although the influence of Ephesus was strong in the Maeander valley, and although the doctors of Heraclea may be connected with the Ephesian Museum, the links between Ephesus and Antioch in Pisidia were not many. Miss Levick notes two magnates of Antioch who boasted of their association with Ephesus, and Marcellus of Antioch travelled there to become a pupil of

¹ J. and L. Robert, *La Carie*, ii. 220. On Soranus, I. E. Drabkin, 'Soranus and his system of medicine', *BHM* xxv (1951), 503-18, and on Rufus, J. Ilberg, 'Rufus von Ephesos', *Abh. Sächs. Akad.* 1931, Band 1.

² Much material will be found conveniently assembled in G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire*, pp. 17-29, 45-7, 90-1.

³ As he realized, *PIR*² G.131.

⁴ L. Robert, *Études anatoliennes*, pp. 146-8.

⁵ L. Robert, *Hellenica*, xi-xii. 233, with details of earlier publications, and cf. also *CIG* 3283: P. Lebas and W. H. Waddington, *Voyage archéologique*, iii. n. 1523.

⁶ J. H. Oliver, *Hesperia* iii (1934), 191-6. Doubts were expressed by P. Lemerle, 'Inscriptions latines et grecques de Philippos', *BCH* lix (1935), 135-7, although he accepted Oliver's conclusion. See also J. H. Oliver, *Hesperia*, *Suppl.* xiii (1970), 106.

⁷ The teaching of medicine at Tarsus was

not mentioned by W. M. Ramsay in his description of the intellectual life of the city, *The Cities of St. Paul*, pp. 228-35, but a pharmacological tradition stretching from Philo and Dioscorides to Asclepiades Pharmacion can be easily discovered or manufactured. On Byzantium, Philostratus, *VS* 529-30, 590-1.

⁸ On Pergamum, Bowersock, *op. cit. passim*. More light on the cultural importance of this city in the second century is thrown by C. Habicht and M. Wörle, *Die Inschriften des Asklepieions*. Vespasian's rescript was published by R. Herzog, *SBBerl* 1935, 967-1019. Two Pergamene doctors connected with a Museum (probably that of Alexandria) are honoured at Delphi in 27 B.C., *SEG* ii. 332 with L. Robert, *BCH* lii (1928), 178 n. 2. On the intellectual tradition of Pergamum and its links with Alexandria, R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, pp. 234-52, and Habicht, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-51.

the sophist, Soter,¹ but this may not be sufficient to lift the claims of Ephesus above those of Smyrna or of Pergamum. With the latter city Antioch had long-standing cultural contacts, and Gellius' priesthood of Asclepius may derive from a connection with the celebrated Asclepeion there.²

But why after all must Gellius be placed only in a local Museum? Stein's arguments against Alexandria, never conclusive, have been weakened by later discoveries, and although his remarks upon the titulature of the members of the Alexandrian Museum have great value, his conclusions are not entailed by them.

Although many details of the administration of the Alexandrian Museum are obscure, it is clear that certainly by the time of Hadrian, and probably earlier, membership was another sign of imperial favour and patronage, and that not all who enjoyed its privileges could claim to be distinguished scholars.³ A champion athlete and a retired soldier take their places alongside a Homeric poet and philosophers,⁴ and the inclusion of imperial procurators, whether active or retired, suggested to Lemerle an imperial interest in the control of its finances as well as in the choice of members.⁵ Thus it was fitting that an imperial physician who had served on the emperor's council should be rewarded with entry into a notable group of intellectuals whose eminence stretched back to the time of Callimachus and Eratosthenes.⁶

Distance was no bar to membership, for the mobility of sophists and scholars, not to mention doctors, enabled them to receive honours from many cities. The doctor and savant, Heracleitus of Rhodiapolis, was honoured for his poetry, his medical skill, and his literary ability by the Alexandrians, the Rhodians, and the Athenians.⁷ It is not even certain that residence was a necessary condition of membership of the Museum. Hadrian granted entry to Dionysius of Miletus and to Polemo, but there is no indication as yet that they ever visited Egypt.⁸ But a belief that Gellius was a non-resident member is not essential, and the lives of the sophists are not described in such detail as to exclude a brief visit for installation. Others came from far to dine at the

¹ Levick, *op. cit.* 127, Philostratus, *VS* 605.

² Levick, *op. cit.* 124-6: *CIL* iii. 6820 must be expanded to read *sac(erdoti)*.

³ Müller-Graupa's discussion in *RE* xvi/1. 797-821 is still useful, although he attributes too much to the emperor Hadrian. N. Lewis, 'The non-scholar members of the Alexandrian Museum', *Mnemosyne*, 4th ser. xvi (1963), 257-60, has collected some of the evidence for non-scholars. P. Rylands 143, dated to A.D. 38, shows a local Egyptian politician as a member, and P. Oxy. 1241. ii. 16, reveals that an officer *ἐκ τῶν λογχοφύρων* was president under the Ptolemies.

⁴ M. Aur. Asclepiades, *IG* xiv. 1103, who is the *ignotus* of *BCAR* lvii (1953-5), 73-8; A. and E. Bernard, *Les Inscriptions grecques et latines du Colosse de Memnon*, pp. 66-7 (henceforth Bernard); *ib.* 112-13; among the philosophers note *OGIS* 712 with the comments of C. P. Jones (*CQ* n.s. xvii [1967], 311 ff.). See also the list given by Habicht, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁵ P. Lemerle, *op. cit.* 131-40, but his arguments are not conclusive, as will be shown.

⁶ On the early history of the Museum, Pfeiffer, *op. cit.* 96 ff., 156 ff. If *φίλος* indicates that Gellius was a member of the emperor's *consilium*, he should be retained in the prosopographical appendix to J. A. Crook, *Consilium Principis*, and the following doctors added: Criton, on the evidence of *MAMA* vi. 91 (= J. and L. Robert, *La Carie*, ii. 167); Ser. Sulpicius Hecataeus from Cnidos, C. T. Newton et al., *Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*, n. 799. I remain unconvinced by the attempts of A. B. West to discover an imperial doctor at Corinth viii/2, n. 15.

⁷ *IGRR* iii. 733. Another inscription of this wealthy doctor is *IGRR* iii. 732.

⁸ Philostratus, *VS* 524 and 532-3. Stein, *Untersuchungen*, p. 122, rightly regarded their presence as an obstacle to his theory of Gellius and the Ephesian Museum.

Museum—a procurator from Philippi, another from Ostia, philosophers from Caria, a man from Magnesia on the Maeander, a philosopher called Fronto from a remote city in Asia Minor¹—and thus distance would not prevent Gellius from becoming a member.

Nor can it be alleged that as a doctor Gellius was unsuited to the refined culture of the Alexandrian philosophers, for, as I have shown, non-scholars were often admitted as a reward for public service either within Egypt or as procurators. Besides, there is no dispute about the attractiveness of Alexandria and its medical school for doctors: even had we not the late testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus,² the number and variety of its students would be ample confirmation. A young man from Adada in Pisidia, the son of a wealthy citizen, died there before completing his studies, and Galen spent some years there under the instruction of Numisianus, Heraclianus, and Julianus.³ The presence of doctors and their pupils within a city is no sure proof that they formed part of a Museum, and medical teaching may easily have existed outside that institution; at Alexandria, however, as much as at Ephesus, there is evidence that the physicians were accepted as full and worthy members. Athenaeus describes how, after the dispersal of the members of the Museum by Ptolemy VIII, grammarians, philosophers, geometers, and doctors were scattered abroad throughout the Eastern Mediterranean.⁴ At least one doctor became president of the Museum; Chrysermus, a kinsman of Ptolemy VI and an exegete, head of the doctors and president, received a memorial on Delos from an Athenian friend.⁵ Medical writings were to be found in the great library, and the experiments upon criminals by Herophilus and Erasistratus did not take place without the approval and encouragement of the king.⁶ It is not improbable that Vespasian consulted the doctors attached to the Museum when he sought advice upon the possibility of his cure of sick persons who had been sent to him by the god Sarapis, especially as Philostratus may be right to record a meeting with the Alexandrian philosophers.⁷ The frequent participation of doctors in intellectual debates in the late first and second centuries, and mention of them in laws and edicts alongside teachers and scholars, make their inclusion within the Museum almost certain, and thus there is no objection to Gellius' presence on grounds of scholarly unsuitability.⁸

¹ Lemerle, *op. cit.* 131–3; *CIL* xiv. 5340; *Syll.* 3, n. 900, and *BCH* iv (1880), 405–6; *I. Magnesia*. 189, although it is not impossible that the last three belonged to Ephesus: J. Keil and A. von Premerstein, *Denkschr. Wien.* liv/2 (1911), n. 210, who thought that this inscription came from a library or from a collection of family portraits.

² Ammianus 22. 16. 18; cf. Anon. *Expositio totius mundi* 37. The arguments against accepting the evidence of Ammianus put forward by J. Scarborough, 'Ammianus Marcellinus xxii. 16. 18; Alexandria's medical reputation in the fourth century', *Clio Medica* iv (1969), 141–2, must be rejected.

³ *IGRR* iii. 374, on which see also L. Robert, 'Hellenica', *RevPhil* xiii (1939), 173; Galen (ed. Kühn), ii. 217–18, x. 52, xv. 136.

⁴ Athenaeus 4. 184 b; Pfeiffer, *op. cit.* 252 ff.

⁵ *Inscriptions de Délos*, 1525.

⁶ The evidence which is given by Celsus, *Proem.* to Bk. i. 23, is extensively discussed by L. Edelstein, *Ancient Medicine*, pp. 249 ff. and by F. Kudlien, 'Antike Anatomie und menschlicher Leichnam', *Hermes* xcvi (1969), 87–93.

⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 4. 81, Philostratus, *VA* 185 (5. 27). A. Henrichs, 'Vespasian's visit to Alexandria', *ZeitPapEpig* iii (1968), does not discuss this possibility at 65–72, where he considers the story of Vespasian's miracles, and, p. 54 n. 12, he disregards the evidence of Philostratus.

⁸ Much of the evidence is set out by Bowersock, *op. cit.* 66–9: note especially the attitude of Aulus Gellius, *NA* 18. 10. 8, and the association of teachers and doctors at Aventicum, *ILS* 7786, cf. *ILS* 6507 (Beneventum) and 5481 and 7817 (Rome).

Some further considerations strengthen the case for Alexandria. There is no doubt that the Museum of Alexandria was *the* Museum *par excellence* and the model upon which others were formed. If my supposition that there were several such associations in the East is accepted, then the mere mention of 'Museum', if it is to be intelligible, should indicate either a local Museum or that of Alexandria. There is no firm evidence that the Museum of Ephesus was called simply 'Museum' outside Ephesus and its immediate neighbourhood, and that of Smyrna is referred to as the Museum of Smyrna in the inscription from Temenothyris:¹ thus it becomes less likely that it is they which are meant in the inscriptions of Gellius. Indeed, as both Smyrna and Ephesus, to say nothing of Pergamum, were famous medical centres and each possessed a Museum, the choice open to the casual reader would have been baffling. On the other hand, as the Museum is mentioned upon two different inscriptions erected by two different persons, Gellius' membership was clearly important to him and his friends.² A purely local Museum at Antioch would appear too trivial, and the most obvious solution would seem to be the Museum of Alexandria, which is described simply as 'Museum' on several inscriptions from Italy and the East, and which would be a fitting residence for a faithful imperial servant with some pretension to learning.

A further confirmation comes from some papyri of the reign of Gallienus, though great caution is required to avoid placing too much weight upon them. An imperial procurator, Aurelius Plution, a native of Hermopolis, is described in one papyrus as ὁ κράτιστος δοικηνᾶριος καὶ ἀπὸ Μουσείου, where he appears to perform some judicial duties, and in two others he is called ὁ κράτιστος ἀπὸ Μουσίου.³ These titles correspond to the *ducenario et a musio* and the ἀπὸ Μουσείου καὶ δοικηνᾶριος on the inscriptions, and, as Plution's membership of the Alexandrian Museum has gone almost unquestioned,⁴ so it is possible to conclude that Gellius was also a member. Stein rightly pointed out that Gellius and Plution may have held different *ducenarian* posts, but his conclusion that they must therefore have been members of different Museums does not follow.⁵ The similarity between the two titles seems too great to be ascribed to coincidence and points towards the Alexandrian Museum.

So far we have shown only that L. Gellius Maximus was probably a member of the Museum of Alexandria rather than of some local institution, an imperial physician, and a *procurator ducenarius*. Although he bears a title comparable to that of another procurator and Museum member, Aurelius Plution, neither the evidence nor the argument demands that they held identical offices.

The identification of the procuratorship of Gellius is a task which calls for caution. Pflaum discovered a *ducenarian* post, *procurator a museo*, which has passed without comment, even though Pflaum himself had doubts and even discarded it at one point.⁶ The existence of such a post with such a stipend is problematical and the evidence does not permit such a conclusion to be accepted without qualification. Pflaum in his index to *Les Carrières* lists two

¹ *IGRR* iv. 618. The evidence for membership of the Museum at Ephesus by the three men listed at p. 266, n. 1 is weak and cannot be pressed.

² *CIL* iii. 6820; *JRS* ii (1912), 96 n. 25.

³ *CPHerm* 53, 59, 124+125.

⁴ Save by W. Otto, *Priester und Tempel im hellenistischen Aegypten*, iii. 321: 'Es sei denn, es ist das hermupolitische Μουσείον.'

⁵ *Untersuchungen*, pp. 119-22.

⁶ *CP* 1089, with which compare *JRS* 1959, p. 83 n. 1, and p. 269 n. 1 below.

holders of the post, Plution and Clodianus of Philippi, but does not mention Gellius.

I deal first with Clodianus, whose date is much more uncertain than Pflaum implies. His title ἀπὸ ἐπιτρόπων τῶν ἐν μουσείῳ σειτουμένων can be translated either as 'one of the procurators who dine at the Museum' or as 'a procurator, one of the diners at the Museum'.¹ In the latter translation, his procuratorship is distinct from his membership, in the former we are informed that the Museum contained more than one procurator. Although Lemerle's suggestion that they kept an eye on the Museum's finances is interesting,² the fact that at least two procurators are required for the job would seem to cast doubt upon the office and upon the accompanying salary of 200,000 sesterces. Thus while this inscription shows that procurators were members of the Museum, which is not in dispute, it tells us nothing of their activities, their salary, or their title. Nor, despite Pflaum's index, is there an example of the phrase *ducenarius a museo* or its Greek equivalent: the two parts are either separated by *et* or the word *ducenarius* is omitted.³ In the papyri of Plution ὁ κράτιστος, which is the Greek epithet of an equestrian *egregius*, can be applied equally to a retired and to an active procurator and it is not essential to believe that it was either the post *a museo* or the *ducenarian* salary which conferred the title *egregius*. If Gellius is considered a member of a museum other than that of Alexandria, he need not be brought into the discussion, but since I have shown that there is good reason to believe that this is not so, an argument can be provided from his titles to show that *ducenarius* and *a museo* are to be kept distinct. His inscriptions, it will be noted, separate the two, and the order of one is reversed in the other, and thus it is probable that as *ducenarius* he had no necessary connection with the Museum.⁴

Pflaum in his earlier work, *Les Procurateurs équestres*, appeared to suggest that the post *a museo* was identical with the headship of the Museum,⁵ but, as Stein had long ago pointed out, the president is never called by that title.⁶ Chrysermus, the court doctor of Ptolemy VI, was the ἐπιστάτης, the same title as was carried by C. Iulius Vestinus, the sophist and friend of Hadrian.⁷ Its Latin equivalent, *supra museum*, is found on the inscription to Ti. Claudius Balbillus,⁸ and, while Pflaum may be right to conclude that the headship of the Museum was an equestrian post, filled by an imperial procurator, this has no bearing upon the activities of the *a museo*, if he existed. *a museo* in fact means 'member of the Museum' (and includes its head) and the Greek translation ἀπὸ Μουσείου argues for such a meaning. As it appears on the inscriptions of

¹ Lemerle, *op. cit.* 131–2. ² *Ib.*, 138–9.

³ For the first, *CIL* iii. 6820, *JRS* ii (1912), 96 n. 25, *CPHerm* 53; for the second, *CPHerm* 59, 124+125. The other papyri, *CPHerm* 77, 78, 106??, 119 *verso* 3, are either fragmentary or do not mention his membership of the Museum. On the meaning of the word *egregius* as the possible title of a procurator, see R. P. Duncan-Jones, *PBSR* xxxv (1967), Appendix ii, pp. 185–6.

⁴ As Stein argued, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 120–2.

⁵ *Les Procurateurs équestres sous le haut-empire romain*, p. 253, where the post is given to Vestinus; at *CP* 1089 the two are cor-

rectly distinguished.

⁶ *Op. cit.* 119–22. He suggested that many of the duties performed by non-scholar members of the Museum related to other posts held concurrently. Note *SB* 7027 = *SEG* viii 652, where an ἀρχιδικαστής καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς εὐθηνίας became ἀντεπιστάτην τοῦ Μουσείου.

⁷ *Inscriptions de Délos* 1525: *IG* xiv. 1085 with *CP*, n. 105, pp. 245 ff.

⁸ *AE* 1924, n. 78, *CP*, n. 15. The salary of this post is unknown, *pace* Pflaum, and it may not be a regular post in an equestrian career; if it is, the presence of other procurators actively engaged in the Museum becomes even more surprising.

men who were never procurators and who were scholars and philosophers, it should be regarded as the mark of membership, not of the presidency.¹ A procurator from Ostia 'enjoyed the immunity of the Museum', a poet came ἐκ Μουσείου, and papyri and inscriptions suggest that the formal designation was 'one of those who dine at the Museum'.² Nevertheless, although there are other idiosyncratic methods of indicating membership, the argument that there is no certain instance of ἀπὸ Μουσείου meaning 'the president' remains valid, and Stein's conclusion that Plution and Gellius were only ordinary members still stands.³

But what were imperial procurators doing in the Museum if they were not managing its finances? I shall argue that, although Lemerle's suggestion of imperial supervision of finances is possible, neither Plution nor any of those described as ἀπὸ Μουσείου can be shown to have exercised it. If the emperor controlled membership and, like the interfering Hadrian, placed his friends and favourites within it, the financial affairs of the Museum would not require much supervision, and one or more procurators to attend to this seems a waste of efficient man-power and money, if they received 200,000 sesterces a year, to say nothing of the possible duties of an equestrian president.

The only procurator whose activity has been placed within the Museum, leaving aside Clodianus who may have been retired when he was elected, is Aurelius Plution. It quickly becomes apparent that in none of the papyri in which he appears is there any indication that he is exercising any control over the Museum, and there is much that suggests that he was not.⁴ He had been in Rome, where he had secured some favour from Gallienus for his home city of Hermopolis, and now, with a salary of 200,000 sesterces, he returned to Egypt. One papyrus refers to him and a δικαστήριον, and Zwicker suggested that he was the ἀρχιδικαστής, an Egyptian law officer.⁵ But his duties at Hermopolis are concerned with the regulation of the city's finances: gymnasiarchs who have failed to supply oil are summoned before him, and he adjudicates in disputes about immunity from liturgies.⁶ None of this suggests an ἀρχιδικαστής, and Stein rightly supposed that he was an imperial procurator sent as *corrector* to reorganize the finances of his native city.⁷ His activities have no direct link with the Museum, where he was elected as a distinguished Egyptian servant of the emperor. Indeed, the insertion of a Euripidean quotation in an address of thanks to him may signify that he had pretensions to culture.⁸

¹ Examples are J. and L. Robert, *Bulletin Épigraphique* 1967, n. 688; L. Moretti, *BCAR* lxxix (1963-4), 140-1; I. Magnesia, 189. A. de Franciscis, *RAN* xlii (1967), 155-8. An inscription published by Oliver, (*Hesperia* iii [1934], 192) reveals a man ἐν Μουσείῳ, probably at Athens, and this is a possible title for the president. The examples of ἀπὸ used instead of ἐν in the description of procuratorian posts are few, cf. L. Vibius Lentulus, ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων, *CP*, n. 66. M. Valerianus Rullianus Agrippa, *CP*, n. 345, τὸν κράτιστον ἀπὸ στρατειῶν ἱππικῶν καὶ ἐπιτρόπων, is irrelevant as ἀπὸ here indicates that he was a former holder of these posts, cf. Lewis, *op. cit.* 258.

² *CIL* xiv. 5340: Bernand, 112-13; add to Lewis's examples of the latter usage, which

may have been the official title, *SB* 7027, Bernand, 66-7, and *AGIBM* iv/2. 1076.

³ Stein's division of duties was accepted by Pflaum, *CP*, 1086 and 1089, cf. also *SEG* ii. 870.

⁴ *CPHerm* 53, 59, 77, 78, 106?, 119 v. 3 and 124+125.

⁵ *CPHerm* 53, lines 17-18; F. Zwicker, 'Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Gerichtsorganisation in ptolemäischen und römischen Ägypten', *Philologus*, Suppl. xii (1911), 120 n. 211.

⁶ *CPHerm* 53, 59, 119 v. 3.

⁷ Stein, *Untersuchungen*, p. 122; G. Méautis, *Hermopolis la grande*, p. 173.

⁸ Méautis, *op. cit.* 172-6; E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri*, pp. 85-7.

With the departure of Plution goes the strongest argument for an independent financial procurator *a museo*, for an examination of other *equites* reveals that membership was given to them as a reward for services, an honour to be enjoyed, not a duty to be performed. Philoxenus, a *praefectus cohortis*, was elected when he became ἀρχιδικαστής around A.D. 135,¹ M. Aurelius Asclepiades, a champion athlete, was 'temple guardian of the great Sarapis',² a post held by several other members, including the *eques* Sulpicius Serenus.³ M. Aurelius Hermogenes, who became procurator *a studiis* after a military career in Germany, gained the immunity of the Museum, surely only membership,⁴ and Valerius Fannianus, another Egyptian, was a former *praefectus vigilum*.⁵ Even Clodianus need not have been an active procurator at the Museum, for his inscription does not specify that he was procurator *a museo*, and I should prefer to see him as an imperial procurator who in the course of his career had been granted membership.⁶

The evidence that there was an equestrian *ducenarius a museo* is very slender, and, if Plution is not *a museo*, Gellius' rank of *ducenarius militates* against his holding of that post. But what possible procuratorships are there for Gellius? Many imperial doctors gained sufficient wealth to become knights, and some became imperial officials. C. Stertinus Xenophon, after serving in Claudius' British expedition with the sinecure post of *praefectus fabrum*, became ἐπὶ τῶν ἀποκριμάτων,⁷ and T. Statilius Criton, who accompanied Trajan on his first Dacian campaign, was also a procurator and a member of the imperial *consilium*.⁸ Since there is nothing to suggest that Aurelius Hermogenes ever saw service in Egypt,⁹ there is no compelling reason to believe that Gellius held a *ducenarian* post there, and I venture to suggest that he was made a member of the Museum in recognition of his medical learning rather than as a procurator.

The identification of the procuratorship that he occupied, like that of Criton, must remain in doubt until further evidence is discovered. But a tempting possibility offers itself: the office was purely honorary and required no administrative duties. This idea, which appeared tentatively in footnotes by Groag and Pflaum, has been extended and expanded by others until it is propounded as firm doctrine. It is necessary to trace the growth of this belief and to see how it is borne out by the evidence. Pflaum first concluded that in the mid third century men such as Plution could be given the rank of *ducenarius* even if the post they occupied did not qualify them for that salary, an unobjectionable theory.¹⁰ Others then saw in a letter of Cornelius Fronto confirmation

¹ BGU 729+136.

² IG xiv. 1103; BCAR lxxv (1953-5), 73-8.

³ Bernard, pp. 66-7; Pflaum, CP, n. 104 bis. ⁴ CIL xiv. 5340; CP, n. 352.

⁵ Lewis, op. cit. 258 (P. Corn. inv., no. ii. 25); J. F. Gilliam, *Mnemosyne*, 4th ser. xvii (1964), 293-9.

⁶ Lemerle, op. cit. 131-2.

⁷ Stein, *Ritterstand*, p. 437 (where his reference to Calpurnius Asclepiades contradicts his statement on p. 402): on Xenophon, CP, n. 16, and on service as *praefectus fabrum*, B. Dobson, *Britain and Rome: Studies Presented to Eric Birley*, pp. 61-84.

⁸ To the biography of Buckler (*JÖAI* xxx

[1937], B.5 ff.) add MAMA vi. 91, *La Carie* ii. 167 and p. 201, and the discussion of the fragments of his *Getica* in F. Jacoby, *FGHst* ii. B, n. 200. He is mentioned in CP 298-303 as a relative of T. Statilius Apollinaris, and on p. 1018 in the index as 'procurator rerum Caesaris'. It would have been safer to list him as the holder of an unknown post.

⁹ CP, n. 352: his military service took place in Germania Inferior.

¹⁰ 'Histoire et Cultes de Thasos', *JIS* 1959, p. 83 n. 1. At CP 950-1, he says that *ducenarius* indicates that such a man ranked higher than a simple *egregius* and at 951, CIL x. 5336, *ducenarius* represents an honorary

that it was possible to appoint men to the rank of procurator without conferring duties upon them. Fronto, requesting a procuratorship for Appian, refers to another friend whose *dignitas* had been enhanced by the mere offer of a procuratorship to him, even though he refused it.¹ But it is uncertain whether Fronto is speaking loosely when referring to *dignitas*, as Pflaum originally thought,² or whether Calpurnius was given the rank of a *ducenarius* or *sexagenarius* simply by the offer, in the same way as *ornamenta consularia* were granted to men who had not held the office of consul.³ There is some evidence to support the latter interpretation: Commodus gave the post of *ab epistulis graecis* to Adrian of Tyre who lay on his deathbed, and apologized for his delay.⁴ Even if this appointment is seen as merely honorary, Philostratus seems to imply that, had Adrian lived, he would have continued as imperial secretary, and thus not too much must be made of this story. Another test case is Plutarch, who is said (on the evidence of Eusebius) to have been made 'procurator of Hellas' in his old age by Hadrian.⁵ Groag recognized that the procuratorship, like that in Dalmatia reported by the *Suda*,⁶ was unusual and suggested that it might have been honorary.⁷ C. P. Jones and Bowersock follow him in their assumption that the post was 'non-governmental' and 'the formalisation of a relationship with the Roman government that had long existed'.⁸ Yet the evidence for this, especially that of the *Suda*, can be impugned, if not refuted, and a more detailed examination of all the arguments for non-governmental or honorary procurators is needed before assertions based upon doubtful evidence can be accepted without hesitation.⁹ Therefore, although an honorary procuratorship might be given to a physician as eminent as Gellius, the career of Stertinius Xenophon imposes at least a doubt, and in the present state of our knowledge the possibility cannot be excluded that he was given some governmental or administrative office which qualified him for the rank of *ducenarius*.¹⁰

What conclusions can be drawn from this examination of the career of a court doctor from Antioch in Pisidia? First, he was a member of the Museum

grant to a lower procurator. Turner, op. cit. 86, misrepresents Pflaum's original position, although his comments upon honorary procuratorships are apposite.

¹ Fronto, ed. Naber, p. 170.

² *Les Procurateurs équestres*, pp. 200-5.

³ Stein, *Ritterstand*, 246 ff., 274 ff.; S. Borsák, *RE* xviii/1. 1110-22. The statement in the *Suda* that Plutarch was granted *ornamenta consularia* by Trajan is open to suspicion.

⁴ Philostratus, *VS* 589-90. The grant is not recorded by Pflaum among his list of *ab epistulis graecis*, CP 1021.

⁵ Syncellus, ed. Dindorf, p. 659, from Eusebius, recorded under the year 119.

⁶ *Suda* s.v. Plutarchos notes that the governor of Illyricum was forbidden to act without Plutarch's permission: C. P. Jones in his dissertation, summarized at *HSCP* lxxi (1966), 322-9, argues that this means that Plutarch was 'proc. Dalmatiae'. J. H. Oliver, *Hesperia*, *Suppl.* xiii (1970), 70-1, claims a wide jurisdiction for Plutarch in Hellas.

⁷ E. Groag, *Die römischen Reichsbeamten von*

Achaia von Augustus bis auf Diokletian, pp. 145-7, correctly surmised that the post was very unusual and unlikely to be a normal administrative procuratorship. 'Übrigens wäre es keineswegs ausgeschlossen, daß er das Amt nur titular geführt hat.' Pflaum, CP 1071, called Plutarch the procurator of imperial estates in Achaia.

⁸ C. P. Jones (*JRS* lvi [1966], 63 n. 18); Bowersock, op. cit. 57 n. 18 and p. 112. Turner, op. cit. is correct in removing Plutarch from the list of non-governing procurators.

⁹ The passage in *Suda* was rejected by K. Ziegler, in *RE* xxi/1. 658 ff. s.v. 'Plutarchos', and K. Latte in a footnote at the same place attacked the evidence of Eusebius. The action seems perfectly in keeping with a phil-Hellene such as Hadrian, but it cannot entirely be excluded that Eusebius is in error.

¹⁰ A similar remark applies to the career of Statilius Criton, of whose procuratorship we know only that it occurred.

at Alexandria, an appropriate honour for an imperial physician and one which linked him with scholars and other imperial procurators. Second, the post *ducenarius a museo* which was discovered by Pflaum rests upon very doubtful evidence, and a consideration of the other members of the Alexandrian Museum suggests that it never existed, certainly not with the title and rank that Pflaum gave to it. Third, although an honorary procuratorship for the physician Gellius is appropriate, the evidence for the existence of such posts, although suggestive, is not yet conclusive; and because of our ignorance of the career of Gellius, it cannot be ruled out that he held an administrative procuratorship whose identity is unknown.¹

Selwyn College, Cambridge

VIVIAN NUTTON

¹ I am grateful to Mr. J. A. Crook for assistance in the preparation of this paper.