

FREEDMAN COURTIER IN CIVIC LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION OUTSIDE OF ROME DURING THE PRINCIPATE*

Abstract:

The relationship between 'secretarial' and 'domestic' freedman courtiers and the external world in the Principate, especially with provincial society and administration is still unclear. I aim to analyze traces of freedman courtiers' activities outside of Rome and present some ties between the court and local administrations and societies.

Keywords:

aula, *familia Caesaris*, court, courtiers, imperial freedmen, imperial administration, Principate

The term *aula* which means the imperial 'house' or 'court' is first mentioned in the works of Seneca, in the middle of the first century AD.¹ The young Caesar (later Augustus) – like the late Republican senators – had an extensive personal staff-household, formed by his slaves and freedmen. But no senator, not even the richest one, could match a *princeps*. In the new regime the Emperor's slaves and

* I thank Ignazio Tantillo for his inspiring comments.

¹ Sen. *de ira* 2.33.2: *Notissima uox est eius qui in cultu regum consenuerat: cum illum quidam interrogaret quomodo rarissimam rem in aula consecutus esset, senectutem, 'iniurias' inquit 'accipiendo et gratias agendo'. Saepe adeo iniuriam uindicare non expedit ut ne fateri quidem expediat; Tranq. 6.3: Quorundam parum idonea est uerecundia rebus ciuilibus, quae firmam frontem desiderant; quorundam contumacia non facit ad aulam; quidam non habent iram in potestate, et illos ad temeraria uerba quaelibet indignatio effert; quidam urbanitatem nesciunt continere nec periculosos abstinere salibus: omnibus his utilior negotio quies est. Ferox impatiensque natura irritamenta nocturnae libertatis euit; Ep. 3, 29, 6: ostendet mihi alium in adulterio, alium in popina, alium in aula. Cf. Wintering 2009: 86.*

freedmen were included in the imperial administration, which was divided into two main branches in the first century AD: the state administration, which the emperor shared with the Senate, and the palace administration, which was staffed primarily with *servi et liberti Augusti*, who created the so-called *familia Caesaris*.² Numerous and specialized slave and freedman servants – next to equestrian *amici principis* and senatorial elite members, who participated in social rituals, such as morning receptions (*salutationes*) and evening dinners (*convivia*) – created the imperial court.

Looking for some comparisons, A. Wallace-Hadrill summarized: ‘But in analysing the functions and powers of the *familia Caesaris*, it is misleading to assimilate it to a modern bureaucracy. Much more fruitful analogies lie in the royal households of medieval and Renaissance Europe. One essential feature of the household is that it serves the person of the ruler in all his activities, private or public, small or large’.³ All of the emperor’s activities mentioned by Wallace-Hadrill could be carried out with the participation of various types of slave and freedman servants, whose positions, tasks and influences varied. Service in the imperial court was well-organized into quasi military-style-court units, which is affirmed by terms, such as *optio tabellarium*, *decurio*, *numerus cubiculariorum /vestiariarum*.⁴ The more than 1100 slave and freedman servants buried in the *columbarium* (*Monumentum Liviae*) on the *Via Appia*,⁵ may give some idea as to how extensive the imperial staff was. P.R.C. Weaver calculated over four thousand imperial slaves and freedmen,⁶ and recently J. Edmondson underlined: ‘It is not easy to arrive at an exact figure, but they must have numbered in the thousands rather than the hundreds’.⁷

Some powerful freedman courtiers certainly belonged to the financial elite and owned suburban villas, gardens, or huge estates, as evidenced not only by ancient authors,⁸ but also by the great tomb of the freedman courtier, Eschnius, *a codicillis*, which was set up in Ficulea.⁹ Being recorded as owners of water conduits outside of Rome, freedman courtiers can be assumed to have owned residences in Velitrae (*ab epistulis*), Ostia (*a rationibus*), Gabii (*proximus ab epistulis Latini*), Tusculum – around Frascati (*a cubiculo*), and Capri (*a memoria*).¹⁰ However, the *familia Caesaris* was not homogeneous, and not all of its members belonged to the

² Demougin 2009: 8.

³ Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 298.

⁴ Edmondson 2022: 171–172.

⁵ Treggiari 1973: 242.

⁶ Weaver 1972: 8–9.

⁷ Edmondson 2022: 168.

⁸ Recently, see Edmondson 2022: 202.

⁹ *CIL* XIV 4011.

¹⁰ *CIL* XV 7837a; *CIL* XIV 5309, 23 et 28; *CIL* XIV 2815 = *CIL* XV 7832; *AE* 1903, 130; Ferrua 1972: 143. For a full list of freedman residences with water supplies see Wypijewski 2006: 73–74.

financial elite. Cassius Dio mentioned imperial freedmen, probably employed in the imperial estates in Italy under Septimius Severus. Due to low or no earnings, they joined the Italian bandit leader – Bulla Felix.¹¹

Not every imperial slave or freedman, a member of the *familia Caesaris*, was a ‘courtier’. The category of freedman courtiers includes only those who served in the imperial palace in Rome or in the imperial *horti* around Rome, such as Coetus Herodianus who was ‘a taster of the divine Augustus and later manager of the Gardens of Sallust’, *praegustator divii* (sic) *Augusti, idem postea vilicus in hortis Sallustianis*.¹² Also included in this category are those who were part of the Emperor’s entourage outside of Rome or Italy, such as Ti. Claudius Zosimos, *procurator praegustatorum Imperatoris*, who was with the Emperor Domitian in Moguntiacum (Mainz) during the war with the Chatti in 84 AD.¹³ I excluded from the courtiers those imperial slaves and freedmen who, despite holding the ‘palatine titulature’, served as provincial administrators of the imperial patrimonium without prior experience in the imperial court. For example, we know almost 1,300 members of the *familia Caesaris* at Carthage who were buried in the cemeteries discovered by A.-L. Dellatre in the 19th century.¹⁴

Freedman courtiers held two main types of office: ‘secretarial’ and ‘domestic’. The ‘secretarial’ offices – as Weaver wrote – were ‘senior administrative grades’ or eight ‘great Palatine bureaux’ (*officia maxima*¹⁵ or *ministeria principatus*¹⁶): *a rationibus, ab epistulis, a libellis, a studiis, a cognitionibus, a codicillis, a memoria, and a diplomatibus*.¹⁷ The secretarial courtiers were most often of interest to ancient writers who criticized the *nouveaux riches*.¹⁸ Statius’ account concerning the anonymous

¹¹ Cass. Dio 76.10.5.

¹² CIL VI 9005. In turn, C. Iulius Euxinus, perhaps an imperial freedman, was a *medicus ex hortis Sallustianis*, CIL VI 8671.

¹³ AE 1976, 504. See also the imperial slave Delicatus, *adiutor a cognitionibus dom[ini]nicis*, who died in *expeditione Germanica*, probably between 167–175 AD, CIL VI 8635.

¹⁴ Lassère 1973: 25–57; Carlsen 2020: 199. We know of several *adiutores a commentariis* from Carthage who were part of the administration in charge of the *tractus* in Carthage (CIL VIII 12610–12612; VIII 12894–12897), not part of the central administration in Rome. Sometimes there are doubts if an official served in the province or in Rome. For example, we are not sure whether the Iucundus Aug(usti) lib(ertus), *adiut(or) a cognitionibus* buried in Carthage (CIL VIII 12613), was active in Rome or Carthage. Cf. Carlsen 2020: 201. We have the same problem regarding Amiantus, Aug(usti) lib(ertus), *a commentariis*, who set up the funerary inscription for his mother Flavia Eutychia in Synnada (Asia), CIL III 7045. In turn, two imperial slaves Africanus [C]aes(aris), *adiutor tabularior(um) fisci castrensis* and Vitalis Aug(usti) ser(vus) vern(a) Caes(aris) n(ostri), ministrat(or), both buried in Carthage (CIL VIII 12609; VIII 24691), served in Rome, no doubt.

¹⁵ Suet. Dom. 7.

¹⁶ Tac. Hist. 1.58.

¹⁷ Weaver 1972: 259.

¹⁸ Mouritsen 2011: 113–118.

a rationibus, father of Claudius Etruscus, perfectly define the unique and privileged position of the most important and trusted *libertus Augusti* (Stat. *Silv.* 3.3.64–66):

[...] *semperque gradi prope numina / semper Caesareum coluisse latus sacrisque deorum / arcanis haerere datum.*

[...] and always you were privileged to walk close to deity, always to attend Caesar's side and be near the secrets of the gods' (transl. Shackleton Bailey).

The informal, secret and confidential character of such accounts meant that 'secretarial' offices – as A. Wallace-Hadrill rightly pointed out – controlled 'the channels of communication between subject and ruler',¹⁹ especially in the first century AD.

However, courtiers were not only 'secretarial' officials, but also 'domestic' ones, the *interiores aulici*,²⁰ who formed an informal, trusted and intimate group of the Emperor's servants.²¹ Suetonius suggested that only *cubicularii* listened in on confidential talks between Augustus and Tiberius during a secret meeting (*secretus sermo*).²² The poet Martial used the 'brokers' – 'persons who served him with their contacts with the emperor'²³ – not only *equites*, but also leading 'domestic' *liberti Augusti*, such as *tricliniarum* Euphemus, and a *cubiculo* Parthenius.²⁴ In the second century and at the beginning of the third century AD, the top-level courtiers primarily held one of two 'domestic' offices – *proc. castrensis* and a *cubiculo*,²⁵ which had direct and often exclusive access to the Emperor.

Freedman courtiers were also special envoys, who traveled to Italian cities and the provinces. Poliaeus Marsus – Nero's *cubicularius* – visited Pompeii, but the purpose of his travel is unknown. He gave a special greeting (a double *ubique salutem*) to the *sanctissima colonia* and the Pompeian people.²⁶ An example of imperial freedmen' supervising activities in the provinces is the sending of Nero's freedman, Polyclitus, to Britannia.²⁷ He was sent to examine the political situation after Boudicca's rebellion, to smooth the relationship between the governor and the new procurator.²⁸ Another *libertus* of Nero with much *potentia*, who was to rule Italy in the absence of the Emperor while he was visiting Greece, was Helius.²⁹ In

¹⁹ Wallace-Hadrill 1996: 297.

²⁰ Suet. *Calig.* 19.3.

²¹ Treggiari 1973: 243; Edmondson 2022: 168–203.

²² Suet. *Tib.* 21. See also. Suet. *Iul.* 4.1; Suet. *Dom.* 17.2.

²³ Nauta 2002: 67.

²⁴ Mart. 4.8; 5.6.

²⁵ Boulvert 1974: 129.

²⁶ CIL IV 7755: [---]eius Aug(usti) cubicularius Marsus hic et ubique sa[l](utem)] / [sa]n[ct]issimae coloniae et populo Pompeieno(!) / ubique sal(utem).

²⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 14.39. Cf. Cass. Dio 62.12.

²⁸ Gambash 2012: 5–6.

²⁹ Cass. Dio 63.12.1–3; PIR² H 55.

turn, the imperial freedman L. Aurelius Nicomedes, *a cubiculo* of L. Aelius Caesar, *nutritor* of Lucius Verus, received the equestrian status and held equestrian posts, including *proc. summarum rationum* (*ducenarius*), probably between October 166 and February of AD 169.³⁰ Nicomedes also received military decorations after carrying out the duties of the *cura copiarum exercitus*, perhaps under the direct control of Lucius Verus at Antiochia.³¹ He was probably responsible for the logistics of Lucius Verus' Parthian war.³² Some imperial freedmen and pantomimes should likely be included in the category of freedman courtiers. L. Aurelius Pylades, M. Aurelius Agilius Septentrio, and M. Aurelius Septimius Agrippa, were active in the cities by order of the emperors where they were honored.

It is not my aim to describe and analyze all careers of 'secretarial' and 'domestic' courtiers.³³ Recently, J. Edmondson has exhaustively discussed the taxonomy, recruitment and promotion of domestic servants of the imperial court. However, the relationship between administrative court officials and the external world, especially with provincial society and administration is still unclear.³⁴ I aim to analyze traces of courtiers' activities outside of Rome and present some ties between the court and local administrations and societies.

Our knowledge about freedman courtiers is somewhat limited due to certain methodological problems in interpreting epigraphic evidence.³⁵ Most freedman courtiers are attested for in epitaphs from Rome, where their careers were often spent from beginning to end. Unfortunately, funerary inscriptions of slave and freedman servants present only some of the offices that they had held. Inscriptions with full careers (in opposition to honorific or funerary inscriptions with senatorial or equestrian careers) are very rare. Imperial courtiers or commissioners of funerary inscriptions often did not present the whole career and underlined only the most prestigious or the last office(s) that should be commemorated.³⁶

In many cases it cannot be unequivocally determined whether a given imperial freedman was a courtier or not. For example, it is hard to imagine that two imperial freedmen, M. Ulpius Probus and Tyrrhenus, whose only two functions (*procurator regionis Thevestinae* and *procurator Pannoniae Superioris*) were carved into inscriptions from Ostia and Rome,³⁷ had no connection with the imperial court or did not serve there earlier, but it is only a speculation. The interesting career of

³⁰ CIL VI 1598.

³¹ Remesal Rodríguez 2002: 87; Kehne 2007: 331. Cf. Cass. Dio 71.2.2.

³² Kehne 2007: 331.

³³ Boulvert 1970; 1974; Weaver 1972.

³⁴ Edmondson 2022: 168–203.

³⁵ This issue has been comprehensively presented by Eck (2002: 131–152).

³⁶ Cf. Weaver 1972: 224–225; Edmondson 2022: 170.

³⁷ CIL XIV 176; CIL VI 790.

the imperial freedman P. Aelius Liberalis was carved into the statue base set up by the *vicus Laurentium Augustanorum*.³⁸ Liberalis performed several functions in the corn supply administration in Ostia with the top-level freedman procuratorship (*proc. annonae Ostiensis*), and he received two civic honors: the *ornamenta decurionalia* and the title of *patronus Laurentium vici Augustanorum*. Parallely he held some posts in Rome, where he was a *decurialis gerulorum*, a *decurialis decuriae viatoriae consularis*, and a *tribunicus collegi magni*. The latter title was an important religious function in the *collegium magnum Larum et imaginum domini nostri Caesaris*, related to the imperial cult. As an *apparitor*, Liberalis had some connections with the imperial court.³⁹ He too was probably a courtier. It is also possible that the imperial freedman Ulpius Helis, *optio tabellariorum*, known from the funerary inscription from Gerasa in Arabia, performed this function in the imperial court.⁴⁰ Perhaps he served in the *officium a rationibus/rationum* or in the *statio marmorum* at Rome, where the *optio tabellariorum* functioned.⁴¹

Freedman courtiers as civic benefactors

Numerous examples of the generosity of the rich *liberti Augusti* towards cities, especially in Italy and Asia, are known.⁴² For example, freedmen of Augustus acted as private agents in Asia Minor, such as C. Iulius Zoilos who was a benefactor in Aphrodisias,⁴³ or C. Iulius Nicephoros in Ephesos.⁴⁴ The authorities of Apameia Kelainai in Phrygia honored M. Aurelius Zosimos, a freedman of two Emperors (AD 161–167 or AD 176–180), who was a benefactor of the city (*polis*).⁴⁵ In turn, C. Iulius Helenus, a freedman of Augustus, was honoured by Aletrium (*municipium Aletrinatium*) ‘for his merits’ (*ob merita eius*) through a decree.⁴⁶ Cities awarded the imperial freedmen the *ornamenta*, the title of patron, and – through *adlectio* – included them in the *ordo decurionum*.⁴⁷ Some imperial freedmen were honoured with dedications set up by freeborn citizens, cities or other institutions (for example, two imperial freedmen were honoured by cities as *patroni*).⁴⁸ In Nola

³⁸ *CIL* XIV 2045 = *ILS* 1534; Gregori, Incelli 2018: 34–35, OD 1.

³⁹ Gregori, Incelli 2018: 35.

⁴⁰ *AE* 1930, 93.

⁴¹ *CIL* VI 8424a; *CIL* VI 410.

⁴² Fabre 1992: 156.

⁴³ Reynolds 1982: doc. 33, 35, 36b, 37.

⁴⁴ *I.Ephesos* 859.

⁴⁵ *MAMA* VI 183.

⁴⁶ *CIL* X 5808.

⁴⁷ Boulvert 1974: 222–226.

⁴⁸ *CIL* XIV 2045 = *ILS* 1534 (Vicus Augustanus Laurentium); *CIL* X 5917 = *ILS* 1909 (Anagnia); Bruun 1990: 284.

T. Flavius (his *cognomen* is unknown), *procurator divi Vespasiani et divi Titi* (the exact function is unknown), received a statue from the *Augustales* and that monument was erected in the place given by decree of the *decurions*, *locus datus decreto decurionum*.⁴⁹ After serving as e.g. *nu(m)ularius in aed(e) [Hercu]llis Olivar(i)*, in the trade area on the *forum Boarium*, and *[adiuto]r fisci frument(ari)* at Rome, another T. Flavius [---]ros (his *cognomen* is also unknown) was active in the public and economic life of *Formiae* (his son T. Flavius Irenaeus was a *Ilvir* and patron of the colony).⁵⁰ He was honoured with the honorific double-stool (*bisellium*) and the insignia of a *decurion* (*ornamenta decurionalia*) by the *ordo* of *Formiae*. His statue was also erected in the place given by decree. We know some examples of imperial freedman activity in municipal life, as *magistri Augustales* or local officials (e.g. *duumviri*).⁵¹ C. Iulius Meges, a freedman of Caesar, was *duumvir quinquennalis* in *Lissus*, *Dalmatia*.⁵² Another notable imperial freedman, active in the second half of the second century AD, was L. Aelius Aurelius Apolaustus. He was a *pantomimus* and held the esteemed post of *quinquennalis Augustalium*. The *ordo* of *Canusium* honored him through a decree.⁵³ However, there is no evidence to suggest that these individuals served in the imperial court or were part of the Emperor's entourage.

Possibly an imperial freedman named L. Aurelius Pylades, who was active from 185 to 192 AD, the foremost pantomime of his time (*pantomimus temporis sui primus*), was a courtier and special envoy of *Commodus* in *Puteoli*.⁵⁴ He was *augur*, *hieronica coronatus III*, *patronus parasitorum Apollinis*, and *sacerdos synhodi* in this colony. Pylades also organized extraordinary events, a gladiatorial *munus* and a mixed hunt (*venatio passiva*) in *Puteoli*, a benefit granted by *Commodus* as a favour,⁵⁵ *ex indulgentia sacratissimi principis <<Commodi Pii Felicis>>*. Pylades was honored with the *ornamenta decurionalia* and the *ornamenta duumviralia* by *Puteoli* through a decree, and his two statues were erected by the *Augustales* from the *centuria Antia* and *centuria Cornelia*.⁵⁶ We have information about another influential pantomimus from the time of *Commodus* (187 AD). M. Aurelius Aug. lib. Agilius Septentrio is mentioned as *productus ab Imperatore M. Aurel(io) <<Commodo>> Antonino Pio Felice Augusto* (l. 7–9). This reference potentially confirms his previous service in the imperial court and suggests an intimate relationship with the Emperor.⁵⁷ In

⁴⁹ *CIL* X 1261 (cf. *AE* 2007, 367).

⁵⁰ Arnaldi, Cassieri, Gregori 2013: 56–67 = *AE* 2013, 216. See also Gregori, Incelli 2018: 43–44, OD 7.

⁵¹ *CIL* XI 3083 (Falerii); *CIL* V 3404 (Verona); *AE* 1982, 765 (Lissus).

⁵² *AE* 1982: 765–766.

⁵³ *CIL* IX 344.

⁵⁴ *Eph.Ep.* VIII 369 = *ILS* 5186; *AE* 2005, 337 = *AE* 2007, 378.

⁵⁵ *Commodus* was a *duumvir quinquennalis* in *Puteoli*, *CIL* X 1648; Horster 2004: 346.

⁵⁶ Evangelisti 2011: 41–43; Gregori, Incelli 2018: 54–58, OD 16.

⁵⁷ Cf. *IRT* 606; Cass. Dio 77.21.2.

Lanuvium he was *pantomimus*, *sacerdos synhodi*, *paraistus Apollinis*, *alumnus Faustinae Augustae*, and he was honored with the *ornamenta decurionalia* and the *allectio inter iuvenes* by the senate and people of Lanuvium.⁵⁸ His second statue was erected in Praenestae, where he continued a pantomime activity during the reign of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. In Praeneste he performed several functions (e.g. *sevir Augustalis*) and was granted civic honors, *Huic res publica Praenestin(orum) ob insignem amorem eius erga cives patriamque, postulato populi, statuam posuit d(ecreto) d(e-curionum)* (l. 11–15).⁵⁹

In turn, M. Septimius Aurelius Agrippa, a freedman of Caracalla, was another *pantomimus*, but commemorated with a statue in Lepcis Magna in 211–217 AD. This monument was erected by his *amicus rarus*, P. Albucius Apollonius Mediolanensis ex Italia.⁶⁰ Agrippa was a freedman courtier and special envoy, advanced by the Emperor, *a domino nostro Augusto proventus*. He received many honors in Italian and African cities. He was decorated with the insignia of a decurion (*ornamenta decurionalia*) at Verona and Vicentia, accepted as a member of the *iuvenes* at Mediolanum, and finally enrolled in the *ordo* by the Emperor in Lepcis Magna.

A votive inscription, a small round *cippus* from Pisidian Antioch,⁶¹ presents the freedman courtier, Ti. Claudius Epinicus, a private secretary of the Emperor (*a secretis Augusti*) and a taster (*praegustator*) in the court of Nero. The next (and probably the last) position in his career was a procuratorship (its type is unknown), perhaps in Rome. Epinicus initially was a slave who belonged to the Antiochian family of Caristanii and later was transferred to the imperial court.⁶² He returned to his native town Antiochia, where he served as *sevir Augustalis*, connected with the cult of the Emperor. At the order (*ex mandatu*) of his parents, who were also freedmen but freed by Caristanii, he erected the small votive monument.⁶³

Among the numerous examples of euergetism and building activities of imperial freedmen outside of Rome, we know seven freedman courtiers who were honoured by cities:

⁵⁸ CIL XIV 2113 = ILS 5193. See Gregori, Incelli 2018: 39–40, OD 5.

⁵⁹ CIL XIV 2977 = ILS 5194. See Gregori, Incelli 2018: 39–40, OD 5.

⁶⁰ IRT 606.

⁶¹ ILS 9504 = AE 1914, 261: *L(ibens) v(otum) s(olvit) / Ti(berius) Claudiu[s] / Epinicus / proc(urator) et prae(gustator) et / a secretis Aug(usti), / V(l)vir Aug(usti) c(oloniae) C(aesarea) / d(onum) d(edit), ex mandatu / Caristanior(um) / Droserae et / Mileti parenti(um) suorum / posuit*.

⁶² Caristanii from Pisidian Antioch had influential contacts in the imperial court, and one of them, an equestrian C. Caristanius Fronto Caesianus Iullus, set up an honorific inscription to Claudius in AD 45/46 to celebrate the *Victoria Britannica* (AD 43), AE 2001, 1918. See Christol, Drew-Bear, Taslialan 2001: 13; Wypijewski, Pietruszka 2013: 191–192.

⁶³ Cheesman 1913: 258–259.

1. In Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria, Cosmus, *a rationibus*, was honoured with a statue, probably by the city.⁶⁴ It could be a trace of local honour or gratitude for his administrative activity in Egypt or Rome.
2. In Lanuvium T. Aurelius Aphrodisius, *proc(urator) Aug(usti) a rationibus*, a senior court official active in the second century AD, was honoured with a statue by *S(enatus) P(opulus)q(ue) L(anivinus), dedic(ante) Q(uinto) Varinio Q(uinti) f(ilio) Maec(ia) Laeviano aed(ile)*.⁶⁵
3. In Auximum, in Picenum, L. Aurelius Marcianus, *exceptor* active in the second half of the second century AD,⁶⁶ was honoured with a statue by the habitants of the city – Auximates. However, the costs of the erecting of the statue were borne (*honore accepto impensam remisit*) by his father, Marcus, a freedman procurator (his exact function is unknown) who also gave three *denarii* to every decurion and two *denarii* to every colonist from this city on this occasion.⁶⁷
4. In Castrimoenium Natalus, *[a] censibus et proc(urator)*, who was a *[pa]tronus municipii*, was honoured on account of his meritorious action, *[ob] me[rita] ipsius*.⁶⁸
5. In Minturnae Aelius Saturninus, the freedman of Hadrian or Antoninus Pius, *proc(urator) castrensi*, gave a gift for the *plebs* of Minturnae and was honoured on account of his extraordinary generosity, *ob obsiduum et liberam munificentiam eius*.⁶⁹
6. In Vicus Augustanus Laurentium at Castelporziano near Ostia P. Aelius Liberalis, *apparitor (decurialis gerulorum, decurialis decuriae viatoriae consularis)* active in the first half of the second century AD, was honoured with the *ornamenta decurionalia* and the title of *patronus Laurentium vici Augustanorum*.
7. In Puteoli Aurelius Symphorus, *officialis veteris a memoria et a diplomatibus*, active in the third century AD, was honoured with the *ornamenta decurionalia* for his *amor* and *instantia* toward his homeland and its habitants.⁷⁰

Some freedman courtiers were founders of buildings outside of Rome. According to Pliny the Elder, Posides, one of Claudius' favourite freedman courtiers,⁷¹ built exclusive villas and thermal springs (*aquae Possidianae*) in the area of

⁶⁴ *I.Alex.* 22.

⁶⁵ *CIL* XIV 2104.

⁶⁶ Perhaps he was active in one of the court offices. Cf. *AE* 1961, 308 (*exceptor Imperatorum in officio memoriae*).

⁶⁷ *CIL* IX 5828.

⁶⁸ *CIL* XIV 2407.

⁶⁹ *CIL* X 6005.

⁷⁰ *CIL* X 1727; Gregori, Incelli 2018: 58–59, OD 17.

⁷¹ Suet. *Claud.* 28.

Baiae.⁷² In turn, the building inscription from Caere, carved into the architrave (*epistylum*), presents the career of the imperial freedman, Ti. Claudius Bucolas, who held several ‘domestic’ offices in the imperial palace and the administration of Rome.⁷³ After serving as *praegustator* and *tricliniarcha*, he held two procuratorships in Rome – *proc. a muneribus* and *proc. aquarum*.⁷⁴ The *proc. castrensis* – the top office in the imperial court – probably was the last one in his career. However, the inscription from Caere proves that together with his son Q. Claudius Flavianus, and his mother Sulpicia Cantabra, Bucolas founded a *basilica*, perhaps the *basilica Sulpiciana* mentioned in another inscription from Caere, dated 113 AD.⁷⁵ The fragmentarily preserved inscription from Aquae Flavianae in Numidia, shows that the imperial servant, Salutaris, founded a temple of the imperial cult with his own money.⁷⁶ The dedication’s type suggests that Salutaris could be connected with the imperial court. In turn, a dedication to the *Genius Augusti*, dated to the middle third century AD, was set up with the permission of decurions by the imperial freedman, Phileros, who was *tabularius eiusdem patroni et provinciae*.⁷⁷ This extraordinary reference to the Emperor (*tabularius eiusdem – Augusti?*) could be proof that Phileros was an imperial courtier.⁷⁸ In Heliopolis in Syria [Sep]timi[us] [---]bas set up a votive inscription and dedicated the gilded *caput columnae* to the Emperor, and a familial triad of Heliopolis, consisting of Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury.⁷⁹ It is possible that this rich freedman was connected with the court of Caracalla.

Freedman courtiers as praesidial and patrimonial procurators

A. Domestic courtiers

Some influential freedman courtiers described by ancient authors were appointed by emperors as provincial administrators. A famous example is the case of M. Antonius (or Claudius) Felix, brother of Claudius’ omnipotent freedman

⁷² Plin. *NH* 31.5; Marzano 2007: 77.

⁷³ *CIL* XI 3612.

⁷⁴ Ti. Claudius Bucolas was a *proc. aquarum* under Domitian. See *CIL* XV 7279–7280.

⁷⁵ *CIL* II 3614, l. 11.

⁷⁶ *ILAlg* I 863: [---] / [Pr]o sa/[lute I]mp(eratoris) M. / [Anto]nini Aug(usti) / [Salu]taris / [Aug(usti servus) ta]bellari/[us ---] templum / [a solo] fecit / [et dedi]cavit. Cf. *AE* 1957, 92b.

⁷⁷ *Corinth* VIII, 3, 67: [Ge]nio sanctissimo Aug(usti) / [procur]at(or) XX her(editatis) [pr]ov(inciae) Acha(iae) / Phileros Aug(usti) lib(ertus) tabul(arius) eiusdem / pat(roni) et provinciae d(ecreto) d(ecurionum).

⁷⁸ But the imperial freedman Theseus, *tabularius*, who in Theveste dedicated the inscription (carved on the *cippus*) to Minerva Augusta and to Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus’ health, was a local administrator of the imperial estate, not a courtier from Rome, *CIL* VIII 16525.

⁷⁹ *AE* 1903, 265.

M. Antonius Pallas and ‘the husband of three queens’,⁸⁰ who probably received *ingenuitas* and held the procuratorship of Judaea in AD 52–60.⁸¹ Before holding the procuratorship, Felix may have been active in Judaea as a commander,⁸² but his earlier career and posts in the imperial court are unknown. Another extraordinary case was M. Aurelius Epagathus, the imperial freedman (his career in the imperial court is also unknown), who is confirmed in *P.Oxy.* XXXI 2565 as having been the prefect of Egypt early in the summer of AD 224.⁸³ He was likely involved in the murder of Ulpian, and this extraordinary appointment could have been a reward for his actions in the imperial court.

Courtiers in the role of imperial procurators sometimes performed special assignments. Tacitus commented the actions of the *libertus* of Nero, Crescens, a freedman procurator, who held a feast in Otho’s honour in Carthage in AD 69: ‘in bad times even freedmen take part in the *res publica*’.⁸⁴ In turn, an imperial freedman Moschus was a commander of the fleet at Misenum during the reign of Otho, but his earlier career is unknown.⁸⁵ At times freedman courtiers would receive procuratorships as a reward for their service. The interesting example of Ti. Claudius Halotus is described by Suetonius.⁸⁶ He writes that Galba defended the hated eunuch (*spado*) Halotus, servant of Nero. Galba, who dismissed some freedmen of Nero,⁸⁷ conferred a financially lucrative procuratorship (*procuratio amplissima*) on Halotus, perhaps in the province.⁸⁸ We know that Halotus was a food taster (*praegustator*) of Claudius and, at the order of Agrippina the Younger, is supposed to have given him the poison from which he died.⁸⁹

Epigraphical evidence also confirms freedman courtiers who became imperial (praesidial or patrimonial) procurators outside Rome. The interesting career of T. Flavius Pergamus is documented by the honorific inscription from Ephesos, carved on his statue base dated to the Flavian times or the beginning of the sec-

⁸⁰ Suet. *Claud.* 28; Tac. *Hist.* 5.9.3.

⁸¹ Joseph. *AJ* 19.354; Eck 1999: 24.

⁸² Tac. *Ann.* 12.54.

⁸³ Cass. Dio 78.21.2; Jördens 2009: 57, n. 161.

⁸⁴ Tac. *Hist.* 1.76.3: *nam et hi malis temporibus partem se rei publicae faciunt.*

⁸⁵ Tac. *Hist.* 1.87.2: *curam navium Moschus libertus retinebat ad observandam honestiorum fidem immutatus.*

⁸⁶ *PIR*² H 11.

⁸⁷ Suet. *Otho* 7.1; Cass. Dio 64.8.3.

⁸⁸ Suet. *Galba* 15.2; Cf. *CIL* VI 8833.

⁸⁹ Suet. *Claud.* 44.2: *Quidam tradunt epulanti in arce cum sacerdotibus per Halotum spadonem praegustatorem [...].*

ond century AD.⁹⁰ Pergamus was an assistant to the procurator responsible for the Emperor's jewellery (*adiutor procuratoris ab ornamentis*) and the servant responsible for the collection of wagons (*acceptor vehiculorum*) in the imperial court. Then he held three provincial procuratorships: *proc. provinciae Narbonensis item insulae Cynni*, *proc. regionis Syriaticae*, and finally *proc. provinciae Asiae*. Another honorific inscription from Stektorion (Phrygia), carved into the base of a statue and dated to the second half of the second century AD, presents an imperial freedman, M. Aurelius Crescens, who was *procurator castrensis* in the imperial court, a patrimonial procurator in Phrygia, and finally a procurator of the province *Lugdunensis*.⁹¹ The commissioner of this inscription (another imperial freedman, Aurelius Zosimos) emphasized Crescens' strong connection with Stektorion, from which he most likely came.

The case of M. Aurelius Faustus, who was *proc. rationis urbicae voluptarensis*, confirms that some freedmen courtiers had a tendency to build their careers in the province.⁹² According to P.R.C. Weaver this office was clearly financial and it was connected to the imperial court in Rome.⁹³ The next (and probably last) provincial stages in Faustus' career were two praesidial posts – *proc. Arabiae* and *proc. Ciliciae*. Similarly, Theoprepen, 'an unrivaled man' (*homo incomparabilis*), known from a dedication from Corinth,⁹⁴ started his career in the imperial court in Rome. He was a superintendent of the imperial crystal vessels (*praepositus a crystallinis*), a superintendent of the buckles and clasps on clothes (*praepositus a fiblis*), and a superintendent of the dining room (*tricliniarcha*). Then Theoprepen was a manager of the imperial estates in Italy (*proc. saltus Domitiani*, *proc. ad praedia Galliana*). He returned to Rome, where he was a superintendent of the instructions issued to provincial officials (*proc. a mandatis*) and in charge of keeping a diary of the events connected with the Emperor's *commentarii* (*ab ephemeride*). The final step in his career was the financial procuratorship in Achaia, responsible for selling purple dye from the imperial factories (*rationis purpurarum*). Theoprepen probably owed this procuratorship to the emperor Alexander Severus, whose name is part of the extensive title of that office, *proc(urator) domini n(ostri) M(arci) Aur(eli) Severi Alexandri Pii Fel(icis) Aug(usti) provinciae Achaiae et Epiri et Thessaliae rat(ionis) purpurarum*. It is very probable that Hadrian's freedman, P. Aelius Primus, who was responsible

⁹⁰ I.Ephesos 855 = AE 1982, 877: [T(ito)] Fl(avio) Aug(usti) lib(erto) / [P]ergamo, / *proc(uratori) / [pr]ovinciae Asiae, / [pr]oc(uratori) reg(ionis) Syriaticae, / [pr]oc(uratori) provinc(iae) Narbo[n]ensis item insulae / [Cyr]ni, acceptorem(!) ve/[hic]ulorum, adiut(ori) proc(uratoris) / [ab] ornamentis, / [adi]ut(ores)] et tabel(larii), q(ui) s(unt) sub cura / [---]li Firmi proc(uratoris) Aug(usti).*

⁹¹ CIG 3888 = IGR IV 749.

⁹² AE 1930, 96.

⁹³ Weaver 1972: 273.

⁹⁴ CIL III 536.

for the delivery of invitations to *convivium* in the imperial court (*invitator*) and who was buried in Rome, later served in the provincial administration.⁹⁵ He was the *subprocurator ad XX(vicesimam) hereditatium*, the same office that Hypaticus held, *Augustoru(m) lib(ertus), subprocurator XX* in Spain.⁹⁶

Two other ‘domestic’ courtiers who held two prestigious posts – *proc. castrensis* and *proc. voluptatum* – achieved provincial posts but their controversial and mysterious careers confirm the lack of the freedman schematic *cursus* (in opposite to equestrian or senatorial *cursus honorum*). A bilingual inscription from Ephesus presents the career of Ti. Claudius Classicus, who was a chief chamberlain and a specialist in court finances under Titus, *a cubiculo et proc. castrensis(s)*.⁹⁷ After the reign of Domitian, an inactive period in his career, he returned to the Emperor’s entourage and had to start his career over once again, *Ti(berio) Claudio Aug(usti) lib(erto) / Classico, / divi T(iti) a cubiculo et proc(uratori) / castrensi, divi Nervae / proc(uratori) a voluptatibus ...* θεοῦ Τίτου ἐπὶ τοῦ / κοιτῶνος καὶ ἐπίτροπον καστ/τρήσιον θεοῦ Νέρουα ἐπίτρο/[πον] ἐπὶ τῶν ἀπολαύσεων. He was a procurator of ‘delights’ (*proc. a voluptatibus*) under Nerva and in charge of one of four gladiator training camps (*proc. a voluptatibus et ad ludum matutini*) under Trajan and finally procurator of Alexandria under Trajan (*proc. Alexandriae*), which is identified with the important patrimonial post in Egypt – *proc. ad Mercurium*.⁹⁸ Some scholars compared the career of Classicus to the one of Ulpian, whose *cursus* is presented by a funerary inscription from Praeneste.⁹⁹

However, the similarity between the careers of Classicus and Ulpian is only superficial. Historians disagree not only on how to date Ulpian’s offices, but also on the order in which he held them. There is doubt, too, as to the status of those procuratorships – *procurator Alexandriae*, *procurator voluptatis*, and *procurator hereditatium*.¹⁰⁰ Classicus’ atypical career – divided by Domitian’s reign – had two phases: first ‘domestic’ (its peak was under Titus – *proc. castrensis*) and later ‘administrative’ (its peak was *proc. Alexandriae* under Trajan). On the other hand, Ulpian was active later than Classicus, because he was a freedman *proc. usiacus* (*proc. Alexandriae*) in AD 122/123 and in my opinion it was his first procuratorship.¹⁰¹ The crowning achievement in his career – after several procuratorships in Rome – was a post

⁹⁵ AE 1993, 313.

⁹⁶ CIL II 487 = ILS 1548. It is also likely that P. Aelius Primus served not in the province, but in Rome, see Kloft 2008: 385.

⁹⁷ I.Ephesos 852 = SEG 30 1308 = AE 1972, 574.

⁹⁸ Bruun 1990: 274–276.

⁹⁹ CIL XIV 2932: *Paean Aug(usti) lib(ertus), proc(urator) castrensis(is), / proc(urator) hereditat(ium), proc(urator) voluptat(is), / proc(urator) Alexandr(iae), sibi posterisq(ue) suis.*

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Kłodziński 2019: 125–141.

¹⁰¹ Kłodziński 2019: 128–129.

of *proc. castrensis* in the mid second century AD.¹⁰² Thus, Paeon is a rare example of a provincial freedman administrator who went to Rome and ended up in the imperial court.

No.	Name	In office	Court offices	Offices outside Rome	Source
1	M. Antonius (or Claudius) Felix	52–60 AD	ζ	<i>proc. Iudaeae</i>	Joseph. <i>AJ</i> 19.354 Acts 24–26
2	Ti. Claudius Halotus	20–80 AD	1. <i>praegustator</i>	2. <i>procuratio amplissima</i>	Suet. <i>Galba</i> 15.2; cf. <i>CIL</i> VI 8833
3	Crescens	69 AD	ζ	<i>proc. in Carthage</i>	Tac. <i>Hist.</i> 1.76
4	M. Aurelius Epagathus	224 AD	ζ	<i>praefectus Aegypti</i>	<i>P.Oxy.</i> XXXI 2565
5	T. Flavius Pergamus	Flavian times/ beginning of II c. AD	1. <i>adiutor procuratoris ab ornamentis</i> 2. <i>acceptor vehiculorum</i>	3. <i>proc. provinciae Narbonensis item proc. insulae Cyreni</i> 4. <i>proc. regionis Syriaticae</i> 5. <i>proc. provinciae Asiae</i>	<i>I.Ephesos</i> 855 = AE 1982, 877 (Ephesus)
6	M. Aurelius Crescens	end of II/ beginning of III c. AD	1. <i>proc. castrensis</i>	2. <i>proc. in Phrygia</i> 3. <i>proc. in Lugdunensis</i>	<i>CIG</i> 3888 = <i>IGR</i> IV 749 (Stektorion)
7	Theoprepen	beginning of III c. AD	1. <i>praepositus a crystallinis</i> 2. <i>praepositus a fiblis</i> 3. <i>tricliniarcha</i> 6. <i>proc. a mandatis</i> 7. <i>ab ephemeride</i>	4. <i>proc. saltus Domitiani</i> 5. <i>proc. ad praedia Galliana</i> 8. <i>proc. rationis purpurarum</i>	<i>CIL</i> III 536 (Corinthus)
8	P. Aelius Primus	117–138 AD	<i>invitator</i>	<i>subproc. ad XX(vicesimam) hereditatium</i>	AE 1993, 313 (Rome)

¹⁰² Kłodziński 2019: 136.

No.	Name	In office	Court offices	Offices outside Rome	Source
9	Ti. Claudius Classicus	69–117 AD	1. <i>a cubiculo et proc. castrensi(s)</i> – under Titus 2. <i>proc. a voluptatibus</i> – under Nerva 3. <i>proc. a voluptatibus et ad ludum matutini</i> – under Trajan	4. <i>proc. Alexandriae</i>	<i>I.Ephesos</i> 852 = <i>SEG</i> 30 1308 = <i>AE</i> 1972, 574 (Ephesus)
10	Ulpius Paeon	II c. AD	2. <i>proc. voluptatis</i> 3. <i>proc. hereditarium</i> 4. <i>proc. castrensis</i>	1. <i>proc. Alexandriae (proc. usiacus)</i>	<i>CIL</i> XIV 2932 (Praeneste)

B. Secretarial courtiers

‘Secretarial’ courtiers also held administrative positions outside of Rome. These administrators held positions of finance, office or management in Italy and the provinces. We are dealing with a kind of professionalization or even specialization of lower-ranked secretarial officials. An excellent example of financial specialization is that of M. Aurelius Marcio, *proximus rationum*, a subaltern official in the *officium a rationibus*. He held strictly financial procuratorships: *marmorum*, *provinciae Britanniae*, *summi choragii*, *provinciae Phrygiae* at the end of the second century/beginning of the third century AD.¹⁰³

Below I have presented a list of freedman ‘courtiers’ who were promoted from the ‘secretarial’ staff to administrative posts outside of Rome, mainly patrimonial and praesidial procuratorships in Italy and the provinces. The exception is the career of T. Aelius Saturninus, who first held office in Ostia (*tabularius Ostis ad annonam*), then two posts in the imperial court in Rome (*tabularius a rationibus*; *proc. fisci libertatis et peculiorum*), and finally one in the province of Gallia Belgica (*proc. provinciae Belgicae*).¹⁰⁴ The offices are numbered according to the order and potential pathways of careers.

¹⁰³ *CIL* III 348 (Tricomia, Asia). Senecianus, the dedicator of the inscription, was his *collibertus ex tabulario*. Cf. *IGR* 4, 676; 704. See Potter 1998: 271.

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* VI 8450.

No.	Name	In office	Court offices	Offices outside Rome	Source
1	T. Flavius Palatin(a) Fusciano Tartiolus	69–140 AD	1. <i>proximus ration-alium</i>	2. <i>a commentari(i)s provinc(iae) Belgicae</i>	CIL X 6092 (Formiae)
2	T. Aelius	131–170 AD	1. <i>proximus com[m(entariorum--- vel -entariensis)]</i> 3. <i>a balniaris Augusti</i>	2. <i>proc. tractus Campaniae</i>	BCAR 1883, 237 (Roma)
3	T. Aelius Saturninus	131–170 AD	2. <i>tabularius a rationibus</i> 3. <i>proc. fisci libertatis et peculiorum</i>	1. <i>tabularius Ostis ad annonam</i> 4. <i>proc. provinciae Belgicae</i>	CIL VI 8450 (Roma)
4	Beryllus	2 nd part of the 2 nd c. AD	1. <i>rationalium vicarius</i>	2. <i>proc. diligentissimus et amantissimus (restitutor metallorum)</i>	AE 1908, 233 (Vipasca)
5	Bassus	161–200 AD	1. <i>proximus ab epistulis Graecis</i>	2. <i>proc. tractus Carthaginiensis</i>	CIL VI 8608 (Roma)
6	M. Aurelius Marcio	end of II/ beginning of III c. AD	1. <i>proximus rationum</i>	2. <i>proc. Marmorum</i> 3. <i>proc. provinciae Britanniae,</i> 4. <i>proc. summi choragii</i> 5. <i>proc. provinciae Phrygiae</i>	CIL III 348 (Tricomia, Asia)
7	M. Aurelius	end of II/ beginning of III c. AD	1. <i>proximus a memoria</i>	2. <i>proc. fisci Asiatici,</i> 3. <i>proc. h[ereditat(ium)],</i> 4. <i>proc. provinciarum Lugdune[ns(is) et Aquitan(icae)]</i>	CIL XIII 1800 (Lugdunum)
8	M. Aur(elius) Faustus	?	1. <i>proc. rationis urbanae voluptatensis</i>	2. <i>proc. provinciae Arabiae</i> 3. <i>proc. provinciae Ciliciae</i>	AE 1930, 96 (Gerasa in Palaestina)

Freedman Courtiers' funerary and sacral inscriptions outside Rome

The vast majority of funerary inscriptions of freedman courtiers come from Rome, but several of them are from outside, most often – as we can presume – from their hometowns or places where they last served. We can assume that M. Aurelius (*cognomen* unknown), *proximus a memoria* in the imperial court, *proc. fisci Asiatici*, *proc. provinciarum Lugudensis et Aquitanicae*, was buried in Lugdunum, the city where he last served.¹⁰⁵

However, in many cases establishing the connections between freedman courtiers and towns outside of Rome is very difficult, as is establishing the relationship between the dedicator and the deceased in funerary inscriptions. For example, in Tarracina in Latium, Iulia Regulina set up the sepulchral inscription for the imperial freedman, Ti. Claudius Alcibiades (*ex testamento eius*), who was *praegustator et a cubiculo Neronis*.¹⁰⁶ The relation between them is unknown.¹⁰⁷ We can only assume that Tarracina was Alcibiades' hometown. A marble plaque from Ostia, in which two commissioners, Olympicus, *vilic(us)*, and Ilus, commemorated the slave Plato Caesaris, who was a *dietarcha* in the imperial court, is also puzzling.¹⁰⁸

The sons (or other relatives) of freedman courtiers had more chances for a better career. Fortunatus, *procurator fisci Asiatici*, set up a funerary inscription for his father – Herma, the *a cubiculo* of Domitia Augusta.¹⁰⁹ We can assume that the imperial freedman, Venerandus, *tab(u)l(arius) her(editatium)*, who in Ostia founded a funerary inscription for his relative (*cognato*) the imperial freedman Fuscinus, *tab(ulariorum) adiut(or)*, helped in his career.¹¹⁰ In funerary inscriptions outside of Rome, freedman courtiers or former freedman courtiers are commemorated in two ways: as the dedicator or as the deceased. Slave and freedman courtiers as dedicators are confirmed only in inscriptions from Italy, but their tombstones were scattered throughout the provinces.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ CIL XIII 1800. Cf. Weaver 1972: 276.

¹⁰⁶ CIL X 6324: Ti(berio) Claudio Aug(usti) l(iberto) / Quir(ina) Alcibiadi, q[ui] fuit] / praegustator et a c[u]biculo Neronis. Iulia / Regulina ex testamen[to] / eius fecit.

¹⁰⁷ Lassère 2007: 165.

¹⁰⁸ AE 1939, 150. In CIL VI 8644 Dexter (or Dexter), *dietarcha domus Aug(ustae)*, is confirmed. Cf. CIL VI 8645; 8666; 8818.

¹⁰⁹ CIL VI 8570: Hermae, / Aug(usti) lib(erto) / á cubiculo / Domitiae Aug(ustae), / Fortunatus f(ecit), / proc(urator) fisc(i) Asiatic(i), patri piissimo et indulgentissimo.

¹¹⁰ CIL XIV 200.

¹¹¹ See Appendix I and Appendix II.

We have data about the religious activities of imperial courtiers outside of Rome that were often carried out while working on administrative tasks. In Sparta an anonymous official, perhaps a slave, *dispensator domus Augusti*, made a dedication to Castor and Pollux, dated to II c. AD.¹¹² Another essential testimony is the recently published votive inscription from African *Byzacium* (the hinterland of Lepti Minus and Thapsus), dated to the beginning of the second century ad.¹¹³ This dedication to the local god named *Mercurius deus sanctus pater* was set up by the imperial freedman Quintio, who was *adiutor tabularii a rationibus mensae transmarinarum*. It must have been founded on the occasion of Quintio's financial activity in the coastal area (where the crucial harbour of Hadrumetum was located) of African *Byzacium*, a very fertile land of special importance to the imperial fisc.¹¹⁴ We know three *tituli* dedicated to Hercules by freedman courtiers. In Settecami (near Rome) the imperial freedman, Aelius Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Dia[du]menus, vern(a), *adiut(or) a rat(ionibus) et a c(ommentariis) b(eneficiorum)*, dedicated the inscription probably to [Her]cu[li].¹¹⁵ The dedication to Hercules was also set up by the imperial freedman, P. Aelius Hieron, *ab admissione*, in Monterotondo in Latium.¹¹⁶ Another dedication to Hercules Victor Certencinus, dated 224 AD, comes from Tibur. This one was set up by M. Aurel(ius) Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Zoticus who was *nom(enclator) a censibus*.¹¹⁷ In turn, known from the *titulus* from Capena in Etruria M. Ulpius Aug(usti) lib(ertus) Thaumastus, *a commentariis operum publicorum et rationis patrimonii*, the official presumably connected with the imperial court, dedicated the inscription to Jupiter Optimus Maximus.¹¹⁸

No.	Name	Status	Court offices	Sacral formula to god/gods	Date	Source
1	Anonymus	S?	<i>dispensator domus Augusti</i>	<i>Di[i]s Castori et Polluci sacrum</i>	II c. AD	<i>CIL</i> III 493 (Sparta)

¹¹² *CIL* III 493.

¹¹³ Ghaddhab 2020: 503–514: *Mercurio deo / sancto patrio, / aram cum si / mulacro eius / corolitico / Quintio Aug(usti) lib(ertus), / adiutor tabul(arum) / a rationibus / mensae transmarinarum / d(ono) d(edit)*.

¹¹⁴ Varro, *Rust.* 1.44.2; Plin. *NH* 5.24; Sil. *Pun.* 9, 204–205.

¹¹⁵ *AE* 1987, 213.

¹¹⁶ *AE* 1907, 125.

¹¹⁷ *CIL* XIV 3553.

¹¹⁸ *CIL* XI 3860.

No.	Name	Status	Court offices	Sacral formula to god/gods	Date	Source
2	Quintio	L	<i>adiutor tabularii a rationibus mensae transmarinarum</i>	<i>Mercurio deo sancto patrio</i>	II c. AD	Ghaddhab (2020: 503–514) (Byzacium)
3	M. Ulpius Thaumastus	L	<i>a commentariis operum publicorum et rationis patrimonii</i>	<i>Iovi Optimo Maximo</i>	II c. AD	CIL XI 3860 (Capena)
4	Aelius Diadumenus	L	<i>adiut(or) a rat(ionibus) et a c(ommentariis) b(eneficiorum)</i>	<i>[Her]cu[li]</i>	II c. AD	AE 1987, 213 (Setecamini)
5	P. Aelius Hieron	L	<i>ab admissione</i>	<i>Herculi sacrum</i>	II c. AD	AE 1907, 125 (Monterotondo)
6	M. Aurelius Zoticus	L	<i>nomenclator a censibus</i>	<i>Herculi Victori Certencino</i>	II c. AD	CIL XIV 3553 (Tibur)

Conclusions

Although the activities of most freedman courtiers were concentrated in Rome, close to the emperor, we also know of examples of their influence and activities outside. The emperor could enroll freedmen in the palace service,¹¹⁹ but he also decided about their later fates and careers outside of the court. Filling posts in the palace was a common practice among many freedman courtiers, often from beginning to end. Some of them, however, took imperial posts outside. Freedman courtiers held provincial (praesidial and patrimonial) posts, especially procuratorships in Italy and in the provinces. They served as governors in (mainly smaller) provinces such as Phrygia, Arabia, and Cilicia. Additionally, they held positions as patrimonial procurators overseeing the imperial estates in Africa (*proc. tractus Carthaginiensis*) or in Phrygia (*proc. marmorum*).

The analyses show that these positions were covered by two different groups of courtiers: 1. ‘domestic’ important servants, such as *praegustator*, *proc. castrensis*, *proc. a voluptatibus*, 2. ‘secretarial’ lower-ranking officials (*tabularii*, *proximi*) from the offices of *a memoria*, *a rationibus*, *ab epistulis Latinis*. The first group assumed procuratorships as a reward for their service and loyalty, while the second group

¹¹⁹ CIL VI 8498: *ordinato a divo Commodo in kastrense*.

of subordinate courtiers took up positions to specialize in administration and gain experience. The inscriptions do not provide reasons for such nominations, but according to Suetonius, Galba awarded the *amplissima procuratio* to Halotus, the *praegustator*. The emperor opposed the people who sought to condemn this freedman.

Courtiers were often honored by their hometowns or towns that commemorated gratitude for their acts of euergetism or doing business at court. It is noteworthy that this honor was bestowed upon seven freedman courtiers who held senior secretarial and domestic roles in the imperial court (*a rationibus*, *a memoria*, *a censibus*, *a diplomatibus*, *proc. castrensi*, *apparitor*, *exceptor*). Undoubtedly, winning the favor of influential servants at the imperial court was in cities' interests. Freedman courtiers formed an informal decision-making centre. It was widely known that resolving any matter with the emperor required winning over or bribing his freedmen.¹²⁰ This is well exemplified by Herod, who had to pay 500 talents to members of the *domus Augusta* and courtiers,¹²¹ as well as the influential slave Helicon, the *cubiculo* who facilitated contacts with Caligula.¹²²

Appendix I. Slave and freedman courtiers as dedicators outside Rome.

No.	Name of dedicator	Status	Court offices and other posts	In office	Name of deceased	Place	Source
1	Clemens Caesaris nostri; Ulpian Festus – son of Ulpia Athenais	S	<i>librarius</i>	1 st half of II c. AD	Ulpia Athenais – wife	Ferrara (Aemilia, Regio VIII)	<i>AE</i> 1976, 228
2	Vitalis	L	<i>proximus memoriae</i>	161–180 c. AD	Aelia Maximina – daughter	Aveia (Samnium, Regio IV)	<i>AE</i> 1992, 354
3	M. Ulpian Mithres	L	<i>tabularius hereditatium</i>	II c. AD	Antonia M. f. Valentina – wife	Caere (Etruria, Regio VII)	<i>AE</i> 1948, 57
4	T. Aelius Verecundus	L	<i>a cognitionibus</i>	II c. AD	Magia Philete – wife	Aquileia (Venetia et Histria, Regio X)	<i>IAq.</i> I, 464

¹²⁰ Millar 1977: 72–74.

¹²¹ Joseph. *BJ* 1.32.7; *AJ* 17.6.1.

¹²² Philo *Leg.* 166–178.

No.	Name of dedicator	Status	Court offices and other posts	In office	Name of deceased	Place	Source
5	M. Aurelius Alypus	L	<i>proc. a sacris kastrensibus</i>	III c. AD	Aurelia Sozomene – wife	Puteoli (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> X 6571
6	Zosimianus	L	<i>nomenclator, a censibus</i>	III c. AD	Aurelia Primitiva	Tibur (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 3640

Appendix II. Slave and freedman courtiers as deceased outside Rome.

No.	Name of Deceased	Status	Court Function and Other Posts	In Office	Name of Dedicator	Place	Source
1	Plato Caesaris	S	<i>diaetarcha</i>	41–68 AD	Olympicus and Ilus	Ostia (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>AE</i> 1939, 150
2	Alcimus Neronis Caesaris Augusti	S	<i>a veste castrensi</i>	54–100 AD	Claudia Docile – wife	Praeneste (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 2832
3	Ti. Claudius	L	<i>tabularius a rationibus</i>	I c. AD	Cannutia – wife	Caesarea (Mauretania Caesariensis)	<i>CIL</i> VIII 21008
4	Orontes	L	<i>procurator patrimonii</i>	71–150 AD	Alexander – son, also <i>procurator</i>	Puteoli (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> X 1740
5	Abascantus Caesaris	S	<i>ex familia castrensi, ex numero vestiariorum</i>	II c. AD	–	Hippo Regius (Africa Proconsularis)	<i>CIL</i> VIII 5234 = <i>ILAlg</i> I, 33
6	Eschinius	L	<i>ab codicillis</i>	I–II c. AD	–	Ficulea (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 4001

No.	Name of Deceased	Status	Court Function and Other Posts	In Office	Name of Dedicator	Place	Source
7	T. Flavius Palatin(a) Fusciano Tartiolus	L	<i>proximus rationalium, a commentari(i)s provinc(iae) Belgicae</i>	69–II c. AD	Flavia Irene – wife	Formiae (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> X 6092
8	T. Flavius Aug. I. Epictetus	L	<i>lictor curiatus, a copiis m(ilitaribus), ab epistulis</i>	71–130 AD	Flavia Tyche – wife	Praeneste (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 2840
9	M. Aurelius	L	<i>proximus a memoria, proc. fisci Asiatici, proc. provinciarum Lugudenensis et Aquitanicae</i>	2 nd half of II c. AD	Annia Myrine – wife	Lugdunum (Gallia Lugudunensis)	<i>CIL</i> XIII 1800
10	Onesimus	L	<i>adiutor ab admissione</i>	II c. AD	Ulpia Arsinoe – wife	Athenae (Achaiae)	<i>CIL</i> III 6107
11	Anonymus	?	<i>a cubiculo, proc. Aug. a frumento, accensus patrono?</i>	41–100 AD	–	Velitrae (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> X 6573
12	M. Aurelius Antiochianus	L	<i>magister ab admissione</i>	161–230 AD	Antiochianus and his sons, and heirs	Sublaqueum (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 3457
13	Epis	L	<i>tabularius rationis hereditatium</i>	138–161 AD	Flavia Callisto – wife	Aricia (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 2262
14	Rufianus	L	<i>librarius commentariorum stationis hereditatium, tabularius kastrensis</i>	151–250 AD	Saturninus and Terentinus – perhaps slaves or freedmen	Capua (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> X 3878

No.	Name of Deceased	Status	Court Function and Other Posts	In Office	Name of Dedicator	Place	Source
15	Achilleus	L	<i>nomenclator, a censibus</i>	II c. AD	Porcia Crescens – wife	Ficulea (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>CIL</i> XIV 4010 = VI 8937
16	Dama Caesaris nostri	S	<i>librarius</i>	II c. AD	Agathe – mother	Brundisium (Apulia et Calabria, Regio II)	<i>AE</i> 1966, 100a
17	Florus Augusti	S	<i>a possessionibus</i>	I c. AD	–	Surrentum (Latium et Campania, Regio I)	<i>AE</i> 1929, 153
18	Thalamus	L	<i>a veste</i>	98–117 AD	Anteus – the imperial freedman	Interamna Nahars (Umbria, Regio VI)	<i>AE</i> 2002, 422

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Karol Kłodziński

karol.klodzinski@ug.edu.pl

Faculty of History
University of Gdańsk
Wita Stwosza 55
80-308 Gdańsk, Poland