



LL Sub-Faculty Seminar, HT 2024

Non-standard Greek and Latin: Characterisations in Literature

Convenors: Michele Bianconi, Sara De Martin

Thursdays, 5pm – Outreach Room (weeks 1-6) / Lecture Theatre (week 7), Ioannou Centre

When we talk about non-standard Greek and Latin morphology or syntax, we tend to think of linguistic phenomena that are documented in non-literary texts (e.g. graffiti, personal documents and other ‘informal’ texts) and do not conform to the codified or implicit norms of literary varieties. However, non-standard forms, and forms deviating from the relevant literary norm, are anything but absent from literary texts. Regional and social dialects afford vivid characterisations: among the most renowned instances, we can think of Aristophanes’ linguistic portraits of non-Attic Greeks and non-Greeks, of Timotheus’ Persian ‘tracking out the Ionian tongue’, or of the language of the *liberti* in Petronius’ *Satyricon*.

In this seminar series, we would like to go beyond these usual examples. We take our cue from recent studies on social linguistic varieties and problematise what the non-standard achieves in Greek and Latin literature. We aim to put the spotlight on its literary potential, and on its political significance. Through a selection of case studies from a variety of Greek and Latin genres, we shall explore:

- how non-standard linguistic features contribute to the social characterisation of *personae* and literary characters, especially in terms of gender, class, and ethnicity;
- the actual mimetism of such features – how they are close to, or distant from, linguistic realities;
- how literary linguistic characterisation is symptomatic of current perceptions of linguistic realities;
- how linguistic and genre experimentation are linked: how genre boundaries are pushed and how literary and non-literary genres interact when linguistic characterisation is at play.

Preliminary bibliography

Adams, J.N. (2013) *Social Variation and the Latin Language*. Cambridge.

Bentein, K., Janse, M. (eds.) (2021) *Varieties of Post-classical and Byzantine Greek*. Berlin-Boston.

Cassio, A.C. (ed.) (2016²) *Storia delle lingue letterarie greche*. Firenze.

Clackson, J. (2015) *Language and Society in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Cambridge.

Colvin, S. (2020) ‘Varieties of Greek: disorder and continuity’, *CQ* 70, 68-84.

De Temmerman, K., van Emde Boas, E. (eds.) (2019) *Characterization in Ancient Greek Literature*. Leiden-Boston.

Dickey, E., Chahoud, A. (eds.) (2010) *Colloquial and Literary Latin*. Cambridge.

van Emde Boas, E. (2017) *Language and Character in Euripides’ Electra*. Oxford.

Monaco, C., Bozia, E., Machado, R. (eds.) (forthcoming 2024) *Beyond the Standards: Attic, the Koiné, and Atticism*. Leiden.

Willi, A. (2003) *The Languages of Aristophanes: Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek*. Oxford.



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| Week 1 | Non-standard in Greek Literature |
| 18 January | A conversation between Richard Hunter (Trinity College, Cambridge) and Andreas Willi (Worcester College, Oxford) |
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| Week 2 | Non-standard Communication in Greek Drama |
| 25 January | Evert van Emde Boas (Aarhus University) |
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| Week 3 | Challenges in Editing Aristophanes of Byzantium's <i>Lexeis</i> |
| 1 February | Lucia Prauscello (All Souls College, Oxford) |
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| Week 4 | Linguistic Characteristics of Early Roman Drama |
| 8 February | Gesine Manuwald (University College London) |
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| Week 5 | The Language of Sophistopolis |
| 15 February | Bé Breij (Radboud University, Nijmegen) |
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| Week 6 | 'Go Sell your Possessions': Exploring Jesus' Commands in the Greek Gospels and their Latin Translations |
| 22 February | Liana Tronci (University for Foreigners, Siena) |
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| Week 7 | Non-standard in Late Latin Literature |
| 29 February | A conversation between Eleanor Dickey (University of Reading) and Rolando Ferri (University of Pisa) |