

My dissertation explores the importance of language to cultural identity in diverse populations of Latin and Greek speakers in the Roman world. I focus on Lucian of Samosata, an increasingly central figure in current studies of Greek culture under Roman rule and illustrate how his satirical works engage with contemporary debates on the nature of language and its role in society. Lucian was a Syrian (and thus ‘barbarian’) writing in Greek during the late second century CE when Greek writers, loosely affiliated in a movement now called the Second Sophistic, engaged in revival of Classical Greek language and culture as a counterpoint to Roman political dominance (Swain 1996). This period was characterized by competing assertions of authority in gatekeeping the correct form and use of the Greek language, as well as disagreements (sometimes vitriolic personal attacks) about how best to recreate and compose in the ancient Attic dialect of Plato, Aristophanes, and Demosthenes. Using theoretical frameworks from sociolinguistics, I illustrate how writers of the period established expertise and authority within their intellectual communities of practice (Wenger 1999) and envisioned the relationship between language and cultural identity.

In contrast to the works of Lucian, who has received increased attention in recent scholarship on Classical reception and genre (Bompaire 1958, Jones 1986, Bozia 2015), the lexicons and grammars of this period have been the subject of only a handful of studies (Fischer 1974, Vessalla 2018) and are not much read or well understood. One of my project’s contributions is to elucidate in precise terms, the concepts and agendas behind them. I discuss the ways that different lexicographers develop their own canons of literature from which to prescribe Greek usage and connect this practice to Lucian’s reception of Athenian Old Comedy. But where previous studies on Lucian make occasional reference to the linguistic activities around him, my work emphasizes how integral language issues are to his humor and suggests new ways to read Lucian in the contemporary context, bridging the gap between studies on Second Sophistic linguistics and those on Lucian. In addition, my research shows how Lucian pushes back against the assumption, held by many writers both in his period and today, that Greek intellectual practice requires a Greek identity.

The first chapter of my dissertation maps out the complex network of language ideologies in the Second Sophistic by examining how the authors’ positions fall on three ideological axes. For instance, I examine the opposition between language ideologies in *Against the Grammarians*, a humorous work on Skeptic philosophy by Sextus Empiricus (Blank 1998), and the *Selection of Attic Words and Phrases* by the rhetorician Phrynichus. But while Empiricus is descriptivist, and Phrynichus prescriptivist, they both regard irregularities in vocabulary and grammar (known as “anomaly”) as natural and correct, united against those who consider regularity (or “analogy”) the only valid principle (Dihle 1957, Atherton 1995). As a third axis, I plot the opposition between the Atticists, who seek to emulate as closely as possible the dialect of Athens six centuries prior, and the Hellenists, like the physician Galen, who emphasize clarity and stylistic appeal over archaizing purism (Hankinson 1994). With this framework, I

demonstrate the complex interrelationships of ideologies against which Lucian composes his satires.

In the second chapter, I focus on three works of Lucian that caricature Greek language ideologies of his day: the *Solecist*, the *Lexiphanes*, and the *Professor of Rhetoric*. I find that, in addition to being a parody of Platonic dialogues that exposes an ignorant pseudo-Atticist, the *Solecist* serves as a two-pronged satire to mock the pedantic, prescriptive hyper-Atticists as well. In the *Lexiphanes* ('Speech-flaunter') Lucian caricatures writers whose language is dense with obscure Old Comedy vocabulary but do not know the works from which that vocabulary comes (Weissenberger 1996). I illustrate how Lucian engages with Aristophanes and other Old Comedy writers to, in effect, enlist them as satirical allies. I examine the pseudo-Attic depicted in the *Professor of Rhetoric*, a work that caricatures those popular speakers whose language gives a superficial impression of expertise but relies on the ignorance of a lay audience rather than good rhetoric. With these case studies, I illustrate how a detailed understanding of contemporary ideologies, heretofore only a minor footnote in Lucian scholarship, informs the reading of Lucian and vice-versa.

Chapter three takes another wide look at literary linguistic constructs, critiquing accepted scholarly models of the relationship language and cultural identity (Adams 2003) and illustrating the ways ancient authors put their own spin on this relationship. I show how Athenaeus, whose *Learned Banqueters* did not attract serious scholarly attention until relatively recently (Baldwin 1976), crafts a world of cosmopolitan intellectualism made possible by the interactions of Greek and Roman. By comparison, the *Attic Nights* of Aulus Gellius—in Latin and set primarily in Rome, despite its title—shows Roman culture growing (in part via knowledge of Greek) to subsume Greek learning, particularly through Gellius' teacher Favorinus (Howley 2018). In contrast, the prescriptivist Cornelius Fronto (tutor to Emperor Marcus Aurelius) rigidly siloes Greek and Latin languages apart and positions himself as either in- or outsider to both cultures (Champlin 1980), to appear at once deferential and authoritative to powerful Romans.

The final chapter addresses Lucian's take on the relationships between language and cultural identity. *How to Write History*, for instance, explores how and when to translate from Latin to Greek, or not. In *On Salaried Posts*, Lucian darkly mirrors other depictions of Greek and Roman culture by haranguing Greeks who declaim in Attic as a party trick for Roman patrons (Hafner 2017). In some works, like *Double Indictment*, Lucian posits his skill in Attic as marking a Greek identity, while elsewhere he not only reveals but foregrounds his Syrian origins (Rochette 2010, Andrade 2013) even as he defends his Attic usage. Lucian's work not only relies on his Greek expertise, it makes that expertise itself into a recurrent theme. Nonetheless, throughout his corpus Lucian's various personae also highlight and mock the futility of making such expertise an end unto itself. Lucian denies his literary persona a fully Greek identity, but this perpetual outsider will nevertheless defeat the other Atticizing sophists at their own game.

*Select Bibliography*

- Adams, J.N. *Bilingualism and the Latin Language*. Cambridge: CUP, 2003.
- Andrade, N. J. *Syrian Identity in the Greco-Roman World*. Cambridge: CUP, 2013.
- Atherton, C. "Apollonius Dyscolus and the Ambiguity of Ambiguity." *CQ* 45(1995): 441-73.
- Baldwin, B. "Athenaeus and his Work." *Acta Classica* 19 (1976): 21-42.
- Blank, D.L. *Sextus Empiricus: Against the Grammarians*. Oxford: OUP, 1998
- Bompaire, J. *Lucien écrivain. Imitation et creation*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1958.
- Bozia, E. *Lucian's Roman Voices*. London: Routledge, 2015.
- Champlin, E. *Fronto and Antonine Rome*. Cambridge (Mass.): HUP, 1980.
- Dihle, A. "Analogie und Attizismus." *Hermes* 85.2 (1957): 170-205.
- Fischer, E. *Die Ekloge des Phrynichos*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974.
- Hafner, M. *Lukians Schrift "Das traurige Los der Gelehrten": Einführung und Kommentar zu De Mercede Conductis Potentium Familiaribus*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2017.
- Hankinson, R.J. "Use and Abuse: Galen on language." In S. Everson (Ed.) *Language. Companions to Ancient Thought* 3, 166-87. Cambridge: CUP, 1994.
- Howley, J.A. *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*. Cambridge: CUP, 2018
- Jones, C.P. *Culture and Society in Lucian*. Cambridge (Mass.): HUP, 1986.
- Rochette, B. "La problématique des langues étrangères dans les opuscules de Lucien et la conscience linguistique des grecs," in F. Mestre and P. Gómez (Eds.), *Lucian of Samosata: Greek Writer and Roman Citizen*, 217-233. Barcelona: Publicacions i Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2010.
- Rosen, R.M. "Lucian's Aristophanes: On Understanding Old Comedy in the Roman Imperial Period." In C. W. Marshall and T. Hawkins (Eds.) *Athenian Comedy in the Roman Empire*, 141-162. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Strobel, C. "The Lexica of the Second Sophistic: Safeguarding Atticism." In A. Georgapoulou and M. Silk (Eds.) *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present*, 93-105. London: Routledge, 2009.
- Swain, S. *Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 50-250*. Oxford: OUP, 1996
- Vessalla, C. *Sophisticated Speakers: Atticistic pronunciation in the Atticist lexica*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018.
- Weissenberger, M. *Literaturtheorie bei Lukian. Untersuchungen zum Dialog Lexiphanes*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1996.
- Wenger, E. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*. Cambridge: CUP, 1999.