Anacharsis in the "Second Sophistic": the legend of the Scythian in Lucian, Plutarch, and Maximus of Tyre.

Murphy, Colm

Universiteit Leiden

Faculty of Humanities

Anacharsis in “The Second Sophistic”: the legend of the Scythian in Lucian, Plutarch, and Maximus of Tyre.

Colm Seán Murphy

3238008

s3238008@vuw.leidenuniv.nl

Supervisor: Prof. dr. C.C. de Jonge

Second reader: Prof. dr. A. B. Wessels

Thesis submitted for the degree MA Classics and Ancient Civilizations (Classics)

Date of submission: 14/06/2022

Contents

Introduction

Anacharsis the Scythian

ἐς Σκυθίην Ἀνάχαρσις ὅτ᾽ ἤλυθε, πολλὰ πλανηθεὶς
πάντας ἔπειθε βιοῦν ἤθεσιν Ἑλλαδικοῖς.
τὸν δ᾽ ἔτι μῦθον ἄκραντον ἐνὶ στομάτεσσιν ἔχοντα
πτηνὸς ἐς ἀθανάτους ἥρπασεν ὦκα δόναξ.

"When Anacharsis returned to Scythia, after much travel,
he sought to convert all to the ways of the Greeks.
Yet with his tale still idle in his mouth,
a winged arrow swiftly laid him low."[1]

These lines from Diogenes Laërtius' *Lives of the Philosophers* are styled as an epitaph for Anacharsis, a legendary sage from the region of Scythia. Laërtius reprises certain elements of the most well-known appearance of the Scythian, that of Herodotus' *Histories*, which narrates how Anacharsis came to Greece in order to learn the ways of the Greeks, before being executed upon his return to Scythia for being too "Hellenized", with his Scythian identity having been somewhat effaced.[2] To the mind of François Hartog, Herodotus' depiction of the Scythians is in great part a literary construction, as they come to represent the total opposite of the Greeks.[3] Beyond the straightforward contrast between tolerant, pedagogical Greeks and intolerant, harsh barbarians, the Herodotean narrative also implies that it was possible to an extent to participate in Greek custom despite being a non-Greek.

While it is difficult to find a basis for a historical Anacharsis, some characteristics remain common across his literary appearances in Greek literature: he was a noble Scythian, met and conversed with Solon, and learned a great deal from his voyage to Greece. Despite his "otherness", the figure appears to have been held in high regard by Greek authors, and he is sometimes cited as one of the Seven Sages of Greece.[4]

Anacharsis' role underwent a degree of change throughout centuries of Ancient Greek literature. As in Herodotus, he first appears as an example of tragic Hellenization, before being later claimed by the Cynics as one of their predecessors, then becoming the embodiment of the ideal foreigner, fully immersed in Hellenic education while providing an outside perspective of Greek customs.[5] As a perennial outsider, Anacharsis is perhaps never fully a Greek, but nevertheless, is part of the classical canon.

Anacharsis in scholarship

In his seminal work on the figure of Anacharsis, Kindstrand has considered the evolution of the tradition surrounding the sage.[6] His emphasis lies in considering the contributions and innovations of the authors whose works feature Anacharsis. This idea of a developing tradition is reprised by Francesca Mestre, who attempts to draw a clearer picture of the Scythian by combining the various characteristics he is said to possess in different works.[7]

[1] Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 1.103. All translations are my own.
[2] Herodotus, *Histories* 4.76.5.
[3] See Hartog (1988), 3-33.
[4] For a discussion of Anacharsis' association with the Seven Sages, see Kindstrand (1981), 75-76.
[5] See Mestre (2003), 317.
[6] Kindstrand (1981) remains the point of reference for an overview of Anacharsis' appearances throughout Ancient Greek literature and beyond.
[7] See Mestre (2003).

The emphasis on the Scythian himself moves the debate away from the motives of the individual authors who use Anacharsis in their works.

In contrast, analyses such as that of Branham in the case of Lucian's *Anacharsis* run the risk of focusing too specifically on a single appearance of the Scythian sage without considering its place in the broader tradition around him.[8] Such an approach may neglect the innovations made by authors within that tradition, which constitute a clearer indicator of their own self-positioning *vis-à-vis* the legend of the Scythian outsider, and questions of engagement with Hellenic identity. Richter pays some attention to this question, and states that Anacharsis "was the 'ideal type' of the ethnically non-Greek Hellene", holding that his tragic Hellenization served as a springboard for later "outsiders" to demonstrate their success.[9] This view remains rather one-sided, however, as it does not consider the fundamental ambiguity at the heart of Anacharsis' cultural identities, and the often-nuanced engagements of later authors with Hellenic identity. Further, his analysis considers uses of Anacharsis as a reaction to the Herodotean narrative, which runs the risk of perhaps overlooking the broader tradition, that is to say the literary appearances of the Scythian between Herodotus and the time of the Second Sophistic.

"Greekness" in the Second Sophistic

For the later Hellenophone authors of the Second Sophistic[10] movement under the Roman Empire, the idea of Greekness being attained through education (*paideia*) was of paramount importance, as a great many of them came from further afield than the traditional confines of Greece, adding to the multifaceted cultural negotiation taking place in the period. This "Greekness" involved *inter alia* writing in Greek, adopting the style and language of the Classical era (namely, for many authors, the Attic style of Classical Athens[11]), and displaying a profound knowledge of the authors and history of the Greek past. Furthermore, the Atticist tendencies of the era and its feelings of nostalgia for the classical period suggest an intellectual displacement (however construed it is) of a temporal sort.[12] This "Greekness" may appear rather different from certain more ethnic considerations of Hellenic identity from the classical period, but it is difficult to neatly distinguish two clear-cut conceptions.[13]

Scholarship surrounding conceptions of "Greekness" in Greek literature under the Roman Empire has progressed from more binary conceptions (setting up an opposition between Hellenic and Roman identities[14]) to more recent considerations of how local identities are also at stake and explored in the literature of the period.[15] In the former category, Simon Swain's seminal work *Hellenism and Empire* considers the reactions of a variety of Greek-language writers to Roman rule, as though opposing Greek and Roman identities. This binary view is also present in Simon Goldhill's *Being Greek Under Rome*.[16] Greek identity in the Roman Empire was not a straightforward matter, however, and individuals such as Plutarch could feel "Greek" while actively taking part in Roman civic life, while also feeling attached to more local identities.[17] Greek-language authors need not have been "ethnically" Greek, and their

[8] See Branham (1989), 81-104.
[9] See Richter (2011), 160.
[10] The term "Second Sophistic" has been criticised, notably by Whitmarsh (2013), yet it is used throughout this thesis for the sake of convenience, as more of a temporal marker.
[11] See Kim (2010).
[12] See Bowie (1970).
[13] See Kemezis (2014).
[14] See Swain (1996).
[15] For a study into the importance of local identities in imperial Greek literature, see Whitmarsh (2010).
[16] See Goldhill (2001).
[17] See Whitmarsh (2010).

participation in Hellenic literary activity often displays a variety of attitudes, not only towards Roman rule, but also towards various aspects of Greek identity and culture. The Atticist tendencies of the Second Sophistic period were but one part of these debates, and a figure such as Anacharsis allowed authors to engage with these matters, through his own ambiguous cultural positioning.

The Scythian sage is an outsider not only in a geographical and cultural sense, but also a temporal sense, as his original place in Greek literary history is far removed from the Hellenophone authors of the Second Sophistic period. He is therefore the ideal figure for them to engage with issues of "Greekness", as well as questions surrounding the Greek past.

Choice of authors and analysis.

This thesis proposes a closer analysis of some of the appearances of Anacharsis in the literature of the Second Sophistic period, by examining not only *how* but also *why* certain authors, namely Lucian, Plutarch, and Maximus of Tyre, employ the Scythian in their works. These three individuals each present a different relationship to questions of Hellenic identity under the Roman Empire. While Lucian and Maximus both originated from the Roman province of Syria, the former openly addresses his "barbarian" origins in certain parts of his work,[18] while the latter shows no indication within his oeuvre that he is not Greek. Plutarch, however, was a Greek, from Chaeronea, near Delphi. His perspective on questions of Hellenic identity must therefore be considered from a different angle.

Throughout this thesis, the various positions and characterisations these authors adopt concerning Greeks, their culture, and "others"[19] shall be analysed, as well as how their own identities come into play, notably by analysing the discourse surrounding Anacharsis in their works. Each chapter begins with a brief overview of each author's positioning *vis-à-vis* identity and some of the tendencies of the Second Sophistic period, before moving on to the analysis of Anacharsis' appearances in their works, and eventually finishing with some concluding remarks concerning their uses of the Scythian.

Accordingly, the figure of Anacharsis features on a number of occasions in these authors' works, namely in two of the dialogical works of Lucian, *Anacharsis* and *The Scythian*, in Plutarch's *Life of Solon* and *Banquet of the Seven Sages*, and Maximus of Tyre's *Orations*. He serves as an interlocutor to Solon on the subject of gymnastics in *Anacharsis*, and as a young man initiated to Greek customs by the same Athenian lawgiver in *The Scythian*. In the latter work, Lucian likens his own self to the Scythian sage, while in the former it is unclear to which character he grants a rhetorical advantage. As a Greek-speaking author originally from the province of Syria, Lucian's position *vis-à-vis* Hellenism is multifaceted and has attracted some scholarly attention.[20] His use of Anacharsis, the Hellenized barbarian *par excellence*, in conversation and learning with Solon is therefore quite notable, worthy of closer study, and is considered in the first chapter of this thesis.

In the case of Plutarch's work, Anacharsis not only partakes in the *Banquet*, in which his surface role is that of a highly cultivated but slightly rustic and amusing (for the other participants) character, but also makes a brief appearance in the *Life of Solon*, as the Scythian makes light of Solon's extensive legal reforms (a crucial part of the history of the Athenian

[18] In *Twice Accused*, Lucian presents a Syrian protagonist (as a stand-in for himself) who is able to distinguish himself oratorically "despite" his barbarian origins, while in *The Scythian* 9, he states that both he and Anacharsis are barbarians.

[19] The Greek-barbarian axis from classical Greek literature, though useful, is often somewhat inaccurate in establishing clear-cut views of Greekness, and therefore forms only part of this analysis.

[20] See Goldhill (2001), 2-4, and Richter (2011), 163-166.

polis), seemingly rightly so.[21] Plutarch's self-fashioning in his work has often been considered along the lines of a Greek who regrets the loss of freedom under Roman rule.[22] However, this might be rather restrictive, and Plutarch's use of Anacharsis is explored in the second chapter of this thesis.

For the rhetorician Maximus of Tyre, who composed a series of 41 orations, the appearances of Anacharsis occur in a couple of lines of Oration 17, and in a brief anecdote at the start of Oration 25, in which the Scythian meets Myson of Chenae[23] and is greatly impressed at the Greek's concise wisdom and virtuous life, in contrast with the verbose and ineffective wisdom of undefined "skirmishers" (πελτασταῖς) in Athens who are distinguished from steady and measure "hoplites" (ὁπλίτῃ).[24] Of particular interest here is a rejection of a certain way of thinking and the use of the outsider as a judge of Greek wisdom. While incorporating wisdom from outside the Hellenic world had become commonplace in 2nd-century CE Greek literature, the anecdotes concerning the Scythian is the only case of a foreign sage appearing in the *Orations*.[25] However, as a travelling rhetorician, Maximus of Tyre was also compelled to demonstrate his authority and own Hellenic learning, despite his origins. Like Lucian, he was from the Roman province of Syria, but displays a different attitude towards Hellenism and identity, and the appearances of Anacharsis in his work constitute the third and final chapter of this thesis.

It is apparent that the Scythian is used in a variety of contexts in a period which saw different authors exploring their own identities and the notion of "Greekness" in Imperial Rome. It is therefore pertinent to consider a closer examination into how the aforementioned intellectuals employed the figure of the sage in the scope of their own self-fashioning as Hellenic authors in this period, and to ask: how is the figure of Anacharsis employed by these authors of the Second Sophistic period as a tool for thinking "Greekness"?

[21] Plutarch, *Life of Solon* 5.1-3.
[22] See Preston (2001) for a view of Plutarch as a "non-integrationist", while Shiffman (2008) contests this.
[23] Anacharsis would often replace Myson as one of the Seven, see Defradas (1954), 16-19.
[24] *Or.* 25.1
[25] Trapp (1997), xxx.

1. Lucian and Anacharsis

1.1 *Lucian and the Second Sophistic*

This chapter seeks to consider how Lucian uses the figure of Anacharsis as a tool for thinking "Greekness" in the scope of his own authorial self-fashioning. Lucian's own relationship towards Hellenic identity is rather ambiguous, as he flits between parading his *paideia*, a key component of intellectual and cultural prestige in the Second Sophistic period, and his "barbarian" origins which lay in Samosata, in the Roman province of Syria. *Paideia* provided the means for relative participation in Hellenic cultural identity for a number of ethnically non-Greek authors.[26] In *The Dream*, Lucian relates a supposed episode of his own childhood[27], in which he dreams of an opposition between personifications of Sculpture (Ἑρμογλυφική) and Education (Παιδεία), the former, evidently speaking in a coarse and stuttering manner, briefly promising renown if he were to choose her path and become a sculptor, while the latter dismisses her opponent and promises even greater fame and an illustrious career. The decision parodies Prodicus' choice of Hercules, as related by Xenophon.[28] Lucian would choose Education and leave his home under her guidance. Lucian's choice of immersing himself in Greek culture and language by accepting the benefits of a personified *Paideia*[29] fits into the Second Sophistic views of *paideia* as a tool for intellectual and social renown. However, Lucian's assimilation to a Greek identity is never quite complete, and the figure of Anacharsis proves to be a useful tool for engaging with this ambiguous identity.

The Scythian sage features prominently in two of his works: *The Scythian*, a prolalia[30] in which Lucian likens his situation to that of an Anacharsis who has just arrived in Greece, and *Anacharsis*, an imagined dialogue on the subject of athletics and other aspects of Greek cultural life between the Scythian sage and the Athenian lawgiver Solon. These works paint two very different images of Anacharsis, presumably at different stages of his Hellenization. In the former, the Scythian arrives in Athens and is quite lost, ignorant of everything (πάντα ἀγνοῶν)[31], and about to return home when he is recognised by Toxaris, a Scythian who has been wholly Hellenized and is now counted among the number of the autochthonous Athenians. Toxaris introduces Anacharsis to Solon, who educates him in all things Greek. To Richter's mind, Anacharsis undergoes the same Hellenization as Toxaris, but this is not consistent with the narratives surrounding both characters in *The Scythian*.[32] Lucian concludes the short request for patronage by describing himself as a sort of Anacharsis (and not Toxaris!), an outsider who has come to Greece for its cultural renown and tolerance.

In *Anacharsis*, the Scythian is much more critical of Greek culture; for instance, he questions the utility of athletic exercise, even describing it as "madness". The subject of athletics was a source for debate in both Classical Greece and intellectual circles of the Roman

[26] See in particular Whitmarsh (2001).
[27] It is difficult to ascertain how "biographical" this is, as it may simply be literary invention. See Richter (2017), 327-8.
[28] Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.1.21-34. For the view of Lucian's narrative as parodying this episode, see Macleod (1991), 249.
[29] Whether or not Lucian's native language was Syriac is up for contention, but it is most likely he had at the very least some Greek education in Samosata.
[30] A prolalia is a short introductory part to a longer work, usually serving as a request for patronage, as is the case of *The Scythian*.
[31] Lucian, *The Scythian* 3.
[32] See Richter (2017), 330-331.

Empire, with views ranging from praise to outright condemnation.[33] Traditionally, scholarship on *Anacharsis* has assumed a Cynic foundation to the dialogue, though it is difficult to ascertain who the true Cynic interlocutor is, and who serves as the mouthpiece for Lucian's own views on the matter.[34]

Both works have been interpreted as examples of the author's supposed perspectives on otherness, Hellenism, Scythians, and cultural tolerance, often linearly aligning Anacharsis' views with those of Lucian.[35] Where this approach may falter, however, is that it considers these texts as *bona fide* expressions of Lucian's personal opinions on various subjects[36] without considering the different portrayals of the works in question; one who adopts this approach may thus stumble onto the obvious pitfall of considering Hellenism and "otherness" as a binary opposition, which is undermined by the author's own ambiguous self-positioning. Furthermore, the depictions of Anacharsis in both works are rather different and convey varying uses of the character. Lucian's engagement with these figures of the classical canon may be more nuanced and go beyond straightforward questions of self-identification.

The first section of this chapter deals with the author's professed self-identification with Anacharsis in *The Scythian*, while the second considers the discussion in *Anacharsis* and Lucian's engagement with the classical tradition. The third and final discussion synthesises the two portrayals and what they may reveal about Lucian's use of the figure of Anacharsis in the fashioning of his own identity and relationship *vis-à-vis* "Greekness".

1.2 *Anacharsis in* The Scythian

In *The Scythian*, Lucian portrays Anacharsis as a young Scythian aristocrat who has just arrived in Athens, yearning to learn about Greece and her ways. The parallels are evident, as Lucian himself points out at the end of the work:

> φημὶ δὴ ὅμοιόν τι καὶ αὐτὸς παθεῖν τῷ Ἀναχάρσιδι.
>
> "I believe that my situation is quite akin to that of Anacharsis."[37]

The bulk of the request for patronage relates the episode of Anacharsis' arrival in Greece and meeting with Toxaris, then Solon. In this sense, it is a straightforward exercise to consider Anacharsis as a model for Lucian. One of the Scythian's main concerns upon his arrival in Athens is that his attire is being mocked, just as Education, in *The Dream*, promises to provide a young Lucian with appropriate clothing, so that he may not feel out of place. However, the *prolalia* does not begin with a discussion of the legend of Anacharsis, but rather of Toxaris, a Scythian who had supposedly arrived in Greece some time earlier.[38] This figure is wholly Hellenized, to the point where Anacharsis does not recognise him at all as a fellow countryman beyond his use of the Scythian tongue:

> ὁ Ἀναχαρσις δὲ πόθεν ἂν ἐκεῖνον ἔγνω ὁμοεθνῆ ὄντα, Ἑλληνιστὶ ἐσταλμένον, ὑπεξυρημένον τὸ γένειον, ἄζωστον, ἀσίδηρον, ἤδη στωμύλον, αὐτῶν τῶν Ἀττικῶν ἕνα τῶν αὐτοχθόνων; οὕτω μετεπεποίητο ὑπὸ τοῦ χρόνου.

[33] See König (2017) for a broader discussion on the subject of athletics in the period of the Second Sophistic.
[34] See Kindstrand (1981), 65-67.
[35] See Gangloff (2007), 83-85.
[36] See Kindstrand (1981), 65 for a summary of the various attempts to make either Anacharsis or Solon the mouthpiece of Lucian's own position in *Anacharsis*.
[37] *The Scythian* 9.
[38] Another figure of a Scythian who came to Greece in order to learn its customs. His primary appearances are in Lucian's *The Scythian* and *Toxaris*, the latter of which sees him defend the Scythian conception of friendship.

> "Anacharsis would not have recognised a fellow countryman there, dressed in the manner of the Greeks, with his chin shaven, bearing neither a sword nor a belt, and in his speech, might have been one of the autochthonous men of Attica: so thoroughly had he been changed by time."[39]

Notably, the first distinguishing feature of Toxaris' Hellenization is his attire. His acculturation sees him forget his homeland, his wife, and his children out of a love for Athens. He claims that the same will happen to Anacharsis, if he has a wife and children.[40] Lucian's model, in the Atticizing and Hellenophile tendencies of the Second Sophistic period, might have been Toxaris, a clear-cut model of the acculturating potential of Hellenization. Anacharsis is nevertheless the most explicit comparison, and Lucian has Toxaris set up his meeting with Solon. Notably, Solon's wisdom seems to have stemmed in part from his travels abroad to Asia and Egypt, making it far from autochthonous:

> ἔστι σοφὸς ἀνὴρ ἐνταῦθα, ἐπιχώριος μέν, ἀποδημήσας δὲ μάλα πολλὰ ἔς τε Ἀσίαν καὶ ἐς Αἴγυπτον καὶ τοῖς ἀρίστοις τῶν ἀνθρώπων συγγενόμενος.
>
> "There is a certain wise man here, a local, yet he has often travelled to Asia and Egypt and conversed with the noblest of men there."[41]

Toxaris asserts that to know Solon is to know all things, namely, to know Athens and Greece, irrespective of where this learning came from:

> πάντα ἑώρακας ἤδη Σόλωνα ἰδών, τοῦτο αἱ Ἀθῆναι, τοῦτο ἡ Ἑλλάς
>
> And having seen Solon, you have seen all things, this is Athens, this is Greece."[42]

Lucian's narrative mentions that Anacharsis would return to Scythia (unlike Toxaris, who would die in Athens) at Solon's death[43], despite Toxaris' earlier claim that Athens would not easily let him go:

> οὐ γαρ ἄν, […], ἀπέλθοις οὐδ᾽ ἂν ἀφείη σε ῥᾳδίως ἡ πόλις.
>
> "for […] you will not leave, nor will the city let you go easily."[44]

The noble Scythian stops short of binding himself to Athens, as Toxaris has. This return home is evocative of an episode in *The Dream*, in which Lucian describes how the figure of Education shows him all the benefits that she will be able to bestow upon him, before returning him home, having dressed him in regal purple (once again emphasising the importance of clothing in the Hellenizing process):

> δείξασα δέ μοι τὰ τοσαῦτα κἀμὲ τοῖς ἐπαινοῦσιν ἐκείνοις ἐπανήγαγεν αὖθις, οὐκέτι τὴν αὐτὴν ἐσθῆτα ἐκείνην ἐνδεδυκότα ἣν εἶχον ἀφιπτάμενος, ἀλλά μοι ἐδόκουν εὐπάρυφός τις ἐπανήκειν, καταλαβοῦσα οὖν καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἑστῶτα καὶ περιμένοντα […].
>
> "Having shown me all of these things, and I to all those who were there applauding, she led me back home again, and I no longer bore the same clothing which I had upon setting off, but it

[39] *The Scythian* 3.
[40] *The Scythian* 5.
[41] *The Scythian* 5.
[42] *The Scythian* 7.
[43] Given Toxaris' likening of Solon to the entirety of Greece, it might be possible to read his passing as symbolising a sort of death for Athens as a whole.
[44] *The Scythian* 5.

> seemed to me that I was dressed in regal purple, and upon seeing my father standing there and waiting […]".[45]

This aspect of an eventual return home seems to indicate that the acculturation in the cases of both Lucian and Anacharsis is never complete. The image painted by Lucian therefore takes an altogether different colour: he likens himself not to a fully Hellenized barbarian, but to an aristocratic Scythian, who is educated by a well-travelled Athenian who has spoken with the most (seemingly foreign) eminent men, and whose death prompts a swift return home. In this light, it is difficult to read the comparison as linear – Lucian's Anacharsis here is not the perfectly Hellenized barbarian embodied by Toxaris, who does not serve as the author's model.

One may therefore suggest that Lucian's engagement with Hellenism, and particularly Athenian culture, in the comparison of *The Scythian* is not as linear as it may appear. In the dialogue *The Lover of Lies*, Lucian makes an interlocutor deride the autochthonous myth of the Athenians.[46] For Toxaris to seemingly be taken as one of the autochthonous Athenians[47] in *The Scythian*, may therefore be somewhat satirical, making light of the desire to be part of the Athenian culture. The same is not said of Anacharsis, whose relation to Athenian culture is perhaps more complicated. His admiration for Greece and its institutions is still maintained – however, the aforementioned remark that he would return to Scythia implies that he does not undergo a Hellenization which is as comprehensive as that of Toxaris.

As for Lucian, he makes a recurrent point of highlighting his "barbarian" origins, all the while partaking in the Hellenophile tendencies of the Second Sophistic period. By assimilating himself to this Anacharsis who is keen to immerse himself in Greek culture but stops short of forgetting his Scythian origins, as Toxaris has, it would appear that the author's own performative identity[48] occupies a hybrid position, an in-between space[49] which cannot be assimilated to either multifaceted Hellenism or the position of the "other". Anacharsis is able to actively engage with Athenian culture without being held captive by it, just as Lucian retains his own origins while partly immersing himself in the classical tradition. At the conclusion of the work, the author hails the fact that he has the luxury of more sources of assistance than Anacharsis had, suggesting that more contemporary countrymen and foreigners had reached the same level of Hellenization as Toxaris:

> ἐνταῦθά μοι οὐχ εἷς, ὥσπερ τῷ Ἀναχάρσιδι, καὶ οὗτος βάρβαρος, ὁ Τόξαρις, ἀλλὰ πολλοί, μᾶλλον δὲ πάντες τὰ αὐτὰ μόνον οὐ ταῖς αὐταῖς συλλαβαῖς ἔλεγον
>
> "I did not have one source, like Anacharsis, a barbarian, Toxaris, but many, and they all told me the same story with very similar words."[50]

The possible implication is that by Lucian's day, this engagement had become possible on a wider scale than in the time of Solon, Toxaris, and Anacharsis.

Therefore, it is apparent from Lucian's self-identification with Anacharsis in *The Scythian* does not linearly play into the Hellenized barbarian trope, and some degree of distance is maintained between the author and the tradition with which he is engaging.

---

[45] Lucian, *The Dream* 16.
[46] Lucian, *The Lover of Lies* 3. The first men to have allegedly autochthonously sprung from the Attic soil are said to have done so "like vegetables" (καθάπερ τὰ λάχανα).
[47] *The Scythian* 3.
[48] See Whitmarsh (2001), 250.
[49] See de Jonge (2022) for a discussion of how the concept of "migrant literature" might be applied to Greek-language writing of the Early Roman Empire, and how authors occupy an "in-between" space between cultures.
[50] *The Scythian* 10.

1.3 *Anacharsis in* Anacharsis

If *The Scythian* presents a bewildered and naïve Anacharsis, the figure presented in *Anacharsis* assumes a different position altogether, as Lucian reprises another aspect of the Anacharsis legend, in which he is a learned and well-spoken critic of various aspects of Greek custom. In this work, the Scythian sage is critical not only of athletics[51], the starting point to his conversation with Solon, but also of various aspects of Athenian, and by extension Greek culture. The dialogue between Solon and Anacharsis on the subject of athletics has been compared to the Platonic dialogues *Lysis* and *Euthydemus*, and its exploitation of cultural tension for the sake of humour has been thoroughly considered by Branham.[52] He notably points out some similarities between the inquisitive Anacharsis and Socrates, figures who belong to society but are not "in" it.[53] If the latter was known for his reluctance to leave Athens, the former was considered to have been a travelling sage, thereby serving as a foil to the philosopher. Lucian himself may appear to combine both of these aspects – it is likely that he settled in Athens with his father but kept up some degree of travelling.

The discussion begins with Anacharsis questioning the behaviour of wrestling gymnasts, which seems absurd to him given his supposed unacquaintance with Greek culture. Solon's justifications escalate along with Anacharsis' bemusement, ranging from the glory of winning prizes to the importance of athletics for warfare. The conversation also turns to the performances of tragedies, a cultural mainstay of classical Athens. Throughout the dialogue, Solon is confident in the supremacy of his culture, offering Anacharsis the chance to prove him wrong, declaring that the Athenians are open to wisdom from abroad:

> καὶ εὖ ἴσθι ὡς οὐκ αἰσχυνεῖται ἡ Ἀθηναίων πόλις παρὰ βαρβάρου καὶ ξένου τὰ συμφέροντα ἐκμανθάνοντες.
>
> "And be mindful that the city of the Athenians shall not shy away from learning something useful from a barbarian and a foreigner."[54]

He playfully appoints the Scythian as a temporary Areopagite to judge whether or not Solon's case for the Athenian way of life is valid, highlighting the ways in which the privileges of cultural belonging are summarily granted and removed:

> ὥστε καὶ σέ, ὦ Ἀνάχαρσι, Ἀρεοπαγίτην ἐν τῷ παρόντι ποιοῦμαι ἔγωγε, καὶ κατὰ τὸν τῆς βουλῆς μου νόμον ἄκουε.
>
> "So that I now make you a temporary Areopagite, Anacharsis, and according to the custom of the court, you shall listen to me."[55]

The absurdity presented here is that an Athenian institution is being invoked to judge Athenian customs, giving the lie to any idea of neutrality. The very format of the dialogue, given its Platonic and Aristophanic echoes, is bound up in the classical tradition. Anacharsis' ridicule of various aspects appears close to bad faith, but neither interlocutor appears to gain the upper hand. That one of the pillars of Athenian democracy is portrayed as being incapable of fully

[51] Many of the apopthegmata suggest that Anacharsis' criticism of athletics and gymnastics more broadly was a long-standing trope, see Kindstrand (1981), 58-59.
[52] See Branham (1989), 82-102.
[53] Branham (1989), 83.
[54] Lucian, *Anacharsis* 17.
[55] *Anacharsis* 19.

defending the institutions of his *polis* is rather dramatic[56], and Lucian exploits this portrayal to comic effect when this defence is opposed to a stubborn outside eye.

The author's explicit position cannot be assumed from the text, but it does point to some problematic aspects of cultural criticism. Lucian may not be using either Solon or Anacharsis as a mouthpiece, but he does appear to highlight the problems of this sort of intercultural communication. Solon's case for Athens may only be fully understood by someone from within Athenian society, and it is criticised by someone who can engage with it while standing on the outside. The dialogue ends with a promise of a discussion the following day on Scythian customs, which is not related. For that discussion to fully mirror that of *Anacharsis*, however, it would have to take place in Scythia, in the Scythian tongue, which is obviously an impossibility and inconsistent with the tradition surrounding the two figures. Further, Solon's position does not appear to be one of cultural reconciliation, as he asks Anacharsis to explain his own traditions given the Scythian's own dissatisfaction with the Athenian model, a conversation which would presumably have to happen in the most polished Attic Greek. The initial declaration of Athenian tolerance eventually drops its mask, as Solon concedes that the Athenians do not tend to copy other nations:

> ὅτι ἡμῖν ἱκανά, ὦ Ἀνάχαρσι, ταῦτα τὰ γυμνάσια οἰκεῖα ὄντα ζηλοῦν δὲ τὰ ξενικὰ οὐ πάνυ ἀξιοῦμεν.
>
> "Because, Anacharsis, our own exercises are sufficient for us, we do not at all deem it useful to emulate other nations."[57]

Nevertheless, this Anacharsis declares that he is keen to learn from the Greeks, despite his apparent hostility to some of their customs. The question of attire once again arises, but in this instance, Anacharsis has tried to blend in with the Athenians by not wearing his Scythian hat, before seemingly regretting this decision on account of the sun beating down on himself and Solon during their conversation, while the Athenian proudly boasts that his countrymen and himself have no need of hats given their athletic training:

> οἱ μάταιοι γὰρ οὗτοι πόνοι, ὦ Ἀνάχαρσι, καὶ αἱ συνεχεῖς ἐν τῷ πηλῷ κυβιστήσεις καὶ αἱ ὕπαιθροι ἐν τῇ ψάμμῳ ταλαιπωρίαι τοῦτο ἡμῖν τὸ ἀμυντήριον παρέχουσι πρὸς τὰς τοῦ ἡλίου βολάς, καὶ οὐκέτι πίλου δεόμεθα ὃς τὴν ἀκτῖνα κωλύσει καθικνεῖσθαι τῆς κεφαλῆς.
>
> "Anacharsis, these useless efforts, these continuous somersaults in the mud, these toils in the sand and outdoors, these are our defence against the rays of the sun, and we have no need of a hat which would prevent those beams from touching our heads."[58]

To undergo these toils seems an overwrought solution in contrast to simply donning a cap, casting a slight doubt on the pertinence of Anacharsis' attempt at blending in with the locals, as it were. Like an Anacharsis who is rather critical of the very culture he is attempting to understand, Lucian's own engagement with and immersion in the classical tradition is never quite whole.

Pushing Branham's analysis further, one may view the cultural dissonances of Solon's overworked arguments as applying to Lucian's own day, as the political and cultural realities of classical Athens had little to do with the Greek situation under the Roman Empire. Ascribing military merits to the athletic training of Athenians no longer makes a great deal of practical

---

[56] Solon's overworked argumentation, faced with the needling questioning, bad faith, and ridicule of Anacharsis, may evoke the imagery of Better Argument, a venerable yet inefficient rhetorical figure, facing Worse Argument, a younger and more sophistic character, in Aristophanes' *Clouds* vv. 889-1104.
[57] *Anacharsis* 39.
[58] *Anacharsis* 16.

sense from an Athenian perspective under Roman imperial rule, creating another form of distance between the interlocutors' argument and the audience. In this sense, part of Solon's reasoning falls on deaf ears, and Anacharsis himself derides the gap between athletic exercise and actual warfare:

> οὐκοῦν, ὦ Σόλων, ἤν ποτε ὑμῖν ἐπίωσιν οἱ πολέμιοι, χρισάμενοι τῷ ἐλαίῳ καὶ κονισάμενοι πρόιτε […];
>
> "Therefore, Solon, when a hostile people invade you, do you cover yourselves with oil, apply dust to yourselves, and charge…?"[59]

The gulf is cultural, temporal, and political. The Scythian is employed as a tool to highlight these differences – in a prior part of the dialogue, when discussing the prizes won by the victors of the games, Anacharsis points out that Solon's country is not in imminent danger, nor is it being laid waste to:

> […] οὔτε πατρίδος κινδυνευούσης οὔτε χώρας πορθουμένης οὔτε φίλων ἢ οἰκείων πρὸς ὕβριν ἀπαγομένων
>
> "while your country is not in danger, nor is your land being destroyed, nor are your friends and family being dragged away in anger."[60]

Lucian's engagement with the classical tradition is itself dual-sided: on the one hand, his dialogue is an indication of the author's participation in the debates of his age surrounding athletics as a whole, while on the other hand, its format and cultural dissonances address the gap between his contemporaries and the classical past.

Therefore, Lucian's use of Anacharsis as a tool for thinking "Greekness" in the *Anacharsis* depends heavily on the interplay between Solon, the embodiment of Athenian culture, and Anacharsis, a Hellenophone who derides the cultural institutions of classical Athens. The Scythian's position may mirror that of Lucian, who satirises both certain aspects of the classical tradition and the tendency of his Second Sophistic contemporaries to idolise the institutions of classical Athens. At the same time, it cannot be said that Lucian wholly identifies himself with the Scythian, as a case is nevertheless made for Hellenic culture by Solon, who maintains cultural authority, as no alternative is offered.

1.4 *Lucian's self-fashioning*

Lucian makes use of his own self-identification as a "Hellenized barbarian", often recalling his "barbarian" roots, all the while striving for the cultural belonging bestowed by *paideia*. This naturally lends itself to the use of the figure of Anacharsis, who was greatly Hellenized but remained the perennial barbarian. Scholarship surrounding Lucian has varyingly studied his identity, but to view *The Scythian* and *Anacharsis* as straightforward expressions of a call for cultural tolerance, or a simple parallel between the author and the figure of a Hellenized barbarian, is perhaps too convenient.

The two portrayals of Anacharsis, though both finding their origins in the tradition surrounding the Scythian, are starkly different, but they both reprise a reluctance to fully immerse himself in Hellenophile tendencies. The differences between Toxaris and Anacharsis in *The Scythian* highlight the latter's position as actively retaining cultural aspects and memories of his own native land, the result producing a different sort of engagement with Athenian culture. As the "first" Scythian to have visited Greece, Toxaris represents one

[59] *Anacharsis* 31.
[60] *Anacharsis* 13.

extreme of Hellenization, to which Lucian does not appear to aspire. Anacharsis retains a great deal of agency in his interactions with Solon and Athenian culture, just as he does in *Anacharsis*. Whitmarsh points out that the Scythian's critique of classical Greek institutions only makes sense from a Hellenocentric perspective[61], but this does not consider the variety of gaps between the Hellenism of Lucian's day and that of Solon's. The very form and premise of the dialogue certainly takes place within a Hellenocentric framework, but this does not preclude Lucian's efforts in the way of portraying a variety of cultural dissonances, nor does it prevent the author from parodically taking aim at this very Hellenocentrism.

1.5 *Concluding remarks*

This chapter has considered the ways in which Anacharsis is deployed in Lucian's *The Scythian* and *Anacharsis* as a means for self-identification in a twofold manner, and how this plays into the author's own engagement with the Hellenophile tendencies of the Second Sophistic period. In the former work, Lucian explicitly identifies his situation to that of Anacharsis, though this is done in contrast to another "Hellenized barbarian", i.e., Toxaris. This opposition indicates that the author's own ambitions of "Hellenization" are not absolute, and that he occupies a cultural space which refuses to be drawn too far in any direction. In the latter work, the opposition between Solon and Anacharsis serves both as a parodic look at a variety of Greek and Athenian institutions and as an examination of different cultural dissonances which separate the interlocutors from one another, and from the audience of Lucian's day. Anacharsis' persistent questioning embodies Lucian's pervasiveness and impertinence with regard to generic adulation of the classical past, and further illustrates the author's ambiguous relationship with certain parts of this Hellenophile nostalgia.

[61] Whitmarsh (2001), 124-125.

2. Plutarch and Anacharsis

2.1 *Plutarch and the Second Sophistic*

Plutarch's place in the Second Sophistic movement has often been called into question, notably in that he did not view himself as, nor was he considered to be, a sophist.[62] Nevertheless, his work does display levels of concern with Hellenic identity in the late 1st and early 2nd centuries AD similar to other authors of that era. His engagement with this identity has often been considered as opposed to questions of Roman identity, with scholars addressing the question as to how a member of the intellectual Greek elite felt about being under Roman imperial rule. Analyses include reading Plutarch as a non-integrationist who distances himself from Roman religion and culture[63], as a unifier of both Greek and Roman mores[64], as a "Hellenizer" of Roman society, seeking to "appropriate" its history[65], and as a supporter of Roman rule given its guarantee of stability.[66] To questions concerning the traditions of Greece and Rome (*Roman Questions* and *Greek Questions*), Plutarch gives a series of answers in book 4 of the *Moralia*.[67]

However, Plutarch's positioning with regard to Roman power does not constitute the only approach one may take concerning questions of identity. There appears to have been a third set of questions, the *Barbarian Questions*, now lost, which presumably addressed barbarian customs. The biographer's characterisation of barbarians has also received a certain amount of scholarly attention, and it is considered to be overwhelmingly negative.[68] Plutarch's barbarians are consistently used as a negative foil to bring out Roman and Greek virtues[69], with a certain set of qualities being considered inherently Greek, while certain vices are considered to be of the barbarian domain. This does not preclude noble behaviour from the part of a barbarian, but they are seen to be acting in a "Greek" way, against their own standards.[70] The barbarian, therefore, is not respected for his own "other" self[71], but only to the degree to which he behaves in a "Greek" manner, and Plutarch appears to have reprised the straightforward Greek-barbarian dichotomy developed in the classical period. This is therefore in line with the traditional view of the "civilising" power of Greek *paideia*, dear to a number of intellectuals in the period of the Second Sophistic.

Is this the case of Anacharsis as portrayed by Plutarch in his work? Does this portrayal allow for any kind of re-evaluation of Plutarch's engagement with the Greek past, and issues of "Hellenic" or "barbarian" identity? Schmidt notes that the Scythian is an exception to the

---

[62] Along the lines of the traditional Platonic distinction between philosophy and sophistry. For a consideration of Plutarch's place in the Second Sophistic, see Schmitz (2014), 32-41.
[63] See Preston (2001), 86-119, for Plutarch as a non-integrationist who resists Roman culture in favour of the Greek.
[64] See Boulogne (1987), 473-475.
[65] Duff (1999) follows a similar line to Preston, affirming that Plutarch is seeking to "appropriate Roman history into a Greek framework", 291.
[66] Shiffman (2008) holds that too much effort has been put into reading Plutarch as anti-Roman, and that as a philosopher, he would not have been opposed to some aspects of Roman imperial rule.
[67] See Preston (2001).
[68] See Schmidt (2004), 227-235.
[69] For a nuancing view of Plutarch as "Hellenizing barbarians and barbarizing Hellenes" in *The Life of Alexander*, and the cultural ambiguity of Alexander and the Macedonians, see Whitmarsh (2002).
[70] See Nikolaidis (1986), 224, for a list of adjectival terms most associated with Greeks as opposed to barbarians.
[71] See Roskam (2004) for a study into Plutarch's philosophical (lack of) consideration for the perspective of the "other".

negative depictions of barbarians, but only by virtue of the tradition associated to him.[72] Anacharsis features in the *Life of Solon* and the *Banquet of the Seven Sages*[73] and is briefly mentioned in *Table-talk*[74], *How a Man May Become Aware of His Progress in Virtue*[75], and *On Talkativeness*.[76] The former two appearances, being more comprehensive and less anecdotal than the latter three, are to be considered here.

2.2 *Anacharsis in the Life of Solon*

As was the case in Lucian, in accordance with a great part of the tradition, Anacharsis is paired with Solon in Plutarch's *Life of Solon*. This version of Anacharsis gets the better of Solon on two occasions, the first, to Solon's advice that the Scythian should make friends at home rather than abroad, he replies: "In that case, you who are at home, make me your friend and guest".[77] The second instance is more political and indirect, and concerns Solon's law-making. Anacharsis laughs at the idea that written laws could prevent crime, considering them to be:

> ἃ μηδὲν τῶν ἀραχνίων διαφέρειν, ἀλλ᾽ ὡς ἐκεῖνα τοὺς μὲν ἀσθενεῖς καὶ λεπτοὺς τῶν ἁλισκομένων καθέξειν, ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν δυνατῶν καὶ πλουσίων διαρραγήσεσθαι.
>
> "like the webs of spiders, since they would hold the weak and meagre of those that were caught, but would be ripped apart by the wealthy and powerful".[78]

Solon offers a counterargument, claiming that:

> πᾶσι τοῦ παρανομεῖν βέλτιον ἐπιδεῖξαι τὸ δικαιοπραγεῖν.
>
> "it would be made clear to all that it is better to act justly than to act outside the law".[79]

Within the brief exchange, it is not at all evident who makes the better point, but the sentence immediately afterwards makes it clear:

> ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὡς Ἀνάχαρσις εἴκαζεν ἀπέβη μᾶλλον ἢ κατ᾽ ἐλπίδα τοῦ Σόλωνος.
>
> "yet the facts vindicated Anacharsis' claims rather than the hope of Solon".[80]

It is then claimed that it was Anacharsis who stated:

> ὅτι λέγουσι μὲν οἱ σοφοὶ παρ᾽ Ἕλλησι, κρίνουσι δὲ οἱ ἀμαθεῖς.
>
> "that amongst the Greeks, the wise men defended causes, while fools judged them".[81]

There is therefore a two-pronged attack on Athenian customs, its laws on the one hand and its institutions on the other. To Kindstrand's mind this criticism of Athenian democracy was a common feature in Socratic beliefs, and equally fits in squarely with similar sayings associated

[72] Schmidt (2004), 230.
[73] Anacharsis' place in the Seven Sages was not a given, and Plutarch here appears to have replaced Periander with Anacharsis in this particular narrative see Defradas (1954), 18. See Snell, B. (1938) for an overview of Greek and Latin texts pertaining to the Seven Sages. Elsewhere, Plutarch reduces the number of Sages to five, see *On the E at Delphi* 385D.
[74] *Table-talk* 693A.
[75] *How A Man May Become Aware of His Progress in Virtue* 78F.
[76] *On Talkativeness* 505A.
[77] *Life of Solon* 5.1.
[78] *Life of Solon* 5.2.
[79] *Life of Solon* 5.3.
[80] *Life of Solon* 5.3.
[81] *Life of Solon* 5.3.

with Anacharsis.[82] Yet Plutarch's own vindication of these criticisms (explicit in the case of the laws, implicit in the case of institutions) appears to differ slightly from other uses of the legend. It is difficult to ascertain what "ταῦτα" (these things) are, which justify Anacharsis' beliefs. It may perhaps be a step too far to suggest that it is Athens' eventual political fall from grace, and by extension Greece's, but one could perhaps read into it a certain admission of failure of the Athenian democratic project, or in any case, of Solon's beliefs concerning the efficacy of laws. A reader of the *Life of Solon* is arguably quite aware of the eventual failures of the Athenian democracy, and the appearance and criticisms of the Scythian here cast some doubt on some aspects of past Athenian customs. This portrayal allows for a certain dissonance between Plutarch's day and that of Solon, a theme which is further developed in Anacharsis' appearance in the *Banquet*.

2.3 *Anacharsis in* The Banquet of the Seven Sages

The *Septem sapientium convivium*, or "The Banquet of the Seven Sages", is a short work of Platonic inspiration[83], and takes the form of a conversation between a multitude of interlocutors (beyond the seven sages indicated by the title) on a variety of ethical, political, and moral subjects. Its authenticity as a work of Plutarch has historically been questioned, though it is now generally admitted as being of the biographer's own composition.[84] One of the historical arguments for its inauthenticity lies in its lack of a coherent, systematic philosophical argument, as the discussion is scattered and lacks a single narrative thread. To Jean Defradas' mind this is not an issue in and of itself, as the nature of the event being described did not lend itself to such a systematic development. [85] He further argues that Anacharsis plays a primary role in the Banquet, even acting as the master of proceedings.[86] Kindstrand, however, does not believe that the Scythian plays a primary role in the work, which is seemingly justified by the number and length of Anacharsis' interventions, which do not exceed that of other participants.

To the mind of Lawrence Kim, the *Banquet* may be read as a challenge to the suitability of the archaic style of discourse which is traditionally associated with the Seven Sages.[87] The disparity of views and general lack of a systematic philosophy in the *Banquet* have often been viewed as problematic[88], but of particular note is Plutarch's decision to express some of his own views through the words of Anacharsis. This decision is a remarkable one, which has not been much considered in scholarship surrounding Plutarch's attitude towards barbarians or Hellenism. The ideas developed are notably that of the soul being the instrument of God[89], established amongst others in *On the Oracles of the Pythia*.[90] The wording is quite similar:

> σῶμα μὲν ὀργάνοις χρῆται πολλοῖς αὐτῷ δὲ σώματι ψυχὴ καὶ μέρεσι τοῖς σώματος ψυχὴ δ' ὄργανον θεοῦ γέγονεν ὀργάνου δ' ἀρετὴ μάλιστα μιμεῖσθαι τὸ χρώμενον ᾗ πέφυκε δυνάμει καὶ παρέχειν τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ τοῦ νοήματος ἐν αὐτῷ δυναμένη, […].
>
> "[that] the body uses many instruments, and that the soul uses this very body and its members, and the soul is formed as the instrument of God, and the virtue of an instrument is to imitate as much as

[82] See Kindstrand (1981), 151.
[83] Defradas (1954), 7-8.
[84] For an overview of the various points of view on the matter, see Defradas (1954), 7-12. For a list of correlations between the *Banquet* and Plutarch's other work, see Hauck (1892), 39 sqq.
[85] See Defradas (1954), esp. 8-9, for a refutal of arguments on the work's authenticity.
[86] Defradas (1954), 19.
[87] See Kim (2009), 493.
[88] See n. 84.
[89] Plutarch, *The Banquet of the Seven Sages* 163D-F.
[90] See also *On the Sign of Socrates* 588F-589F, *The Obsolescence of Oracles* 436F-437D.

possible the function of that which uses it with the power granted to it, and to deliver, in itself, the work of this purpose, […].”[91]

ψυχῆς γὰρ ὄργανον τὸ σῶμα, θεοῦ δ᾽ ἡ ψυχή· καὶ καθάπερ σῶμα πολλὰς μὲν ἐξ αὑτοῦ κινήσεις ἔχει, τὰς δὲ πλείστας καὶ καλλίστας ὑπὸ ψυχῆς, […].

“For the body is the instrument of the soul, and the soul is the instrument of God; and just as the body possesses many movements from itself, the greatest number, and the finest movements, stem from the soul.”[92]

The praise of the sun at 155A also appears to be Plutarch’s own novelty in the Anacharsis tradition and is reprised elsewhere in his work.[93] In the case of Lucian, questions were raised in the previous chapter concerning the Greco-Syrian author’s self-identification with Anacharsis, and his use of him as a tool to question and comment on certain aspects of classical Greek culture in his own ambiguous self-fashioning. In the case of Plutarch, questions of self-identification are rather difficult, as the biographer was not an outsider *per se* to Greece. However, they both appear to employ the Scythian as a vehicle to express a number of beliefs and doubts. In the setting of the banquet, it is not only Solon whom Anacharsis is addressing[94], but the rest of the Seven Sages and beyond. In this sense, Plutarch uses the figure of the Scythian to inscribe some of his own philosophical beliefs in conversation with the archaic Greek past. As it was the case with Lucian, Anacharsis crosses boundaries which are not only geographical, but also temporal, and allows Plutarch to introduce new ideas within a traditional framework, all the while criticising certain aspects of said framework.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Plutarch’s view of barbarians is consistently negative, with Anacharsis standing out as an exception. One of the key aspects of this view is the philosopher’s general lack of consideration for barbarians as barbarians[95], and only esteems them insofar as they are “Hellenized”. Virtuous and commendable behaviour is considered to be aligned with “Greek” qualities, while the opposite is considered to be “barbarian”. Anacharsis, as the Hellenized barbarian *par excellence*, appears to fit the mould in the *Banquet*, as he is an able and educated participant in a typically Greek institution, a symposium. Many of his contributions are generic common-sense sayings, which do not distinguish him particularly from the rest of the party. Delfim Leão holds Anacharsis to be “pleinement intégré au groupe des Sept Sages”.[96]

However, when he is introduced at the very start of the work, he is set quite apart from the other members of the banquet, with Cleobulina.[97]. Thales calls on her to see to Anacharsis’ appearance:

ποίει καλὸν τὸν ξένον, ὅπως ὢν ἡμερώτατος μὴ φοβερὸς ᾖ τὴν ὄψιν ἡμῖν μηδ᾽ ἄγριος.

[91] *On the Oracles of the Pythia* 404B.
[92] *Banquet* 163E.
[93] See Kindstrand (1981), 47.
[94] Anacharsis was also traditionally paired with Myson, see Kindstrand (1981), 40-1.
[95] Roskam (2004), 260-1.
[96] See Leão (2019), 67.
[97] Cleobulina was a poet and the daughter of Cleobulus, who features in the *Banquet* as one of the Seven Sages of Greece. Plutarch indicates that her real name was Eumetis, but that most people called her “Cleobulina” after her father. The two names are used interchangeably in the *Banquet*.

> "Make the foreigner beautiful, so that, though he is polite, he does not appear to us to be frightful nor savage".[98]

The term used by Thales, ἡμερώτατος, is used in other works to indicate the opposite of uncivilised or uncultured.[99] It is his appearance which must be seen to, and neither his temperament nor character, which is seemingly sufficiently "Hellenized". However, it is revealed that he has been teaching the young woman the ways and medical knowhow of the Scythians, rendering his knowledge and the use of his teaching inherently tied to his "barbarian" native land. This medical knowhow appears to be an addition to the tradition surrounding Anacharsis.[100] As Thales states:

> μανθάνουσάν τι καὶ προσδιαλεγομένην.
>
> "[She is] learning something in discussing with him."[101]

This belief indicates that there seems to be some merit to barbarian custom, which nuances the prior view of his merits being due to his Hellenization. Cleobulina herself also embodies a form of outsider, as she and Melissa, the two female participants of the banquet, depart when more profound philosophical subjects are broached.[102] Further, as a prelude to one of Anacharsis' most important contributions, Aesop mocks the nomadic ways of the Scythians by pointing out that he (Anacharsis) does not own a house, but rather proudly only possesses a chariot:

> καθάπερ τὸν ἥλιον ἐν ἅρματι λέγουσι περιπολεῖν, ἄλλοτ᾽ ἄλλην ἐπινεμόμενον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ χώραν.
>
> "like the sun, which, they say, completes its revolutions in a chariot, and occupies one region of the sky, then another".[103]

Anacharsis retorts by emphasising the freedom (ἐλεύθερός) which the sun possesses over the other gods, before praising its chariot and at length arguing that the contents of a house matter more than its outlook. This is thematically close to the Scythian's introduction with Cleobulina, in which his character is praised but his appearance implicitly teased. The point here is that the "wisdom" dispensed stems from the character's Scythian origins which are mocked by a Greek, further indicating that the "barbarian" may be esteemed as his "other" self, rather than simply on account of his Hellenization.

However, there is another aspect to this use of the Scythian, as if the interaction between the young woman and Anacharsis may be described by Defradas as a "scène charmante"[104], it may also be viewed as a transaction, with the Greek Cleobulina "rewarding" the Scythian for his knowledge by making him look more "civilised". This does not equate to Hellenization through *paideia*, but it does evoke the idea that participation in this Greek "civilisation" is a privilege to be earned by the outsider, here through proof of wisdom. Further, it subjects the outsider's merits to the more prevalent culture in this particular context, as Cleobulina, despite being less prominent in the discussion than Anacharsis, and being on the receiving end of some knowledge, is able to confer this privilege upon him.

Anacharsis does also display one of the negative traits commonly ascribed to barbarians in Plutarch and beyond, namely excessiveness, as he is once again lightly jibed at when Pittacus

---

[98] *Banquet* 148C.
[99] Plato, *Republic* 410d, Hippocrates, *Air, Waters, Places* 288.
[100] Kindstrand (1981), 46-47.
[101] *Banquet* 148E.
[102] *Banquet* 155D-E.
[103] *Banquet* 155A.
[104] See Defradas (1954), 19.

mentions that he requested a prize and a crown (ἆθλον αἰτεῖν καὶ στέφανον[105]) after swiftly getting himself into an inebriated state. The Scythian retorts that it was his understanding that he who drank the most would be given a prize, before questioning the value of wine-drinking, another common trope from the Anacharsis tradition. Pittacus laughs in reply, emphasising the light-hearted nature of the exchange.[106] It is difficult to read this as a Plutarchan criticism of a Greek custom, but the criticism of excess is consistent with other parts of his work. Of note is how the Scythian is once again the subject of a taunt, on account of his "otherness", setting him once again on the defensive.

While Kindstrand holds that Plutarch's use of the Scythian as a mouthpiece is only out of convenience[107], it is perhaps also indicative of the philosopher's belief that Anacharsis would be a credible and authoritative vehicle for his own contributions to the work. There remained a tradition to consider surrounding the Scythian, but this along with his barbarian origins do not appear to have been an obstacle to his credibility. However, in using Anacharsis as his mouthpiece in the *Banque*t, Plutarch is also in a sense appropriating the Scythian's merits (as established in the tradition) and origins to his own argumentative ends, by reworking the figure to fit his own mould. In this sense, Plutarch appears to hold the figure of the barbarian in high esteem, and employs him in this work as a way to engage with the Greek past.

2.4 *Concluding remarks*

To conclude, Plutarch's use of Anacharsis in his works does not linearly fit some of his other more general descriptions of barbarians and goes beyond straightforward considerations of the benefits of Greek *paideia*. The Scythian's appearance in the *Life of Solon* appears to allow for some degree of criticism of Athenian political history, from a perspective that is distant both geographically and temporally. It is equally possible to suggest that Anacharsis' characterisation in the *Banquet* is not quite aligned with the classical negative connotations associated with "barbarians". The figure of Anacharsis is not merely that of the Hellenized barbarian, who is "civilised" through the acquisition of *paideia*. There appears to be some regard for his wisdom from abroad, beyond his immersion in Greek culture. Though he is Plutarch's mouthpiece for some of the Delphic philosopher's own views, it is notable that his foreign origins do not pose an obstacle to this role, even as many of his interventions stay true to the tradition surrounding the character. The Scythian allows the philosopher from Chaeronea to introduce some of his own ideas in a discussion with figures from the Greek past, once again making him cross a variety of boundaries. Beyond this, however, that Plutarch should think it appropriate to ventriloquise Anacharsis for his own ends, is perhaps indicative of his regard for even the most learned of outsiders. There are also some connotations to the Scythian's interactions with Cleobulina at the start of the *Banquet*, which appear to make participation in this Greek social institution conditional on the outsider's merits.

[105] *Banquet* 155F.
[106] The laughter can also be said to convey a sort of uneasy tension, see Klotz (2014), 219.
[107] Kindstrand (1981), 48.

3. Maximus of Tyre and Anacharsis

3.1 *Maximus and the Second Sophistic.*

Maximus of Tyre was a second-century AD rhetorician, whose sole remaining work is a series of 41 orations. He considered himself a philosopher in the lineage of Plato, and therefore rejected the title of sophist. Twentieth-century scholarship, however, has not been kind to Maximus, and he along with his work have disparagingly been called "bland"[108], "un sophiste prétentieux et maniéré"[109], "superficial"[110], "qu'un rhéteur qui parle de philosophie".[111] One of the main criticisms of the *Orations* is their supposed lack of a systematic philosophy, as each one appears to be a relatively self-contained unit which deals with one subject. There have been more recent attempts to rehabilitate the Tyrian, which principally seek to understand his work in the context of philosophical oratory in the Second Sophistic period[112], and the content and decidedly Atticist style of the *Orations* assuredly confirm Maximus' participation in some of the main sophistic tendencies of his age. The main focus of his orations appears to lie in ethics, as they include a great deal of practical advice for a good life rather than any emphasis on physics or logic.[113] Many of the *Orations*' arguments are undeniably Platonic in nature[114], though Maximus borrows elements from a wide array of philosophical schools, with the notable exception of Epicureanism.[115]

Little is known about Maximus beyond his name and work, though it would seem that he travelled to Rome under the reign of Commodus. Although the epithet Τύριος ("of Tyre") is always associated with Maximus in ancient sources[116], it is unclear whether this refers to the rhetorician's particular ethnic origins. As Johnson has pointed out, there is no evidence within the text of the orations which marks their author out as a Tyrian.[117] This is quite unlike Lucian, who, as we have seen, proudly refers to his "barbarian" origins. However, Maximus' engagement with Hellenic identity is not as one-sided as it may appear, as shall be discussed in this chapter.

The figure of Anacharsis appears twice in the *Orations*: the first appearance sees a Greek asking the sage whether the Scythians know of piping, to which the answer is negative[118], while the second appearance sees the Scythian travelling around Greece looking for wisdom, before finding it in the shape of Myson of Chenae.[119] These episodes feature in two different *Orations* but feature similar uses of the figure of Anacharsis. Kindstrand does not dedicate any real time to analysing these appearances in his seminal work on the Scythian, as he merely uses them as examples to supplement other points surrounding the tradition.[120] The analysis here below shall

[108] Swain (1996), 123.
[109] Boulanger (1923), 49.
[110] Brunt (1994), 42.
[111] Croiset (1928), 583.
[112] See mainly Trapp (1997) and Lauwers (2015). Trapp (1997), xxx argues: "The philosophy of the Orations, […], is in many ways characteristic of its times".
[113] Trapp (1997), xv.
[114] Trapp (1997), xxvi. For a challenge to the "Platonic" tag associated with Maximus, see Koniaris (1982).
[115] Taylor (1804) holds that Maximus' attentions shift from Platonic philosophy to the more practical outlook of the Cynics, 3-4.
[116] Trapp (1997), xi.
[117] Johnson (2013), 236.
[118] Maximus of Tyre, *Or.* 17.4
[119] *Or.* 25.1. Myson of Chenae was held to be one of the Seven Sages in some parts of the tradition, notably in Plato, *Protagoras* 343a.
[120] See Kindstrand (1981), 42, 54, 127-8.

focus on these appearances, and how Maximus uses the Scythian for his own rhetorical purposes as well as his own self-positioning *vis-à-vis* "Greekness" and the Hellenic past.

3.2 *Maximus' Greeks and barbarians*

To Lauwers' mind, Maximus of Tyre's relationship with "Greekness" is thoroughly representative of Second Sophistic thought, and his work is pervaded by a "pro-Greek" bias.[121] It is certainly true that while second-century AD thinkers under the Roman Empire had a wide range of philosophical sources, beyond the confines of the Greek world, Maximus of Tyre's sources for wisdom are consistently Hellenic.[122] His treatment of barbarians appears similar to that of Plutarch, in that it often reprises stereotypes from the Greek-barbarian opposition developed in classical Greece, which would presumably have spoken to his audience.[123] However, this traditional view considers "Greekness" as one monolithic bloc, whereas the rhetorician entertains a multifaceted relationship with the Greek past. Maximus notably takes aim at what he perceives as Greek vices, notably incessant warfare amongst Hellenes, greed, and a predilection for pleasure and luxury over beauty, a trait more traditionally associated with barbarians. His attitude towards Greek history and identity is not one-sided and posits a more nuanced view. The infighting amongst the Greeks is notably considered in the 35th oration:

> Κἂν τήν λοιπήν Ελλάδα έπίης, ἀφθονίαν ὄψει σκυθρωπών διηγημάτων, ἄνδρα ἀνδρί συμπεπτωκότα, καί πόλιν πόλει, καί γένος γένει· […] συγγενεῖς καί συνεστίους πολεμίους, πάντας πᾶσιν επιτιθεμένους, τούς ὑπό τον αὐτόν ἥλιον καί τόν αὐτόν αἰθέρα καί τον αὐτόν νόμον, καί την αὐτήν φωνήν ἱέντας, και τήν αὐτήν γήν νεμομένους, καί καρπούς τούς αυτούς σιτουμένους, καί μυστήρια τὰ αὐτὰ τελουμένους.
>
> "And should you move on to the remainder of Greece, you would discover a multitude of dire stories, man fighting man, city fighting city, race fighting race; […] enemies who share a race and a home, all people in conflict with one another, who live under the same sun, the same sky, and the same law, and who speak the same language, and live off the same land, and eat the same fruit, and are initiated into the same mysteries."[124]

Maximus emphasises the similarities between the different peoples of Greece and laments their civil strife. Under the Roman Empire, however, this manner of infighting had been by and large quelled, begging the question as to which Greece Maximus is referring to. Elsewhere, in oration 12, the rhetorician appears to address the Greeks' military fall from grace:

> οὕτως ἐπειδὰν ἐμπέσῃ οἴκῳ ἢ πόλει ἀδικίας ἀρχή, στῆσαι δεῖ τὸ κακόν, εἰ μέλλει τὸ περιλειφθὲν σωθήσεσθαι. τοῦτο Πελοπίδας ἐξέτριψεν, τοῦτο Ἡρακλείδας ἠφάνισεν, τοῦτο τὴν Κάδμου οἰκίαν, τοῦτο Πέρσας ἀπώλεσεν, τοῦτο Μακεδόνας, τοῦτο Ἕλληνας.
>
> "Thus, whenever an initial act of injustice impacts a home of a city, the evil must be stamped out if the remainder is to be saved. This is what devastated the Pelopidae, this is what destroyed the Heraclids as well as the house of Cadmus, this is what laid waste to the Persians, the Macedonians, and the Greeks."[125]

If this is read as being the Greek world of the archaic, classical, and Hellenistic periods, it may be interpreted as a critique of the Hellenes' warring past, which is now removed from

[121] Lauwers (2015), 256-263.
[122] See Trapp (1997), xxxi for an overview of different philosophical influences available to thinkers of that era, seemingly snubbed by Maximus.
[123] An audience of young men anxious to acquire a basic philosophical education and to demonstrate Greek learning, see Trapp (1997), xviii.
[124] *Or.* 35.5.
[125] *Or.* 12.8

Maximus' audience. However, there is a more contemporary component of this particular criticism, as the conflict also takes place on the philosophical level:

> […] καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν φιλοσόφων στρατόπεδα ἀντιτεταγμένα ἀλλήλοις καὶ ἀντιπαιωνίζοντα, λόγων μὲν πάντα μεστὰ καὶ ψιθυρισμάτων, σοφιστῶν σοφισταῖς συμπιπτόντων, ἔργου δὲ ἐρημία δεινή· καὶ τὸ θρυλούμενον τοῦτο τὸ ἀγαθόν, ὑπὲρ οὗ διέστηκεν καὶ διεστασίασται τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, οὐδεὶς ὁρᾷ.
>
> "[…] and all of the conflicting camps of the philosophers, shouting at one another, as the world is filled with muttered words, sophists fighting with sophists, yet there is a terrible dearth of deeds; and this highly praised thing, the Good, over which the Greek world has been divided into different sides, is nowhere to be seen."[126]

In Maximus' day, disputes continued between the tenants of different philosophical schools. Notably, the Tyrian only mentions the Greek world (τὸ Ἑλληνικόν) and omits Rome in this philosophical battleground[127], implying that he held Greece to be its cultural epicentre.

The aforementioned 35th oration, which deals with friendship, also relates that while Harmodius and Aristogeiton were true friends[128], there was little to celebrate in Attica after them:

> μεθ' ἣν οὐκέτι φιλία Ἀττικὴ ἦν, ἀλλὰ πάντα ὕπουλα καὶ σαθρὰ καὶ ἄπιστα καὶ διαβεβρωμένα, μεστὰ φθόνου καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ ἀπειροκαλίας καὶ φιλοχρηματίας καὶ φιλοδοξίας.
>
> "After this there was no more friendship in Attica, but all things were plagued, and spoiled, and faithless, and tarnished, filled with envy, and wrath, and callousness, and greed, and ambition."[129]

The excessive polysyndeton and list of negative characteristics serve to emphasise Maximus' criticism of Attic values, an attitude which contrasts somewhat with the Atticism of the Second Sophistic. The deeds of Harmodius and Aristogeiton are held to have taken place towards the end of the Athenian tyranny, in the late sixth century BC, meaning that Maximus' target appears to be Athenian society in its subsequent democratic age.[130] While the rhetorician's points may be interpreted as oratorical flourishes rather than deeply held cultural beliefs, this criticism highlights Maximus' wish to distinguish himself and his teachings from certain aspects of the Greek past. Elsewhere, he praises Socrates' wish (in his ideal city) to reward war heroes by allowing them to kiss a youth of their choosing, rather than the more traditional Greek prizes:

> πόλιν δὲ οἰκίζων ἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν, τιθεὶς νόμους τοῖς ἀριστεῦσιν οὐ στέφανον οὐδὲ εἰκόνας, τὰς
>
> Ἑλληνικὰς φλυαρίας, δωρεῖται, ἀλλ' ἐξεῖναι φιλεῖν τῷ ἀριστεῖ ὅντινα ἂν θέλῃ τῶν καλῶν.
>
> "In founding a city of honourable men, and having established laws for the rewards due to war heroes, he did not bestow upon them a crown or statues, the Greek nonsense, but rather gave the war hero the right to love one of the beautiful boys of his choosing."[131]

---

[126] *Or.* 26.2.
[127] Rome is not explicitly mentioned in the *Orations*, leading one to believe that Maximus was perhaps not much concerned with the impact of its imperial rule on his field. This omission of Rome was rather typical for his period, see Bowie (1970).
[128] Harmodius and Aristogeiton were two lovers, who in 514 BC assassinated Hipparchus, a Peisistratid tyrant of Athens.
[129] *Or.* 35.4.
[130] Elsewhere, Maximus reprises the Platonic praise of aristocracy over democracy, see *Or.* 14.7.
[131] *Or.* 18.4.

The condemnation of the Greek custom of conferring crowns and statues as prizes, specifically dismissed as "Greek nonsense/blathering" (τὰς Ἑλληνικὰς φλυαρίας) emphasises the waywardness of their ways, as they do not sufficiently value beauty.

These examples all see some criticism and a split from different aspects of historical Greek society and culture, in the scope of some of Maximus of Tyre's orations. To Johnson's mind, the rhetorician "decentres" and challenges Hellenocentrism[132], though this is perhaps a step too far. Many of these criticisms are still based in Greek thought, as the infighting is lamented from the point of view of potential Hellenic harmony, the philosophical disputes are confined to the Greek world, and the emphasis on beauty is considered with Socrates as an illustration. Nevertheless, these elements do present a more nuanced interaction with the Greek past than simple nostalgia or admiration, as are found elsewhere in the literature of the Second Sophistic period. This interaction places the rhetorician and his audience as spectators and critics of various aspects of the multifaceted classical and Hellenistic Greek cultures, setting themselves beyond these, as part of a philosophical and rhetorical project.

3.3 *Anacharsis in Oration 25*

Where, then, does the figure of Anacharsis fit into this engagement with Hellenism? Lauwers holds that the treatment of the Scythian here is "very accessible and straightforward", and only constitutes an exception to Maximus' favourable bias towards "Greekness".[133] However, this depiction is not altogether accurate, as it does not account for the specificity of this portrayal within the tradition surrounding Anacharsis, nor does it consider Maximus' often ambiguous views towards aspects of Hellenic culture, as developed hereabove. The Scythian's most substantial appearance comes in the 25th oration, entitled *That the best words are those in accordance with deeds* (Ὅτι οἱ σύμφωνοι τοῖς ἔργοις λόγοι ἄριστοι).[134] The Scythian is here described as "wise" (σοφὸς), and possessing a certain sort of wisdom:

> Ἦλθεν εἰς Ἕλληνας ἐκ τῆς Σκυθῶν γῆς τῶν ἐκεῖ βαρβάρων ἀνὴρ σοφὸς σοφίαν οὐ πολυρρήμονα οὐδὲ λάλον· ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτῆς τὸ κεφάλαιον βίος ἀκριβὴς καὶ γνώμη ὑγιὴς καὶ λόγος βραχύς, εὔστοχος, ἐοικὼς οὐ πελταστῇ μισθοφόρῳ, ἀπροοράτως θέοντι, ἀλλ' ὁπλίτῃ βάδην ἰόντι καὶ κινουμένῳ ἀσφαλῶς.
>
> "There came to Greece, from the land of the Scythians, one of the barbarians there, a wise man, whose wisdom was neither verbose nor garrulous, yet its kernel was a frugal life, a sound mind, and sparing and well-aimed speech, not akin to a mercenary foot-soldier, who darts forwards recklessly, but to a hoplite who proceeds calmly, in a steadfast march."[135]

Anacharsis is not named in this opening passage[136], perhaps implying that Maximus' audience would have immediately grasped who the wise man coming from Scythia must have been. The rhetorician's depiction of the Scythian thus far remains rather conventional, as he reprises the stereotypical notions that Scythians were known for simple living, and that Anacharsis was known for his "soundness of mind".[137] The qualities ascribed to his wisdom also evoke the

[132] See Johnson (2013), 235-243.
[133] Lauwers (2015), 258, n. 246.
[134] For a discussion of the oration's true topic and train of thought, see Koniaris (1982), 114-120, and Puiggali (1983), 378-384.
[135] *Or.* 25.1
[136] Even when his name is mentioned a couple of lines later in *Or.* 25.1, it is not explicitly said that Anacharsis was the Scythian, meaning that his identification would probably have been obvious from the start.
[137] See Mestre (2003), 316.

laconism of the Spartans, and possibly refer back to ancient Cynic criticism of the gap between words and deeds.[138] The first stop on his journey is in Athens, as Maximus states:

> ἐλθὼν δὲ Ἀθήναζε, ἐντυγχάνει αὐτόθι ὁπλίτῃ μὲν οὐδενί, πελτασταῖς δὲ πολλοῖς. καὶ τὸν μὲν τούτων δρόμον καὶ τὴν πτοίαν τοῦ παντὸς ἐδέησεν ὁ Ἀνάχαρσις ἐπαινέσαι· περιῄει δὲ τὴν Ἑλ λάδα ἐν κύκλῳ, ποθῶν ἰδεῖν σοφίαν στάσιμον καὶ ἑδραίαν.
>
> "Having come to Athens, he encountered no hoplites, but many foot-soldiers. And Anacharsis was not at all inclined to praise their volatility and fright, so he travelled all around Greece, wishing to discover a stable and unmoving wisdom."[139]

Once more, Maximus appears to criticise Athens. This time, however, it is through the eyes of Anacharsis, who, in effect, mirrors the rhetorician's itinerary: if Maximus and the sophists were travellers who dispensed wisdom, Anacharsis here travels in order to acquire wisdom. Athens here is by no means the standard of philosophical learning, rather, it is the Scythian outsider who is portrayed as possessing the authority to not only comment, but also severely judge Greek wisdom, and thereby to utterly dismiss that of the Athenians. Though he is not a Greek by birth, Anacharsis is able to determine the worth of Hellenic learning, just as Maximus could defend his intellectual authority despite his "barbarian" origins. This is a shift from the more conventional representations of the Scythian, as he is not just a tool for criticising Greek culture, but provides an outright standard against which its wisdom may be measured. In Maximus' narrative, Anacharsis eventually finds the wisdom he is looking for in the shape of Myson of Chenae[140]:

> εὗρε δ' οὖν ἐν Χηναῖς, σμικρῷ καὶ ἀσθενεῖ πολίσματι, ἄνδρα ἀγαθόν· ὄνομα ἦν αὐτῷ Μύσων. ἀγαθὸς δὲ ἦν ἄρα ὁ Μύσων οἶκον οἰκῆσαι καλῶς καὶ γῆν τημελῆσαι δεξιῶς καὶ γάμου προστῆναι σωφρόνως καὶ παῖδα ἐκθρέψαι γεννικῶς.
>
> "He did find a good man in Chenae, a small and inconsequential town; and his name was Myson. Myson's virtue lay in managing his household well, cultivating his land with craft, tending to his marriage with decent conduct, and raising his child nobly."[141]

Far from the renown of Athens, the rhetorician affirms (from Anacharsis' viewpoint) that the finest sort of wisdom could be found on a more local level, in a lesser settlement, which is contrasted with the city of Athens. Given the Scythian's belonging to the classical canon, this episode does not fully constitute a challenge to Hellenocentrism but may be viewed as a belief on Maximus' part that even an outsider (such as himself) may be a judge of what constitutes sound wisdom. The tradition surrounding the Scythian's travels and his "otherness" make him the perfect candidate for the rhetorician's criticism of some aspects of Hellenic culture. In this sense, Maximus of Tyre uses Anacharsis as a proxy arbiter for an introduction of his own views on inefficient wisdom (as embodied by "flighty" foot-soldiers) within Greece.

Furthermore, Anacharsis' brief visit to Athens in this episode is wholly devoid of any reference to Solon, with whom the Scythian was traditionally paired (as we have seen in both Plutarch and Lucian). It is a curious decision on the part of Maximus, as it would have been known that Anacharsis was held to have conversed with the Athenian lawgiver. Given the

---

[138] The first of the (spurious) letters ascribed to Anacharsis is also quite critical of aimless rhetoric and Athens, it would appear that Maximus here is reprising and reworking this tradition for his own purposes. See Mestre (2003), 311-313.

[139] *Or.* 25.1

[140] For Anacharsis' pairing with Myson, see Kindstrand (1981), 39-42, though Maximus' version differs somewhat from the traditional tale. Diogenes Laërtius reprises both parts of the tradition in retelling Anacharsis' interactions with both Solon and Myson, *Lives* 1.101-102: 1.106-108.

[141] *Or.* 25.1.

Tyrian's familiarity with a great deal of classical Greek texts, it is difficult to imagine that he himself was unaware of that part of the tradition. It could be argued that the rhetorician's audience was not that familiar with the legend surrounding the Scythian, though he is referred to in the 17th oration as "well-known" (τὸν Ἀνάχαρσιν ἐκεῖνον).[142] This is made even more unlikely by the fact that he is not immediately named in oration 25.[143] It is equally improbable that Maximus ranked Solon as one of the "flighty foot-soldiers", as he is referred to with some reverence elsewhere in the *Orations*.[144] A possible (but awkward) solution may be that Anacharsis' tour of Greece in this instance would have taken place before Solon's prominence in Athens, creating a somewhat novel narrative. In any case, this choice illustrates Maximus' innovation within the Anacharsis tradition.

3.4 *Anacharsis in Oration 17*

Anacharsis' appearance in the 17th oration is briefer, but reprises some of the themes developed earlier in this chapter. This particular speech is an attempt to justify Plato's dismissal of Homeric poetry, while allowing for some of its practical uses. The main argument hinges on different cities and communities having different needs and criteria for usefulness and pleasure. Poetry, though useful and pleasant, is not crucial to some peoples. Anacharsis here is used as a spokesperson for the Scythians, who upon being questioned by a Greek, states that his people do not know of wine and flute-playing:

> τὸν Ἀνάχαρσιν ἐκεῖνον ἤρετο Ἕλλην ἀνὴρ εἰ ἔστιν αὐλητικὴ ἐν Σκύθαις· οὐδὲ ἄμπελοι, ἔφη.
>
> "A Greek fellow asked the famous Anacharsis whether flute-playing existed in Scythia; he replied: 'Not even vines exist there'".[145]

The opposition between a seemingly generic "Greek fellow" (Ἕλλην ἀνήρ) and Anacharsis is rather notable and accentuates their differing cultural positions. Anacharsis represents that which is not Greek. The Scythians are none the lesser for not knowing of wine or flute-playing, however, and Maximus goes on to state that even though some barbarians may not know Homer, there is still virtue to be found amongst them:

> σχολῇ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνοι τὰ Ὁμήρου μάθοιεν, ἀλλ' εὕροις ἂν ὅμως καὶ ἐν βαρβάροις ἀρετὴν ἀπεσχισμένην τῶν Ὁμήρου ἐπῶν· […].
>
> "For they could hardly learn the verses of Homer, but you could find among the barbarians a certain form of virtue removed from the words of Homer; […]."[146]

This perspective cannot be seen as purely relativistic, but it does reveal a certain openness to virtuous qualities beyond typically Greek sources. Anacharsis here serves to add some degree of authority to the barbarian perspective.

3.4 *Concluding remarks*

Anacharsis in the *Orations* cuts a different figure to those seen in the works of Lucian and Plutarch, but fits a similar role, as he is used by Maximus of Tyre to introduce a set of philosophical points which take aim at certain aspects of Greek custom. As a travelling professor of philosophy and rhetoric from abroad, the Tyrian is compelled to promote his *paideia* while being an outsider to Greece, for which purposes the use of Anacharsis is rather

[142] *Or.* 17.4
[143] See n. 136.
[144] See especially *Or.* 33. 5 and 34. 4-5.
[145] *Or.* 17.4.
[146] *Or.* 17.5.

appropriate. Certain aspects of the tradition surrounding the Scythian are reprised, such as his stock dismissal of wine-drinking and flute-playing in Oration 17, as well as his meeting with Myson in Oration 25. The former of these representations, being shorter and more anecdotal, sees Anacharsis fulfil the role of *the* other *par excellence*, in line with representations of the Scythian elsewhere, but in the scope of a broader philosophical argument concerning the relative value of a people's customs. The latter appearance of Anacharsis sees him act as a judge of Hellenic wisdom, and further criticise some Attic characteristics. These narratives are worked into Maximus' own philosophical project and innovated upon, as the Tyrian includes Anacharsis in a wider view of Hellenism, "otherness" and philosophical authority.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to consider the ways in which the figure of Anacharsis is used as a tool for thinking "Greekness" in the works of Lucian, Plutarch, and Maximus of Tyre. The figure of Anacharsis is used by these intellectuals of the Second Sophistic period as a useful tool for thinking about their own placement vis-à-vis notions of Greek *paideia* and culture, as in all three cases he serves as the personification, mouthpiece, or eyes of the author in these works.

Firstly, in the case of Lucian, the Greco-Syrian author identifies himself with Anacharsis in *The Scythian*, though this particular portrayal of the figure is not as a critical sage, as he is distinguished from the fully Hellenized Toxaris, and returns to Scythia upon the death of Solon. Anacharsis' Hellenization here is incomplete and remains dependent on Solon, and Lucian exploits the inherent tension of the noble Scythian's situation for his own ends in a request for patronage. Anacharsis' Scythian roots do not wholly disappear as Toxaris' do, just as Lucian remains anxious to maintain his own "barbarian" origins. In *Anacharsis*, Lucian depicts a different version of the sage, and uses him as a critical eye on not only the Athenian institutions of the past, as embodied by Solon, but also on some of the ongoing trends of his day. The satirical value of this work casts some doubt on Lucian's own self-positioning on these points, as he also engages in the Hellenophile tendencies of his day, of which Solon is the representative. It is precisely Anacharsis' ambiguous stance which allows for these two different portrayals, as on the one hand, he embodies the "other" who is able to engage with Greek culture through a form of *paideia*, while on the other, he serves as a question mark for other parts of Hellenic custom.

Secondly, in the case of Plutarch, Anacharsis' ambiguity is also reprised, but from a different stance, as the biographer reprises the Scythian's "otherness" in order to engage with a variety of figures from the Greek past. Solon appears once again, as Plutarch uses Anacharsis to seemingly formulate an indirect critique of Athenian laws. In the *Banquet*, he uses the Scythian as a mouthpiece for some of his own philosophical ideas, and places them in conversation with the rest of the Seven Sages (and others). In this sense, Plutarch, as an outsider to the Archaic period of Greek history, reprises *the* outsider in the tradition in order to engage with the past, an engagement which was typical of authors of the Second Sophistic period. This engagement was perhaps also rather critical, as the *Banquet* may be read as a critique of archaic philosophical thinking. The portrayal of Anacharsis in the *Banquet* challenges some of the traditional negative views of "barbarians", notably by adding medical skills to the range of knowledge attributed to Scythians, and in choosing this particular sage as a way to convey some of his own philosophical conceptions, Plutarch appears to recognise the outsider's virtues.

Finally, in the case of Maximus of Tyre, Anacharsis is used in the scope of philosophical expositions in the *Orations* and is granted the authority to judge, and for the most part dismiss, the value of Greek wisdom. The Scythian lends credibility to Maximus' points, which is crucial to his own self-presentation as an authority on philosophical learning, while the figure's travelling mirrors the Tyrian's own peregrinations. Maximus's criticism of certain Attic characteristics, notably through the eyes of Anacharsis, is at odds with some of the Atticist tendencies of the Second Sophistic period and conveys a multifaceted engagement with Hellenism.

Each of these authors exploit Anacharsis' ambiguity in their own self-positioning concerning aspects of Greek culture and identity, in different ways. Lucian directly self-

identifies himself with the Scythian, exploiting his ambiguous cultural belonging in order to emphasise his own hybrid identity, while Plutarch exploits his otherness in a temporal sense in order to enter into conversation with the Greek past, and Maximus of Tyre aligns himself with the figure in order to lend weight to his argument, and prove that an outsider (such as himself) may be an authority on wisdom, which is perhaps not the sole preserve of the Greeks. It may therefore be argued that it is in this variety of ways, and for this variety of purposes, that these authors employed the figure of Anacharsis.

Bibliography

Editions:

Aristophanes, *Clouds, Wasps, Peace*, ed. and trans. Henderson, J. (1998), LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, ed. and trans. Hicks R. D. (1925), 2 vols., LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Hippocrates, *Ancient Medicine, Airs, Waters, Places, Epidemics 1 and 3, The Oath, Precepts, Nutriment*, ed. and trans. Jones, W. H. S. (1923), LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Lucian: ed. and trans. Harmon, A. M. et al. (1913-1967), 8 vols., LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Maximus of Tyre: trans. Taylor T. (1804), *The Dissertations of Maximus Tyrius: translated from the Greek*, 2 vols., London.

Maximus of Tyre: ed. Trapp, M. B. (1994), *Maximus Tyrius, Dissertationes*, Leipzig.

Plato, *Laches, Protagoras, Meno, Euthydemus*, ed. and trans. Lamb W. R. M. (1924), LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Plato, *Republic*, ed. and trans. Emlyn-Jones C. and Preddy W. (2013), 2 vols., LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Plutarch, *Lives*, ed. and trans. Perrin B. et al. (1914-1926), 11 vols., LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Plutarch, *Moralia*, ed. and trans. Babbitt, F. C. et al. (1927-2004), 16 vols., LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Xenophon, *Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apology*, ed. and trans. Marchant, E. C., and Todd, O. J. (1923), rev. Henderson J. (2013), LCL, Cambridge (MA).

Secondary literature:

Armstrong, A. MacC. (1948), 'Anacharsis the Scythian', *Greece and Rome* 17:49, 18-23.

Boulanger, A. (1923), *Aelius Aristide et la sophistique dans la province d'Asie au II^e^ siècle de notre ère*, Paris.

Boulogne, J. (1987), 'Le Sens des « Questions romaines » de Plutarque', *Revue des Études Grecques* 100, 471-476.

Bowie, E. L. (1970), 'Greeks and Their Past in the Second Sophistic', *Past & Present* 46, 3-41.

Branham, R. (1989), *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions*, Cambridge (MA).

Brunt, P. A. (1994), 'The Bubble of the Second Sophistic', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 39, 25-52.

Brenk, F. E. (2019), 'Plutarch the Greek in the *Roman Questions*', in Leão, D. F., and

Lanzillotta, L. R. (eds), *A Man of Many Interests: Plutarch on Religion, Myth, and Magic*, Leiden, 240-254.

Colvin, S. (2007), *A Historical Greek Reader: Mycenaean to the Koiné*, Oxford.

Croiset, M. (1928), 'Période Romaine', in Croiset, A, and Croiset, M. (eds), *L'Histoire de la Littérature Grecque: tome cinquième*, Paris, 317-1067.

de Jonge, C. C. (2022), 'Greek Migrant Literature in the Early Roman Empire', *Mnemosyne* 75, 10-36.

Defradas, J. (1954), *Plutarque: Le Banquet des Sept Sages*, Paris.

Dench, E. (2017), 'Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity', in Richter, D. S. and Johnson, W. A. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook to the Second Sophistic*, Oxford, 99-114.

Duff, T. (1999), *Plutarch's Lives: Exploring Virtue and Vice*, Oxford.

Fauquier, F. and Pérez-Jean B. (eds) (2016), *Maxime de Tyr, entre rhétorique et philosophie au II^e^ siècle de notre ère*, Montpellier.

Gangloff, A. (2007), 'Peuples et Préjugés chez Lucien de Samosate', *Revue des Études Grecques* 120:1, 64-86.

Goldhill, S. (ed) (2001), *Being Greek under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, Cambridge.

Goldhill, S. (2002), *Who Needs Greek? Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism*, Cambridge.

Hall, E. (1991), *Inventing the Barbarian*, Oxford.

Hauck, G. (1892), *Plutarch von Chaeronea, der Verfasser des Gastmahls der Sieben Weisen*, Burghausen.

Harrison, T. (2020), 'Reinventing the Barbarian', *Classical Philology* 115:2, 139-163.

Hartog, F. (1988), *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History*, trans. Lloyd, J., Berkeley.

Johnson, A. P. (2013), *Religion and Identity in Porphyry of Tyre: The Limits of Hellenism in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge.

Kemezis, A. (2014), 'Greek Ethnicity and the Second Sophistic', in McInerney, J. (ed), *A Companion to Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Malden, 390-404.

Klęczar, A. (2014), 'Plutarch's Alexander the Great as Focus for Greek Identity: The Case of Alexander's Childhood and Youth in *Vita Alexandri*', *Classica Cracoviensia* 17, 89-101.

Klotz, F. (2014), 'The Sympotic Works', in Beck, M. (ed), *A Companion to Plutarch*, Chichester, 207-222.

Kindstrand, J.-F. (1981), *Anacharsis: The Legend and the Apophthegmata*, Uppsala.

Kim, L. (2009), 'Historical Fiction, Brachylogy, And Plutarch's *Banquet of The Seven*

Sages', in Ferreira, J. R., Leão, D. F., Tröster M., and Dias, P. B. (eds), *Symposia and Philanthropia in Plutarch*, Coimbra, 481-496.

Kim, L. (2010), 'The Literary Heritage as Language: Atticism and the Second Sophistic', in Bakker, E. J. (ed), *A Companion to the Ancient Greek Language*, Malden, 468-482.

Koniaris, G. L. (1982), 'On Maximus of Tyre: Zetemata (I)', *Classical Antiquity* 1:1, 87-121.

König, J. (2017), 'Athletes and Trainers', in Richter, D. S. and Johnson, W. A. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook to the Second Sophistic*, Oxford, 155-167.

Kuin, I. N. I. (2017), 'Being a Barbarian: Lucian and Otherness in the Second Sophistic', *Groniek* 49:211, 131-143.

Lauwers, J. (2012), 'Self-advertising meta-poetics in Maximus of Tyre's 25th oration', *Wiener Studien* 125, 75-84.

Lauwers, J. (2015), *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Sophistry in the High Roman Empire: Maximus of Tyre and Twelve Other Intellectuals*, Leiden.

Leão, D. F. (2019), 'Anacharsis: la sagesse atypique de l'étranger avisé', in Leão, D. F., and Guerrier, O. (eds), *Figures de sages, figures de philosophes dans l'œuvre de Plutarque*, Coimbra, 57-70.

Macleod, M. D. (1991), *Lucian: A Selection: Edited with an Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Warminster.

Martin, R. P. (1996), 'The Scythian Accent: Anacharsis and the Cynics', in Branham, R. B., and Goulet-Cazé M.-O. (eds), *The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and Its Legacy*, Berkeley, 136-155.

Mestre, F. (2003), 'Anacharsis, The Wise Man from Abroad', *Lexis* 21, 303-317.

Montiglio, S. (2005), *Wandering in Ancient Greek culture*, Chicago.

Nikolaidis, A. G. (1986), 'Ἑλληνικός - βαρβαρικός: Plutarch on Greek and Barbarian Characteristics', *Wiener Studien* 99, 229-244.

Perry, B. E. (1955), 'Literature in the Second Century', *The Classical Journal* 50:7, 295-298.

Preston, R. (2001), 'Roman questions, Greek answers: Plutarch and the construction of Identity', in Goldhill, S. (ed), *Being Greek under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, Cambridge, 86-120.

Puiggali, J. (1983), *Étude sur les Dialexeis de Maxime de Tyr: Conférencier Platonicien du IIe Siècle*, Lille.

Richter, D.S. (2011), *Cosmopolis: Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford.

Richter, D.S. (2017), 'Lucian of Samosata', in Richter, D. S. and Johnson, W. A. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook to the Second Sophistic*, Oxford, 327-344.

Roskam, G. (2004), 'Plutarch on Self and Others', *Ancient society* 34, 245-273.

Schmidt, T.S. (2004), 'Barbarians in Plutarch's Political Thought', in Bons J., Kessels, T.,

Schenkeveld, D., and de Blois, L. (eds), *The Statesman in Plutarch's Works, Volume I: Plutarch's Statesman and his Aftermath, Political, Philosophical, and Literary Aspects*, Leiden, 227-235.

Schmitz, T. A. (2014), 'Plutarch and the Second Sophistic', in Beck, M. (ed), *A Companion to Plutarch*, Chichester, 32-42.

Schubert, C. (2010), *Anacharsis der Weise: Nomade, Scythe, Grieche*, Tübingen.

Shiffman, M. (2008), 'Plutarch among the postcolonialists', *Perspectives on Political Science* 37:14, 223-230.

Snell, B. (1938), *Leben und Meinungen der Sieben Weisen*, Munich.

Swain, S. (1996), *Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 50–250*, Oxford.

Trapp, M. B. (1997), *Maximus of Tyre: The Philosophical Orations. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes*, Oxford.

Ungefehr-Kortus, C. (1996), *Anacharsis, der Typus des edlen, weisen Barbaren*, Frankfurt am Main.

Whitmarsh, T. (2001), *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire*: *The Politics of Imitation*, Oxford.

Whitmarsh, T. (2002), 'Alexander's Hellenism and Plutarch's Textualism', *The Classical Quarterly* 52:1, 174-192.

Whitmarsh, T. (2004), *Ancient Greek Literature*, Cambridge.

Whitmarsh, T. (ed) (2010), *Local Knowledge and Microidentities in the Imperial Greek World*, Cambridge.

Whitmarsh, T. (2013), *Beyond the Second Sophistic: Adventures in Greek Postclassicism*, Berkeley.