

Prosopographical Notes on the Second Sophistic

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THE FOLLOWING NOTES concern three men mentioned in Philostratus' *Sophists*.¹ For all three I have tried to add to the known evidence: but since that evidence is scattered, I have also tried to assemble it and bring it up to date, with particular reference to the entries for these persons in the second edition of the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*. For the third, Amphilches of Chalcis, I must also acknowledge some revisions in my own treatment of him of ten years ago.

I. Dionysius of Miletus

Dionysius of Miletus is chiefly known from Philostratus' account in the *Sophists*. Two items may be emphasised: Hadrian made Dionysius a knight and "satrap [that is, procurator] of not inconsiderable nations," and he passed his later career in Ephesus and was buried in the agora there.²

An inscription on a statue-base discovered at Ephesus in 1906 was seen by its editor, Josef Keil, to refer to Dionysius.³ With the help of a new one to be discussed below, it can now be restored in its entirety as follows:

[ἡ βουλὴ καὶ] ὁ δῆμος
[T. Κλ.] Φ[λαουιαν]ὸν Διονύσιον
[τὸν] ῥήτορα καὶ σοφιστήν

¹ I have used the following special abbreviations: Bowersock, *Sophists* = G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1969); *Bull.* = J. and L. Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique*, followed by the year of REG and the number of the item; Jones, "Thespieae" = C. P. Jones, "A Leading Family of Roman Thespieae," *HSCP* 74 (1970) 223–55.

² Philostr. VS 1.22 (pp. 35–38 K.). Cf. *PIR*² D 105 (Stein); Bowersock, *Sophists* 51–53.

³ *Forsch.Eph.* III 133 no. 47; *JOAI* 40 (1953) 6. All the restorations are Keil's, except for line 2 and line 4 ([δί?]ς Keil, but see his photograph in *JOAI*). Note the Ephesian Ti. Claudi(us) Eutychos of *IGBM* III 635.

- 4 [δ]ῖς ἐπίτροπον τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ
Κλ. Εὐτυχος τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πατρῶνα.

From the form and find-spot of the base, Keil inferred that Dionysius had not in fact been buried in the agora, but in an area outside its south gate which contained several *heroa*. This was confirmed in 1968, when his actual sarcophagus was found south-west of the agora, not far from the celebrated Library of Celsus, a building of Hadrianic date.⁴ It is inscribed with the simple text *T. Κλαύδιος Φλαουιανὸς Διονύσιος ῥήτωρ*. The first initial must stand for Titus,⁵ which is rarely combined with Claudius, and suggests that Dionysius was originally a T. Flavius adopted into a family of Claudii. Though he is alleged to have fallen from Hadrian's favor,⁶ the brevity of the inscription is rather to be attributed to the ostentatious modesty practised by some of the sophists.⁷

The revelation of Dionysius' full name allows him to be recognized in an inscription of Miletus itself. A statue-base discovered there in 1905 (a year before the one at Ephesus) belongs to a long series of such bases which originally bore statues of Hadrian, and is dated to 125/6.⁸ The first of the six archons is named in the genitive *T. Κλαυδίου Φλαουιανοῦ Διονυσίου*, and he must again be Dionysius; the third is *M. Κλ(αυδίου) Φλαουιανοῦ Νικίου*, who ought to be a brother adopted by the same Claudius. We can infer that Dionysius' fall, if it occurred, was later than 125/6, and it may belong to the end of the reign.⁹

II. Attalus of Laodicea

The famous sophist Polemo of Laodicea had a son Attalus. Philostratus implicitly dismisses him by declaring only one of Polemo's descendants worthy of notice, Hermocrates of Phocaea,

⁴ F. Eichler, *AnzWien* 106 (1969, publ. 1970) 136–37, with the important discussion in *Bull.* 1971, 574. For the location see the aerial photograph published by H. Vetters, *AnzWien* 114 (1977, publ. 1978) Taf. III.

⁵ M. Avi-Yonah, *Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions* (QDAP Suppl. 9 [1940]) 104, cites for *T(ιβέριος)* only MAMA IV 265.11, which in fact is *T(ίτος) Φλ(αυίος)*.

⁶ Cass.Dio 69.3.4–5; cf. Bowersock, *Sophists* 52–53.

⁷ Cf. Philostr. VS 2.1.15 (p.73 K.) on the funerary epigram “both short and long” of Herodes; for recent bibliography, Jones, *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 230–31.

⁸ A. Rehm, *Milet* 1.7 (*Der Südmarkt*) 312 no. 231. On the statues of Hadrian at Miletus, T. Pekáry, *IstMitt* 15 (1965) 120.

⁹ Cf. Bowersock, *Sophists* 52–53.

whose mother was Attalus' daughter Callisto.¹⁰ Despite Philostratus' contempt, Attalus has been thought distinguished enough for his name to appear on the coins of four Asian cities—Smyrna, Phocaea, Laodicea, and Synnada. These coins were assembled and discussed by Rudolf Münsterberg,¹¹ but there remain some unnoticed difficulties.

The coins of Smyrna certainly refer to Attalus. They are dated to Marcus' reign, and have the legend Ἄτταλος σοφιστῆς ταῖς πατρίσι Σμύρ(να) Λαο(δικεΐα).¹² Polemo passed his active career in Smyrna, but "also watched over Laodicea, frequently visiting his own family and publicly aiding the city in every way he could," and he was buried there.¹³ Since he must have been a citizen of both cities, his son could claim two πατρίδες; similarly Dio of Prusa talks of Apamea, where his father and maternal grandfather were citizens, as his own πατρίς and even more that of his children.¹⁴ The coins of Phocaea, again struck under Marcus, have the legend Ἄτταλος Φωκαιεύσιν ἀνέθηκε, and these too must refer to the sophist, whose son-in-law was from there. The absence of σοφιστῆς is no difficulty, since Smyrna is the only city on whose coins this appellation appears.¹⁵ Attalus was famous enough for his simple name to identify him, just as his father could identify himself on an inscription from Pergamon merely as 'Polemo'.¹⁶

Laodicea is more difficult. A number of coin-types showing Marcus' name and portrait refer to a P. Claudius Attalus, high-priest (of the Caesars), who apparently issued the coins in celebration of an imperial victory (ἐπινίκιον).¹⁷ Eckhel was the first to ascribe these coins to the son of Polemo and to connect the victory with Lucius Verus' eastern campaigns.¹⁸ Imhoof-Blumer, however, pointed out that these coins are not of the reign of Marcus, as are those of Attalus the sophist at Smyrna and Phocaea, but some

¹⁰ Philostr. *VS* 1.25.11 (p.54 K.), *cf.* 2.24.2 (p.110 K.). For the other references, *PIR*² C 797 (Stein). Hermocrates: *PIR*² F 285 (Stein); Chr. Habicht, *I. Asklepieions (Alt.Perg. VIII.3)* no. 24; *Bull.* 1973, 375 pp.141–42.

¹¹ *NZ* 8 (1915) 119, largely followed by Stein in *PIR*² C 797.

¹² *BMC Ionia* 307–08 nos. 511–16; *SNG Copenhagen* 24 (Ionia) 1432, Deutschland (von Aulock) 6.2243, 2244.

¹³ Philostr. *VS* 1.25.2 (pp.43–44 K.), 1.25.11 (p.54 K.).

¹⁴ Dio Chrys. *Or.* 41.2, 6.

¹⁵ *BMC Ionia* 222f no. 138 and 141. On σοφιστῆς, Münsterberg (*supra* n.11) 119.

¹⁶ Habicht, *I. Asklepieions* no. 33.

¹⁷ For the references, *PIR*² C 797; add now *SNG Copenhagen* 30 (Phrygia) 579, 580, Deutschland (von Aulock) 9.3821–26, 3849.

¹⁸ J. Eckhel, *Doctrina Numorum Veterum* 3 (Vienna 1794) 163–65.

twenty years earlier, for Marcus appears as a young prince and with the name *M. Ἀδρήλιος Βῆρος Καῖσαρ*.¹⁹ The names 'P. Claudius' are also disturbing: Eckhel and Münsterberg did not notice that Polemo was a M. Antonius.²⁰ The Roman names marked the services of this great house to the Triumvir; the epigrammatist Ammianus of Smyrna makes spiteful play on 'Antonius' to accuse Polemo of venality; and there is a good chance that the M. Antonius Polemo known at Miletus under Valerian and Gallienus is a descendant.²¹ Polemo's son would be expected to have been a 'M. Antonius Attalus'. It so happens that a man of this name is attested at Laodicea in the second quarter or so of the second century as the father of two girls sent on a sacred delegation to Claros. He seems too early to be the sophist himself, but he may be a member of the same family who lived about a generation earlier.²² It would still be possible to identify the sophist with the moneyer by supposing that his full style was 'P. Claudius Antonius Attalus',²³ but that would entail that on coins of his own city he suppressed precisely the part of his nomenclature which recalled his connection with one of its greatest houses. Since 'Attalus' is not a rare name, and was certainly borne by more than one prominent Laodicean in this period,²⁴ it seems easier to distinguish the sophist M. Antonius Attalus, who flourished roughly in the reign of Marcus, from the benefactor and high-priest P. Claudius Attalus, who was active some twenty years earlier.

The coins of Synnada are less problematic. They are dated to

¹⁹ Fr. Imhoof-Blumer, *Kleinasiatische Münzen* I (Vienna 1901) 271, followed by Stein in *PIR*² C 797.

²⁰ For his full nomenclature see the inscription from Smyrna published by J. Keil, *Kleinasion und Byzanz* (Ist. Forsch. 17 [1950]) 58 no. 11. Münsterberg (*supra* n.11) 120 actually thought of identifying him with the rhetor Ti. Claudius Polemo known from several inscriptions of Cibra (*PIR*² C 963).

²¹ Triumvir: G. W. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford 1965) 143–44, L. Robert in *Laodicée du Lycos* (Québec and Paris 1969) 307. Ammianus: *Anth.Pal.* 11.181, *cf.* L. Robert, in *L'épigramme grecque* (Entretiens Hardt 14 [Geneva 1968]) 283, 287. Miletus: *PIR*² A 863, and add L. Robert, *Gnomon* 31 (1959) 672 (*Opera minora selecta* III 1637). Note also the Polemo, *neokoros* at Smyrna under Decius: *Passio Pionii* 3ff (H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* [Oxford 1972] 136ff).

²² Th. Macridy, *JOAI* 8 (1905) 165 no. II.3.3, *Ἀρχαρχὴν καὶ Ἀμμία Μά(ρκου) Ἀνωίνου Ἀττάλου*. For the date, early in a series that runs from shortly before 128 to 155/6, Robert, *Laodicée* (*supra* n.21) 299, *cf.* 309–12.

²³ Thus Stein, *PIR*² C 797.

²⁴ There are several other Attali from Laodicea in another inscription of Claros, Macridy (*supra* n.22) 170 no. IV.3.17–18.

the reigns both of Pius and of Marcus and Lucius, and refer to a *prytanis* and *logistes* called Cla(udius) Attalus.²⁵ He is certainly not the sophist, for an inscription published in 1939 has revealed that he belongs to a prominent family of Synnada and was the son of a Ti. Claudius Piso Tertullinus.²⁶

III. Amphicles of Chalcis

Philostratus twice mentions a young pupil of Herodes Atticus called Amphicles of Chalcis, who seems to have flourished about the middle of the second century. The old assumption was that he was identical with the boy Amphicles known from an inscription from the territory of Chalcis, in which the deceased is said to be “of a famed house of consuls.”²⁷ Louis Robert, however, has now shown that this Amphicles is not Herodes’ pupil, but rather that man’s son; the elder Amphicles did not die young, but lived at least long enough to commemorate his son with inscriptions that show the clear influence of Judaism.²⁸ As Robert observes, this conclusion has prosopographical as well as cultural consequences, since this family was connected with several other notable ones. I have discussed elsewhere the chief of these, a great house of Thespieae, and it is opportune to acknowledge some revisions.²⁹

A Flavius Amphicles was archon of the Panhellenes for a term that began no earlier than 177 and ended not later than 189. A man of the same name entered chariots at the Erotideia of Thespieae at some date after 138 and before 212; he may, but need not, have been a citizen of Thespieae. It is reasonable to assume that this is a

²⁵ References in *PIR*² C 797; add now *SNG* Copenhagen 30 (Phrygia) 732.

²⁶ *MAMA* VI 374, with the commentary of Buckler and Calder. On the uncle of Attalus mentioned here as ‘Attalus the priest of the Greeks’ see most recently Daniel J. Geagan, *TAPA* 103 (1972) 153–55; S. Follet, *Athènes au II^e et au III^e siècle* (Paris 1976) 191–93; Geagan, *ANRW* 7.1 (1979) 401.

²⁷ *IG* XII.9 1179, with another copy of the prose section in 955. For the sources, *PIR*² A 568, *cf.* F 201 (Stein).

²⁸ *CRAI* 1978, 245–52.

²⁹ Jones, “Thespieae,” esp. 241–43. Further to 227–28 no. 6 (Polycratides son of Anthemion and T. Statilius Taurus) see the two inscriptions from Thespieae, *BCH* 98 (1974) 649 no. 3, 651 no. 4; the view argued in the Appendix (249–55) that the Julia Sebasta associated with the Muses is Livia, is confirmed by her identification with Mnemosyne in the first of the two. In discussing the latest members of the family I overlooked one of the most important of all, T. Flavius Mondo, priest of the Homonoia of the Hellenes in the later third century: see now Geagan (*supra* n.26) 158 no. e; Follet (*supra* n.26) 30–31, 245.

single Flavius Amphicles, and to identify him with the pupil of Herodes, a wealthy man of Chalcis who after his study of rhetoric busied himself with public affairs and his private wealth, and had leanings to Judaism.³⁰

Inscriptions from Thespieae, Delphi, and Aedepeus in Euboea mention three generations of related people.³¹ In the first are two couples, T. Flavius Lysander and Flavia Democlea, and T. Flavius Amphicles and Plotia Agesicrita; the children of these marriages are respectively the consular Flavius Philinus and Flavia Amphiclea; from their union comes Flavia Philina who marries M. Aurelius Olympiodorus, *ἔκγονος Ἴπποδρόμου*. Both Philinus and Olympiodorus come from families with literary connections, and again it is natural to suppose that this Flavius Amphicles is the man of the same name who studied with Herodes Atticus and had connections with Thespieae. Certainly, Thespieae honors his daughter as her *πατρίς*, but it can be supposed that her father was a citizen of Thespieae as well as Chalcis, just as Attalus the son of Polemo had both Smyrna and Laodicea for his *πατρίδες*.³² As for chronology, T. Flavius Lysander seems likely to be a man of the same name attested in the reign of Hadrian.³³ His son's father-in-law could easily have been a pupil of Herodes and have been active about 180. The same son's son-in-law, *ἔκγονος Ἴπποδρόμου*, is evidently descended from the famous sophist Hippodromus of Larissa, who was still alive in 213.³⁴ *ἔκγονος* ought not to mean 'son' but 'grandson', and though the chronology is awkward it is not impossible.³⁵

³⁰ Follet (*supra* n.26) 128 (archon of the Panhellenes); Jones, "Thespieae" 241–42, 255 (chariot-owner); Robert (*supra* n.28) 252 n.58 (possible identity with Herodes' pupil).

³¹ Jones, "Thespieae" 237–41 nos. 17–21. No. 21 (Aedepeus) is now re-edited by Timothy E. Gregory, *GRBS* 20 (1979) 264 n. 9, *cf.* 267–68.

³² Jones, "Thespieae" 237 no. 18. For this proposal, H. Müller, *ZPE* 3 (1968) 214; I was wrong, "Thespieae" 241, to suppose that Philina's father need have been a native of Thespieae.

³³ Jones, "Thespieae" 235 no. 16. This had been the view of others, including Müller (*supra* n.32) 201; I was wrong to contest it, "Thespieae" 240, 255. For the chronology of this family see now H. Halfmann, *Die Senatoren aus dem östlichen Teil des Imperium Romanum* (Hypomnemata 58 [Göttingen 1979]) 194–95.

³⁴ Müller (*supra* n.32), 198–99; Jones, "Thespieae" 238–39.

³⁵ On *ἔκγονος* see now Gregory (*supra* n.31) 267–68. *E.g.*, Hippodromus could have been born in 145 and his grandson have married in 205; Flavius Amphicles could have been born as late as 140 (not much later, if his meeting with Philagrus of Cilicia is correctly dated to the 150s or 160s, Jones, *GRBS* 13 [1972] 477–78), and have had a daughter as late as 185.

Plotia Agesicrita, Amphicles' wife, came from a background similar to her husband's, though from a more distant island. Inscriptions of Thera reveal a prominent family which eventually produced an Asiarch called A. Plotius Leonidas; he had three children, a rhetor A. Plotius Craterus, a Boeotarch A. Plotius Theodotus, and Plotia Agesicrita.³⁶ The family evidently received the citizenship through some member of the *gens Plautia* which was so prominent under the early empire: P. Petronius, governor of Asia for six years under Tiberius, is now known to have been accompanied in the province by his wife Plautia, daughter of an A. Plautius.³⁷ Since Plotia Agesicrita's two brothers are respectively a rhetor and a Boeotarch, it seems likely that she is the wife of Amphicles of Chalcis, who was a pupil of Herodes Atticus and closely connected with Thespieae.

For clarity, I append a simplified stemma of the persons discussed in this note.³⁸

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³⁶ IG XII.3 529, 531, 532; for other members of the same family, 530, 533, 880, 898. The *praenomen* is given as Ὠλος in all cases: for the variation between *Plautius* and *Plotius*, RE 21 (1951) 1, 7.

³⁷ G. E. Bean, JHS 74 (1954) 91–92 no. 6 (Bull. 1956, 274c; SEG XIV 646); cf. R. Syme, Tacitus I (Oxford 1958) 386 n.5.

³⁸ I am very grateful to Glen Bowersock for his help.

Hippodromus
of Larissa,
sophist,
still alive
in 213

×

M. Aurelius
Olympiodorus

T. Flavius = Flavia
Lysander, = Democlea
flourished
under
Hadrian

T. Flavius = Flavia
Philinus, = Amphiclea
consul

= Flavia Philina

T. Flavius = Plotia
Amphicles, = Agesicrita
pupil of
Herodes,
archon of
Panhellenes
ca 180

(Flavius)
Amphicles,
died young

A. Plotius
Leonidas,
Asiarch

Plotia
Agesicrita

A. Plotius
Craterus,
rhetor

A. Plotius
Theodotus,
Boeotarch