

**LUCIANI SOMNIUM  
CHARON PISCATOR  
ET DE LUCTU:  
WITH ENGLISH NOTES**

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Luciani Somnium Charon Piscator Et De Luctu: With English Notes by Samosata Lucian & W. E. Heitland

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**SAMOSATA LUCIAN & W. E. HEITLAND**

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WITH ENGLISH NOTES**



*Gitt Press Series.*

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LUCIANI  
SOMNIUM CHARON  
PISCATOR ET DE LUCTU

*WITH ENGLISH NOTES*

BY

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS little edition is an attempt to render the four pieces of Lucian selected for the Previous Examination intelligible to candidates even though not well grounded in Greek, without producing a mere cram-book, the demand for which it is usually left to private enterprize to supply. Time being short, I have not entered deeply into textual questions, and have only departed from the text of Bekker's edition in a very few passages, and then for the most part following Jacobitz or Sommerbrodt in the adoption of manuscript readings. When I have borrowed, I have acknowledged the debt. I have striven hard to keep the notes down to a moderate bulk; but they are still long, and my experience in preparing students for the above-mentioned examination debars me from all hope of reducing their length without wholly changing the character of the edition. In any case much must be left to the teacher.

W E HEITLAND.

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*Sept 3, 1877.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

### A. *Lucian's times, his life and works.*

(1) LUCIAN lived about 120—200 AD and was one of the chief literary characters of the period commonly known as the 'age of the Antonines.' The civilized world, and much that was barbarian, was ruled by Roman laws and guarded by Roman armies. The imperial administration had settled into a centralized despotism governing the provinces through a host of subordinates, but to a great extent respecting local institutions. All power within the Roman frontiers now emanated from or existed by sufferance of the emperor: he was the one main-spring of the whole machinery, and from his camp or palace sent forth his orders to be obeyed through the whole empire from the Euphrates to the Clyde. The vast mass of countries composing this empire may be divided into West and East, the former speaking Latin, the latter Greek. This rough division of speech marks an important fact. The western provinces were greatly Romanized; the eastern, submitting far more readily to the conquerors and adapting themselves quickly to the forms of provincial government, remained almost unaffected by Rome while they exercised a powerful influence upon her.

(2) Such few and broad outlines must here suffice to give a faint idea of the outward aspect of the Roman world in the second century of our era. What has been said of the East generally will apply in particular to Syria. That country had come more and more under Greek influences since the con-

quests of Alexander and the foundation of kingdoms by the generals who divided his great empire. But, as would naturally be the case where Greek learning and ingenuity were introduced among oriental apathy and luxury, the mixture produced a people unrivalled in the arts of elaborate immorality and crime. The wave of Syrian slaves pimps poisoners and quacks of all descriptions that deluged Rome, added another pernicious influence to corrupt a society already only too much debased by the contact with the western Greeks. Christianity was it is true doing something for the reformation of Seleucia and Antioch ; but Christianity itself took no good from the contact. Among such a people, intellectual but immoral, at the town of Samosata on the upper Euphrates, the capital of the district called Commagene, Lucian (Λουκιανὸς or Λυκῖνος) was born. We know very little of his life save what may be learnt from his own writings ; and even that is not much. It is chiefly to be gathered from the pieces called<sup>1</sup> (1) the Dream (2) the Twice-accused (3) the Defence of salaried service.

(3) After the failure of an attempt to bring him up to the trade or profession of statuary, young Lucian seems to have devoted himself to the attainment—how, we know not—of such culture as his native province could afford ; and in particular to rhetoric, for it is hardly credible that, being born of a poor family, he can have gone off on his travels without the rudiments of some profession at least. We find him still a youth roaming about western Asia Minor (*περὶ τῆν Ἰωνίαν*), the chief cities of which were Ephesus and Smyrna, rival seats of learning and commerce. Here he became a finished rhetorician, and entered upon his literary career. He seems to have earned his living partly by pleading in the courts, partly by public lectures or rhetorical displays such as the professors<sup>2</sup> (*σοφισταί*)

<sup>1</sup> *περὶ τοῦ ἐνυπνίου ἤτοι βίος Λουκιανοῦ, δις κατηγορούμενος ἢ δικαστήρια, ἀπολογία περὶ τῶν ἐπὶ μισθῷ συνόγκων.*

<sup>2</sup> Some of these men were actually endowed professors. The Flavian Caesars set the example of such endowments, and the Antonines followed the lead.

of the time were in the habit of delivering both on serious and trifling subjects. He soon passed over to Greece proper, and no doubt visited Athens, then the chief centre<sup>1</sup> of Greek education; all the while we may be sure extending the range of his information and improving the accuracy of his style. From thence he passed on to Italy, his reputation growing as he went; till he found a congenial society and source of profit in the rhetoric-loving towns of Gaul.

(4) When Lucian was now in his fortieth year, and had amassed considerable wealth, he left the West and settled down at Athens, having removed his family thither from Samosata. He now threw over rhetoric and took to the study of philosophy. The many writings in the composition of which he now revelled are for the most part cast in the form of dialogue. Imitation of Plato was in all likelihood originally at the bottom of this, but the spirit of the satiric dialogue (of which Lucian may be called the founder) has more in common with Aristophanes than with Plato. At Athens our author learned to write a purer Attic Greek than he had before been able to attain; getting rid of most of those Syrian provincialisms which he, though long ago 'enrolled among the Greeks' by his earlier rhetorical studies, still no doubt retained in plenty.

(5) He now poured forth a series of satires, which assail human weakness and folly from many points of view. The popular notions of the gods and the life after death; the vain hopes fears and endeavours of men; the empty vanity of the rhetorician; the insincere moral-lecturing of the philosopher; the indignities borne by dependents at the hands of the great; the crafty machinations of harlots for the enthrallment of wealthy youths; the weak and childish spirit in which the Homeric poems were read and learnt by heart; the want of critical power which encouraged the production of wild romances under the name of books of travel;—all these and more are mercilessly lashed in detail with the scourge of satire. Lucian is

<sup>1</sup> See Mr Capes' lectures on *University life in ancient Athens*. The city teemed with lecturers of all sorts.