

Lucian in Egypt

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ἐγὼ γοῦν, εἰ σκέψαιο, δόξαιμ' ἄν σοι οὐ τὸ σμικρότατον τῆς Αἰγυπτίας ταύτης ἀρχῆς ἐγκεχειρίσασθαι, τὰς δίκας εἰσάγειν καὶ τάξιν αὐταῖς τὴν προσήκουσαν ἐπιτιθέναι καὶ τῶν πραττομένων καὶ λεγομένων ἀπαξαπάντων ὑπομνήματα γράφεσθαι καὶ τὰς τε ῥητορείας τῶν δικαιολογούντων ῥυθμίζειν καὶ τὰς τοῦ ἄρχοντος γνώσεις πρὸς τὸ σαφέστατον ἅμα καὶ ἀκριβέστατον σὺν πίστει τῇ μεγίστη διαφυλάττειν καὶ παραδιδόναι δημοσίᾳ πρὸς τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον ἀποκεισομένας (Lucian, *Apology* 12)

For if you consider it, you will see that not the smallest part in the administration of Egypt has been entrusted to me, for I am designated to introduce the cases, to assign the order, to draw up a record of all that is done and said, to shape the speeches of the lawyers, to preserve very clearly and accurately the decisions of the magistrate with all faithfulness, and to pass these decisions to public record to be kept for all time

As early as the seventeenth century, scholars suggested that the post held by Lucian in Egypt was that of *ὑπομνηματογράφος*. Since that time, this view has been accepted by many.¹ These early discussions, however, have gone virtually unheeded since H.-G. Pflaum argued that Lucian's position was actually that of *archistator praefecti Aegypti*,² an identification accepted without question in most recent scholarship.³ As a result, little attention has been paid to P. Meyer's

¹ The early history of this idea, plus an examination of some of its drawbacks, can be found in A. Thimme, *Quaestionum Lucianearum capita quattuor* (Göttingen 1884) 12–24; among those who accepted that Lucian was *ὑπομνηματογράφος* were von Premerstein, *RE* 4 (1900) 764 s.v. “*a commentariis*,” and O. W. Reinmuth, *The Prefect of Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian* (= *Klio* Beih. 34 [1935]) 12.

² H.-G. Pflaum, “Lucien de Samosate, *Archistator Praefecti Aegypti*, d’après une Inscription de Césarée de Maurétanie,” *Mélanges de l’École Française de Rome* 71 (1959) 281–86 (= *Scripta Varia* I: *L’Afrique Romaine* [Paris 1978] 155–60).

³ Those accepting Pflaum include *PIR*² L370; J. Schwartz, *Biographie de Lucien de Samosate* (= *Coll. Latomus* 83 [1965]) 11f; G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1969) 114 n.6; and B. Baldwin, *Studies in Lucian* (Toronto 1973) 17. The identification of Lucian as *ὑπομνηματογράφος* has been maintained by J. F. Gilliam, “*Ala Agrippiana* and *Archistator*,” *CP* 56 (1961) 103 (Addendum), and C. P. Jones, “Two Enemies of Lucian,” *GRBS* 13 (1972) 486.

proposal that the office in question was that of *εἰσαγωγεὺς*.⁴ One exception was H. Box, who strengthened Meyer's proposal by an emendation in the text of Philo.⁵ This paper will reconsider these three possibilities, presenting some further evidence that may add to the argument in favor of *εἰσαγωγεὺς*, while demonstrating that neither *ὑπομνηματογράφος* nor *archistator praefecti Aegypti* can be correct.

Meyer and Box both drew attention to the almost identical functions ascribed by Philo to an Alexandrian Greek named Lampo, who lived during the reign of Tiberius:

προσεστῶς γὰρ τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν, ὁπότε δικάζοιεν, ὑπεμνηματίζετο τὰς δίκας εἰσάγων ὡς ἔχων τάξιν . . . (In Flacc. 16.131).

One major difficulty with this passage has been that the phrase, ὡς ἔχων τάξιν, could not be translated with any sense. Box offered the simple and appealing emendation *εἰσαγωγέως* for *εἰσάγων ὡς*, which not only makes sense of the passage, but also provides a title for Lampo's office.⁶ The verbal parallels with the passage in Lucian and the general similarity in duties are striking. Both Lucian and Lampo are said to have introduced, arranged, and recorded court cases. But while Lucian says that he faithfully upheld his great responsibilities, Lampo (ὁ δὲ φυλάττειν ἐπιτραπεῖς τὴν ἀναγκαιοτάτην παρακαταθήκην, τὰ δίκαια καὶ τὰς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ὀσιωτάτας γνώμας, In Flacc. 16.134) betrayed his trust by altering the details of cases and reversing the verdicts of the prefect, selling these illegal changes for a profit. This scheme succeeded because, given the large number of cases heard, Lampo could assume that the details of each one would not be remembered.⁷ These parallels leave little doubt: Lampo and

⁴ P. Meyer, *P.Hamb.* I 18.

⁵ H. Box, "Philo: In Flaccum 131," *CQ* 29 (1935) 39f.

⁶ Box's reading has won general approval from students of Philo: note the comments of F. H. Colson in the Loeb *Philo* IX (London/Cambridge [Mass.] 1941) 536; and it has been accepted by the most recent editor of *In Flaccum*, A. Pelletier, *Les Oeuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie* 31 (Paris 1967). Pelletier (164f) maintains, however, that *εἰσαγωγεὺς* need not have been the official title of the person who filled this rôle, referring to Pflaum's argument for *archistator*. This misconception is probably derived from Pflaum's statement (*supra* n.2: 284) that Lucian's duties had not been connected with those of the *archistator* Apollonius (*P.Oxy.* II 294) because it was not recognized that "le fonctionnaire dit *εἰσαγωγεὺς* . . . portait en réalité le nom d'*archistator*." Pflaum gives no discussion of the position of *εἰσαγωγεὺς*, and I can find no reason to suppose that both titles ever referred to the same official.

⁷ The evidence available for the Roman administration of justice in Egypt confirms the severe case load and the prefect's heavy dependence on his subordinates. For a recent discussion of the volume of paper-work involved in a *conventus* and how it was handled, see N. Lewis, "The Prefect's Conventus," *BASP* 18 (1981) 119-29. Given this situation, the emphasis in both authors on the great trust involved in the positions of Lampo and Lucian cannot be seen as exaggeration.

Lucian, although active about one and a half centuries apart, held the same post in Egypt. If Box is correct and Lampo was *εἰσαγωγεὺς*, so was Lucian.

Confirmation is hampered by a lack of documentary evidence relating to this official: most is Ptolemaic in date,⁸ when this official acted as a clerk in the court of the *chrematistai*. But while the titles of many positions in the Ptolemaic bureaucracy were retained and incorporated into the Roman system in Egypt, it is often difficult to tell to what extent the duties of the functionaries were modified. In the case of the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* there are very few references in the Roman period, and it is certain only that these clerks could operate on two different levels within the Roman administration: on the staff of a strategos and on the staff of the prefect himself.⁹

The first published papyrus to mention an *εἰσαγωγεὺς* on the staff of a prefect (*P.Hamb.* 18) dates from the reign of Elagabalus. Here, this official and his staff are involved in the classification of various types of documents: petitions to the prefect with the official receipts, instructions from the prefect, and letters of commission. While secretarial, these duties are much broader than the strictly judicial rôle described by Philo and Lucian, and might thus be seen as an obstacle to the argument that Lampo and Lucian were *εἰσαγωγεὺς*.¹⁰ Yet the late date of this document suggests that these expanded duties could have been given to the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* after the extensive changes in the administration of this province during the third century. Alternatively, this papyrus might indicate that there were several officials with this title whose duties fell within slightly different spheres of activity.

A recently re-edited papyrus, dating from about the same period as Lucian's term in Egypt,¹¹ provides more promising material, including an introduction to extracts from a report of proceedings heard

⁸ *P.Amh.* II 33; *P.Fay.* I 11; *P.Grenf.* I 40; for other references see Schulthess, *RE* Suppl. 3 (1918) 425–27 s.v. “*Εἰσαγωγεὺς*,” and P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) I 112, II 204 nn.160 and 162.

⁹ *P.Fay.* I 23a shows one on the staff of a strategos (as also probably *P.Oxy.* XLII 3062).

¹⁰ Meyer, in publishing *P.Hamb.* 18, was the first to suggest that *εἰσαγωγεὺς* was the post held by Lampo and Lucian. But as the duties of the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* and *ὑπομνηματογράφος* could not be clearly defined on the basis of the limited number of documents then available, it was difficult to separate these two officials. Thus, A. Stein, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Verwaltung Aegyptens unter römischer Herrschaft* (Stuttgart 1915) 187–206, argued that since the duties described in *P.Hamb.* 18 went beyond the judicial ones described by Philo and Lucian, the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* was a different functionary in the office of the prefect, and that Lampo and Lucian had been *ὑπομνηματογράφοι*. But it will be shown below that the latter possibility cannot be supported.

¹¹ *P.Stras.* 179 + *P.Daris inv.* 38, in S. Daris, “*Ricerche di papirologia documentaria*, II,” *Aegyptus* 63 (1983) 122–28.

before the prefect during a *conventus*.¹² In the list of assessors who accompanied the prefect (his *συμβούλιον*) is found the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* C. Julius (or Junius) Gelo.¹³ While the introductory formulae in this papyrus are consistent with those found in other examples,¹⁴ an unusual phrase occurs just before the body of the trial: Γαῖος Ἰούλιος Γείλων εἰσαγωγεὺς[ς] ὑπέγραψα. This should mean that Gelo signed the record of proceedings, endorsing its accuracy.¹⁵ Although, to my knowledge, such a phrase is unique in the introduction of reports of proceedings, there are other papyri in which this type of official certification is marked in the concluding section.¹⁶ These authenticating signatures usually belonged to the court scribe or to the copyist responsible for making the specific copy in which they occur. But the endorsement by the *εἰσαγωγεὺς* Julius Gelo appears to offer a significant parallel to the duties attested for Lampo and Lucian (τῶν πραγματοποιμένων καὶ λεγομένων ἀπαξαπάντων ὑπομνήματα γράφεσθαι, *Apol.* 12); in particular, anyone responsible for such verification would also have had the opportunity to make the kind of illegal changes Philo attributed to Lampo.

If Lampo and Lucian held the same post, it must have been a position in the provincial administration that could be filled either by a native Alexandrian or by a Romanized Greek from the banks of the Euphrates who had arrived in Egypt as part of the retinue of a prefect. The office of *εἰσαγωγεὺς*, to judge from our present knowledge of its function, seems to allow this possibility. As the prefect would need to rely on the expertise of resident Alexandrians to help him administer a system with which he probably had little experience,¹⁷ the use of qualified locals wherever possible would be logical. But at the same time there is nothing to indicate that strictly local knowledge was essential for the specific duties of *εἰσαγωγεὺς*, and thus it would also be a suitable post for the prefect to fill by patronage.¹⁸ It is

¹² On this class of papyri see R. A. Coles, *Reports of Proceedings in Papyri* (= *Pap. Brux.* IV [1966]).

¹³ Unfortunately very little is known about the appointment or the function of the assessors; see T. C. Skeat and E. P. Wegener, "A Trial Before the Prefect of Egypt Appius Sabinus, c. 250 A.D.," *JEA* 21 (1935) 240. It is impossible to say whether the inclusion of an *εἰσαγωγεὺς* among them was unusual.

¹⁴ Coles (*supra* n.12) 29–38.

¹⁵ *P.Ryl.* II 77 shows an *exegetes* and a gymnasiarch making a similar verification by signing the record of a disputed election to municipal offices.

¹⁶ Coles (*supra* n.12) 52–54. Often *ἀνέγνω* is used to indicate that the report has been read (e.g. *P.Oxy.* VIII 1102 and XII 1420); *P.Fouad* 21 is signed *ἔγραψα*.

¹⁷ See P. A. Brunt, "The Administrators of Roman Egypt," *JRS* 65 (1975) 124–47.

¹⁸ On such appointments see Fronto, *Ep. Ad Pium* 8 (Naber); cf. R. P. Saller, *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire* (Cambridge 1982). In *P.Stras.* 179 + *P.Daris*

possible that there was more than one *εἰσαγωγεὺς* serving on the staff of a prefect at the same time, and there may even have been a mixture of local and foreign administrators acting in this capacity.

While the argument in favor of Lucian as *εἰσαγωγεὺς* is still far from certain, reconsideration of the other two identifications adds to its probability. The office of *ὑπομνηματογράφος* was the highest municipal magistracy in Alexandria,¹⁹ and there is no known instance in which it was filled by a non-Alexandrian. Even in the third century, when the reorganization carried out by Septimius Severus seems to have established *ὑπομνηματογράφοι* in each of the nome-capitals, and some who had held office in other towns in Egypt are also found holding posts in Alexandria, no native of another province can be shown to have held this particular office. As for the second century, ten of the fourteen known *ὑπομνηματογράφοι* are clearly native Alexandrians, seven of whom are known to have held other offices in that city.²⁰ Moreover, most *ὑπομνηματογράφοι* also held other, more junior, posts in the municipal ranks and had family connections with other office-holders. Indeed, the higher offices at Alexandria tended to be shared by a number of prominent local families.²¹ It would thus be inconsistent with what we know of the position to find Lucian serving as *ὑπομνηματογράφος*. In the case of Lampo, Philo tells us that he had been gymnasiarch after acting as secretary in the court of the prefect (*In Flacc.* 16.128–34). The office of gymnasiarch was several rungs below that of *ὑπομνηματογράφος*, and while many documents cite *ὑπομνηματογράφοι* who are former gymnasiarchs, none refers to a gymnasiarch who had previously been *ὑπομνηματογράφος*. Finally, what we know of the functions of the

inv. 38 (*supra* n.11), it is impossible to say how C. Julius Gelo came to Egypt, or what his origins were. Daris says “... indubbia è l’origine provinciale del personaggio. Non si conoscono altri esempi di Γείλων.” For the name Γείλων or Gelo the doubt about origins must be maintained, even if Γείλων was an alternative form of Γέλων (although this seems unlikely for this period; see F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* I [Milan 1976] 256–59). Γείλων, however, could be a Greek transliteration of the Latin name Gillo, which is attested (see *PIR*² F542–44), and may mark an Italian origin. I wish to thank Professor C. P. Jones for this suggestion.

¹⁹ For the order of municipal offices at Alexandria *cf.* *P.Oxy.* XII 1412.

²⁰ We have no indication of the origins of the other four (*P.Mert.* 19; *P.Köln* 143; *SB* 7434; *P.Oxy.* 1102; *P.Ross.Georg.* 11.20), but there is no reason to doubt that they too were residents of that city (note the discussion of the *ὑπομνηματογράφος* in F. Oertel, *Die Liturgie* [Leipzig 1917] 351–54).

²¹ For one family whose members held a variety of government positions in Alexandria over a period of time, *cf.* P. J. Sijpesteijn, ed., *The Family of the Tiberii Iulii Theones* (= *P.Theon.*, *Stud.Amst.* 5 [1976]).

ὑπομνηματογράφος is inconsistent with the duties described by Philo and Lucian, for the *ὑπομνηματογράφος* is portrayed as a judge with authority delegated by the prefect.²² Altogether, the evidence is conclusive: it is unlikely that either Lampo or Lucian could have held the post of *ὑπομνηματογράφος*.

The meagre evidence relating to the *archistator praefecti Aegypti* has been collected and discussed by J. F. Gilliam.²³ Here only two questions need to be considered: whether the courtroom duties described for Lampo and Lucian can also be seen in the evidence relating to the *archistator*; and whether the careers of Lampo and Lucian are in any way similar to those of known *archistatores*, so that there exists a reasonable expectation of their being promoted to such a post.

Pflaum connected Lucian to this post on the basis of one papyrus (*P.Oxy.* II 294, dated A.D. 22) in which an Egyptian, concerned about a case soon to go before the court of the prefect, is urged by his friends to join the household (*γενέσθαι οικιακός*) of the *archistator* Apollonius so that he may enter the proceedings with him. But surely this refers to physical entry into the hearing with Apollonius (*εἶνα σὺν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ διαλογισμὸν ἔλ[θ]ω*) in order to convey the impression of having some favor with this official—something very different from Lucian's rôle in introducing cases (*τὰς δίκας εἰσάγειν*). Thus there is no obvious tie between the rôles of Apollonius and Lucian.

A second papyrus in which an *archistator* is named (*P.Oxy.* XXXVI 2754, dated A.D. 111) also shows this official involved with the prefect's administration of justice.²⁴ This document preserves a prefectural edict concerning legal procedure. While there is some difficulty with the text, the section in which the *archistator* is mentioned indicates the prefect's concern with cases left unsettled at a previous *conventus*; he adds his plans to ensure that the same situation should not occur during the upcoming *conventus*. The *archistator* Julius Maximus is presented as an official with significant rank and power—indeed, he is called a *φίλος* of the prefect. In an effort to clear up the backlog of cases, the prefect directs those involved to petition the *archistator*, who by this directive seems to be delegated to act as

²² *P.Tebt.* I 286; *P.Oxy.* VIII 1102; *P.Mil.Vogl.* IV 230; *P.Stras.* I 22. This also seems to have been the function of the Ptolemaic *ὑπομνηματογράφος*: cf. *P.Tebt.* 61 and 64; B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, "Ptolemaic Papyri in the Gizeh-Museum," *ArchP* 1 (1900) 157–62.

²³ *Supra* n.3.

²⁴ This papyrus was published after Gilliam's article, but it does not affect his conclusions. For further comment see N. Lewis, *BASP* 9 (1972) 29–31, and 13 (1976) 7f. Both Lewis and the editors of *P.Oxy.* 2754 refer to Gilliam, but neither note nor discuss Pflaum's proposal that Lucian held this post.

judge. This must have been a temporary duty for the *archistator*, as future cases not heard at the *conventus* were to be judged before the *nome-strategos*. Hence it is unclear how this instance is related to the regular duties of any official. Nevertheless, the impression given of Julius Maximus is that of a man with considerably more authority than Lampo or Lucian ever possessed.

Ultimately, neither of the papyri in which *archistatores* are portrayed in legal rôles present any close parallels with the duties of Lampo and Lucian. In fact the evidence for the *archistator* suggests that any courtroom duties he might have had must have been of secondary importance.²⁵ Gilliam noted that the *statores* were some sort of military police, and that the *archistator* probably had a largely military function overseeing these and possibly some other soldiers as well.²⁶ This aspect may receive partial confirmation by P.Oxy. II 294, which also states that two officials were under arrest until the trial unless they could persuade the *archistator* to give security for them. Releasing prisoners on bail would seem a proper concern for the head of a police force. Another reference to an *archistator* connected with the army is found in an inscription from about the middle of the second century detailing the career of L. Septi[mus] Petro[nianus].²⁷ Although it gives no indication of the duties of the *archistator*, this inscription reveals a case where the post was held as part of an equestrian career that was largely military.

In arguing that Lucian was *archistator*, Pflaum states that, like Petronianus, he had just completed the *tres militiae* and was subsequently promoted to this higher equestrian post.²⁸ While this progression is certainly possible, the lack of evidence pointing to any previous military experience for Lucian raises some doubt. At the same time, there are many indications that appointments to the staff of a provincial governor were often made through patronage, rather than regular advancement.²⁹ Although Lucian refuses to defend his acceptance of a post in Egypt out of admiration for his patron (*Apol.* 9), this refusal itself indicates that a patron-client relationship was involved. Thus, whatever his post in Egypt, Lucian need not have followed the pattern of Petronianus in being promoted to it through the equestrian *cursus*.

²⁵ Gilliam (*supra* n.3) 102 n.10.

²⁶ Gilliam (*supra* n.3) 101.

²⁷ H. d'Escurac-Doisy, *MélRome* 69 (1957) 137–50 (*cf.* *AEpigr* [1958] 156); this inscription is the starting-point for both Pflaum and Gilliam. On Petronianus, see now. H. Devijver, *De Aegypto et Exercitu Romano sive Prosopographia Militarium Equestrium* (= *StudHell* 22 [Louvain 1975]) no. 104.

²⁸ Pflaum (*supra* n.2) 284.

²⁹ Saller (*supra* n.18) 130–34 and 157–59.

In fact, although Lucian was certainly a Roman citizen and might have held equestrian rank, it seems unlikely that he held any post in Egypt within the *cursus* at all. There is no evidence that Lampo was a Roman citizen, still less that he enjoyed equestrian status;³⁰ even Pflaum does not include him among the *archistatores*. Yet, as we have seen, the posts of Lampo and Lucian must have been the same; and since it is impossible for Lampo to have been *archistator*, Lucian could not have held that post either.

In sum, it is clear that Lampo and Lucian could not have held the office of *ὑπομνηματογράφος*, nor could they have been *archistatores*. If Box's emendation for the text of Philo *In Flacc.* 16.131 is accepted, the possibility that these two men filled the post of *εἰσαγωγεὺς* seems enhanced. The other evidence presently available for this post suggests no reason to dispute this identification.³¹

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³⁰ His early career is detailed by Philo, *In Flacc.* 16.128–34; his trial and execution along with his fellow Alexandrian, Isidorus, is detailed in H. A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* (Oxford 1954) 18–26.

³¹ I am grateful to Professor C. P. Jones for his constructive criticism.