

## Lucian

Born around 125 A.D.  
Died sometime after 180 A.D.  
Little is actually known about his life  
Thought to have been from Samosata.  
Rhetorician and satirist  
Wrote in Attic Greek

### Best known works:

A True Story  
*Dialogues of the Gods* (Θεῶν διάλογοι)  
*Dialogues of the Dead* (Νεκρικοὶ Διάλογοι)

### Terms to Know:

Samosata = City where Lucian was supposedly from, located near the Euphrates River.  
Rhetoric = The art or skill of speaking or writing formally and effectively especially as a way to persuade or influence people.  
Satire = A literary work holding up human vices and follies to ridicule or scorn.  
Atticism = A rhetorical movement favoring Athens.

### A True Story:

A comedy that explores many fantastical regions known to the ancients such as; space, the underworld, and the inside of a whale. This reader also meets many historical figures such as Homer and Socrates. Thought by many to be the first science fiction story.

Once upon a time, setting out from the Pillars of Hercules and heading for the western ocean with a fair wind, I went a-voyaging. The motive and purpose of my journey lay in my intellectual activity and desire for adventure, and in my wish to find out what the end of the ocean was, and who the people were that lived on the other side.

-Section from A True Story.

### Lucian and the Second Sophistic:

Sophists were a group of people who wanted to get back to the ancient ways of Greece. Lucian was one of these people on that he supported Atticism, which was a way to get back to the classical model of rhetoric that was present in ancient Athens.

Questions:

-What do you think was Lucian's purpose for writing *A True Story*?

-Why do you think that little is known about Lucian?

-Do you think that Lucian being a foreigner had an influence on his writing?

-Do you think that the writings of Lucian would have had much influence over Herodes Atticus or Regilla, or do you think that since many of his popular works were that of that powerful people would not have bothered with reading it?

-Go you think it's a coincidence that Herodes a Romanized Greek and Lucian a Greek Assyrian were both Sophists.



Lucian of Samosata. 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Website:

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/luc/true/tru01.htm>

This website gave both an English translation as well as the Greek version of *A True Story*. This website by providing an English translation allows for us to get a good look at what the writings of Lucian are like.

Journal:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/637711>

This journal article was used to see how modern scholars treat the writings of Lucian. This article discusses that Lucian used his writings to poke fun and to question the social inequalities of Rome. This is especially true when it comes to wealthy vs. poor in Rome.

Bibliography:

Lucian. "A True Story, by Lucian of Samosata." *Sacred Texts*. Trans. A. M. Harmon. Loeb Classical Library, n.d. Web. Lucian as Social Satirist

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