Kaibel maintained that most of the Deipnosophists were fictions, derived or compounded from great names of the past. It is a view that has exerted two kinds of influence, both unfortunate. The Budé editor reproduces Kaibel's notions with servility. Gulick of the Loeb rightly contested a number of Kaibel's fantasies, but succumbed to a complexity of his own devising: Athenaeus' practice was "to take a well-known personage and attribute to him different traits from those he was known to possess." That credo has a perverse charm, but will get us nowhere slowly. In fact, at least some of the assembled wiseacres are vulnerable to prosopographical scrutiny.

Undue optimism is not in order. In that we are dealing with characters obscure (to us) and otherwise (at first sight) unknown, the harvest is not likely to be a rich one. One will have to be content with some general possibilities, the prospect of linking Athenaeus' guests with names in other sources (including the Historia Augusta), and the infracting of Kaibel's dismissal of the lesser savants as prosaic fictions.

Major luminaries are excluded from the present investigation. Elsewhere, I argue at some length for the old notion of Dittenberger that the Ulpian of Athenaeus' dialogue is the father of the celebrated jurist. The host of the verbose diners bears the uncommon name of Larensis; we do not require the idea of Rudolph, wrongly perpetuated by Wright in her Loeb edition of Philostratus' Lives, that he is a cover-name for Herodes Atticus. Mine host was the pontifex P. Livius Larensis, a real character with an Antonine career. Athenaeus himself is treated in detail elsewhere; and Galen is too familiar to require enquiry here.

2. A. M. Desrousseaux, introd., xii-xix.
3. Introductory.
5. W. Dittenberger, "Athenaeus und sein Werk," Apophoreton (1903), 1; the contention is supported by: e.g., R. Syme, Emperors and Biography (Oxford, 1971), 155, n. 5.
6. Introductory.
The character to whom Athenaeus narrates his account of the banquet is a certain Timocrates. This “feed” may be of interest. For Timocrates happens to be the name of the philosophy teacher of the sophist Polemo of Laodicea, defended and admired by his luminous pupil. Athenaeus displays a certain interest in Polemo. According to Galen, Polemo coined a notable phrase to describe Rome: she was “the epitome of the world.” An extract from his first book discloses that Athenaeus reproduced this mot.

Which proves nothing. A phrase could have been borrowed for mockery as much as emulation. Yet it might suggest that Athenaeus was an admirer, perhaps even a pupil, of Polemo. If so, the Timocrates of Athenaeus could be a descendant of Polemo’s mentor. Or a fiction designed to recall that real-life original. Either way, Polemo’s teacher suits the learned table, for his first ambition had been medicine: four of the deipnosophists (including Galen) were physicians.

A second item is worth adducing. A foolish youth of sophistic pretensions who incurred the wrath of Polemo was called Varus. Amongst the assembled banqueters, one of the least significant is a grammarian of that name, whose one tiny contribution to the talk is rudely ignored. Coincidence or more?

Sectarian rivalries could be surfacing. Athenaeus might have been acquainted with the ill-fated Hermocrates of Phocaia, the great-grandson of Polemo, who was prospering under Severus before his untimely death. The captious Philostratus, no doubt purveying the jealousy of rival salons, asserts that Hermocrates was the only follower or descendant of Polemo to merit discussion.

Excluding Athenaeus, Timocrates, Larensis, Ulpian, Galen, and the anonymous extras, the guest list is made up of: 8 grammarians (subsuming Palamedes the lexicographer and Myrtilus of Thessaly, albeit the latter tends to operate as a Cynic foil to Cynulcus); 3 doctors; 4 philosophers; 2 musicians; 1 jurist; 1 bon vivant.

It is a typical blend. The term “sophist” was a flexible one (Lucian applied it to Christ), incorporating most or all of the learned professions. Surprise was evinced in a most expert quarter at the presence of musicians. No need for

8. With much comment on the absurd prolixity and triviality of the talk; these animadversions are placed at the beginnings and ends of individual books, where no reader could miss them: 1.4c; 3.127d; 4.185a; 5.185b; 6.222b; 7.330c; 8.331b; 8.365c; 9.366a; 11.509e; 12.510a; 15.665a.
10. 5.584 (Kuhn).
11. 1.19b.
13. 3.118d–e; see later for Varus.
15. VS, p. 554.
17. Bowersock, 14. He is misleading in talking of the presence of a musician; there were two, and it is pertinent that Aemilianus Maurus is described as a music-lover (14.634c).
concern; Athenaeus\textsuperscript{18} describes the Antonine mime, Agrippus Memphius, as a "philosopher-dancer." What was allowed to him will certainly have been conceded to the more decorous pair of musicians in the \textit{Deipnosophistae}.

For all that, the labels can mislead. The appellation "philosopher," bestowed by Philostratus upon Julia Domna, was but a courtesy title. And one that was in large measure responsible for the puffing up of her occasional \textit{séances} with men of letters into a regular circle. By the same token, these honorifics can be a boon to speculation. When a philosopher, say, in Athenaeus' dialogue is under scrutiny, the search after clues for his identity does not have to be restricted to philosophical contexts or personnel.

Now to the guests. The order of their appearance here is of no consequence. Hence, as a possible convenience for those who may wish to follow them by means of the indices of Kaibel and Gulick, simple alphabetic sequence is adopted.

1. Aemilianus Maurus. He is introduced along with Plutarch, Leonides of Elis, and Zoilus (1.1c); the quartet is hailed as comprising the most elegant of grammarians. Elsewhere (14.634c), he is billed as a music lover. An angry cook once sneers at his tiny body (9.406a), something that does not have to be taken literally.

His several contributions to the talk have usually to do with mageiric matters: puddings (3.126b–f; 3.127a–d), cooking utensils (4.169a–4.174a; 6.228e–6.231b), Thessalian delicacies (14.662f–14.664f), and general culinary items (9.405d; 9.406a). Two changes of pace are provided by lecturettes on musical instruments (14.634c–e) and riddles (10.448b).

Only once does he really function as a grammarian. That is when he breaks out on the etymology of words for fruit (3.83b). Aemelianus here adduces the authority of Juba of Mauretania, appealing to the latter's history of Libya. A signal reference, from the mouth of a scholar called Maurus. One of Athenaeus' pranks? Or a clue to something?

Kaibel averred that our grammarian was created out of Scipio Africanus Aemilianus, leaving it at that. True, his theory of fictions cannot be disproved. But we are entitled to travel down other roads, so long as it is understood that many of them may turn out to be \textit{culs-de-sac}.

Aemilianus is a name borne by imperial men of letters. The elder Seneca attests to a \textit{rhetor Graecus} of his own time; he was very likely the father of an Aemilianus \textit{rhetor} mentioned in Plutarch.\textsuperscript{19} A \textit{grammaticus} of the first half of the first century A.D., one Epitherses, might challenge this paternity, as his son Aemilianus was a \textit{rhetor}. That suits our present investigation rather well, for this latter pair came from Nicaea, the native city of Cassius Dio. So did the

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Deip.} 1.20c (a passage not alluded to by Bowersock); see earlier on this character's career and relevance.

\textsuperscript{19} Seneca, \textit{Controv.} 5.34.25; Plutarch, \textit{De defect. orac.} 17. See \textit{PIR}\textsuperscript{2} A 318.
Aemilianus whose poems occur in the *Anthology*. We may have a sophistic family stretching over the generations here; Nicaea was not fecund in men of letters.

Maurus is an imponderable name, for it might have to be taken as an epithet (ethnic or otherwise), not a name at all. The vituperative Palladas lampoons a Maurus *rhetor*, as does the poet Ammianus; in both cases, Maurus has been taken as an ethnic.20

Various Aemiliani did well in the later second and early third centuries. Consulars are registered for 227, 259, and 276.21 More pertinently to the present discussion, it is a name with close African associations. One thinks of Sicinius Aemilianus, the enemy of Apuleius. Also of Asellius Aemilianus, thought to be an African on the strength of his kinship with Clodius Albinus. In spite (or because) of this tie, Aemilianus supported the cause of Niger, and was executed by Severus in the wake of the defeat of that cause.22

Dio23 describes Asellius Aemilianus as a man of wide provincial experience, without equal in the senatorial order for political acumen, and (inevitably, one supposes) most conceited. Since his sons were in Rome in the civil war period (Severus had them seized as hostages), we may infer that he had a residence in the capital.24

No source says anything about the intellectual pastimes of Asellius Aemilianus. To cover this, the matter of courtesy titles is invoked from above. One might simply take Maurus to indicate African connections. Or better, and it would suit the humour of Athenaeus, support of Niger. For the deipnosophist did not disdain puns,25 and could have relished the spectacle of rivals called Albinus and Niger.

All this is but conjecture, albeit valid in principle. One does not need a precise identification to realise that distinguished Aemiliani were in no shortage in Athenaeus’ general period. To have such a one at Larensis’ house makes for sound dramatic realism.

One more thing. The *Historia Augusta*26 once invokes a certain Aelius Maurus, supposedly the freedman of Phlegon (Hadrian’s *libertus*), for an item concerning the death of Septimius Severus. If Aelius Maurus is a fabrication,27 could he have been inspired by Aemilianus Maurus? The Severan context would work. Or would anyone venture the reverse fabrication?

20. *AP* 11.204 (Palladas), 16.20 (Ammianus); *PLRE* 1,570 takes Maurus as an ethnic in both cases.
22. On Sicinius, see Birley, 50; on Asellius, Birley, 55, 137, 163, 172, 279.
23. 75.6.1–2.
24. *Herodian* 3.2.3.
25. Observe a good one in 8.365e.
2. Alceides of Alexandria. This musician is curtly introduced at the end of the inaugural parade of guests (1.1f). He is allowed only one contribution to the talk, appropriately on the subject of music and musical instruments (4.174b–4.185a).

Kaibel had no bright ideas about this character. It is easy to believe in a musician from Alexandria, and we have shown that such an artist was admissible to the gatherings and rank of sophists. Even if he is a fiction, it will have been a nice touch to have him emanate from Alexandria. For that city was oddly poor in the production of sophists. This may just have been in the mind of Athenaeus when he makes Ulpian ridicule the Alexandrians as an unmusical lot (4.174b; 4.175e).

A more subtle approach would be to bear in mind the use of Alceides as a poetic name for Heracles (Athenaeus, 1.33c, quotes a line with this epithet), and look for someone called Heraclius or perhaps Heracleides. The latter name is that of one of Philostratus' sophists. He comes from the wrong place, Lycia not Alexandria, but belongs to the early years of Severus' reign. Apart from being a famous glutton, which might betoken a deipnosophist, Heracleides had strong associations with Egypt in general (many flocked from that country to study under him at Smyrna) and Naucratis in particular (he was a rival of both Ptolemy and Apollonius).

3. Amoebeus. This fellow is imported near the end of the banquet; he is allowed one brief quotation, and a dazzling display of his vocal and instrumental talents (14.622c–14.623d).

Late arrival is a motif of symposiac literature, as any reader of Plato, Petronius, and Lucian knows. It might also be suspicious that he has the name of a famous harpist of old. However, Athenaeus acknowledges this with a comparison between the two, which may imply that he is not trying to pass off an antique virtuoso as one of his guests. It is insisted that his Amoebeus is a contemporary (14.622d), though that in itself will not disarm the sceptic. Of relevance here is the account given by Alceides of his fellow citizen and musician, Alexander, who has just died after creating a sensation in Rome with his triangle playing (4.183e). A vogue for musicians will have aided their claims to rank as sophists, and increases the chances of their presence at the table of one such as Larensis.

4. Arrian. One of the grammarians, Arrian is omitted from the formal list of guests at the beginning. He appears in only one sequence (3.113a–3.113d),

28. See VS, p. 613 f. for all that follows on this sophist.
29. Alcibiades is late and drunk in Plato's Symposium. So is Habinnas in the Satyricon; Petronius may have been parodying Plato (for the notion, Averil Cameron in CQ N.S. 19 (1969), 367). Lucian, Conv. 20, has his doctor come late after a house call to a patient: that is more implausible to modern ears than ancient ones!
30. Plutarch, Aratus 17.
discoursing on bread. When brought in, he is merely “one of the grammarians,” but at the close of his lecture, he has improved to the status of “the great Roman sophist” (this may or may not be a sarcasm). He is admired for his scholarship by the bon vivant Magnus, but is brushed aside by Cynulcus, who dubs him (twice) Blepsias.

One cannot help thinking of the versatile historian-philosopher Flavius Arrianus. For a good reason, in the present context. He is respected by Magnus, who flourished early enough in the Antonine period to know Hadrian's clever freedman, Aristomenes of Athens, about whom we have already wondered. Has Athenaeus contrived this overlap for a purpose?

It may or may not be true that Dio Cassius composed a biography of Arrian the historian. The name is frequently encountered. A jurist Arrian is cited more than once in the Digest by Ulpian and Paulus. Some might want to fasten on the Arrian-Ulpian conjunction, for obvious reasons. L. Annius Arrianus was a consular in 243. Arrian was a name of interest and some eminence throughout the age of Athenaeus. Even if the deipnosophist Arrian is a fiction, he has been well named for dramatic realism.

A rerum scriptor Graecus is thrice cited by the Historia Augusta under the name of Arrian. This is generally taken to be an error or a prank for Herodian. Could it be instead that the biographer lifted his Arrian from the Deipnosophistae? One looks back to Aemilianus Maurus and Aelius Maurus.

5. Cynulcus. This is the nickname of Theodorus, and one that he himself prefers (4.160d). It is a natural tag for the vicious Cynic opponent of Ulpian. Kaibel regarded it as nomen e Parmenisci symposio petitum . . . That may be right, but it is not necessary. The name is originally an epithet, denoting the leading of dogs; its present suitability needs no comment.

Cynulcus is one of Ulpian’s two great rivals, and the second most frequent speaker at the banquet. A voluble Cynic in the second century is no surprise. Theodorus is a common name at all periods. Athenaeus mentions twelve of them, apart from Cynulcus; there are nearly thirty bearers of the name, including sophists, doctors, and philosophers, in the first volume of the Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire. It requires little effort to believe in a Cynic Theodorus who actually operated in Athenaeus’ time.

31. He is dubbed μεγάλοοσφαίρης, a word unique to this passage.
32. Translated by Gulick as “Bright Eyes”; it might be βλεψίας (= fish), a word employed in an ichthyological treatise by Dorion, cited at Deip. 7.306 f.
34. PIR A 1078.
35. PIR A 635; cf. HA, Gord. 29.1.
36. Max. 33.3; Gord. 2.1; Max-Balb. 1.2 (always joined with Dexippus).
37. Thus Stein, PIR A 1078; Magie, Loeb edition of HA.
38. LSJ registered only Nicolaus of Damascus for the adjective. The Supplement adds PSA Athen. 2.2.
6. Daphnus. One of the medicals, Daphnus is said to be from Ephesus. He has to be taken in conjunction with another of the physicians at table, Rufinus of Nicaea. Kaibel took them as fictions, compounded from Rufus of Ephesus, a doctor attested for the period of Domitian and Trajan.

Rufinus is curtly introduced by name only (1.1f), and is not once permitted to open his mouth throughout the banquet. Daphnus, by signal contrast, is ushered in with all honour as a man ἰερός in both profession and character, and as a well-versed Platonist (1.1e).

And yet, for all this glory, Daphnus is brought in as “a certain Daphnus” when he makes his first contribution to the talk (2.51a). Subsequently, he is simply referred to by name. As in the case of Galen, his sequences are brief and entirely concerned with diet and health (2.51a; 3.79a–3.80e; 3.120b–3.121e; 7.276d; 8.355a–8.359d). Again as with Galen, there is no hint of philosophical expertise after the formal introduction.

We should here subjoin the fourth medical man at table, Dionysocles. He is omitted from the formal introductions, and given two tiny speeches, both on diet and health (3.96d; 3.116d–3.116f).

Two patterns are discernible. Learned physicians are a real-life convention of the second century. Their presence at symposia also provokes no surprise. Athenaeus has yoked fact and motif together in including medical men in his dialogue.

But it is also patent that he wishes to minimise their role in the verbal transactions. Either it is a subtle compliment—the doctors being viewed as too bored by the pedantic descantings to contribute much—or a desire to deprecate their status as sophists. The latter is the simpler view, one reinforced by Athenaeus' quip on the insuperable stupidity of physicians (15.666a). The humour of Athenaeus will also have to be admitted as a factor here. For doctors (notably Galen) were on the right side in sectarian conflict with Atticists and linguistic purists. So, at least upon many an occasion in his narrative, was Athenaeus of Naucratis.

A prosopographical glance at the trio of doctors (Galen is obviously to be excluded here) may strengthen the above contention. There is nothing to be discovered about Daphnus or Dionysocles. But the silent Rufinus of Nicaea is more interesting. For he might be redolent of the consular (142) L. Cuspius Pactumeius Rufinus, a figure closely associated with the great doctor Galen and the great patient Aelius Aristides, famed for building the great Asclepium around 150. An alternative is to consider Rufinus the sophist, one of the bastard sons of Apollonius of Naucratis, and totally subservient to his father’s sophistic repertoire.

It is to be iterated that such observations as the above are not to be regarded as precise identifications. The point is, as in earlier cases, that Athenaeus’
characters, even if invented, are designed to a pattern of dramatic plausibility. The notion of a farrago of names from all ages is most vulnerable.

7. Democritus. He is coupled in the formal introductions with Pontianus. Both are polymaths from Nicomedia (1.1d). Kaibel dismissed Democritus as a simple reproduction of the sage of Abdera; Pontianus of Nicomedia was claimed to be a confection from Nicomedes of Bithynia.

Nicomedia is the only city overtly contributing two deipnosophists. That both are philosophers is worthy of remark; Nicomedia was the provenance of Arrian. It is a city that emitted one of Philostratus' worthies, the successful Quirinus.\(^41\) Once again, Athenaeus has made his details conform to historical fact.

Of the two names, Democritus may elicit suspicion. But Pontianus of Nicomedia has unimpeachable credentials, since one such is known from an inscription.\(^42\) We shall also cast an eye at Pontius Proculus Pontianus, a consul in 238.\(^43\)

8. Leonides. Deriving from Elis, he is commended along with Plutarch, Aemilianus, and Zoilus as an elegant critic. His few intrusions (3.96d; 3.116a; 9.367d–9.368f; 11.504b; 13.558e–13.560f) are entirely unmemorable, except perhaps for the last, in which he counters Larensis' praise of the married state. Staid Roman versus flighty Greek?

The name, to be distinguished from Leonidas, is not a common one. One observes with some delight that it occurs in a long register of great generals trained by Probus in the Historia Augusta.\(^44\) Elis was not a town in any way notable for the production of scholars in the Antonine or Severan periods.\(^45\) Kaibel fought shy of any speculation concerning Leonides. The Budé editor,\(^46\) having pointed out a Leonidas of Elis in Pausanias,\(^47\) rushes on to connect Athenaeus' character with the great Spartan king. That is a fine example of the inferiority of second thoughts.

9. Magnus. His name, and a reference by him to the beauty of Rome (3.74e), together suggest that he was a Roman. This notion could be reinforced by his siding with Larensis on the issue of fake philosophers (4.160d), and by his passion for the table, which merits him the unique epithet \(\varphiιλοσφαίρες\)

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\(^{41}\) PS, p. 620; his name is emended to Quirinius by Millar, 177, and Bowersock, 22 n. 1.
\(^{42}\) FG ii 3265 (noticed by Gulick).
\(^{43}\) See Birley, 352; G. Barbieri, L'Albo senatorio de Settimio a Carino (Rome, 1952), no. 1137. His origin cannot be traced.
\(^{44}\) Probus 22.3: stigmatised by PLRE, recorded without comment in \(\text{PIR}\) L 148, and allowed as possibly authentic even by Syme, AHA, 171, and EB, 213.
\(^{45}\) 'Leonidas, the poet of the Anthology, is connected with Alexandria or Tarentum (\(\text{PIR}\) L 147.\)
\(^{46}\) Introd., xvii.
\(^{47}\) 5.15.2.
Magnus harks back to the age of Hadrian: also he is a devotee of Arrian, that 'great sophist of the Romans'.

Magnus is the only guest, apart from Athenaeus and the host, who is not formally associated with the professions or the arts. One could hardly pretend to identify him on the details furnished by Athenaeus. Still, a guest of Larensis with this name impels mention of M. Fabius Magnus Valerianus, who prospered under Commodus and went on under Severus. By flagrant contrast, there was a Pactumeius Magnus (consul in 183), slain by Commodus in an alleged pogrom of consulars.

10. Masurius. A more momentous name. He is the first deipnosophist to be introduced, and receives the most elaborate and the most fulsome description (l.lc). By profession a jurist, he was a famed polymath, an encyclopaedic fellow since childhood, an outstanding poet with special expertise in Archilochian satire. Near the end of the feast (14.623e), it is further disclosed that he was also proficient in music. The last attribute serves to consolidate the respectability of our two men of music, earlier discussed.

His contributions are fairly frequent, sometimes lengthy, and on a variety of topics. Not that any supremacy in learning can be ceded to a particular deipnosophist! Kaibel simplistically equated him with the distinguished jurist of Tiberius' reign. Yet Masurius is not outside the conventions of the Second Sophistic. The occasional sophist turned his hand to poetry. Most pertinent to the present discussion is Hippodromus of Thessaly, one of Philostratus' favourites. He was a celebrated devotee of Archilochus, whom he called the very breath of the sophists.

The enthusiasms of Masurius are credible enough. We may look a little further, in that speculation over possible identity or echo could, not for the first time, involve the Historia Augusta. In the life of Elagabalus, Ulpian the jurist dedicates some of his books to a consular by the name of Sabinus. This has been dismissed as a fraud based on the name of the Tiberian Masurius Sabinus. But what if the Masurius of Athenaeus were a cover-name for a contemporary Sabinus? Nomenclature, expertise, chronology—all converge.

11. Myrtilus. The major speaker, after Ulpian and Cynulcus. Oddly omitted from the formal muster of guests (though that might be due to the deficiencies of the extracts which are all that survive of the first two books), he is far more than a doublet of Cynulcus. Indeed, he is one of the few wiseacres for whom Athenaeus adumbrates a career. An old man (seemingly: it is implied at

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50. VS, p. 620.
51. 16.2.
52. Thus Syme (*EB*, 120), after Dessau in *Hermes* 27 (1892), 578.
53. As Gulick (xiii) calls him.
Myrtilus came from Thessaly; the origin is mentioned several times (1.11b; 7.308b; 13.568d; 15.677a). His father was a cobbler (13.568e). Myrtilus for a season was a sophist resident in Corinth (13.567c; 13.573c). He journeyed at least once, from Synnada to Metropolis in northern Phrygia (13.574f).

There is nothing here that cannot be believed. It is true that shoemakers are something of a motif in Cynical literature. For all that, it was occasionally possible for a sophist to rise from humble origins. Apart from the well-known case of Lucian (not all that poor, in reality), there was Secundus of Athens, whose father was a carpenter, and Apollonius of Naucratis who started out as a household flunkey.

Thessaly produces sophists. Philostratus tends to be rather scornful of men from that area, an attitude reflected in Athenaeus' stressing of Myrtilus' provenance. For all that, the biographer of the sophists is elaborate and keen on Hippodromus of Thessaly. There was also Philiscus from that area, who features in the notorious reference to the "circle" of Julia Domna. Epigraphy has brought to light at least one family of sophists from Thessaly.

The relevance of Corinth to sophistic residence and performance requires no exegesis. Of greater fascination is the journey undertaken by Myrtilus in Phrygia. It is alluded to in the context of Hadrian's travels in that area. It has now been made clear that Polemo visited that part of the world with Hadrian. Another item for our previous aggregation of links or reminiscences concerning Polemo in the Deipnosophistae.

12. Palamedes. An Eleatic lexicographer, not formally introduced, and allowed only a quotation of six words in the entire dialogue (9.397a). The presence of a lexicographer is unsurprising. One thinks of Phrynichus of Bithynia and Pollux of Naucratis, both of whom did well under Commodus. The nullity of Palamedes' contribution to the talk may have been contrived by Athenaeus to imply contempt for his particular activities.

13. Philadelphus of Ptolemais. He never overtly speaks at the banquet, but is intriguingly presented (1.1d) as a man who was experienced in real life as much as philosophy. That would seem to imply a recognisable contemporary, either by way of compliment or censure. For Athenaeus, it is a unique form of introduction, most tantalisingly applied to a silent participant. Another of the author's jokes?

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54. Noted by Gulick (ibid.), following R. Helm, Lucian und Menipp (Leipzig, 1906) and making too much of it.
57. V.S. p. 615.
58. V.S. p. 622.
59. Namely the Flavii Alexander, Phylax and Phoenix (PIR² F 199; Bowersock, 4 n. 2).
60. By Bowersock, 120–23.

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Kaibel drably equated this character with Ptolemy Philadelphus. It is just as reasonable, and emphatically more exciting, to look at somebody like Flavius Boethus. This man was a consular, a patron of Galen, a dabbler in philosophy—and a product of Ptolemais. From the frequent references to him in Galen, he fits the description of one who knew about real life.

So, of course, did most sophists. It is not to say that we have an exact equation. Rather, yet one more demonstration of the plausibility of Athenaeus' characters, in terms of provenance, chronology, and attainments.

14. Plutarch. A rare case of a scholar emanating from Alexandria. Which does not render his claims to an existence invalid. To the contrary, perhaps; it is hard to accept that the productive record of that city was a blank. Its lack of such a role in Philostratus does not so prove.

Athenaeus imports his Plutarch as one of the elegant scholars (1.1c). The grammarian delivers quite frequent sermons, sometimes lengthy, on all manner of topics (4.134d–4.156a; 6.234c–6.248c; 7.276a; 8.359d–8.361e; 9.348a–9.384c; 11.461e–11.503f; 13.562c–13.563c). Kaibel thought he might have dominated the peculiar Book Twelve. Plutarch is not described beyond his Alexandrian citizenship, except in that he betrays an impatience with Myrtilus and Cynulcus (3.86b; 3.119a; 4.158d).

It was inevitable that Kaibel should conjure up Plutarch of Chaeronea as the prototype. Labouring under the twin disadvantages of different provenance and the fact that one would hardly call the biographer a grammarian, Kaibel rested everything on the common use of the symposiac motif. In fact, at least five Plutarchs are attested for the fourth century; there is no warrant for denying that a Plutarch of Alexandria could have existed in the Antonine or Severan periods.

15. Varus. A grammarian missing in the formal introduction and granted only one small intervention (3.118d–3.118e), on the subject of pickled fish. His name is borne by two of Philostratus' sophists. There was Varus of Perge, known as "the stork," who died young in his native town, leaving a high reputation for his sons to enjoy there. Perhaps more to the point is Varus of Laodicea, almost certainly of Severan date, who is the victim of Philostratus' most crushing notice. That obscure Varus who was antipathetic to Polemo

61. PIRe F 229, and Bowersock, 62, for his career and the Galen references.
63. It is peculiar in that no speakers are assigned to any part of this book. Perhaps one ought to take it as representing Athenaeus' own major effort at the symposium? The phenomenon is hard to explain, and may distort the roles of all the deipnosophists.
64. PLRE I, 707–8.
65. VS, p. 576; Bowersock, 22 n. 3, for the idea that his nomen was Plancius.
66. VS, p. 620; for his date, Bowersock-Jones, Approaches to the Second Sophistic, 40.
was noticed earlier. It is clear that a scholarly Varus is a plausible member of the company around the table of Larensis.

16. Zoilus. This grammarian is introduced as one of the elegant academics (1.1d); he speaks once on fish (7.277e–7.277e) and once on Attic words and formations (9.366c–9.367d).

Any Zoilus has an obvious ancestor in the history of scholarship. However, the fact that there was a corrector of Sicily with this name in the fourth century\(^{67}\) demonstrates that there could have been a flesh-and-blood Zoilus in the age of Athenaeus.

From time to time, the dialogues of Athenaeus serve to complement the biographies of Philostratus, and perhaps illumine items of fact or nomenclature in Dio and Historia Augusta. One cheerfully acknowledges that many will continue to leaf through the Deipnosophistae only as a farrago of sources and sauces. But it is also a document for the student of imperial Rome, above all for those engaged in the analysis of the Second Sophistic in the Rome of the Antonines and Severans.

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\(^{67}\) PLRE 1, 944.
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