Chapter 4
The one and the many: Athenian views on Attic

1 Preliminaries

The monumentalisation of 5th- and 4th-century BCE literary Attic serves as the basis for the purist ideology of Atticist lexicography.[1] However, as already acknowledged by ancient scholarship, literary Attic is highly varied. Moreover, just like any dialect of any time, Classical Attic is not monolithic, as comparison of the information provided by the available sources reveals.[2] As regards literary texts, differences in genre entail language differences, as in the case of tragedy vis-à-vis comedy or prose;[3] however, this is also the case within the same genre, and, for example, the language of Old Comedy differs in several respects from that of Middle and New Comedy.[4] Additionally, Athenian literature was never impermeable to foreign influences.[5] On the documentary side, unofficial inscriptions (ostraka, graffiti, and *defixiones*) are an important (though not unproblematic) source of information on the less formal registers of Attic; official inscriptions, while they are notoriously slower in recording the evolution of the language and require greater circumspection, remain an indispensable source for understanding the evolution of the dialect.[6] The language of literary and documentary texts alike illustrates only a selection of the possible linguistic registers available, and the reality of the spoken language was surely far more varied.[7] Furthermore, socio-cultural and socio-historical factors must be taken into consideration with regard to linguistic variation. Be-

1 On the position of Attic in the framework of the Greek dialects, see Chapter 3, Sections 2.2–3. For an overview of the history of the dialect, see Thumb, Scherer (1959, 284–313); Risch (1964); Crespo (2010). On the emergence of Attic as a literary language, see Adrados (2005, 142–60); Horrocks (2010, 67–78); Willi (2010a); Colvin (2014, 163–8).

2 On linguistic variation in (epichoric and literary) Attic (and more generally in Ancient Greek), see Niehoff-Panagiotidis (1994, 197–222); Willi (2003a); Colvin (2004); Crespo (2010, 126–30); Willi (2010b); Poccetti (2014); Colvin (2020). On the notion of standard language and its application to Attic and Greek, see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.

3 See Rosenkranz (1930); Willi (2002b); Willi (2019). On the language of prose, see Sections 5.1; 5.3. On the language of comedy see Section 5.2. On Greek literary languages, see the contributions included in Cassio (2016); Chapter 3, Section 2.3.

4 See Section 5.2; Chapter 5.

5 See Sections 2; 2.1. See also Chapter 3, Section 2.3.

6 See Rosenkranz (1930, 130–4) on the epigraphic evidence for Classical Attic. On the use of official inscriptions to study the evolution of Attic, see Dover (1981a) (for a critical evaluation of Dover's approach see now Prauscello 2023); López Eire (1993); López Eire (1999); see also Section 4.

7 See also Willi (2003a, 8–10).

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cause of Athens' political, economic, and cultural importance, the Athenian society was never closed and isolated, and the presence of many foreigners passing through Athens for trade or living in Attica as permanent residents must have helped shape the city's linguistic landscape. Non-Athenians introduced new linguistic features, both prestigious and low-register, and they also assimilated Attic forms that they would propagate abroad.

In Chapter 3, we discussed the placement of Attic within the framework of the Greek dialects and how the Athenians constructed a rhetoric of identity around their language. In this chapter, we shall consider linguistic variation in Attic, focusing on the ongoing tension between conservation and innovation and on how this relates to the socio-historical transformations that Athens underwent during the Classical period. The Athenians were evidently perceptive as regards linguistic variation and, more saliently, recognised that different varieties of Attic enjoyed different degrees of prestige. While we shall not attempt a comprehensive study of linguistic variation in 5th- and 4th-century BCE Attic here, we shall examine several of the main factors that regulated such variation. We shall focus primarily on the historical-literary interpretation of contemporary sources while also examining some of the linguistic problems posed by literary and documentary texts. To this end, this chapter will be arranged around three more general topics.

In Section 2, we shall observe the emergence and status of literary Attic, with a special focus on early prose, its relationship with the Ionian tradition, and how literary Attic came to terms with it. Compared to Old Comedy, early Attic prose is more open to admitting elements of linguistic variation from within the Attic dialect and from other traditions, notably Ionic (tragedy proves a useful comparandum for this). We shall discuss how writers such as Thucydides consciously negotiated between traits of innovative Attic, which, in turn, are mostly avoided in Old Comedy, and the prestigious model of Ionic prose. In this section, we shall offer a first glimpse into how certain linguistic choices made in the language of 5th-century BCE comedy reflect a protectionist attitude towards the dialect and how such choices would then be re-conceived in the context of the evolution of comic language. This will allow us to already trace a general trajectory in the evolution of (selected varieties of) literary Attic, which will provide the framing of the whole chapter.

Building on this, Sections 3 and 4 will address in greater detail the question of how, respectively, 5th- and 4th-/3rd-century BCE literary texts reflect on linguistic variation, the different attitudes to which they attest, and how these changes relate to the developments of literary Attic vis-à-vis the socio-historical and cultural transformations taking place in Athens.

In Section 3, we shall focus on the valuable 5th-century BCE sources that bear witness to the relevance of language for the construction not only of an Athenian identity but more specifically of the socio-political groups associated with different forms of Attic. This has significant implications for the purposes of our enquiry into linguistic purism. The 5th-century BCE sources demonstrate that the notion of 'good' Attic had become a bone of contention in the contemporary debate and that this discourse had wider socio-political implications, to the effect that different forms and registers of Attic were associated with specific values and disvalues. By framing these sources within their socio-political contexts, we shall demonstrate that the notion of 'good' Attic is associated with traditionalist and politically moderate (even conservative) views and that conscious attempts were being made in 5th-century BCE Athens to promote and preserve a type of Attic that was considered distinctive of Athenian identity against innovative pulls operating equally at the super- and sub-standard levels.

Section 4 will be devoted to discussing the evidence from the 4th-/3rd-century BCE literary sources commenting on dialectal variation in Attic. We shall frame these texts within the new socio-political environment of late-Classical Athens, redefined by the defeat in the Peloponnesian War and the ensuing transformations in Athens' civic ideology. In this context, we shall also consider the rapid emergence of innovative 'international' Attic and the first stages of the koine. We shall demonstrate that these later sources that comment on the dialect's evolution provide evidence of a much more open approach to innovative linguistic elements and, more importantly, that they do not appear to assess linguistic variation against the same kind of socio-politically loaded background as the 5th-century BCE sources did. While innovative linguistic features may also be singled out and criticised, 4th- and 3rd-century BCE sources reveal no traces of that actively purist attitude that is discernible in 5th-century BCE sources. Indeed, in those cases in which innovative linguistic traits are negatively appraised, such a defensive attitude is presented in a rather negative light.

Having examined the literary sources, in Section 5, we shall reflect more closely on innovative 4th-century BCE literary Attic, focusing on select writers and texts: Xenophon; Middle and New Comedy;[8] and non-Athenian prose writers who adopt Attic as their literary language. Various reasons underlie this selection. Xenophon and the poets of Middle and New Comedy offer the clearest evidence of the emerging new tendencies in literary Attic. As such, they also represented the main battlefield between the different orientations of Atticist lexicography, as we shall

8 For the language of Middle and New Comedy, also framed within the history of 5th- and 4th-century BCE literary Attic, see Chapter 5.

discuss in greater detail in Chapter 5, Foreword and in Volume 2 (see also Chapter 1, Section 4.1). While ancient scholarship adopted an approach that was eminently diachronic (i.e. the language of these writers was perceived as a further stage in the evolution of the dialect compared to 5th- and 4th-century BCE 'pure' Attic), a more careful historical contextualisation of these writers' language can help evaluate the peculiarities of their choices more objectively. This will help re-shape the terms of debate as established by Atticist lexicography and which, in many cases, are still adopted by modern scholarship (e.g. the idea that Xenophon's language is a mixed bag of forms from various dialects). Finally, attention to the adoption of Attic on the part of non-Athenian prose writers will yield direct evidence for the new role that the Attic dialect came to assume as the international literary language of all Greeks, thus overcoming the contrast between localism and panhellenism which, as shall become clear, was an integral part of the dialect's Classical history. Compared to this selection, 4th-century BCE oratory will remain mostly in the background. This choice is rooted in the nature of the language of oratory. Although orators may occasionally adopt innovative linguistic features, their language represents a rather conservative variety of Attic that deliberately sought to avoid the less 'pure' traits (see Section 5.1). Therefore, in this chapter and the next, it will be fruitful to read the evidence for innovative literary Attic, as evidenced, for example, in comedy, against the background of the more traditionalist language of oratory.

2 Attic at the crossroads between tradition and innovation

In the previous section, we emphasised that Classical Attic was highly varied. However, despite the fact that we can identify different registers in literary texts and that purely diachronic factors also contributed to the evolution of the dialect, the evidence for linguistic variation in Attic is comparatively limited, and so we are unable to fully appreciate Attic in all its breadth. While we do have some indications of what lay under the surface, most features of colloquial Attic scarcely entered the written record.[9] Nonetheless, there are ways of appreciating the larger linguistic developments that Attic was undergoing. Scholars have sought early evidence of the incipient transformations of the dialect. Notably, Antonio López Eire investigated 5th-century BCE literary texts, especially Aristophanes and Thucydides, to detect innovative traits that would eventually emerge in the

9 For selected cases see Schulze (1896).

koine.[10] In more general terms, we may identify two ideal polarities operating in the Classical dialect, one representing the more conservative pole and the higher registers, the other the more innovative pole that was open to the developments of the colloquial language. However, this sketch should not lead us to assume that the higher registers are all the same, and indeed, some varieties of literary Attic are more prone to linguistic innovation than others, being also under the influence of other literary traditions. This dialectic between innovation and conservation was active throughout the history of Attic and gave way to different results at different times.

In this section, we shall discuss the development of early Attic prose as a literary language and its relationship with the Ionian tradition. This is an amply debated topic. After revising the conclusions of previous scholarship, we shall propose a more nuanced interpretation that seeks to reconcile different approaches into a unified picture. We shall suggest that various 5th-century BCE literary genres' different degrees of openness to the adoption of 'innovative' Attic traits depend on their more or less purist approach regarding elements that might potentially be perceived as foreign-sounding. This section will provide the ideal background for Sections 3 and 4. In Section 3, we shall discuss the 5th-century BCE literary evidence for linguistic protectionism towards Attic. In Section 4, we shall see how the 4th-century BCE sources document the growing affirmation of the more open-minded approach to linguistic innovation.

2.1 The emergence of literary Attic, the influence of Ionic, and 'subterranean' Attic

The emergence of Attic as a literary variety of Greek is a relatively recent acquisition compared to the much older affirmation of literary Ionic, Aeolic, and Doric.[11] The better-known genres of 5th-century BCE Attic literature – tragedy, comedy, and prose – offer a variegated picture of how the Attic dialect was adapted into a literary language. These larger concerns lie beyond the scope of our research on linguistic purism. Rather, we shall focus on a much-debated aspect of the affirmation of literary Attic – namely, its relationship with literary Ionic. While our primary concern is early Attic prose, we shall also touch upon the language of tragedy and comedy.

10 See López Eire (1981–1982, 40–1); López Eire (1984); López Eire (1986); López Eire (1991); López Eire (1996b).

11 See Chapter 3, Section 2.4.

Scholarship often maintains that, owing to the influence of Ionic prose, early Attic prose writers adopted several Ionicisms that functioned as prestige features that imbued their language with a sense of 'internationality'.[12] Rosenkranz (1930) countered this view and suggested a radically different approach, which has been adopted in some more recent scholarship.[13] According to Rosenkranz, elements of phonological, morphological, and syntactic variation attested in early Attic prose (typically, but not only, Thucydides, Antiphon, and Gorgias), if compared to Aristophanes and the other later Attic prose writers, should not be explained in the light of a gradually diminishing influence of Ionic; rather, Rosenkranz has argued that many such cases of linguistic variation may be internal to the Attic dialect (i.e. intradialectal developments) rather than proof of an external influence (i.e. interdialectal developments). Although Rosenkranz makes numerous valid points, the two positions are not mutually exclusive, and there is scope to reconsider some aspects of the traditional thesis in a positive light and to attempt a unified interpretation.

Rosenkranz' approach is particularly reasonable insofar as it collects evidence that parallels the allegedly isolated and non-Attic features of the language of early Attic prose. It indirectly illuminates the multiple registers of 5th-century BCE Attic and reveals how only some of them acquired literary status. One might call this fluid situation underlying the language of Attic literature and Attic inscriptions a partly 'subterranean' (although not entirely obscure) form of Attic, to borrow the definition coined by Francisco Adrados.[14] Nevertheless, some of Rosenkranz' wider assumptions still leave room for refinement, nor can all cases he discusses be treated along the same lines. As a re-examination of Rosenkranz' work falls beyond the scope of this chapter, we shall confine ourselves to just a single aspect: the alternation -σσ-/-ττ-. This case is particularly salient given its paradigmatic diagnostic value, and it invites us to re-consider in more explicit terms the role of Ionic and its influence on early Attic literature.

Before we begin, several preliminary considerations are necessary. First, even if in this section we attempt to give a unitarian interpretation of the available evidence, this does not mean that we do not acknowledge that some degree of variation should also be allowed for; polymorphism, indeed, is not irreconcilable with the legitimacy of proposing a consistent interpretation for the majority of the evidence available. Second, in a case such as the alternation -σσ-/-ττ-, we depend on the evidence provided by the manuscript tradition, which we cannot

12 See Thumb, Scherer (1959, 302–4); Horrocks (2010, 70).

13 See, especially, Willi (2010a), but note the reservations expressed by Vessella (2016a, 364–5). See also Dover (1997, 83).

14 See Adrados (2005, 146; 177; 195).

blindly trust (or mistrust). These issues are regularly taken into account in the following discussion, but we should bear in mind that in some cases, particularly where it is more difficult to find a consistent interpretation of the evidence, polymorphism may also just be the result of perturbations in the manuscript tradition and vice versa.

One of the most conspicuous features of Attic compared to the other Greek dialects is -ττ- where most other dialects have -σσ-. -σσ- and -ττ- represent two alternative outcomes of the palatalisation of voiceless, aspirated and non-aspirated, dental and velar stops in the development from Proto-Greek to historical Greek. The outcome of this process in Attic as well as in Boeotian and Euboean is rendered graphically as -ττ-, whereas in Ionic and the remaining Greek dialects the outcome is -σσ-. The Atticist tradition took an active interest in the presence of -ττ- and -σσ- in Attic, collected important literary evidence, and advanced broader interpretations of the sociolinguistic appraisal of so-called sigmatism.[15]

The distribution of these outcomes of palatalisation in Attic writers (not only prose writers) is notoriously problematic.[16] Tragic poets exclusively use -σσ-, whereas comic poets use -ττ- (except in parody).[17] Prose writers offer a variegated picture and vary their chosen spelling in individual lexemes. Thucydides uses only -σσ-, except for ἅττα (1.113.1 and 2.100.3, both times ἄλλ(α) ἅττα χωρία). In the speeches and the *Tetralogies*, Antiphon uses -σσ-, though in his sixth speech (which is chronologically the oldest),[18] he uses -ττ-. Gorgias typically uses -σσ-, but in κρείττων and πράττω, he uses -ττ- alongside -σσ-, the variation depending in part on the work (i.e. κρείσσων 4x in *Helen* vs κρείττων 2x in *Palamedes*, πράσσω 1x in *Palamedes* vs πράττω 8x in *Palamedes*).[19] The Old Oligarch usually has -ττ-, except for θαλασσοκράτορες (2.2) and ἄσσα (2.17).[20] Antiphon the sophist (likely to be the same as the orator) normally adopts -ττ-, save for ἐμφράσσει (Diels–Kranz

15 The main evidence derives from passages of Eustathius (*in Il.* 3.96.1–11; *in Il.* 3.365.29–366.6; *in Il.* 4.283.6–9; *in Od.* 1.2.16–22), the first of which surely goes back to Aelius Dionysius (σ 15). On sigmatism, see Clayman (1987). These sources are dealt with by Batisti (forthcoming b) and in Volume 2.

16 Here, we only provide a sketchy picture; for fuller references see Rosenkranz (1930, 144–5); more briefly, Willi (2010a, 108). Notice that in ethnics, poetic quotations, and at morphological boundaries (i.e. in compounds such as προσσχών and the like), -σσ-is obviously also retained by writers who normally use -ττ-.

17 See Willi (2003a, 237).

18 See Dover (1950).

19 On the distribution in Gorgias, see also Willi (2008, 301 n. 91, with further bibliography), who concludes that 'insgesamt scheint σσ für die Originale wahrscheinlicher'.

20 On the exceptional presence of -σσ- in manuscript C, see Willi (2010, 110 n. 41, with previous bibliography).

87 B 58), διισσῶν (Diels–Kranz 87 B 49), ἐκπλήσσοιντο (Diels–Kranz 87 B 61),[21] and ἡσσώμενον (Diels–Kranz 87 B 76). Finally, Andocides makes consistent use of -ττ-, fully in line with later Attic prose (Xenophon, Plato, Demosthenes, etc.) as well as Old, Middle, and New Comedy.

An explanation was attempted by Rosenkranz, according to whom both /ss/ and /tt/ were in use in colloquial Attic with /tt/ the dominant option. Rosenkranz derived this view from the very scanty evidence for -σσ- in Attic *defixiones*.[22] According to Rosenkranz, the Attic writers who adopted /ss/ aimed at imbuing their language with a more 'international' flavour, whereas those who had more of a local audience in mind retained the 'local' /tt/. It is certainly true that /tt/ could be perceived as too narrow a localism, given that it is an isogloss that is shared only with Boeotian and Euboean. However, Rosenkranz' thesis is open to question. His view has been challenged by Willi (2010a, 108). To begin with, the use of ἄττα in Thucydides (see above) remains unexplained.[23] Additionally, Rosenkranz' proposed motivation (that is, to address a wider audience than the strictly Athenian one) is too blurry a concept to explain the different choices that authors writing in similar genres made. For example, why does Antiphon vary between his first, fifth, and sixth orations? There is no reason to suppose that the first two of these addressed not only local audiences. Or why do the fragments of Antiphon the sophist have -ττ-, while the texts of a fellow sophist such as Gorgias appear to favour the use of -σσ- (with the exception of two forms)?

To solve this conundrum, Willi (2010a, 108–11) has revised the alternation -σσ-/-ττ- in Attic writers. According to Willi, the notion that -σσ- is adopted as a Ionicising feature should be regarded more favourably than it was by Rosenkranz, albeit with some nuancing and accounting in a more satisfactory way for the exceptions. The form ἄττα in Thucydides should be explained according to the principle that, while the Ionicising -σσ- was Thucydides' chosen spelling, in a word like ἄττα, which was part of ordinary speech and did not rely on any estab-

21 See Willi (2010, 110 n. 39).

22 See Threatte (1980, 540).

23 ἄττα is also attested in Antiphon's sixth speech (6.14) (-ττ- is the normal spelling in this speech) and in some of his fragments (frr. 27 and 34–5 Blass–Thalheim). Fr. 27 Blass–Thalheim belongs to the oration *On the Tribute of the Inhabitants of Lindos*, which probably dates to 424/3 BCE (see Mattingly 2010); since this is even earlier than Antiphon's sixth speech (dating to 419/8 BCE: see Dover 1950, 44), Dover's recognition of a progressive shift from -ττ- to -σσ- is confirmed. Frr. 34–5 Blass–Thalheim is from the speech *In Defence of Myrrhus* of unknown date, although in the light of -ττ- one might argue for an early date. Regarding the distribution of -σσ-/-ττ- in Antiphon, Dover (1950, 51 n. 2), after revising previous suggestions, does not ultimately formulate an explanation.

lished high literary pedigree,[24] Thucydides opted instead for the local Attic consonantism /tt/. Further, in the case of apparently 'irrational' variation, as in the case of Gorgias, Willi has stressed that the two seemingly exceptional forms in -ττ- used by Gorgias (i.e. κρείττων and πράττω, see above) are not random: since their Ionic equivalents would have been κρέσσων and πρήσσω, Gorgias chose not to use the semi-Ionicised forms κρείσσων and πράσσω. Finally, regarding the inconsistent usages exhibited by Antiphon the sophist and the Old Oligarch, Willi has suggested that -σσ- was used in words that did not belong to ordinary 5th-century BCE Attic, whether literary coinages (θαλασσοκράτορες, ἐμφράσσει) or Ionicisms (δισσῶν in place of the dual number), but also in forms that did not strictly belong to these two categories (ἅσσα).

Willi's revision of Rosenkranz' interpretation has the merit of giving a fairer hearing to the traditional thesis positing the influence of Ionic as a regulating factor in choosing between -σσ- and -ττ-. This different approach significantly allows us to fine-tune the correlation between the use of -σσ- and Ionic, in the sense that -σσ- becomes an 'international' feature consecrated by literature.[25] However, not only do some occurrences of -σσ- in Antiphon the sophist also remain unexplained within this interpretative framework (i.e. ἡσσώμενον and ἐκπλήσσοιντο) but some of Willi's conclusions also give rise to problems of a different kind.

First, Gorgias' use of κρείττων and πράττω alongside the semi-Ionicised κρείσσων and πράσσω lacks an explanation. Considering that κρείσσων and πράσσω are the forms regularly adopted by Thucydides and the tragic poets precisely because they were not entirely Ionic forms (see above), it is unclear why this fact would constitute a problem for Gorgias, who was writing in Attic and not in Ionic. Is this related to Ionic being Gorgias' native dialect? In any case, the problem becomes even more puzzling considering that -σσ- is patently the preferred option in Gorgias' *Helen*. Unless one simply dismissed these inconsistencies as mere accidents of transmission (which is entirely possible), one may wonder

24 ἅσσα is attested only twice in Ionic, once in the *Odyssey* (19.218) and once in the Hippocratic corpus (*Mul*. 1.11 (= 8.42.15 Littré)). This evidence is regarded as insufficient to consider this form of the indefinite pronoun as characteristic of literary Ionic (see Rosenkranz 1930, 145; Willi 2010a, 109 against Wackernagel 1907, 13–4).

25 See Willi (2010a, 111): 'When Thucydides or Gorgias used τάσσω instead of τάττω in their written Attic because the spelling with σσ was a convention, both in Ionic prose and in tragedy, they were observing a literary νόμος'. Willi comes to a similar conclusion in his discussion of -σσ- in tragedy (see Willi 2019a, 103–5, also taking in the use of -ρσ- by the tragic poets in place of Attic -ρρ-; this is a more problematic case, though, and the evidence should be re-examined).

whether κρείσσων and πράσσω were avoided since Gorgias recognised them as artificial forms that belonged to the language of tragedy.[26]

Furthermore, Willi's views (and those of Wackernagel before him) regarding ἅττα in Thucydides (and Antiphon the orator) are entirely convincing, but one cannot accept Willi's interpretation of ἅσσα in the Old Oligarch's *Constitution of the Athenians*. Willi claims that ἅττα/ἅσσα was not ordinary 5th-century BCE Attic based on the fact that this form 'is first attested in Plato the Comedian (fr. 49), i.e. in the fourth century' and so, if it really were part of ordinary 5th-century BCE Attic, 'we would be bound to find it at least in Aristophanes'. Such claims are ill-founded. First, the poetic activity of Plato Comicus' ranged from the 420s to at least 391 BCE, and so he may not be easily dismissed as a 4th-century BCE poet.[27] Second, and more importantly, ἅττα is in fact attested multiple times in Aristophanes (31x).[28] Once we acknowledge that ἅττα is far from foreign from the perspective of ordinary 5th-century BCE Attic, Willi's conclusion regarding the inconsistent use of -σσ- in the Old Oligarch vis-à-vis the normal use of -ττ- is invalidated, and we must account differently for it.

We have accepted the view that Thucydides (and Antiphon) used -ττ- in ἅττα in place of ἅσσα because ἅττα represented an admissible 'colloquial' Attic form for which ἅσσα did not represent a rival literary alternative that should be used instead. Based on this premise, the Old Oligarch might have adopted ἅσσα as a form belonging to an even lower register than ἅττα, which, as proven by its use in Aristophanes, was the ordinary 5th-century BCE Attic form.[29] Given that these pronouns are forms that had no special literary pedigree in Attic (as also acknowledged by Willi regarding ἅττα in Thucydides), it is perfectly possible that they were more rapidly influenced than others by the substandard, internationalised, and Ionicised variety of Attic. In this latter case, the Old Oligarch's language, which has more limited pretence at being an example of artistic prose, would naturally signal a form of an emerging, more 'international' Attic, so that also in a literary text -σσ- will become predominant compared to -ττ- (see, e.g., Aeneas the

26 This may be irrespective of Gorgias' poetic style (see Arist. *Rhet*. 2.25.1402b.17–20 and 3.1.1404a.24–9).

27 The play to which fr. 49 belongs, entitled Ζεὺς κακούμενος, is of uncertain date. Scholars have usually suggested, but with varying degrees of plausibility, a date in the 420s BCE (see Pirrotta 2009, 124).

28 To single out just one parallel, see Ar. *Ach*. 98–9: ἄγε δὴ σύ, βασιλεὺς ἅττα σ' ἀπέπεμψεν φράσον | λέξοντ' Ἀθηναίοισιν, ὦ Ψευδαρτάβα vis-à-vis [X.] *Ath*. 2.17: ἅσσα δ' ἂν ὁ δῆμος σύνθηται, ἔξεστιν αὐτῷ ἐνὶ ἀνατιθέντι τὴν αἰτίαν τῷ λέγοντι καὶ τῷ ἐπιψηφίσαντι ἀρνεῖσθαι τοῖς ἄλλοις ὅτι οὐ παρῆν οὐδὲ ἀρέσκει ἔμοιγε, ἃ συγκείμενα πυνθάνονται ἐν πλήρει τῷ δήμῳ.

29 On the (comparatively limited) evidence for -σσ- on dipinti and *defixiones* see Threatte (1980, 539–40).

Tactician).[30] To conclude, the forms with -σσ- may be used by the Old Oligarch either as an element of marked diction (θαλασσοκράτορες) or as an element of particularly colloquial register (ἄσσα).

It thus appears that while some cases of variation, such as -σσ-/-ττ-, were certainly influenced by the model of Ionic prose (i.e. an interdialectal development), their adoption into literary Attic also goes hand in hand with the ongoing internal evolution of the dialect itself (i.e. an intradialectal development). Building on Rosenkranz' thesis that the alleged 'Ionicisms' of Attic prose were far from unfamiliar in Attic, we may attempt to determine whether the two approaches may be reconciled. Indeed, we may explore the idea that those 'innovative' Attic features shared with Ionic were adopted in some of the Attic literary languages only in cases where Ionic prose would make them also recognisably prestigious. In so doing, we shall be able to give more sustained attention to the role played by the common, ever elusive, *Sprachgut* between Ionic and Old Attic.[31] Our suggestion is that Rosenkranz is correct in postulating that several allegedly Ionic borrowings in early Attic prose were also genuinely colloquial Attic; however, we should add that their more ready adoption into some of the literary languages (notably, historiography, sophistic writings, and tragedy) rather than others (Old Comedy) was attributable to the fact that those genres regarded literary Ionic as a prestigious term of reference. Instead, the poets of Old Comedy mostly avoided those elements because, although they were also colloquial Attic (which, of course, in the language of comedy would not be an issue), at the same time they could be perceived as foreign-sounding and belonging to a higher literary register. In other words, we should focus on the reason that such 'innovative' features, despite being genuinely in use in the dialect, are avoided in some genres while being simultaneously employed in others. Let us examine selected parallels to support this claim.

The first case-study is the extension of the κ-suffix to the plural forms of the athematic aorists ἔδωκα, ἔθηκα, and ἧκα (i.e. forms such as ἐδώκαμεν, ἐδώκατε, ἔδωκαν). These analogic forms are common in epic poetry and Ionic prose. In Attic texts, besides tragedy (only in Euripides), they are also documented in early prose (1x Antiphon, 2x Thucydides). While the analogic forms are scarcely attested in Old Comedy (2x Aristophanes, but one of these occurrences does not count since it is a poeticism), they become more common in Middle and New Comedy, despite this being a smaller corpus (7x in Alexis, Antiphanes, Diphilus,

30 See Section 5.3. On the 'vulgarisms' in the Old Oligarch's *Constitution of the Athenians*, see Pfister (1916).

31 See Prauscello (2023, 254–5).

and Menander), and they are also documented in some 4th-century BCE prose writers, particularly Xenophon.[32] It is perfectly possible, as also claimed by Rosenkranz (1930, 152), that such analogic formations of the singular forms were already common in spoken Attic in the 5th century BCE. If this was the case, however, why are the innovative forms attested so scarcely in Old Comedy compared to early prose, Euripides, Middle and New Comedy, and Xenophon? A possible interpretation would be that these forms, though integral to 5th-century BCE Attic, were adopted only by writers who aspired to the adoption of a more 'international' language based on the model of Ionic and corroborated by the prestigious comparison with the language of tragedy.

A similar problem attends the thematic development of the verbs in -νυμι (i.e. δείκνυμι > δεικνύω).[33] The innovative inflection is quite common in Ionic prose. In Attic literature, the distribution of these forms is even more polarised (and thus highly revealing for our purposes). The thematic conjugation is common in early Attic prose (5x in Thucydides, 1x in Antiphon, 8x in Andocides, 1x in the pseudo-Xenophontean *Constitution of the Athenians*), and while it is extremely rare in Old Comedy (1x in Pherecrates and 1x in Aristophanes' *Plutus*, a very late play), it becomes common again in Middle and New Comedy. Interestingly, the thematic conjugation is foreign to tragedy. If the innovative forms were admissible in ordinary Attic, why do they appear so rarely in Old Comedy compared to early Attic prose, only to re-appear in *Plutus* and 4th-century BCE comedy? Why are they also foreign to tragedy?

While other case studies could be included, we shall limit ourselves to these two.[34] To provide an integrated interpretation of this evidence, we must consider the possibility that writers of artistic prose such as Thucydides and Antiphon regarded the innovative forms, which they knew from their spoken dialect, as acceptable because they had become established forms in literary Ionic (particularly prose);[35] pseudo-Xenophon's *Constitution of the Athenians* demonstrates that innovative linguistic features could be admitted in less artistic prose. Tragedy also proves that some of those features could be admissible in high-register literary Attic. However, if those forms were admissible in prose and tragedy, why did the poets of Old Comedy, although they adopt several evidently innovative (often collo-

32 See Chapter 5, Section C.3.2.3.

33 See Chapter 5, Section C.3.1.2.

34 Another piece of evidence in support of the proposed interpretation is the analogical inflection οἴδαμεν, οἴδατε, οἴδασι in place of ἴσμεν, ἴστε, ἴσασι (see Chapter 5, Section C.1.3.2).

35 The more relevant evidence for Antiphon is from the *Tetralogies*, which contain 'Ionic' – or more likely 'New' Attic – forms to a higher degree. Dover (1950, 57–8) convincingly explains these as attributable to the imitation of Ionic models (see also López Eire 1981–1982, 24–5).

quial) features (many of which they share with Thucydides),[36] avoid others that, in turn, are used by Thucydides? A possible answer is that the innovative forms used by Thucydides but (mostly) avoided in Old Comedy were considered to be foreign-sounding owing to their belonging to literary Ionic and, sometimes, tragedy.

To conclude, while the outcomes of Rosenkranz' analysis are unobjectionable in many respects, this different interpretation of selected parallels (more could be added) permits a less polarised understanding of the evidence.[37] The language of Ionic literature, if not the source from which some forms were imported into Attic prose, may still have represented the literary criterion for early Attic prose writers to approve of the use of some emerging forms that were, in fact, already present in spoken Attic. Tragedy surely represented an additional point of reference,[38] although the guiding parameter remained literary Ionic, as is also proven by the fact that forms that do appear in early Attic prose (and literary Ionic) are very rare or absent from tragedy (the thematic conjugation of verbs in -νυμι is a case in point, see above).[39]

This interpretation provides us with first-hand evidence for the conservative and purist attitude towards Attic that is clearly discernible in several 5th-century BCE sources, most notably Old Comedy (see Section 3). The results of this enquiry, particularly in terms of the change in the 4th-century BCE sources, also help to bridge the development of early literary Attic with the developments taking place in the 4th-century BCE dialect, as witnessed by the language of comedy and prose and by the emergence of 'international' Attic (see Sections 4–5).

36 See Section 2.

37 Notice, e.g., that according to Rosenkranz (1930, 155–6), abstract nouns in -μα and -σις are unrelated to any Ionic influence. While it is perfectly likely that the increased use of these forms is not solely attributable to Ionic influence (see Dover 1981a, 9), it cannot be questioned that these nouns are influenced by new intellectual trends originating from the Ionic world (see Willi 2003a, 135–9 and the discussion of ὑποθηλύτερος in Ar. fr. 706 in Section 3.1).

38 See Wackernagel (1907, 14) on ἠσσᾶσθαι in Thucydides: since the conjugation ἡσσάομαι is an Attic innovation for which Ionic retained instead ἐσσόομαι (46x in Herodotus), the fact that Thucydides uses ἡσσάομαι rather than ἡττάομαι means that he must have derived this form from tragedy (i.e. based on the conventional or artificial equivalence of tragic language between -σσ- and -ττ-) – that is, not directly from Ionic.

39 To support Rosenkranz (1930) against other scholars' views, Willi (2010a, 107 n. 26) comments that 'if there had really been as much strictly Ionic influence on early Attic prose as is sometimes thought, one should also expect features such as ξεῖνος for ξένος, πόλιος for πόλεως, δικαστέω for δικαστοῦ etc.'. The interpretation put forward above would solve Willi's objection. Indeed, forms like ξεῖνος for ξένος and δικαστέω for δικαστοῦ were never really an option in spoken Attic (and indeed, they are also foreign to 4th-century BCE literary Attic, *Großattisch*, and the high koine); hence, their use in literary Ionic was never sufficient for an Attic writer to adopt them. Regarding πόλιος/πόλεος for πόλεως see Chapter 5, Section B.2.4.

3 The 5th-century BCE sources: The dawn of purism and its socio-political significance

While the Atticists regarded 5th-century BCE literary Attic as representing the golden standard of 'pure' diction, the reality of the spoken language must have been far more complex than it mostly appears from literary texts and official inscriptions. In fact, precisely when Athens reached the peak of its political, economic, military, and cultural influence, there arose among the Athenians the perception that their society was rapidly changing and that their dialect was affected accordingly. As anticipated, in this chapter we shall demonstrate that the history of Attic is innervated by an unresolved tension between traditionalism and innovation and that this tension operates at both the higher and lower levels of the language.

Undoubtedly, the Peloponnesian War marked a turning point not only in Athenian history but, owing to the rapid transformations in Athenian politics and society, it also had significant repercussions on the Attic dialect.[40] Indeed, this is also the time of the four most important literary sources explicitly commenting on the Athenians' perception concerning their own dialect: Aristophanes' fragment 706, section 2.8 of the pseudo-Xenophontean *Constitution of the Athenians*, a fragment of Plato Comicus' *Hyperbolus* (fr. 183), and a fragment of Eupolis' *Demes* (fr. 99.25).[41] We shall offer a close reading of these texts to highlight their sociolinguistic and socio-political implications. The importance of these passages lies not merely in the fact that they document the speakers' perception of the existence of multiple registers within the Attic dialect but also in the fact that they all presuppose an idea of what 'good' Attic is and of what values it is connected to. As we shall see, these texts, despite their differences with respect to ideology and literary genre, presuppose a similarly conservative and protectionist attitude towards the Attic dialect.

Before we begin, a brief examination of Attica's demographics will help to put the evidence from the literary sources into perspective. Estimates of Attica's population in the 5th century BCE vary considerably owing to the challenges inherent in such topics. Akrigg's (2019) recent study offers a new picture of demographic change in Attica.[42] Scholars generally agree that the population of Attica

40 See Risch (1964, 13).

41 The passages commenting on individual people's ways of talking or their linguistic mistakes have no bearing on the issues discussed here (see Colvin 1999, 285–7).

42 Akrigg does not always commit to one figure and opts instead to sketch a more fine-grained picture. The figures provided here are extracted from Akrigg's more detailed research and should be treated with due caution.

rapidly increased between 480 and 431 BCE. While most agree that at the end of the Persian Wars, the citizen population was approximately 30,000 units, scholars have estimated that around the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War it must have increased up to 60,000, even 70,000, units. This figure would then have to be quadrupled if we consider women and children (who were not citizens), for a total figure of around 250,000 units. Akrigg's main contention is that the sharp rise in the citizen population during the Pentecontaetia, which is incompatible with natural demographic growth, was probably related to increased immigration.

Besides their relevance for the military, economical, and political history of Classical Athens (notably, Pericles' law of citizenship: see Chapter 3, Section 2.7), these data have a significant bearing on the history of the Attic dialect, as they effectively corroborate the view that immigration may have had a conspicuous influence on shaping the linguistic landscape of Attica.[43] However, it is important to stress that foreign influence was not only confined to the lower social strata. The higher strata of the population, besides reacting against the kind of innovation taking place at the low-register level, must also have been increasingly more exposed to other prestigious varieties of Greek. During this period, Athens became particularly attractive to foreign intellectuals, and the cultural and intellectual discourse within Athenian society was significantly enriched by linguistic influences from abroad that were regarded as prestigious, particularly Ionic. However, these trendy new influences were not passively accepted by all Athenians, as they too might have been considered a threat to the integrity of Athenian identity.

3.1 Aristophanes, fr. 706: Language, society, and Aristophanes' poetic persona

Aristophanes' fragment 706 is an impressive account of sociolinguistic variation in Classical Attic, in which Aristophanes offers a tripartite description of Attic based on diatopic and diastratic criteria. The fragment is quoted by Sextus Empiricus (2nd century CE) in *Against the Mathematicians* (S.E. *M*. 1.228–9):

> περιδιωκόμενοι δὴ ποικίλως οἱ γραμματικοὶ θέλουσιν ἀναστρέφειν τὴν ἀπορίαν. πολλαὶ γάρ, φασίν, εἰσὶ συνήθειαι, καὶ ἄλλη μὲν Ἀθηναίων ἄλλη δὲ Λακεδαιμονίων, καὶ πάλιν Ἀθηναίων διαφέρουσα μὲν ἡ παλαιὰ ἐξηλλαγμένη δὲ ἡ νῦν, καὶ οὐχ ἡ αὐτὴ μὲν τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀγροικίαν ἡ αὐτὴ δὲ τῶν ἐν ἄστει διατριβόντων, παρὸ καὶ ὁ κωμικὸς λέγει Ἀριστοφάνης·

43 See especially Cassio (1981), who also observes that foreigners, whether metics or slaves, played a key function in Athens' economy.

διάλεκτον ἔχοντα μέσην πόλεως,
οὔτ' ἀστείαν ὑποθηλυτέραν
οὔτ' ἀνελεύθερον ὑπαγροικοτέραν.

πολλῶν οὖν οὐσῶν συνηθειῶν, {ὡς} φασί, ποίᾳ χρησόμεθα; οὔτε γὰρ πάσαις κατακολουθεῖν δυνατὸν διὰ τὸ μάχεσθαι πολλάκις, οὔτε τινὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἐὰν μή τις τεχνικῶς προκριθῇ.

Well, being chased around in many different ways, the grammarians want to turn back the impasse. They say that there are many ordinary usages: the Athenians' is one, the Spartans' another, and again the ancient usage of the Athenians is different, while the one now has changed, and that of people in the country is not the same as that of people who spend time in the city – which is why the comic poet Aristophanes says:

Having a middle-of-the-road city dialect
neither uptown and effeminate
nor low-down and rustic.

Since, then, there are many usages, they say, which shall we employ? It is not possible to follow all of them, because they often conflict, nor some one of them, unless one is given preference through expertise. (Translation by Bett 2018, 97–8).

Sextus aims to counter the grammarians' attempts to establish a unified linguistic norm against the view of sceptic philosophers, who argue in favour of adhering to the common usage (συνήθεια).[44] As Sextus explains, the grammarians sought to refute the sceptics' position by highlighting the existence of several linguistic varieties that differed not only between dialects but also within the same dialectal variety; thus, it would be impossible to establish one συνήθεια as a linguistic parameter, as suggested by sceptic philosophers. To corroborate their argumentation, Sextus attributes to the grammarians the exploitation of Aristophanes' fragment to demonstrate that one of the most authoritative Attic writers already shared their linguistic concerns.[45] Given Sextus' agenda, one cannot rule out the possibility that Aristophanes' fragment had previously been quoted by one or more of the grammatical sources against which Sextus is arguing, but this remains unverifiable.

Owing to the state of preservation, many important aspects of this fragment remain impossible to ascertain. First, the comedy in which this fragment origi-

44 On the role of συνήθεια in Sextus' sceptic doctrines, see Corti (2015, 136–8); Chapter 7, Section 3.2.

45 Sextus never openly polemises against Atticist sources nor does he treat Atticism as an issue, as he is rather focused on the opposition between a 'lay' variety and an 'urbane' or 'literary' variety of language, which he qualifies with συνήθεια ('(standard) usage') and ἑλληνίζω ('to speak proper Greek'), respectively (see Kim 2017, 47). According to Dickey (2019, 118), 'the Atticists were clearly not a significant enough group of experts for Sextus to consider them worth attacking, but that does not mean that he was completely unaware of their movement'.

nally occurred is unknown, which makes it even harder to speculate about the potential relevance of the linguistic remarks and how they may relate to other topics. Further, the identification of whom or what the participle ἔχοντα refers to is uncertain; it may be an unspecified male figure, a plurality of people indicated in the neuter, or perhaps an abstract entity.[46] In any event, because the fragment is written in cataleptic anapestic dimeters, it probably derives from a choral section; and because the anapests are typically (but not exclusively) used in the final part of the parabasis, this section of the play is a valid candidate for the context of this passage. If this supposition is correct, the chorus would speak the fragment, possibly thus conveying Aristophanes' authorial comments regarding the Attic dialect and the sociolinguistic factors behind its variety.[47] We shall return to this issue later.

Aristophanes divides Attic into three categories (the middle language of the city; the sophisticated and rather feminine version; and the crude and rustic language) based primarily on diatopic and diastratic criteria.[48] However, the seemingly diatopic distinction in fact falls to a large extent under the wider category of diastratic variation, and we should not take Aristophanes' words purely at face value.[49] Moreover, Aristophanes' fragment is not merely descriptive of the varieties of Attic but also presents markedly evaluative views. The opposition between the two extreme poles implies that the middle variety is that which Aristophanes approves. By comparison, the other two varieties represent sub- and super-standard Attic.[50]

Before we examine Aristophanes' presentation of the three varieties, let us point out two general aspects. Some scholars have claimed that the linguistic features to which Aristophanes is alluding are probably connected with matters of vocabulary, syntax, and style rather than with phonology.[51] In their view, one should not conclude that Aristophanes is referring to different 'accents' (in the

46 Some options are cautiously considered by Bagordo (2017, 87).

47 See Bagordo (2017, 92).

48 In principle, one might object that, in the original context, the first line of the fragment might also have been part of a negative statement (i.e. '(not) having a middle-of-the-road city dialect etc.'). However, it does appear that the μέση διάλεκτος is presented as the good middle point between two opposing extremes. This view is further corroborated by the comparatives ὑποθηλύτερος and ὑπαγροικότερος used absolutely – that is, indicating something a little above and a little below the approved middle language.

49 See Taillardat (1965, 12–4); Dover (1970, 11), who stress that Aristophanes has a more generally cultural than strictly linguistic target in mind.

50 See Bagordo (2017, 87). Additional confirmation is the absolute use of the comparatives with the prefix ὑπο-, which indicate a slight excess compared to an ideal middle (i.e. 'a little too X', 'a little too Y').

51 See Sommerstein (1977, 62); Bagordo (2017, 89).

lay sense of the word). However, such drastic conclusions are best avoided. Among other reasons, not only is 'pronunciation' ostensibly used in other sources as a discriminating criterion between different registers of Attic (notably, Hyperbolus' faulty pronunciation in Pl.Com. fr. 183, see Section 3.3), but there might even be evidence for phonetics as an element of sociolinguistic variation in Attic (see below); and why exclude morphology from among the areas of variation that Aristophanes has in mind? In sum, it seems better to take διάλεκτος in the widest possible sense. Moreover, the remarks and terminology that Aristophanes uses are vague, but although it is often difficult to find direct documentation of what he means by, for example, slavish language, we may at least compare passages from his plays in which the relevant social types are described.

The super-standard variety is qualified with the adjectives ἀστεῖος ('urbane', 'elegant') and ὑποθηλύτερος ('rather effeminate'). ἀστεῖος is 'urbane' in the sense of 'elegant' and 'refined' (see *DGE* s.v. I.1). Being ἀστεῖος is thus a consequence of living in the city, where one is exposed to more refined manners and becomes acquainted with the newer intellectual and cultural trends.[52] ἀστειότης also has clear implications for language and style, despite remaining a rather unspecific word (see Willi 2003a, 93). However, ἀστεῖος and ἀστειότης may also have negative overtones. In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, Euripides is praised early on for his linguistic creativity and boldness (*Ra.* 91–104: notice the opposition with Heracles' more traditionalist and down-to-earth views), while at the end of the play his proclivity to chatter and philosophising will cause his defeat (*Ra.* 1491–9); in a similar vein, the pairing of ἀστεῖος with κατερρινημένος at *Ra.* 900–1 to indicate Euripides' fine style of expression and intellectualistic snobbery already suggests a potentially negative judgement.

Similarly, ὑποθηλύτερος recalls cultivated intellectuals such as Agathon in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*, whose over-refinement and feminine attire is integral to his theory of imitation (*Th.* 146–52), which develops into an explicit association between the composition of good poetry, the adoption of female clothing, and aiming at Ionic softness (*Th.* 159–63).[53] More importantly, ὑποθηλύτερος relates to the popular association between Ionians, softness, and intellectualism and indicates more generally the lack of masculinity of young upper-class Athenians fascinated by the Ionian models they sought to imitate.[54] Commenting on ὑποθηλύτερος, Cassio (1981,

52 See, e.g., Alc.Com. fr. 26: νῦν οὖν γένοιτ' ἀστεῖος οἰκῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει, which probably concerns a man from the countryside who learns the ways of city life (see Orth 2013, 122–3).

53 On Agathon's theory of imitation see Austin, Olson (2004, 105–6; 109–12).

54 See Willi (2003a, 161).

90–2) very plausibly reads this passage side-by-side with the Ionic influences on 5th-century BCE Attic cultivated speech.[55] Indeed, Aristophanes' presentation of the super-standard variety of Attic may be compared with the manner of talking of the young Athenians of the *jeunesse dorée* as negatively portrayed in *Knights* (1375–81), characterised by elements of 'intellectual' language, such as the suffix -ικός.[56] Similar presentations of young intellectuals are common in 5th-century BCE comedy (see Cratin. fr. 105.2–3; Pherecr. frr. 2, 70, and 138).[57] Colvin also compares Socrates' recurring use of abstract nouns in -σις in *Clouds* (see e.g. *Nu.* 317–8). Both suffixes have been carefully discussed among the innovative morphological features that were influenced by the intellectual world of Ionia.[58] Another possible indication of how these young intellectuals spoke is offered by Ar. *Nu.* 870–3, where Strepsiades reproaches Pheidippides' loose articulation of consonants.[59] Furthermore, tragedy and early Attic prose adopted Ionic or Ionicising elements as prestige features, and so the imitation of Ionic culture and language did not solely appeal to the younger generations.[60] The issue, then, may have been how to harmonise the appeal of Ionic with the more traditionalist manners.[61]

Regarding the sub-standard variety of Attic, Aristophanes describes it as ἀνελεύθερος and ὑπαγροικότερος. A comparatively rare adjective,[62] ἀνελεύθερος indicates the kind of expression that would be worthy of a slave and therefore does

55 See Section 2.1; Chapter 3, Sections 2.3; 3.1.

56 See Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 3,2, 362); Colvin (1999, 283).

57 For a discussion of these fragments (and other relevant sources), see Napolitano (2021, 78–82). On the language of the Athenian *jeunesse dorée*, see also Section 3.3.

58 See Willi (2003a, 134–6 and 139–45), who examines these features as part of a wider investigation of 'sophistic' language in Aristophanes.

59 See Dover (1968a, 206); Colvin (1999, 284).

60 Willi (2003a, 165) comments that ὑποθηλύτερος might allude to figures such as Euripides and Socrates and their teachings, but these are less direct comparisons. Previous studies have sought to identify linguistic features of literary Attic at large typical of female characters (see Duhoux 2004 and Sommerstein 2009, 15–42). Building on the passage of Plato's *Cratylus* (418b.7–e.4) discussing the conservative language of women (see n. 161), Willi (2003a, 157–97) examines female speech in Aristophanes to prove that the language used by Athenian women was not conservative but was open to linguistically innovative forms perceived as prestigious; these traits were then adopted by men who aimed at cultural refinement. Although this lies beyond the scope of this chapter, the results of Willi's enquiry do not counter the idea that the 'femininity' to which Aristophanes alludes is not a reference to the (innovative) language used by women but to the stereotype of Ionic softness.

61 On the emergence of literary Attic and its relationship with prestigious literary Ionic, see Section 2.1. Pericles' famous claim in Thucydides' λόγος ἐπιτάφιος that the Athenians do not indulge in softness (2.40.1) evidently reflects the perception of this problem.

62 It indicates either people who are actual slaves or people who adopt a 'servile' and 'mean' behaviour.

not suit an Athenian citizen (i.e. there is a clear opposition with ἀστεῖος in the previous line). This implies not only the use of a low-register language but also words that are foreign to the Attic dialect. We shall return to these aspects in the analysis of [X.] *Ath.* 2.7–8, where this is a central issue (see Section 3.2). Regarding ὑπαγροικότερος, Bagordo (2017, 90) rightly observes that the closest point of comparison for ὑπαγροικότερος is the comic depiction of countrymen such as Strepsiades in *Clouds*.[63] This parody of simple, rustic people who become acquainted with the more cultivated (and also more corrupt) society for the first time is topical.[64] Thus, the ὑπαγροικότερος, who lacks any kind of flair, is guilty in precisely the opposite manner to the ὑποθηλύτερος.[65]

The association of ἀνελεύθερος and ὑπαγροικότερος is somewhat surprising at first. While the language used by slaves was surely open to foreign influences, all the more so since the slaves were often non-Greek, the language of countrymen might be expected to be more conservative. This inconsistency is illusory, however. First, Aristophanes focuses primarily on more generally low-register Attic and so old-fashioned features such as those of the language of countrymen may well lack prestige. Additionally, we cannot rule out the possibility that the language of the inland and the rural demes of Attica was also open to external influences. Sommerstein (1977, 62) stressed the possibility that, at least from the 4th century BCE, the rural population of Attica may have been exposed to a more advanced vowel system under the influence of neighbouring Boeotia.[66] We may add that something along these lines might also be detected with respect to conso-

63 Strepsiades has marital problems because, though a countryman, he married a city woman of noble descent (*Nu.* 46–8) and is repeatedly insulted for his ignorance and rusticity (e.g. *Nu.* 135–8; 492–3; 627–31). In other plays, the ἄγροικος is associated with positive values in opposition to the corrupt inhabitants of the city (see Ar. *Ach.* 32–3; *Pax* 1185–6).

64 See Aristophanes' *Banqueters* and Eupolis' *Aiges* ('Goats'); cf. Cassio (1977, 26); Olson (2017, 91 and 138).

65 Evidence for slave-like and rustic speech is more limited, although we have considerable evidence for the comic depiction of sub-standard speech (see Sections 3.2; 3.3; 4.1; 4.2; 5.2). On the lack of a specific linguistic characterisation of the slaves, and more generally the lower classes in Aristophanes, see Dover (1970, 11); Dover (1976, 362–7); Dover (1981b, 16). Colvin (1999, 283) mentions the drunk Euelpides' past vicissitudes as narrated in *Birds* (493–8) with a predominantly 'καί-style' dominated by parataxis. Bagordo (2017, 90–1) notices that the Aristophanic scholia occasionally attribute some metaphorical or analogical forms to the fact that the speaker is a countryman (see schol. Ar. *Pax* 63b and schol. Ar. *Nu.* 1206bαβ). Dover (1970, 11), while tentatively (but unconvincingly) defending the repetition of δέ in Ar. *Ach.* 2 as a possible element of rustic speech (cf. Olson 2002, 65), also admits the possibility of detecting an occasional 'rural touch' in Aristophanes, mentioning πλᾶτις in *Ach.* 132 (whereas Olson 2002, 114 concludes that πλᾶτις is a poeticism).

66 See Sommerstein (1977, 62).

nantism.[67] Direct evidence of the possible external influence on rural, inland Attic is provided by informal inscriptions that have -δ- as the outcome of (de-)palatalisation, as documented by ὀστρακίδ(δ)ō (i.e. ὀστρακίζω) on an early-5th-century BCE ostrakon from the Ceramicus, paired with λαικάδει (i.e. λαικάζει) and ἐπιτραπέδια (i.e. ἐπιτραπέζια) on two 4th-century BCE graffiti from the agora.[68]

As noted, Aristophanes' fragment centres on several polar oppositions: city vs countryside; citizens vs slaves; intellectualistic, womanish refinement vs rustic, male boorishness. But what can we say in positive terms about the 'middle language of the city', Aristophanes' recommended variety of Attic?[69] The 'middle language of the city' is probably intended to be the urban variety of Attic as spoken by the Athenian middle-class. The words ἀστεῖος and πόλις are likely to reflect an opposition between the city elites and the rest of the urban population as mirrored by the opposition between the ἄστυ, indicating the centre-most part of the city, and other urban demes, which, although they properly belong to the ἄστυ in Cleisthenes' tripartition of Athenian territory, may be perceived as other than the ἄστυ proper.[70] Thus, πόλις is intended to associate the middle variety with the largest share of the Athenian city population, whereas ἀστεῖος is associated with a far more limited social group. Similarly, the contrast with ὑποθηλύτερος opposes the citizens of the πόλις with those who position themselves outside the conventional behaviour of respectable citizens and whose manners associate them with women, a social group that lacked any political rights. The dichotomisation of slaves and countrymen with the citizens of the πόλις further illustrates that these categories are either excluded by definition from the civic body (i.e. the slaves) or represented in this case as a marginal portion of Athenian society (i.e. the countrymen). In sum, Aristophanes' selection of the μέση πόλις to indicate the approved variety of Attic is purposely aimed at excluding the fringes of Athenian society which are perceived as outsiders and external to the good city order.

Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 3,2, 362) establish a useful comparison between the language of the μέση πόλις and the virtues of λέξις discussed by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric* (3.2.1404b.1–25):[71] clarity; using a mode of expression that is neither

67 See the discussion of ὀλίγος in Section 3.3. See also Section 5.2 regarding the apocope of prepositional prefixes.

68 See Colvin (2004); Colvin (2020, 77–8).

69 Bagordo (2017, 92) is entirely focused on what the 'middle language of the city' is not.

70 See LSJ s.v. ἄστυ II.2 (where a reference is made to Piraeus or Phalerum). See also Pl. *Tht*. 142a.1–7 for the opposition between the city centre (indicated by ἀγορά and πόλις) and the harbour (λιμήν).

71 In these sections of the third book of *Rhetoric*, Aristotle presupposes and repeatedly refers to the examination of the virtues of speech, the means to attain these, and the functions of the parts

above nor below the subject's dignity but still capable of fascinating the listeners; adopting poetic language and more generally elevated language only when appropriate; and avoiding the risk of looking presumptuous or deceitful. Like Aristophanes, then, Aristotle also recommends a style that pursues a middle way, which is equally not too humble (as it would not attract attention from the audience) and not too elaborate (as it would run the risk of being unintelligible or make the orator's intention suspicious). The similarity to Aristotle's ethical doctrines is self-evident. Aristotle credits Euripides with the first successful attempt at using an elaborate and artistic language that seems natural and spontaneous, akin to everyday speech.

However, while Aristotle is mostly concerned with the more practical aspects of good and effective style, Aristophanes' preference for the 'middle language of the city' as his approved standard has wider implications. This fragment's sociolinguistic relevance should be considered in relation to Aristophanes' approach to and general views on Athenian society and politics and the role of the comic poet. Regardless of whether one interprets Aristophanes' political views as conservative or democratic,[72] these views are presented to his audience as though deriving from a wise advisor.[73] He generally espouses a kind of balanced traditionalism and moderate views that equally shun the new socio-political trends that he identifies as base and vulgar (e.g. radical democracy and the rise of demagogues as reflecting the degeneration of the Athenian society) and the new intellectual fads that he repeatedly mocks (e.g. sophistic culture, the developments in tragedy and music). One may easily detect a continuity between these opposing tendencies and the varieties of Attic that Aristophanes condemns in fragment 706. If, as proposed above, this fragment was originally contained in the final part of a parabasis, we may easily compare it with the parabatic passages in which Aristophanes offers metaliterary reflections on the artistic qualities of his plays as well as their importance for advising his fellow-citizens.[74]

Aristophanes' approbation of the 'middle language of the city' reflects the views of educated Athenians who, through language, also aimed at promoting but *de facto* defending a traditionalist civic identity and ideology against new trends perceived as threatening to the established social order. It is particularly instructive that the kind of tripartition sketched by Aristophanes in fr. 706 is not unheard of. Parallel

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of speech he has offered in *Poetics* (see especially *Po*. 21.1458a.18–22.1459a.16). See also Chapter 6, Section 3.2.

72 For recent assessments see P. Walsh (2009); Olson (2010); Sommerstein (2015); the papers collected in Foley, Rosen (2020).

73 See Heath (1987, 18–21).

74 See, e.g., Ar. *Ach*. 628–64; *Eq*. 507–50; *Nu*. 518–27 and 537–62; *V*. 1015–59; *Pax* 734–74.

(and hitherto neglected) examples of a very similar articulation of the civic body are attested in Thucydides' excursus on the στάσις of Corcyra (3.82.8)[75] and on the counter-revolution at Samos (8.75.1), in the episode of Sphodrias' acquittal from the accusation of betrayal in Xenophon's *Hellenica* (5.4.25), and in Theseus' dialogue with Adrastus in the first episode of Euripides' *Suppliant Women* (238–45).[76] These sources would require extensive discussion, but for our purposes, it suffices to emphasise that in all these passages, the middle group is presented in positive terms, expressing wisely balanced views that are not conditioned by ideology.[77] It is particularly interesting that the opposition in Thucydides and Euripides, both contrasting the group constituted by the rich and philo-oligarchic with the group comprising the poor and the leaders of the δῆμος, nicely matches Aristophanes' sociolinguistic connotation of the super- and sub-standard varieties of Attic. It is therefore very likely that the politically moderate Aristophanes may have seen the language question as integral to this political scenario. In such cases, the sub-standard variety of Attic may not only be easily associated with the demagogues and their consensus strategies but also the young, effeminate intellectuals who speak the super-standard variety and may profitably be likened to the young ἀπράγμονες who were considered to share their oligarchic views (see Section 3.3). Thus, the tripartition that Aristophanes describes is not merely sociolinguistic in nature but probably also indicative of the speakers' socio-political alignment.

3.2 Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians* 2.7–8: The language of democratic Athens at the time of her maritime empire

The pseudo-Xenophontean (i.e. the Old Oligarch's) *Constitution of the Athenians* is a particularly problematic text.[78] At the core of this polemical pamphlet is a de-

75 Note also that, in this case, the tripartition of the citizen body described by Thucydides is not limited to the situation in Corcyra but more generally reflects the Greek cities' internal conflicts (see Hornblower 1991–2008 vol. 1, 477–9).

76 On the political resonance of this passage, see Musti (1997, 44–7); Porceddu (2023, 91–100). Collard (1975 vol. 2, 171–2) contextualises this passage in the light of the other Euripidean passages that outline a tripartition of the civic body (but in terms that differ from those used in the passages above) and also compares the passage from *Suppliant Women* with the tripartition based on wealth in Arist. *Pol.* 1295b.1–3.

77 The passage from Xenophon's *Hellenica* is instructive. People who side with Sphodrias are afraid not only of the opposing party, that of Agesilaus and his friends, but also of the moderates, who represent the middle position, since Sphodrias' crime was objectively grievous.

78 For a comprehensive treatment see Lenfant (2017). In the following, we shall focus on select topics. As regards the debated date of this text, the suggestion that it dates to the 420s remains

tailed criticism of Athenian democracy and its twistedness. However, although the author expresses downright conservative/oligarchic views, he aims to demonstrate how the Athenian δῆμος has managed to create and maintain the system of government that is best suited to their interests, and the Old Oligarch is famously open to acknowledging that the democratic system has been cunningly conceived to preserve itself and to benefit those who embrace it (see [X.] *Ath.* 1.1 and 3.1). One of the argument's focal points is the importance of the maritime empire, which is acknowledged as integral and essential to Athenian democracy. This topic is more closely addressed in Section 2 of the pamphlet. Thanks to her control over the sea, Athens imposed her political, economic, and military hegemony over the other Greek states; at the same time, the empire benefited the δῆμος ([X.] *Ath.* 2.2–16). It also brought about major transformations within inner politics: while the artisanal and commercial classes greatly benefited from trade, the countrymen and the conservative class, which typically prospered on the income of agriculture or natural resources, were instead damaged by the policies adopted to secure the control of the sea ([X.] *Ath.* 2.14). This sketchy summary of the pamphlet's ideological background serves to introduce the passage that is immediately relevant to our purposes. Among the benefits of the maritime empire, the Old Oligarch first mentions that it allowed the Athenian δῆμος to procure various delicacies and then adds that, owing to the importance of trade, Athens imported foreign linguistic usages, ways of living, and clothing on a massive scale ([X.] *Ath.* 2.7–8):[79]

> εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ σμικροτέρων μνησθῆναι, διὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς θαλάττης πρῶτον μὲν τρόπους εὐωχιῶν ἐξεῦρον ἐπιμισγόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ὅ τι ἐν Σικελίᾳ ἡδὺ ἢ ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ ἢ ἐν Κύπρῳ ἢ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἢ ἐν Λυδίᾳ ἢ ἐν τῷ Πόντῳ ἢ ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ ἢ ἄλλοθί που, ταῦτα πάντα εἰς ἓν ἠθροῖσθαι διὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς θαλάττης. ἔπειτα φωνὴν πᾶσαν ἀκούοντες ἐξελέξαντο τοῦτο μὲν ἐκ τῆς, τοῦτο δὲ ἐκ τῆς, καὶ οἱ μὲν Ἕλληνες ἰδίᾳ μᾶλλον καὶ φωνῇ καὶ διαίτῃ καὶ σχήματι χρῶνται, Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ κεκραμένῃ ἐξ ἁπάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ βαρβάρων.
>
> If one should also mention lesser matters, first, through the rule of the sea [the Athenians] have mixed with other peoples in other places, and so discovered varieties of luxury foods, [to the effect that,] whatever the delicacy in Sicily or Italy or Cyprus or Egypt or Lydia or Pontus or the Peloponnese or anywhere else, all these delicacies have been gathered together in one place through their rule of the sea. Secondly, through hearing every sort of language, they have acquired for themselves this feature from one language, that from another. The other Greeks stick rather to their individual language and way of living and

the likeliest scenario and will be adopted in the discussion that follows (see in general Lenfant 2017, iv–xi; Porceddu 2023, 17–28; Occhipinti 2019 argues for a later date, but within the 390s BCE).

79 Text by Lenfant (2017). The textual problems posed by this passage are discussed by Lenfant (2017, 115).

> dress, whereas the Athenians employ a mixture, which comes from [those of] all the Greeks and the non-Greeks. (Translation by Marr, Rhodes 2008, 47, with modifications).

The first observation, that Athens imports luxury items from throughout the Mediterranean Sea, is topical in discussing Athens' thalassocracy (cf. notably Thuc. 2.38.2).[80] This passage has profitably been compared to a fragment of the comic poet Hermippus (fr. 63), from his lost play *Phormophoroi* ('The Porters'), in which an unknown speaker enumerates the many different types of goods (not merely food) that Athens imported thanks to the city's imperialistic and hegemonic role in the Mediterranean.[81] The Old Oligarch also establishes a cause-and-effect relationship, whereby as a result of the importance of trade, the Athenians are exposed to hearing all manner of Greek dialects and foreign languages.[82] Therefore, unlike most Greeks,[83] they no longer retain their inherited language as well as their traditional way of living (δίαιτα)[84] and demeanour (σχῆμα) but rather mingle them with those from abroad. In line with the pamphlet's characteristically conservative views, the implication of these paragraphs is evidently negative, and the lamented loss of purity is among many proofs offered to demonstrate the moral corruption of the δῆμος.[85] We shall return to these aspects later, as it will be profitable to investigate the relationship between the Old Oligarch's ideologically loaded views vis-à-vis the perspective of the δῆμος in greater depth.

Although in the latter paragraph language, way of living, and clothing are all mentioned, it is clear that the focus of the Old Oligarch is on language, as shown by the fact that it is the exclusive topic of the first sentence (ἔπειτα φωνὴν πᾶσαν ἀκούοντες ἐξελέξαντο τοῦτο μὲν ἐκ τῆς, τοῦτο δὲ ἐκ τῆς).[86] The formulation adopted by the Old Oligarch to describe the contamination of Attic is vague, but we may pin down a few key points. First, φωνὴν πᾶσαν ἀκούοντες must indicate hearing both foreign Greek dialects and foreign non-Greek languages.[87] Second,

80 See Marr, Rhodes (2008, 110).

81 For a recent discussion see Vannicelli (2019); Porceddu (2023, 219–34).

82 This consciously hyperbolic claim does not surprise in this pamphlet.

83 On Ἕλληνες as 'the majority of the Greeks' see Mosconi (2022, 49–50).

84 On the meaning of δίαιτα, see Marr, Rhodes (2008, 111, who choose 'régime' or 'diet' observing that 'way of living' would be too unspecific in this context, whereas the interpretation pertaining to food is consonant with *Ath.* 2.7); V. Gray (2007, 200: 'δίαιτα covers eating, drinking and sexual habits'); Lenfant (2017, 118, who prefers 'way of living'); Mosconi (2022, 45, who argues in favour of a specific association with food also based on the parallel of Hdt. 3.98.3–4, where language, food, and clothing are among the cultural traits that define the Indians).

85 This is what is meant here by Ἀθηναῖοι rather than the Athenians as a whole (see Mosconi 2022, 47–8).

86 Thus, Mosconi (2022, 45).

87 See Lapini (1997, 183–4); Mosconi (2022, 44 and n. 2).

τοῦτο μέν [. . .] τοῦτο δέ has been taken to indicate loanwords (i.e. lexicon)[88] but has also been assigned the more general meaning of 'feature' or 'characteristic'.[89] This general definition may imply any linguistic feature, from phonology to morphology, syntax, and lexicon.[90] This latter approach seems the more persuasive one, but what kind of Attic is the Old Oligarch referring to in this passage, and to what extent are his words to be trusted in light of the pamphlet's polemical nature?

Although the picture offered by the Old Oligarch is probably untrustworthy in its representation of Athens as exceptional among the Greek communities,[91] his claims and the underlying interpretation of the causes are probably correct in several respects.[92] The variety of non-elite Attic described by the Old Oligarch has been assigned the label 'Piraeus Attic' by modern scholars. The passage from the Old Oligarch offers a first-hand account of the development, in parallel to the affirmation of the Athenian maritime empire and Athens' exposition to foreign trade, of the more 'international' and partly de-Atticised variant of Attic that we call *Großattisch*, which represented the immediate forerunner of the koine.[93] This non-elite variety of Attic must have been heavily influenced by the native dialects (or, indeed, languages) spoken by metics and slaves, who represented a substantial and influential portion of Athens' residing population during the 5th and 4th centuries BCE.[94] Foreign Greek dialects must therefore have been spoken and heard in the streets of Athens, and they may have influenced the Athenian

88 See Marr, Rhodes (2008, 110–1), who mention ταῶς ('peacock') as the kind of loanword that, according to their view, must be intended here. This interpretation seems far too narrow, especially because the Old Oligarch not only focuses on the influences of non-Greek languages but also refers to loans from other Greek dialects.

89 See, e.g., Cassio (1981, 79), who translates τοῦτο μέν [. . .] τοῦτο δέ with 'elementi'.

90 See Kalinka (1913, 200–1); Mosconi (2022, 52–3 n. 34).

91 E.g. Lapini (1997, 184) and Lenfant (2017, 120) object that the Ionic communities of Asia Minor and commercial cities such as Corinth would have represented closely comparable cases, although Mosconi (2022, 48–9) rightly observes that the Old Oligarch presents Athens as a case of its own, as the only place where a φωνὴ κεκραμένη was developed.

92 See Risch (1964, 14 n. 43): 'Die Feststellung Ἀθηναίων πολιτεία 2, 8 [. . .] charakterisiert die Situation Athens und seiner Sprache im Grunde viel treffender, als es die Modernen wahr haben wollen'.

93 See already Kalinka (1913, 199–200) and more recently Colvin (2009, 40). On *Großattisch*, see Section 4. López Eire (1981–1982, 34–6) unconvincingly claims that, since the Old Oligarch opposes the Athenians and the rest of the Greeks in their linguistic policies, this would represent the same structural opposition of the Atticist lexica (notably, Ἀττικοί vs Ἕλληνες in Moeris).

94 Recent estimates have it between 20,000 and 30,000 metics and between 60,000 and 100,000 slaves (see Akrigg 2019, 89–138). On the relevance of the demographic data for the history of the dialect, see Section 3.

Umgangssprache and the *Verkehrssprache* of sea trafficking.[95] It is easy to imagine that Ionic played a key role in this linguistic melting-pot, but the contribution of the West Greek dialects should not be underestimated.[96] It would be intriguing to investigate whether the kinds of linguistic features that the Old Oligarch claims were imported from other Greek dialects are actual loans or whether they may have developed (e.g. by analogy, as a result of de-Atticisation, etc.) from within the Attic dialect. Any more precise appreciation of what the Old Oligarch alludes to is bound to remain speculative. Anyway, the fact that the presentation given by the pamphlet is ideologically loaded makes it reasonable to imagine that phenomena such as dialectal convergence should also be taken into consideration.

We should mention that although language of this nature is more open to 'international' imports, this does not necessarily imply that the Old Oligarch must be referring solely to the variety spoken by the lower strata of the population; we should be cautious of the ideologically loaded presentation given in the pamphlet.[97] The Old Oligarch's remarks may be applied to a larger and wider sociolinguistic spectrum that encompasses both lower and higher strata, which, in any case, represents the kind of people who adopted a language that was more receptive to innovative features than that of the conservative classes. Thus, the diastratic divide presupposed by the Old Oligarch also reflects a socio-political divide (i.e. the Old Oligarch opposes the different approach to language of oligarchs and democrats).[98]

This observation invites us to address more closely the ideological issues underlying this passage. Scholars debate whether the Old Oligarch is offering a positive, a neutral, or a negative description of cultural mixing.[99] As we shall see, the opinions are typically polarised. We shall offer instead a middle path between these opposing approaches and interpretations.

95 According to Mosconi (2022, 69–70), the Old Oligarch hyperbolically describes the language mixture in Athens in terms comparable to the development of a creole language.

96 See Cassio (1981, 83–5).

97 E.g., Lapini (1997, 185) and Mosconi (2022, 53 n. 34) indicate the 'popolino' (common people, the masses) as the social stratum to which the Old Oligarch's remark would refer.

98 See Soverini (1992, 841). Mosconi (2022, 54–5) comments that the Old Oligarch is not concerned with the correctness of the language spoken by the δῆμος, as is the case in the comic passages in which the demagogues' inability to speak good Attic is ridiculed together with their (alleged) foreign provenance. These comic passages will be examined more closely in Section 3.3. For the time being, we simply wish to point out that speaking a type of Attic contaminated with foreign features and speaking 'bad' or low-register Attic are sufficiently closed concepts, and so the issues of language correctness and 'pure' Attic may very well be interrelated, at least implicitly, also in the passage from the Old Oligarch.

99 See Willi (2010, 106).

Most scholars conclude that the Old Oligarch espouses a negative view of the import of foreign customs and linguistic features as well as foreign living and dress practices.[100] The implicit but reasonably apparent contention made by the Old Oligarch would be that this process exerts a bad influence on Athenian culture and society. We have seen that cultural mixing is perceived as potentially negative in Attic sources (see Chapter 3, Section 2.5–6). Mosconi (2022) has discussed at length the passage from the Old Oligarch vis-à-vis the rich evidence for Greek approaches to multilingualism and multiculturalism[101] and ultimately aims to demonstrate that, according to the Old Oligarch, the Athenian δῆμος has almost forfeited its ethnic identity, that it is open to the possibility of betraying the Greeks and reaching a compromise with the barbarians, and that it speaks like the slaves, whose language is a mixed bag of features collected from Greek dialects and non-Greek languages.[102] The general conclusion is that the Old Oligarch presents the δῆμος as having an intrinsically servile nature and that, were it not for the democratic regime, it would be enslaved. This conclusion is consonant with the pamphlet's general aim and with several explicit claims made by the Old Oligarch.

Other scholars have argued, less convincingly, that the multiculturalism described by [X.] *Ath*. 2.8 is intended by the Old Oligarch not as a criticism of the δῆμος but as one of the positive consequences of Athenian thalassocracy.[103] In addition to emphasising that the underlying thesis in [X.] *Ath*. 2.2–16 is that the Athenian δῆμος procures himself innumerable and varied advantages thanks to Athens' control over the sea, these scholars have added that, given that the excursus on Attic multiculturalism occurs directly after the section describing the availability in Athens of any sort of foreign food delicacy ([X.] *Ath*. 2.7), the adoption of foreign linguistic usages, ways of living, and clothing should also be interpreted as among the positive consequences of Athens' maritime empire. Furthermore, Gomme (1940, 214) was the first to observe that ἐξελέξαντο implies an almost-conscious process, as though the Athenians were almost 'choosing' or 'selecting' one or the other foreign linguistic feature to adopt like the import delicacies described in the previous paragraph.

100 See, e.g., Soverini (1992, 840–1); Lenfant (2017, 120).

101 On the socio-political perception of multilingualism in antiquity, see also Mosconi (2020).

102 Mosconi (2022, 55–73).

103 See Frisch (1942, 254); Moore (1975, 53); Marr, Rhodes (2008, 110). Lapini (1997, 182–8) offers a more nuanced discussion: based on Antiphon the sophist's *On Truth* (P.Oxy. 11.1364 + 52.3647 + 15.1797 = *CPF* vol. 1,1 Antipho 1–2 = Antipho D 38 Laks–Most), he concludes that the Old Oligarch is praising the Athenians' intellectual curiosity and their cosmopolitanism as superior to those of the other Greeks.

Such polarised opinions may be partly reconciled. First, one cannot agree with the view expressed, for example, by Marr, Rhodes (2008, 110), according to whom 'there is no moral disapproval' in the way the Old Oligarch comments on the phenomenon of linguistic (and, more broadly, cultural) mixture allegedly taking place in Athens. Although there is no explicit condemnation, the polemical and critical tone and meaning of the passage is incontrovertible, all the more so since the very idea of cultural mixture has typically derogatory connotations in line with the general Athenian attitude.[104] However, this may not be the case if one adopts the perspective of the δῆμος, which is the perspective that the Old Oligarch adopts to explain the benefits of thalassocracy. The fact that the Old Oligarch presents the views and interests of the δῆμος does not necessarily indicate that he espouses these views. I shall focus on just two more relevant passages.[105] At [X.] *Ath*. 2.9–10, the Old Oligarch comments on the use of public money to finance public sacrifices and feasts and the building of temples, gymnasia, and baths, all things which would be beyond the reach of the (vast majority of the) δῆμος.[106] In these passages, the moral criticism is subtle (though easily recognised), yet both measures described by the Old Oligarch are clearly intended as positive from the perspective of the δῆμος.

An even stronger piece of evidence in support of this conclusion is offered by [X.] *Ath.* 1.19–20: the fact that the Athenians became skilled sailors and, as part of the acquisition of these abilities, they also learned (or perhaps developed, rather) the language of seafaring is also clearly represented, in the wake of a long literary tradition beginning with Hesiod (*Op*. 618–94), as morally and ideologically wrong, despite the fact that there is no explicit remark to this effect; note also that the Athenian citizens who have become experienced rowers are put on precisely the

104 See Cassio (1981, 81); Soverini (1981, 841); V. Gray (2007, 200); Lenfant (2017, 120); Mosconi (2022, 50–1).

105 To place these specific observations within the wider context of the pamphlet, we may stress that the goal of the Old Oligarch is to demonstrate beyond any disagreement regarding politics and ideology how the Athenian δῆμος is able to keep democracy in function (this is already clear at [X.] *Ath.* 1.1, but see also the opposition at [X.] *Ath.* 3.1 between the moral disapproval of the Old Oligarch, which is expressed by οὐκ ὀρθῶς, and his acknowledgement that the δῆμος act in the most congenial way to suit their needs, as indicated by γνώμῃ).

106 Cf. also [X.] *Ath*. 2.8 concerning the adoption of a foreign σχῆμα by the δῆμος vis-à-vis the statement in [X.] *Ath.* 1.10 that the Athenian citizens did not dress in such a way or adopt an external appearance that makes them easily distinguishable from slaves and metics. As Marr, Rhodes (2008, 112) point out, while the idea at [X.] *Ath.* 1.10 is that the common people would be indistinguishable from the δῆμος because they dress in the same way, at [X.] *Ath.* 2.8 the sense is that thanks to Athenian naval power, new and classy foreign garments were available in Athens.

same level as their slaves.[107] Nonetheless, these new skills represent the indispensable technical and practical abilities that, despite the (explicit or implicit) criticism levelled by the Old Oligarch, are key to enabling the δῆμος to secure its power.[108] Thus, from the perspective of the δῆμος, the acquisition of new linguistic skills must be intended as beneficial. Similarly, it is perfectly possible that at *Ath.* 2.8 also, language mixture was positive in the context of Athens' thalassocracy. Kalinka (1913, 198–9) already concluded that, from the perspective of the δῆμος, the influence of other dialects and foreign languages may have been beneficial. He based this conclusion on the practical observation that the ability to understand the dialect or language of foreign speakers and to adapt one's own to make it intelligible to foreign people may have been regarded by part of the population as facilitating trade and therefore as more important than any purist qualms.[109] As such, Kalinka astutely recognised that the passage's tone is polemical, but he also distinguished between the different perceptions that the δῆμος and the oligarchs may have had with respect to cultural mixing (including language).[110]

The key consequence of this is that language mixture (obviously in different terms from the presentation given by the Old Oligarch) may therefore have been welcomed – even sought after – by the δῆμος. This observation may testify to the more inclusive and less protectionist attitude towards the Attic dialect among part of the Athenian population. However, the polemic made by the Old Oligarch is likely addressed not only against the lower strata. It seems quite likely that the Old Oligarch may also aim to stigmatise the corrupt language of the young Athenians from elite backgrounds, who are often presented in the literary sources in opposition with traditional values. This corruption may consist in the adoption of prestige features of Ionic origin, as we have seen with regard to the super-standard variety of Attic of Ar. fr. 706 (see Section 3.1), but more may be said in this regard, and we cannot rule out the possibility of a perceived 'debasement' of their language (see Section 3.3).

In the revolutionised scenario of late-5th-century BCE Athenian society and politics, the external threats caused by democracy and thalassocracy may also have

107 See further Lenfant (2017, 102).

108 Already at [X.] *Ath.* 1.2, their ability in seafaring is the main reason why the δῆμος preserve the power. This will be a constant of the pamphlet. Note, also, that crafts and seafaring are required for the conservation of the political status quo, which urges the δῆμος to make ample concessions to the metic population (see [X.] *Ath.* 1.12).

109 Apropos this, Mosconi (2022, 53) draws attention to Pl. *Tht*. 163b.1–163c.7, which mentions teachers and interpreters of foreign languages. As Mosconi observes, these people were probably hired by traders to acquire some knowledge of the foreign language(s) they could use for their profession.

110 See Kalinka (1913, 200).

been a factor in the corruption of the young elites. This relates to some important developments of literary Attic. First, commenting on the passage from the Old Oligarch, Willi (2003a, 160) insightfully remarks that 'there was a long tradition of ennobling Attic with foreign elements' and that for some 'Athenians, 'prestige' Attic would have meant an Attic more open to linguistic innovations'. Similarly, Colvin (2020, 79) makes an appealing comparison with the 'international' Attic of Xenophon's writings. Clearly, one cannot posit any continuity between these texts and the passage of the Old Oligarch nor claim that Xenophon ever pursued any democratic agenda by adopting a rich and varied language. Nonetheless, when the Old Oligarch was writing, there were surely emerging tendencies that were willing to accept, maybe even to promote, a more open type of Attic. On the level of literary language, this process is eventually reflected, in addition to Xenophon (see Section 5.1), by the shift in the evolution from the language of Old Comedy to that of Middle and New Comedy (see Section 5.2).

3.3 'Bad' Attic equals 'bad' politicians: Plato Comicus, fr. 183 and Eupolis, fr. 99.25

The passages from Aristophanes and the Old Oligarch examined above share an essentially ideological approach to linguistic protectionism, from both a literary and a socio-political perspective. They partake of a similar refusal to innovate, irrespective of whether this is triggered by the upper or lower social classes' way of speaking. A fragment of Plato Comicus' *Hyperbolus* adds another example of linguistic protectionism in the context of a socio-political attack (fr. 183):

> ὁ δ' οὐ γὰρ ἠττίκιζεν, ὦ Μοῖραι φίλαι,
> ἀλλ' ὁπότε μὲν χρείη διῃτώμην λέγειν,
> ἔφασκε δῃτώμην, ὁπότε δ' εἰπεῖν δέοι
> ὀλίγον, <ὀλίον> ἔλεγεν
>
> For he did not speak proper Attic, dear Moirai, but whenever he should have said διῃτώμην, he said δῃτώμην, when he should have said ὀλίγος, he said ὀλίος.

Although we have no explicit indication of the sources of this fragment,[111] it is virtually certain (and scholars are unanimous on this) that the person depicted in these lines is Hyperbolus, the play's eponymous character; as we shall see below,

111 The fragment is transmitted in its full form by Hdn. Περὶ μονήρους λέξεως *GG* 3,2.926.2–8 (= 27.16–22 Papazeti), while *Et.Gen.* AB s.v. ὀλίος (= *EM* 621.54–5) omits the indication of the play and the text of the fragment.

further indirect pieces of evidence support this identification. According to this description, Hyperbolus would not be able to speak Attic correctly (ὁ δ' οὐ γὰρ ἠττίκιζεν), as demonstrated by his careless pronunciation of δι̯ητώμην and ὀλίγος. The context of these lines remains impossible to ascertain, but it is highly likely, as already suggested by Cobet (1840, 141), that Hyperbolus is described as having committed these pronunciation infelicities while speaking at an assembly meeting.[112] Let us comment briefly on the mistakes pointed out by Plato Comicus and then discuss the fragment's sociolinguistic relevance.

Plato Comicus focuses on issues of incorrect pronunciation.[113] Colvin (2020, 77) comments that these examples 'could be characterized as the result of an attempt to minimize the effort of articulation'. We have already mentioned something similar with respect to Ar. *Nu.* 870–3, where it is likely that Strepsiades is ridiculing Pheidippides' and the young intellectuals' loose articulation of the consonants (see above n. 59), but the sociolinguistic register of the phenomena described by Plato Comicus lies at the opposite end of the spectrum from the passage of Aristophanes' *Clouds*. A more to-the-point comparison might therefore be with the fish-sellers' careless manner of speaking as depicted in Middle Comedy by Amphis fr. 30.11–3: καὶ τοτ' οὐ λαλῶν ὅλα | τὰ ῥήματ', ἀλλὰ συλλαβὴν ἀφελών, 'τάρων | βολῶν γένοιτ' ἄν'· ἡ δὲ κέστρα; 'κτὼ βολῶν' ('and then not uttering the whole words, but taking off a syllable, [he would say]: 'That would be four obols'. 'The spet?'. 'Eight obols'').[114]

The natures of the two phenomena registered by Plato Comicus are not equally clear. The process that is indicated graphically with the omission of -ι- in δι̯ητώμην (from δι̯ητώμην) proves rather difficult to interpret.[115] The development

112 Cobet (1840, 141) suggested comparing Ar. *Eq.* 626–7: ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἔνδον ἐλασίβροντ' ἀναρρηγνὺς ἔπη | τερατευόμενος ἤρειδε κατὰ τῶν ἱππέων ('Inside, breaking out words hurled like thunder, telling tall stories he assaulted the knights'), in which the Sausage Seller describes Paphlagon's threatening speech in the βουλή. We may also compare δημηγορέω in Eup. fr. 99.23, a passage that raises similar problems to that of Plato Comicus, as shown most notably by κοὐδ' ἂν ἠττίκιζεν of line 25 (on Eupolis' fragment, see below).

113 We cannot rule out the possibility that Plato Comicus originally provided further examples of Hyperbolus' incorrect Attic, perhaps also including morphological phenomena.

114 Amphis' fragment is one of the many attacks on fish-sellers, whose arrogance and rapacity are often lamented in comedy. Amphis adds that, among other irritating things, fish-sellers also fail to enunciate correctly, being prone to apheresis (βολῶν = ὀβολῶν, κτώ = ὀκτώ) and syllable dropping (τάρων = τεττάρων). These colloquial features indicate the fish-sellers' dismissive attitude and bad habits when dealing with customers (see Papachrysostomou 2016, 202–3), but such a shabby manner of speaking is probably also indicative of the fish-sellers' low social status.

115 According to Colvin (2020, 77), the development [i] > [i̯] in prevocalic position may have caused palatalisation of the dental stop, which would then develop into something similar to an alveolar affricate (Colvin compares the development of the voiced postalveolar affricate /dʒ/ in Italian, as in

implied by ὀλίον, whereby the intervocalic /g/ underwent a form of lenition and developed into [γ] and then [i̯], is more familiar. It has parallels in 4th-century BCE Attic inscriptions and is quite common already in 3rd-century BCE papyri (in either case also giving rise to the insertion of non-etymological -γ- at intervocalic position).[116] Plato Comicus' fragment confirms that this development was well underway before it surfaced in inscriptions. In all likelihood, Hyperbolus' alleged pronunciation of ὀλίγος was regarded as a low urban trait.[117] Interestingly, this development is also familiar outside Attic. Besides the evidence for ὀλίος in Rhinthon (fr. 2), who wrote in Tarentine Doric,[118] the same development of intervocalic /g/ after a palatal and before a velar vowel is attested in the pronoun ἐγώ in Boeotian (see ἰώγα in Ar. *Ach*. 898, paralleled by ἰώνγα and ἰώνει in Corinn. fr. 664 *PMG*).[119] These parallels, which concern a different word but present the same phonetic environment as ὀλίγος, may be a further indication of the kind of subterranean features shared between Boeotian and the lower varieties of Attic that only rarely surface in writing.[120]

However we interpret these phonetic processes, the criticism levelled by Plato Comicus against Hyperbolus addresses a more fundamental aspect than pronunciation mistakes. Hyperbolus' use of an informal or colloquial variety of Attic indicates that he belongs to the lower stratum of the population and, therefore, that his condition borders on that of a foreigner rather than a true Athenian. This point is also made clear in Pl.Com. fr. 185 (= schol. ($\Gamma_2\Delta$) Luc. *Tim*. 30, 114.28 Rabe), also from *Hy-*

Latin *diurnum* > Italian *giorno*). As Colvin (2020) acknowledges, these developments are difficult to indicate graphically, and the evidence is scanty. Omission of -ι- in this linguistic context is very limited in Attic inscriptions (see Threatte 1980, 393–5, who says that Plato Comicus' fragment is the only solid evidence of this), and neither in Attica nor in Boeotia do we have solid textual evidence for the influence that the development [i] > [i̯] may have had on the preceding consonant. Colvin also refers to the influential study by Méndez Dosuna (1993a) to suggest that the synizesis of [i] and [e] in postconsonantal and prevocalic position was probably common in vernacular Attic and Boeotian and other dialects. However, the phenomena discussed by Méndez Dosuna differ substantially from διητώμην > δῃτώμην (note also that the omission of -ι- is actually documented in Syracusan Doric after [s] – e.g. *φασέω > φασῶ via an unattested stage *[phasi̯ɔ:] – but the sibilant did not undergo palatalisation [s] > [ʃ], as suggested by Colvin regarding [di̯] > [dʒ]; see Méndez Dosuna 1993b, 128 n. 71). On the development [i] > [i̯], its effect on the preceding consonants, and the placement of the accent, see Scheller (1951, 93–126, who at 103–4 also considers Plato Comicus' fragment); Hackstein (2002, 30–1).

116 See Threatte (1980, 440–1); Mayser (*Gramm*. vol. 1,1, 141–3). This is a phonological development characteristic of Modern Greek.

117 See Colvin (1999, 282); Colvin (2000, 290).

118 See Favi (2017, 132–6).

119 See Lejeune (1972, 56); Colvin (1999, 163–4).

120 On the role of Boeotian, see also Sections 3.1; 5.2.

perbolus, in which we are told that Plato Comicus portrayed Hyperbolus as a Lydian and that other sources ascribed him other (allegedly) foreign backgrounds. Among these further sources alluded to by the scholium to Lucian's *Timon*, we must surely include Eupolis, whose *Marikas* is the comic rendition of Hyperbolus, portrayed as a person of servile condition and Asiatic origin.[121] The consequence of these allegations, irrespective of their truth, is that although Hyperbolus is active in Athenian politics, he is destitute of any right to be so and people should thus be wary of giving him any credit. These features are all characteristic of demagogue comedy.[122] Since the new Athenian politicians did not belong to old propertied families but instead derived their recent wealth from craftsmanship, manufacturing, or trade, they were portrayed not only as belonging to a lower social classes, but their (allegedly) philistine professions also caused them to be suspected of not being genuine Athenians; hence, their widespread presentation as slaves or barbarians.[123]

What makes Plato Comicus' fragment a more remarkable case in the context of the parody of demagogues is that ἀττικίζω is not merely another reference to Hyperbolus' foreign parentage and his lack of fluency in Greek but it specifically targets his inability to speak good Attic.[124] As noticed by Cassio (1981, 86–7) commenting on ὀλίος in this fragment, Plato Comicus may have exploited the similarity between a pronunciation that was both common in Athens among the lower strata and that was also common in foreign Greek dialects. This highlights the acknowledged existence of different sociolinguistic registers within the community of Attic speakers and their perceived relevance, which made them useful targets for political attack as only some of these registers were regarded as genuinely Attic. Plato Comicus' fragment thus presents in highly explicit terms the implicitly prescriptive attitude of Aristophanes' fragment 706.

An important parallel to the fragment of Plato Comicus is represented by a passage of Eupolis' *Demes* that also deals with the political implications of the verb ἀττικίζω. While the interpretation of ἀττικίζω in Plato Comicus is relatively

121 See especially Cassio (1985b).

122 Compare Cleon, the notorious Paphlagonian in Aristophanes' *Knights*, and Cleophon, who in *Frogs* (674–85) is described as a roaring Thracian nightingale whose lips are ἀμφίλαλος 'talking both ways' (i.e. Greek and Thracian; see Dover 1993, 277–8); the scholia (schol. Ar. *Ra.* 618a–b = Pl. Com. fr. 61) add that in *Cleophon*, Plato Comicus also portrayed Cleophon's mother as a Thracian woman who spoke broken Greek to him. A similar presentation of the demagogues, likely to have been influenced by Old Comedy, occurs in a passage of Plato's first *Alcibiades* (120b.1–5).

123 See Wankel (1974, 87).

124 This is not an irrelevant distinction. The sources to which we owe the fragment say that Plato Comicus describes Hyperbolus' pronunciation as βάρβαρον (see Hdn. Περὶ μονήρους λέξεως *GG* 3,2.926.2–8 = 27.17 Papazeti and *Et.Gen.* AB s.v. ὀλίος (= *EM* 621.54–5)).

straightforward, the function and meaning of the verb in the passage of Eupolis' *Demes* require closer inspection and more sustained attention (fr. 99.23–9):

]ι κἀξιοῖ δημηγορεῖν,
χθὲς δὲ καὶ πρῴην παρ' ἡμῖν φρατέρων ἔρημ[ος ὤν
κοὐδ' ἂν ἠττίκιζεν, εἰ μὴ τοὺς φίλους ᾐσχύν[ετο.
τῶν ἀπραγμόνων γε πόρνων κοὐχὶ τῶν σεμνῶν [
ἀλλ' ἔδει νεύσαντα χωρεῖν εἰς τὸ κινητήρ[ιον·
τῆς ἑταιρίας δὲ τούτων τοὺς φίλους ἐσκ[
ταῖς στρατηγίαις δ' ὑφέρπει καὶ τρυγῳδ[

. . . and he thinks it appropriate to be a political leader, even though yesterday or the day before he had no phratry-brothers among us; and he would not even speak Attic, if he were not embarrassed in front of his friends. Of the apolitical whores, at any rate, and not the haughty ones . . . but he should have nodded his head and entered the brothel; but friends of the club of these people . . . and he sneaks up on the generalships, . . . and the comic . . . (Translation by Olson 2017, 316, with modifications).

Eupolis' fragment 99 is the longest fragment preserved from *Demes*.[125] Interpretation of this passage, however, is particularly thorny.[126] The chorus targets an unidentified politician, who is depicted with demagogic connotations, for his moral and political conduct. However, his profile is not immediately clear, and this complicates our understanding of the function of ἀττικίζω. Owing to space limitations, in the following, we shall address only the exegetical issues that are more strictly relevant to this point.[127]

At lines 23–9, the chorus counters the politician's claims that he is entitled to participate actively in Athenian politics based on three main allegations. First, the politician has (allegedly) only recently been admitted into a phratry, and so prior to that, he was not even a citizen; this means not only that he is young but also that someone questioned whether he had any right to become a citizen, let alone actively participate in politics.[128] Second, he would not even speak Attic were he

125 On the collocation of the fragment into the play see lastly Olson (2017, 296–310).

126 For other recent discussions see Storey (2003, 149–60); Telò (2007, 358–87); Olson (2017, 335–45).

127 Scholars normally call him a demagogue (see, e.g., Telò 2007, 318), but Sartori (1975, 32–3) argues against this. We have adopted the less loaded term 'politician'. On the politician's identification, see Storey (2003, 153–60); Telò (2007, 387–9 and 397–401); Olson (2017, 335–6 and 341–2).

128 This has been compared with the topos of the demagogues' barbaric parentage (see above Pl.Com. fr. 183; Dunbar 1995, 137–8 and 472–3 on Execestides at Ar. *Av*. 764–5), or it may indicate that the unidentified politician was an illegitimate son born out of wedlock or conceived by an Athenian and a slave (see Dover 1993, 248 on Archedemus in Ar. *Ra*. 416–21; Heracles too is de-

not ashamed not to do so in front of his friends.[129] Third, his connections are with people who are traditionally disinterested in politics and whose sexual life is promiscuous. Such allegations are topical in political comedy.[130] The demagogues' way of speaking was typically ridiculed by the comic poets, and the same topos may be present in our fragment. Based on the parallel use of ἀττικίζω in the comic depiction of Hyperbolus in Plato Comicus, scholars have concluded that Eupolis is saying that the unidentified politician was of foreign parentage and therefore unable to speak good Attic.[131] However, as Olson (2017, 337) observed, Eupolis makes a rather different point from Plato Comicus. While Hyperbolus was unable to speak Attic properly, the politician attacked by Eupolis would not speak (good) Attic, which he eventually does to avoid being embarrassed in front of his friends. This indicates that the politician is capable of speaking 'good' or 'bad' Attic and that pressure from his peers prevents him from speaking 'bad' Attic. Olson's interpretation is sound and contributes to a more satisfactory reading of the fragment.[132] We may expand on this point, taking in a few additional elements. The difference with Hyperbolus does not lie solely in the politician's more educated profile. As we shall suggest, his proficiency in code-switching is part of a populistic strategy, a simulation by which he attempts to acquire political power through consensus.

Lines 26–8 are crucial to a better understanding of ἀττικίζω.[133] The sense of this passage must be that the politician's acquaintances are reproachable rather than decent people.[134] Thus, an opposition is clearly drawn between the politically

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picted at Ar. *Av*. 1669–70 as an illegitimate son not yet enrolled in the phratry, see Dunbar 1995, 734). On the late enrolment in a phratry, see MacDowell (1993, 364–8).

129 The implied context must be that of speaking in a political assembly, as in Pl.Com. fr. 183 (see above).

130 See Storey (2003, 150).

131 See Colvin (1999, 284); Storey (2003, 150); Telò (2007, 364–5); Novokhatko (2020a, 27). Telò (2007, 374–7) also connects ἀττικίζω with νεύω of line 27 and concludes that νεύσαντα indicate non-verbal communication, since the politician is unable to speak Attic. This is unlikely and self-contradictory. Telò deals with this passage as though the chorus were saying that the unidentified politician did not speak at all, which is not the case. Additionally, the demagogues are depicted either as bilingual who speak (bad?) Greek and foreign languages (e.g. Cleophon) or as speakers of a low variety of Attic (e.g. Hyperbolus) but not as people switching from 'bad' to 'good' Attic according to political convenience, which is the situation portrayed by Eupolis (see further below). νεύω probably indicates the nod made by the prostitute/politician to indicate an agreement with a potential client and lure him into the κινητήριον.

132 See also Sartori (1975, 36), although his claim that the politician would not speak 'good' Attic gladly is unsupported.

133 On the difficulties posed by the lacuna, see Storey (2003, 151); Telò (2007, 366–8).

134 See Storey (2003, 152).

loaded categories of ἀπράγμονες πόρνοι and ἀπράγμονες σεμνοί.[135] In Eupolis, it is likely that the ἀπράγμονες σεμνοί are the respectable and honest aristocrats who represent the traditional values and stay away from corrupt politics, whereas the ἀπράγμονες πόρνοι are the younger, degenerated exponents of that category.[136] Let us briefly discuss this opposition.

The 'good' ἀπράγμονες are the members of the Athenian socio-economic upper strata who were scarcely active in politics and whose relationship with radical democracy was problematic.[137] They correspond to the rich quietists described by Carter (1986, 99–130). Bdelycleon in Aristophanes' *Wasps* may well embody a 'good' ἀπράγμων:[138] in addition to the other features that make him an ἀπράγμων (such as his being disinterested in democratic life), he is described as having haughty manners (*V*. 134–5) and this reminds one closely of the ἀπράγμονες σεμνοί described by Eupolis. The 'bad' ἀπράγμονες are the kind of corrupt youths often described as Athens' late-5th-century BCE decadent *jeunesse dorée*.[139] These corrupt youths are reckless with respect to both litigation and politics (Ar. *Ach*. 679–82, 685–8, 703–18; *Nu*. 1019), systematically exploit the common people in pursuit of personal profit (*V*. 682–95), and represent the younger antagonists of the demagogues (see Ar. *Eq*. 875–80 and fr. 424).[140] They are inspired by the sophists and their language: they use their linguistic skills to trick old politicians and to get themselves out of trouble (see Ar. fr. 205; *Ach*. 685–8 and 703–18; *Eq*.

135 See Telò (2007, 368–9). On ἀπραγμοσύνη see Ehrenberg (1947); Sartori (1975, 38–59); Carter (1986); Bearzot (2007b, 121–41).

136 See also Tammaro (1979, 423). Sartori (1975, 59–60) also posited an opposition between the ἀπράγμονες σεμνοί, presented in a positive light and not treated as an ethical or political threat, and the ἀπράγμονες πόρνοι, corrupt and evil, but the identification of these categories as, respectively, the orthodox and the fake followers of Anaxagoras is hazardous.

137 Figures such as Callias have been identified as the kind of ἀπράγμονες σεμνοί to whom the chorus of *Demes* is alluding (see Napolitano 2012, 50–2, who also discusses Nicias as a 'good' ἀπράγμων). Rich and poor ἀπράγμονες may be the victims of demagogues and sycophants (see Ar. *Eq*. 261–3, *V*. 1037–42, and Eup. fr. 19; see Napolitano 2012, 52–3 and Olson 2016, 181–8). Telò (2007, 368–9) says that the ἀπράγμονες are, by definition, the young Athenians of the late 5th century BCE who hang out in the gymnasia, are involved in homosexual relationships, and are imbued with philosophical teachings, but this applies only to younger figures and not to people such as Nicias or Callias (see Napolitano 2012, 52–4).

138 Carter (1986, 63–75).

139 Carter (1986, 119–25). The young, effeminate city intellectuals who speak the super-standard variety of Attic described in Ar. fr. 706 are also an example of this category (see Section 3.1). Such individuals are probably alluded to in other fragments of *Demes* (fr. *104, on which see Telò 2007, 241–57 and Olson 2017, 385–8; fr. *116, on which see Telò 2007, 207–12, and in part. 210–2 on λαλέω, and Olson 2017, 418–21).

140 See Storey (2003, 151).

1375–81).[141] The 'bad' ἀπράγμονες are presented as effeminate and passive homosexuals (*Ach*. 716; *Nu*. 1022–3; *V*. 686–8), are suspected of being male prostitutes (*Eq*. 875–80), or at least of behaving as such to seduce other men (*Nu*. 979–80). They are also suspected of being of foreign parentage or of having been conceived in an adulterine relationship (see *Ach*. 704–5 and 710–2; MacDowell 1993, 262–4). Considering their aristocratic background and their sophistic inspiration, they represent oligarchic positions, and in fact, the allies of the politician attacked by Eupolis are described as his φίλοι and their group is an ἑταιρία, both of which indicate an oligarchic orientation. To support this interpretation of the passage of Eupolis' *Demes* we may compare Ar. *Nu*. 1007, in which the Better Argument opposes the corrupt habits taught by the Worse Argument, exemplified by many of the traits collected here, with the 'good' ἀπραγμοσύνη, which he recommends instead to Pheidippides to practise.

The politician described by Eupolis is consonant with the profile of the corrupt Athenian youths.[142] He is not the traditional demagogue, whose 'humble' familiar background and philistine profession would justify the claim that he is unable to speak 'good' Attic.[143] Indeed, as far as ἀττικίζω is concerned, it appears that Eupolis is saying that the politician would be prepared to fake a low variety of Attic to present himself as a man of the people, although he refrains from doing so to avoid embarrassment in front of his friends. Presumably, the politi-

141 See Cassio (1977, 32–6; 43–9).

142 For Telò (2007, 369–73), the ἀπράγμονες πόρνοι are people from the lower classes who enter the elite circles of the aristocratic ἀπράγμονες, but owing to their humble extraction must prostitute themselves. Telò's interpretation rests on the assumption that πόρνος must be taken in the literal sense of actual male prostitutes; hence, the reference to the κινητήριον must also be taken at face value. It is preferable to take πόρνος in a less literal sense, or in any case, to consider it a typical comic slander. On πόρνος 'male prostitute' and more loosely indicating a passive homosexual, see Arnott (1996, 685). Storey (2003, 152) too admits that πόρνος may refer to moral corruption. In addition, notice that the *hapax* κινητήριον is a comic neologism based on the names of assembly-places such as δικαστήριον or βουλευτήριον, and so the sense of the passage is figurative rather than concrete.

143 The reference to ἀπραγμοσύνη is also incompatible with this (see Storey 2003, 151). Telò (2007, 365 and 379–80) solves this difficulty by claiming that the demagogue and his group are a 'twisted' kind of oligarchic ἑταιρία. Tuci (2014) follows Telò and suggests that the politician attacked by Eupolis was originally a democrat who joined the oligarchs in the coup of 411. But how can the politician and his friends simultaneously be oligarchic ἀπράγμονες and represent a distinct group from the 'real' oligarchic ἀπράγμονες? And why would the politician be ashamed of speaking 'bad' Attic in front of his friends, if they are all from the lower classes or originally belonged to the democratic side? The 'paradoxical' interpretation results in a series of unnecessary complications.

cian and his friends form a linguistically coherent group, which shares the sociolect of the young intellectuals/politicians of their generation.[144]

In sum, the politician targeted by Eupolis is aware that adopting a lower form of Attic would be a successful strategy to obtain consensus and acquire political power. The gullibility of the masses is topical in 5th-century BCE sources.[145] Political transformism of this nature recalls figures such as Alcibiades (an eminent example of the corrupt youths of the *jeunesse dorée*, see Ar. *Ach.* 716 and fr. 205), although he is unlikely to be the person attacked by Eupolis in this passage (although he is often satirised in comedy).[146] Further, the fact that the politician is associated with people called πόρνοι may well indicate a willingness to debase himself to gain material profit – in this case, to obtain a political advantage.[147] Pretending to speak a low form of Attic would therefore be entirely compatible with this interpretation, and we might even consider it a form of prostitution.

3.4 'Good', 'bad', 'low', 'high': An Attic 'purism' *ante litteram*

Analysis of these four passages reveals that a form of proto-purism – or, at any rate, linguistic chauvinism – was an integral part of 5th-century BCE Athenian socio-political discourse. Several factors may have contributed to this including the socio-demographic changes in the Attic population, the evolving political scene, the appearance of new prominent figures, the prestige of new cultural trends and their influence on the upper strata of the population. All these elements are involved, in more or less explicit terms, in the sources examined above.

That which these sources present as a violation of 'good' Attic may be on both the sub- and the super-standard levels.[148] Either of these opposing tendencies is associated with certain demerits and may pose a threat to Athens' socio-political well-being. The fundamental problem that the sources emphasise is that the 'new'

144 Note that the young, intellectually trained συνήγοροι must have been renowned for their innovative way of speaking (see Ar. fr. 205; *Ach.* 685–8 and 703–18; *Eq.* 1375–81).

145 See especially Eur. *Supp.* 240–3 (see Section 3.1) and Ar. *V.* 666–8; 698–9. In the latter, compare the *hapax* verb δημίζω, indicating the politicians who pretend to be on the side of the δῆμος only to exploit it (see MacDowell 1971, 227; Biles, Olson 2015, 306).

146 See Dover (1993, 370–1). An illustrative depiction of Alcibiades' political transformism is offered by [And.] 4 (esp. 4.16 and 4.39).

147 This parallels the presentation of the pursuit of material profit as a form of debasement in the Old Oligarch (see Section 3.2).

148 Unfortunately, the extant sources offer relatively limited exemplification of what they consider sub- or super-standard Attic. In the previous sections, we have indicated some possible interpretations, and others may be considered. See also Willi (2010a, 105).

language that was seething under the surface of traditional Attic would ultimately undermine the social cohesion of Athens, in the sense that, unlike the more reassuring traditional Attic, the new language encourages and reflects the individuals' personalistic aspirations. Therefore, these sources recommend the preservation of a moderately conservative language that poses no danger to the good order of things. This presupposes the idea of a 'neuter' or 'unmarked' variety of traditional Attic that, although it is never really defined, should represent the 'pure' language.

The socio-political implications of this are clear. On the one hand, 'bad' Attic is associated with populist values. This usually reflects the behaviour of demagogues, who nominally perform good on behalf of the δῆμος only to exploit it in the interest of personal profit. 'Bad' Attic also exposes the politicians who are unfit for office by virtue of their backgrounds, as it reflects their lack of the personal qualities required to hold a leading position on the political stage. Note also that unscrupulous politicians may also pretend to use 'bad' Attic as a way of deceiving the δῆμος. On the other hand, super-standard Attic is perceived as equally dangerous. It is typically associated with the youths of the urban elites, who are not merely effeminate or prone to question the values of traditional education under the influence of the sophists but who as politicians are aggressive, unprincipled, unreliable, ready to deceive, and often nurturing oligarchic aspirations. This evidence indicates that any deviation from a balanced and traditional form of ἀττικίζειν, whether in the direction of adopting the super- or the sub-standard, may result in a failure to do what is considered good for Athenian politics. Thus, failing to ἀττικίζειν indicates failing to represent Athens' true interests. Somehow, it is still possible to detect in the use of this verb the kind of semantic duplicity of the verbs in -ίζω, indicating the adoption of a certain political side and a certain language.[149]

These conservative views about the Attic dialect are certainly influenced by the Athenian rhetoric of autochthony and the pride deriving from it (see Chapter 3), to the effect that the Attic dialect became a value in itself and an element of local identity that should be defended.[150] It is surely remarkable that two of the sources discussed above contain the first instances of ἀττικίζω in the meaning 'to speak Attic'. Interestingly, in these sources, the opposition is not drawn simply between Greek and non-Greek (e.g. according to the stereotype that the 'barbar-

149 See Casevitz (1991); Tronci (2013). Novokhatko (2020a) collects examples for the use of these verbs to indicate speaking a language.

150 The political and ideological relevance of preserving the Attic dialect is already an element in Solon's claim (fr. 36.7–12 West) that, thanks to his new legislation, he managed to return to Athens many Athenians who, having either gone into exile or having been sold as slaves, had forgotten how to speak Attic.

ians' are stupid),[151] or between Attic and any other Greek dialect. In a much more poignant sense, the opposition is deeply rooted within the very notion of ἀττικίζω, whereby speaking ('good') Attic is opposed to any violation of this standard, which is simply discarded as non-Attic. It is possible that this use of ἀττικίζω may also reflect the emerging notion of the primacy of Attic in the context of the Greek dialects, as indicated by the Thucydides passage in which non-Athenian ναῦται are admired by foreign Greeks for their acquired 'Atticness' in both language and way of life.[152] Moreover, since the Attic dialect and way of life serve as a model and an aspiration, they allow no half measures in the eyes of those who seek to defend them and the values they represent.[153]

4 4th-century BCE Attic and beyond: A language on the move, towards the koine

The 4th century BCE marks a turning point in Athenian history and culture. In the aftermath of her defeat in the Peloponnesian War, Athenian society entered a further period of progressive, though rapid, evolution.[154] Two main aspects are noteworthy. The loss of her maritime empire resulted in a seismic change in Athens' economy (nor would the Second Athenian League alter this significantly), and citizen taxation became Athens' main source of public income.[155] Additionally, by the 360s, the Athenian state was forced to introduce military conscription according to age group. These changes affected the way in which Athenian citizens viewed their role in society, and their interests became increasingly directed towards the private sphere. Indeed, contemporary sources stigmatise the behaviour of those 'bad citizens' who are solely concerned with their personal interests to the detriment of public well-being (e.g. trying to conceal their wealth and to avoid military conscription). It is not incidental that an increased interest in the management of the household and in the writing of λόγοι οἰκονομικοί are a

151 On the different degrees of sociolinguistic acceptability of foreign speakers in Aristophanes, see Willi (2002b, 142–9).

152 See Thuc. 7.63.3. On the identification of the non-Athenian ναῦται (metics?; paid sailors?), see Hornblower (1991–2008 vol. 3, 677–9).

153 On this 'ideal' representation of 'Atticness', see Chapter 3, Sections 2.5–6.

154 On the different socio-economic and socio-political characteristics of 4th-century BCE Athens, see Christ (2006) (who usefully compared 5th- and 4th-century BCE Athens and pointed out the differences in attitude); M. Valente (2014); M. Valente (2015). For a comprehensive and far-reaching analysis of the transformations of 4th-century BCE Athenian democracy, see Musti (1997, 175–241).

155 Unsurprisingly, taxation became a comic motif (see Di Giuseppe 2014).

4th-century BCE innovation.[156] Of course, this is not to say that self-interest was not also a concern of 5th-century BCE Athenians, only that, owing to the mutated social conditions, the pursuit of self-interest and the declining involvement in politics (in a broad sense) are distinctive features of 4th-century BCE Athenian society.

Amid these changing circumstances, the Attic dialect did not remain unaffected. The 4th century BCE was a time of highly influential development in the history of Greek. Although the naval empire had collapsed and despite the re-enactment of the League in the 4th century BCE, Attic continued to spread beyond the borders of Attica, partly because of the literary prestige of Athenian culture,[157] partly because of the lasting influence of Athens on trade.[158] Attic thus rapidly became a prestigious supra-regional variety, also exerting an influence on other local varieties, notably Ionic. This phenomenon resulted in the gradual development of an 'international' form of Attic that Albert Thumb influentially called *Großattisch*.[159] This type of Attic was characterised by the compromise between the retention of distinctively Attic features and the loss of others for which forms taken from other dialects, mostly (but not exclusively) Ionic, were introduced. It is possible that some of these innovative traits may already have been present in spoken Attic at an earlier stage, although they were avoided in literary and epigraphic texts that adopted a more conservative language. As already discussed, the bastardised Attic lamented by the Old Oligarch's *Constitution of the Athenians* may refer to this process at the lower end of the sociolinguistic scale, but the influence of Ionic was also detectable at the higher (literary) level (see Sections 2.1; 3.2; 3.3). The historical significance of *Großattisch* is that this new variety is the antecedent from which the koine, which has a predominant Attic basis enriched with elements of foreign (mostly Ionic) provenance, will eventually develop.[160]

156 See Pomeroy (1994, 31–40); M. Valente (2011, 5–10).

157 On the circulation of Attic dramatic literature abroad (e.g. comedy in Isoc. 8.14), see Taplin (1993); Taplin (2007); Bosher (2012); Poli Palladini (2013); Castellaneta (2021).

158 Note, also, that the Athenian colonists and cleruchs in the Aegean islands retained the Attic dialect and Athenian customs (see, e.g., Thuc. 7.57.2). This must have been another important factor in the dissemination of Attic abroad.

159 On *Großattisch*, see Thumb (1901); Thumb (1906); Horrocks (2010, 75–7). On the evidence from Attica and abroad and what it can reveal about the evolution of Attic and its influence on other varieties (notably, Ionic), see especially López Eire (1993); López Eire (1997); Crespo (2004); Crespo (2006). On the Attic elements in early Ionic inscriptions see Dover (1997, 86–7); Adrados (2005, 138).

160 On the early koine, including its development from *Großattisch*, besides the already mentioned studies by Thumb (1901) and Thumb (1906), see López Eire (1981–1982); Brixhe (1993); Brixhe (1996); Cassio (1998); Brixhe (2001); Adrados (2005, 177–8); Colvin (2009); Kaczko (2016).

As we shall see, evidence suggests that the Athenians were perfectly aware that their language was undergoing significant changes. A series of comic fragments from the 4th and early 3rd centuries BCE comment in very eloquent terms on this (see Sections 4.1; 4.2). But transformations were also gaining ground on the literary side. The 4th century BCE is a time of experimentation and evolution in the literary language. Pulls in different directions cause different genres and authors to interpret the dialectics between innovation and conservation differently. On the one hand, attention towards linguistic realism becomes more and more detectable (notably, in the language of comedy). In the new Athenian society, in which personal concerns predominated, it is unsurprising that the divide between the more colloquial language of comedy and the language of oratory, which is suited to formal situations, grew larger. On the other hand, literary Attic progressively developed into a more 'international' language, both in the sense that it developed into a linguistic variety that could be adopted by writers who were not Athenians and did not write exclusively or primarily for an Athenian audience (e.g. Aeneas the Tactician) and that Attic writers also began to experiment using new linguistic resources that looked beyond the local tradition (e.g. Xenophon).

4.1 Old and New Attic: Between bewilderment and curiosity

The main sources commenting on linguistic variation in 5th-century BCE Attic express polarised views concerning 'good' and 'bad' Attic and aim to emphasise the sociolinguistic implications of linguistic variation (see Section 2). In 4th-century BCE sources, also as a consequence of Athens' mutated conditions (see Section 4), the perception of linguistic conservatism as an element of socio-political distinction is far less evident, and the socio-political reflex of linguistic variation is not commented on.[161] As we shall see, new and/or uncommon uses may be pointed

161 We should briefly touch on the passage of Plato's *Cratylus* (418b.7–e.4) in which the Athenian women are credited with a more conservative language than men. The two examples discussed by Plato are the (alleged) pronunciation ἰμέρα in place of ἡμέρα and δυογόν (i.e. *δυαγόν) in place of ζυγόν, which serve to forge an etymological connection (among other options) with ἵμερος and δύω + ἄγω (see the catalogue of etymologies in *Cratylus* in Teodorsson 1974, 254–6). Scholars have attempted to take these etymologies as evidence that /ɛ:/ > /i:/ and /sd/ > /dz/ took place during Plato's lifetime (see, e.g., Willi 2003a, 161–2; Colvin 2020, 80–2). However, it remains difficult to trust Plato's passage. The other evidence for a 5th- or 4th-century BCE development /ɛ:/ > /i:/ is dubious (see Teodorsson 1974, 186; Threatte 1980, 165–70; Allen 1987, 74–5; Threatte 2007, 118–9; 131–4). One fails to see how δυ- might indicate initial [dz] (on the spelling variation of the sound corresponding to -ζ- see Teodorsson 1974, 139–40 and 225–7; Threatte 1980, 546–50). Plato's attempt to establish a

out and occasionally criticised, but this does not appear to give way to socio-political implications in terms comparable to what was observed in 5th-century BCE sources, and the discussion about such forms is not integral to a wider sociolinguistic or socio-cultural critique. It is also noteworthy that when Plato refers to a demagogic politician's lack of linguistic proficiency (*Alc*.1 120b.1–5), he clearly has in mind the stereotype of the demagogues as portrayed in 5th-century BCE comedy. This is an early example of the way in which later (even only slightly later) sources use (preferably) Old Comedy as a preferred lens through which to interpret Athens' sociolinguistic situation (and the Atticists will inherit this attitude).

For example, Demosthenes may ridicule Aeschines for his vocal mannerism (see D. 19.337–40) and his unnecessarily flowery and poetic diction despite his (allegedly) obscure birth (see, e.g., D. 18.127–8). There are, indeed, some similarities with the kind of abuse that we find in Old Comedy, but Aeschines' lack of command of 'good' Attic is not mentioned by Demosthenes, who focuses instead on his lack of refinement and good taste. Even in the case of Philip II, whose Greekness was dubious and who is often called a barbarian by Demosthenes, his command of Greek is never targeted.[162] Similarly, in the oration *Against Ctesiphon*, Aeschines says that Demosthenes was born to a Scythian mother and that, although his language was Greek, his πονηρία was not truly Greek or Athenian (Aeschin. 3.172). Revealingly, and unlike 5th-century BCE sources, no connection is made between faulty language and being non-Athenian or non-Greek.

Only twice do Demosthenes' speeches refer to allegations that the citizen status of people who speak in an incorrect or foreign-sounding fashion is dubious. This is unsurprising, and indeed, one of the people involved was likely a foreigner, while the other admittedly had lived abroad for many years. Therefore, the relevant point is that the use of 'good' Attic does not play the same political role as it did in the 5th century BCE. The more relevant case is the instance of σολοικίζω in Demosthenes, which occurs in *Against Stephanus 1* (45.30).[163] This speech was delivered by

meaningful etymological connection is evident (Teodorsson 1974, 258–60 too admits that these materials defy evaluation). On Plato's passage, see also Cuzzolin (2017).

162 This is also reasonable considering that the Athenian audience hardly ever heard Philip speak, and so questioning his manner of speaking and taking it as further proof of his being a barbarian would perhaps be less effective.

163 In Demosthenes' speech *Against Eubulides*, we have, in turn, an occurrence of ξενίζω 'to speak with a foreign accent' (57.18–9). In this speech (addressed to the Heliastic court in Athens), Euxitheus appeals against the decision of his deme, Halimus, which denied him citizen rights and reduced him to the status of metic. Euxitheus replies to a speech delivered by Eubulides, the deme's prefect. Among the motivations for doubting that Euxitheus' parents were both citizens (and, therefore, that Euxitheus too was a citizen), is the fact that Euxitheus' father had a foreign accent (cf. τὸ ξενίζειν αὐτοῦ). Euxitheus confidently refutes this allegation, explaining that his

Apollodorus of Acharnae (probably in 350/349).[164] The trial was a continuation of that involving Apollodorus and Phormio regarding Apollodorus' father's will, which was the object of Demosthenes' speech *For Phormio*. In *Against Stephanus 1*, Apollodorus accuses Stephanus of bearing false witness and Phormio of falsifying the will. In discussing Phormio's machinations, Apollodorus of Acharnae addresses the audience, saying that Phormio may be considered a contemptible barbarian because of his poor use of language; indeed, Phormio's non-Greek origins are repeatedly mentioned in this speech (see also 45.73 and 45.81).[165] However, Phormio's 'otherness' is rapidly set aside, and the speaker adds that while Phormio is in fact a barbarian insofar as he hates the people he should respect, he is second to none in committing petty crimes. The condescending remark about being a contemptible barbarian whose command of Greek is faulty is clearly secondary and only serves to introduce a rather different point (i.e. that Phormio is dishonest by nature), which also corrects the point made about being a barbarian; notice that in the final clause, it appears that being a barbarian would be the same as not being effective in committing anything.

Middle and New Comedy are undoubtedly the most important source for the growing awareness in 4th-century BCE Athenian society that the Attic dialect was undergoing important changes.[166] Several fragments address linguistic matters using identical or very similar formulations; a recurring scheme is to have one character use an uncommon form which the other character criticises or about whose meaning they ask for clarification. The fact that no precise parallel is known from Old Comedy might be attributable solely to chance, but the lack of any such example in Aristophanes speaks volumes, as does the fact that the only partial exception occurs in the late *Plutus*.[167] All this makes it tempting to consider this recurring comic scheme of Middle and New Comedy as further proof of

father's foreign accent, which he does acknowledge, is attributable to his having been taken prisoner and having lived abroad for many years.

164 On this speech, see Scafuro (2011, 215–30).

165 The oration *For Phormio* had also been recited by a supporter of Phormio (perhaps Demosthenes), according to MacDowell (2004, 151), either because of Phormio's poor Greek or because of old age.

166 See Cassio (1975, 395).

167 On the pragmatics of questions in this type of scene, see Thomson (1939, 148). The same question-and-answer scheme is possibly attested in the comic poet Alcaeus (fr. 2), where the form under discussion is δίπυροι. The attribution of this fragment is uncertain, though, and Eubulus (who is quoted alongside Alcaeus in one of the sources of the fragment, see Eub. fr. *17) may also be a candidate (see Orth 2013, 35–7). The lack of other parallels in Old Comedy might support the ascription to Eubulus. Yet, since Alcaeus is in several respects a representative of the transitional phase from Old to Middle Comedy, it would not be surprising that one of his fragments might

a distinctive sensibility of 4th-century BCE society towards linguistic innovation. As already discussed, the 5th-century BCE sources also show in rather explicit terms an awareness of the transformations that Attic was undergoing. However, while 5th-century BCE authors target innovation and, at the same time, hardly ever reflect on the evolution of the dialect, later sources appear to elicit the audience's curiosity and self-awareness regarding their changing language. Feigned surprise and astonishment at hearing new vocabulary is part of the comic game, and we should not consider all such cases to be faithful indications that a given form was unheard of in Athens. Rather, this evidence indicates how more modern language had become a pressing matter in 4th-century BCE Athens, so that the comic poets would relish exploiting this for dramatic purposes. Crucially, instead, such comic passages were taken at face value by later Atticist sources to extract prescriptions and proscriptions, as though the comic poet were expressing his own views about a contested linguistic topic.[168]

Let us begin with a fragment of Antiphanes (fr. 97) concerning the name of a fish species:

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contain the earliest example of a motif which would then become common starting from 4th-century BCE comedy.

168 Several other fragments, although interesting *per se*, for various reasons fall outside the aims of this discussion. Some focus primarily on *Realien* and other aspects of everyday life rather than on linguistic aspects (Amphis fr. 14.1–3; Diph. frr. 39 and 81; Philem. fr. 45). An interesting opposition between the use of ῥάφανος by 'us' (i.e. the Athenians?) and of κράμβη by 'you foreigners' is established in Apollod.Car. fr. 32 (on the dialectal distribution of these forms see Bagordo 2013, 156–7). We learn from Phot. π 26 (= Ael.Dion. π 2) that Philippides (fr. 37) made fun of κοράσιον in place of παιδισκάριον. Since the context is unknown, a more in-depth appreciation of this fragment is difficult. Nevertheless, it is highly likely that Philippides targeted a new formation, as is made clear by the distribution of κοράσιον in literary sources (κοράσιον is also proscribed by Phryn. *Ecl.* 50 and Poll. 2.17; on κοράσιον vis-à-vis its approved equivalents, see further Chapter 5, Section B.5.6.1; Section B.5.6.3). The wordplay in Alex. fr. 94 is between the older use of ποδαπός meaning 'from what country?' and the more recent semantic development of ποδαπός, meaning 'of what kind?' (see Arnott 1996, 247–9). Alex. fr. 148 contains the comic neologisms πεφιλιππίδωσαι 'You have become a Philippides' (see Arnott 1996, 438), but this has a limited bearing for the history of the dialect. The sense of Ἀττικιστὶ [. . .] λαλεῖν in Alex. fr. 200 is more likely that of speaking with the Attic wit rather than speaking Attic *tout court* (see Arnott 1996, 577–9; Section 4.2). On ἄκουσμα and ἀκρόαμα in Diph. fr. 121 see Gerbi (2024a). From Men. fr. 528, quoted by Σ^{b} α 2381 (= Phot. α 3137, *ex* Σ‴), we learn (despite some textual difficulties) that Menander used the adjective Ἀττικουργής to define ῥήματα, but it remains obscure whether Ἀττικουργής indicates actual words, which for some reason were recognisably Attic, or an Attic manner of speaking (e.g. the topical Attic wit). Thessalian καπάναι in Xenarch. fr. 11 must be part of a running joke, as suggested by καπανικός in Ar. fr. 507 (see Taillardat 1965, 122–3; Bagordo 2020, 58–9); καπάνη is also not a word that survives in late Attic or the koine.

πάνυ συχνὴ
σφύραινα. (B) κέστραν Ἀττικιστὶ δεῖ λέγειν.

(A): A very large σφύραινα.
(B): In Attic, you should call it a κέστρα.

The identity of the speakers may not be ascertained, but συχνή with Attic-Ionic vocalism indicates that the first speaker is most likely not a foreigner. Athenaeus quotes this fragment as part of a wider discussion about σφύραινα (7.323a–c):

> σφύραιναι. [. . .]. ὁ δὲ Δωρίων ‘σφύραιναν’, φησίν, ‘ἣν καλοῦσι κέστραν’. Ἐπίχαρμος δ’ ἐν Μούσαις κέστραν ὀνομάσας οὐκ ἔτι σφυραίνας ὀνομάζει ὡς ταὐτὸν οὔσας· [. . .]. καὶ οἱ Ἀττικοὶ δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ τὴν σφύραιναν καλοῦσι κέστραν, σπανίως δὲ τῷ τῆς σφυραίνης ὀνόματι ἐχρήσαντο. Στράττις γοῦν ἐν Μακεδόσιν ἐρομένου τινὸς Ἀττικοῦ ὡς ἀγνοοῦντος τὸ ὄνομα καὶ λέγοντος ‘ἡ σφύραινα δ’ ἐστὶ τίς;’, φησὶν ὁ ἕτερος· ‘κέστραν μὲν ὔμμες ὠττικοὶ κικλήσκετε’. Ἀντιφάνης ἐν Εὐθυδίκῳ· ‘πάνυ συχνὴ | σφύραινα. (B) κέστραν ἀττικιστὶ δεῖ λέγειν’. Νικοφῶν δ’ ἐν Πανδώρᾳ· ‘κέστραι τε καὶ λάβρακες’. Ἐπίχαρμος Ἥβας γάμῳ· ‘κέστρας τε πέρκας τ’ αἰόλας’.
>
> σφύραιναι. [. . .]. Dorion says: ‘spet, also referred to as a κέστρα’ (fr. 28 García Lázaro). Epicharmus in *Muses* (fr. 86), after mentioning a κέστρα, makes no reference to σφύραιναι, since they are the same fish [. . .]. Attic authors also generally refer to the spet as a κέστρα and rarely used the name σφύραινα. In Strattis’ *Macedonians*, for example, when an Athenian character, seemingly ignorant of the name, asks about it and says: ‘(A): What’s a σφύραινα?’ (fr. 29.1), the other man says: ‘(B): You Athenians refer to it as a κέστρα’ (fr. 29.2). Antiphanes in *Euthydicus* (fr. 97): ‘(A) An enormous σφύραινα. (B): You should refer to it in Attic as a *kestra*’. Nicopho in *Pandora* (fr. 14): ‘κέστραι and sea-bass’. Epicharmus in *The Wedding of Hebe* (fr. 43.1): ‘κέστραι and speckled perch’. (Translation by Olson 2008, 523).

As witnessed by the above passage from Athenaeus, the issue of the identification, or distinction, between κέστρα and σφύραινα was acknowledged by ancient culinary writers (Dorion, 1st century BCE (?)), though the general sentiment was that the two names indicate the same species. Athenaeus first treats Epicharmus using κέστρα rather than σφύραινα as an indication that he did not yet know the latter form, and then he comments that Attic writers too very rarely mention the σφύραινα. As proof, he quotes relevant passages from Strattis and Antiphanes, who attest to the fact that σφύραινα was an uncommon word to Attic ears. Finally, the occurrence of κέστρα in Nicophon (fr. 14), a poet of Old Comedy, may be intended to confirm the relative chronology of the competing forms.[169]

169 See also Poll. 6.50: σφύραινα· ταύτην δὲ καὶ κέστραν ὠνόμαζον. Owing to epitomisation, it is difficult to say what Pollux originally meant. It is likely that he too stressed that κέστρα was the older Attic form, which would be in line with Athenaeus and with the kind of remarks that Pol-

Owing to the fragmentary context, we cannot stretch the interpretation of the fragments of Strattis and Antiphanes too far. In Strattis, an Attic-speaker asks his Aeolic interlocutor the meaning of σφύραινα and is told that it is the same as the Attic κέστρα. In Antiphanes, things are the other way round, namely, the first speaker uses σφύραινα and is corrected by the interlocutor, who points out that the expected Attic form would be κέστρα. It thus appears that while in Strattis, σφύραινα is a foreign word used by a foreign speaker, in Antiphanes, σφύραινα is taken on by a less rigid Attic speaker who is therefore reproached by the interlocutor, who recommends κέστρα as the proper Attic form. This suggests that the point raised by Strattis and Antiphanes is rather different: while Strattis ostensibly makes fun of a foreign word (which was presumably beginning to enter the Attic usage), Antiphanes emphasises the growing use of such a word by Attic speakers.

That the poets of later comedy were sensible to linguistic innovations is also proven by the early appearance of the notion of lexical archaism in a fragment of Menander (fr. 330):

(A) οὐκ Ἔμβαρος εἶ.
(B) Ἔμβαρος; ἀρχαϊσμὸς οὗτος ῥημάτων

(A): You are no Embaros.
(B): Embaros? This [is] an old-fashioned choice of word.

A similar formulation is employed in Men. *Phasm.* 80: οὐκ Ἔμβαρός ἐσ[τιν οὗ]τος ('This is no Embaros'). As the ancient sources explain, Embaros was a proverbial figure of the old Athenian past, known in folklore for being smart: hence, the qualification ἀρχαϊσμός. Therefore, to say that someone is no Embaros is to say that they are slow-witted.[170] Despite the obscurity surrounding the speakers and the context of Menander's fragment 330, the remark made by (B) is interesting from several perspectives.

First, this fragment contains the oldest known instance of ἀρχαϊσμός, indicating a deliberate use of old-fashioned language.[171] That this is a new word is likely

lux himself offers in his treatment of fish names (just a few lines after the section on σφύραινα and κέστρα, he writes ὀρφός ἢ τὸ Ἀττικώτερον ὀρφώς).

170 See Gomme, Sandbach (1973, 680); Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 6,2, 212).

171 ἀρχαϊσμός was never a favourite word and concept in ancient literary criticism (see Lebek 1969, 70–1 n. 2; Schindel 1994, 332–4; Schindel 1997); it would become more common in late antique treatises, particularly on the Latin side, but it is also relatively poorly attested in Byzantine lexicographical and scholiastic compilations. This noun presupposes the verb ἀρχαΐζω, which is attested starting from Imperial prose in the sense of using an old-fashioned language or imitating

best seen in the light of the rapid growth in 4th-century BCE Attic of denominal/deadjectival verbs in -ίζω and, from these, deverbal nouns in -ισμός. The awareness of the historical evolution of Greek, and especially of Attic, is well documented in Classical sources,[172] and it is entirely possible that Menander derived the new word ἀρχαϊσμός from ongoing rhetorical discussions.[173] We cannot say whether the use of an old-fashioned expression was a means of characterisation of character (A); the same expression occurs in *Phasma* in the mouth of a slave, but this character's profile is almost entirely unknown.

Second, (B)'s remark closely recalls a passage of Aristophanes' *Plutus*, where the chorus says that the use of χαίρω to greet people is old-fashioned (322–5: 'χαίρειν' μὲν ὑμᾶς ἐστιν, ὦνδρες δημόται, | ἀρχαῖον ἤδη προσαγορεύειν καὶ σαπρόν· | ἀσπάζομαι δ' ὁτιὴ προθύμως ἥκετε | καὶ συντεταμένως κοὐ κατεβλακευμένως, 'Greeting you [saying] 'Good day!' (χαίρειν), fellow demesmen, is old and rotten. But I 'salute' (ἀσπάζομαι) you for your coming willingly and earnestly and not tardily'). The late date of *Plutus* and the innovative linguistic parameters adopted by Aristophanes in this play make it hardly incidental that it shares a similar concern for old-fashioned vocabulary with Menander's fragment. This contributes to strengthening the claim made above that 4th-century BCE Athenians were particularly sensitive to the evolution of Attic and the growing divide from the more conservative language.

A further case, having wider implications, is offered by a passage of Pollux comparing the use of the word κοιτών by Aristophanes (fr. 6) and Menander (fr. 614):

> Poll. 1.79: τῶν δὲ οἴκων (οἰκιῶν MAV) πρόδομος καὶ δῶμα καὶ δωμάτιον καὶ κοιτών (defic. MBC). εἰ γὰρ καὶ Μένανδρος αὐτὸ βαρβαρικὸν οἴεται, ἀλλ' Ἀριστοφάνης ὁ κωμῳοδιδάσκαλος

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the language of the ancients (see LSJ s.v.). The use of ῥῆμα in a sense different from 'verb', as in Menander's fragment, where it means 'word', is unproblematic (see LSJ s.v. ῥῆμα; Thierfelder in Körte, Thierfelder 1959 vol. 2, 295–6, followed by Kassel, Austin, *PCG* vol. 6,2, 212, indicates Ar. *Pax* 930–1 and Strat. fr. 1.44 as comic parallels; see also Philem. fr. 6.1–2 where ῥῆμα refers to the interjection οἴμοι).

172 Lebek (1969, 59–63) collects many instructive examples.

173 As part of his discussion of the origins of the rhetorical concept of archaism, Lebek (1969, 68 n. 1) sought to undermine the importance of ἀρχαϊσμός in Menander's fragment. He suggested that it does not indicate that that with Embaros is an old-fashioned expression, but that the story of Embaros is old, and to prove it, he took ῥῆμα to refer to the story of Embaros (which is impossible per se and is even less likely given the many parallel passages of Middle and New Comedy, many of which are discussed in this paragraph, in which old and new words are singled out). Lebeck's interpretation is entirely unsatisfactory and is motivated purely by Lebeck's claim that the origins of the rhetorical concept of archaism are Hellenistic at the earliest.

> τὰ τοιαῦτα πιστότερος αὐτοῦ, εἰπὼν ἐν Αἰολοσίκωνι· ‘κοιτὼν ἁπάσαις εἷς, πύελος μί’ ἀρκέσει’.
>
> [The parts] of the houses [are called] πρόδομος and δῶμα and δωμάτιον and κοιτών. Indeed, even though Menander (fr. 614) considers this [word] barbaric, nevertheless the comic poet Aristophanes, [who] in this kind of things [is] more reliable than him (i.e. Menander), [uses it] when he says in *Aeolosicon* (fr. 6): ‘Just one bedchamber will suffice for all (fem.), [equally] just one bathing-tub’.

A similarly positive judgement about κοιτών is likely to be expressed by Phrynichus.[174] The likeliest dramatic context for Menander's discussion of κοιτών is the familiar one whereby a first character uses a word that a second character criticises;[175] for simplicity's sake, Pollux evidently condensed this as though Menander himself were saying that κοιτών is 'barbaric', as though it were a proscription of sorts. That κοιτών may have raised some suspicion is unsurprising, considering that after Aristophanes and Menander, it is first attested in the Septuagint. Thus, it must have belonged to a new, arguably lower stratum of Attic. In this regard, the fact that Aristophanes used κοιτών in *Aeolosicon* is perfectly consonant with the tendencies in his later plays towards the use of a 'new' language (see Section 5.2).[176] Hence, Menander's character's likely critical remark on this form would be entirely in line with the other cases examined above, whereby a form that had entered 'New' Attic was singled out. This is also a confirmation that criticism of innovative language is not to be taken at face value, and in fact, it likely presupposes that a certain form was already familiar and possibly also undergoing expansion in Attic.

174 See Phryn. *Ecl.* 222: τὸ μὲν κοιτὼν †ἀδόκιμον† (Fischer here plausibly suspects <οὐκ ἀδόκιμον>, see translation), τὸ δὲ προκοιτὼν οὐ δόκιμον. ἡμῖν δὲ καλὸν χρῆσθαι τῷ Ἀττικῷ ὀνόματι· προδωμάτιον γὰρ λέγουσιν, ἐπεὶ καὶ δωμάτιον τὸν κοιτῶνα (‘κοιτών [is] <not> an unapproved [form], while προκοιτών [is] unapproved. But for us it is good to use the Attic form. For they say προδωμάτιον, since they also call δωμάτιον the κοιτών’). On Phrynichus' entry see Lobeck (1820, 253); Rutherford (1881, 321).

175 See Kock *ad* Men. fr. 30 *CAF*. Monaco (2023, 25) approves this conclusion and attempts a reconstruction of Menander's passage, but her proposed text – (A) . . . κοιτών . . . | (B) κοιτών οὐ δεῖ λέγειν, καὶ τοῦτο βαρβαρικόν – is untenable: it is metrically impossible, and βαρβαρικόν is more likely the adjective used by Pollux to condense what was in the fragment (one may compare the use of βάρβαρος and ξενικός by Ael.Dion. β 17 and Paus.Att. β 14 to comment on Philem. fr. 130, see Eust. *in Il.* 3.311.22–312.1).

176 Interestingly, a modern purist like Rutherford (1881, 321) is as baffled as the ancients and says that it is difficult to evaluate κοιτών in Aristophanes' *Aeolosicon* considering that this play 'must have teemed with para-tragedy'.

4.2 Professional languages and military jargon

One area in which later comedy shows a clear interest in new words is professional language and, more generally, the use of *voces propriae*. On the one hand, this demonstrates the growing attention to the use of more realistic language in literary Attic. On the other hand, it shows the awareness that Attic was acquiring new forms. A fragment of Menander (fr. 229) offers an interesting example with reference to the language of seafaring:

(A) οἱ δ' ἁρπάσαντες τοὺς κάδους <τοὺς> στρογγύλους
ὕδρευον ἀνδρειότατα † κή πόλις † πάλιν.[177]
(B) ἤντλουν λέγειν δεῖ, καὶ κάδους οὐ δεῖ λέγειν,
ἀλλ' ἀντλιαντλητῆρας

(A): Others, having taken the rounded jars, drew out the water (ὕδρευον) vigorously † . . . † again.
(B): One must say 'They bailed the water out' (ἤντλουν), and one must not say 'jars', but 'bilge-water-bailers'.

This fragment is quoted in an entry of the *Synagoge* tradition devoted to ἀντλιαντλητήρ.[178] Although the wider context is unknown, character (A) was evidently involved in a misadventure at sea (possibly culminating in a shipwreck, as so often in New Comedy), which they are now narrating to (B).[179] The general sense of this exchange is that (B) opposes technical to ordinary vocabulary; it is unknown whether (B) is more knowledgeable about seafaring because of their profession or is just being pedantic.

Firstly, (B) says that ἀντλέω is the proper word for 'to bail out bilge water' (see Thgn. 673),[180] whereas ὑδρεύω has a more generic meaning ('to draw water'). Secondly, the character explains that ἀντλιαντλητήρ, a compound of ἀντλία 'bilge water' (see Ar. *Pax* 17 and Olson 1998, 70–1) and the *nomen agentis* of ἀντλέω ('to

177 Regarding the textual problem, the more convincing option is to attribute the corrupt section of line 2 to (B), who would offer a first critical remark about the incorrect use of language by character (A). The likeliest suggestion is κἀπολεῖς πάλιν 'Do you mean to destroy me again?', put forward by Cassio (1975) (see Antiph. fr. 169.2).

178 See Σ^{b} α 1535 (= Phot. α 2129, *ex* Σ‴).

179 Since the fragment belongs to a play entitled *The Messenian Woman*, the play may be about a young girl who was separated from her father after a shipwreck, later became a courtesan (?), and was finally reunited with him.

180 LSJ s.v. I.1 also add Alc. fr. 305a.12 Voigt = fr. 305.col. 1.12 Lobel–Page for ἀντλέω meaning 'the bail out bilge water', but the sense is rather 'to draw water from the sea' in the sense of procuring oneself endless problems. Additionally, ἀντλοῦντες is the verb used by the commentator to gloss Alcaeus' ἀρυτήμενοι.

bail out', i.e. bilge water),[181] should be used in place of κάδος, which indicates a jar or vessel of a more generic nature (see LSJ s.v. I.1); notice that, as discussed by the sources of Menander's fragment, the form ἀντλίον 'bucket to bail out bilge water' was attested in Aristophanes (fr. 486) and Epylicus (fr. 6), which makes it very likely that Menander's ἀντλιαντλητήρ, an otherwise unattested form, was likely created *ad hoc* (however seriously it was taken by ancient scholarship).[182]

The fact that the comic neologism ἀντλιαντλητήρ stands side-by-side with ἀντλέω, which, in turn, is attested as a true nautical term already in Theognis, creates some comic effect and helps define the profile of speaker (B). This character is likely not advocating for some form of old-fashioned purism; rather, he recommends using the *voces propriae* of seafaring.[183] In this sense, Menander is likely to be making a parody, at one time realistic and tongue-in-cheek, of an increasing sensibility for 'specialised' language.[184] It is also noteworthy that, owing to the first-hand experience of many Athenians, the language of seafaring was likely not too highly specialised a professional language, and so here, Menander may play with (part of) his audience's familiarity with this type of vocabulary acquired in real life. Therefore, Menander's fragment reveals how later comedy provides evidence of a distinct interest in real-life language, and while some of the *voces propriae* may have a comic connotation, the nature of the scene is distinctly unlike,

181 The use of the *nomina agnetis* in -τήρ for instruments and objects is increasingly common (see Mayser, *Gramm.* vol. 1,3, 71–2; Chantraine 1933, 327–9).

182 The form ἀντλητήρ for the bucket used to bail out bilge water is also recorded in ancient lexica (see e.g. Poll. 10.31, Hsch. α 5520, Σ^{b} α 1533 (= Phot. α 2127, *ex* Σ‴)), but is never attested in literary texts. If this was a 'real' word, it would clearly render Menander's ἀντλιαντλητήρ, however exaggerated, even more 'realistic'. Besides Σ^{b} α 1535 (= Phot. α 2129, *ex* Σ‴), which evidently discuss ἀντλιαντλητήρ in Menander without considering it a comic compound, Eust. *in Od.* 2.33.14–8 says that according to an unnamed ancient authority (i.e. Menander) κάδος should not be used to refer to the bucket used to bail out bilge water. On these instruments, see Torchio (2021, 277–8).

183 While ἀντλέω is a real word, ἀντλιαντλητήρ is probably not. Character (B) may be portrayed as an alleged expert of seafaring who unwillingly makes up technical words just to credit themselves with the knowledge of the professional vocabulary, or maybe they are a true expert who is just full of themselves and therefore condescendingly recommends unnecessarily complicated technical vocabulary to the layman.

184 This recalls the third of the four categories of 'technical' language identified by Dover (1970, 16): 'Words which have the same sense in technical and ordinary language but are used more scrupulously and consistently in the former'. A similar formulation to that used by (A) occurs in a fragment of Pherecrates (fr. 81: κατάχεον αὐτῆς κάνύδρευσαι τὸν κάδον), and it must be the unmarked way of describing the action of drawing water from a well using a bucket (the verb being ἀνυδρεύομαι).

for example, the parody of the theories about the ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων in Aristophanes' *Clouds*.[185]

Another area in which the evidence from comedy is highly significant from a historical perspective is the language of the military. This subject lends itself well to wider comparisons. Indeed, recent scholarship has discussed how Xenophon, unlike Herodotus' and Thucydides' use of a high literary register to discuss war, adopted a more realistic approach and employed real technical military terminology, which is shared with contemporary sources using 'international' Attic (i.e. Aeneas the Tactician) and with the koine (notably, Polybius).[186] This attention to realism clearly lends a new nuance to Xenophon's historiography compared to earlier writers, and certainly reflects the transformations in 4th-century BCE warfare. A similar case can be made for comedy. Although the military subject is pervasive in all phases of Greek comedy, Athens' continuous state of military unrest during the 4th century BCE, the fact that military conscription according to age was first introduced in the 360s, and the growing professionalisation of warfare (of which the soldiers of Menander's comedy are an excellent example) certainly contributed to making this a relevant subject and one which the audience was able to understand by virtue of their close, direct or indirect, experience.[187]

Comic sources also offer evidence in support of this from a linguistic perspective: through imitation of military jargon, the comic poets offer a faithful representation of the evolution of Attic towards the koine.[188] A first example is a fragment of Philemon (fr. 130):

> βουνὸν ἐπὶ ταύτῃ καταλαβὼν ἄνω τινά.
> (B) τί ἐσθ' ὁ βουνός; ἵνα σαφῶς σου μανθάνω.
>
> (A): Having occupied some βουνός ('hill') up on top of this.
> (B): What is a βουνός? (I ask) to understand you clearly.

The fragment is quoted in an entry of Phrynichus' *Eclogue* (Phryn. *Ecl.* 332 = *Glossarium Italioticum* no. 9, *PCG* vol. 1, 304), in which Phrynichus, based on the exchange

185 See Huitink, Willi (2021).

186 See Huitink, Rood (2019, 31–2).

187 One may consider oblique references, such as Men. *Pc.* 4–6 (see Furley 2015, 92–3). Lamagna (2014) discusses Davus' report at the beginning of Menander's *Aspis* and the military strategy of Greek mercenaries and considers the understanding that the audience may have had of such aspects.

188 In some cases, the *voces propriae* of military language may present a *double entendre*, as in the case of ἀναβαίνω 'to climb (i.e. a wall)' and περικάθημαι 'to besiege' in Men. *Pc.* 232–4 (see Furley 2015, 137).

in Philemon, condemns βουνός as foreign to Attic and adds that it is a form commonly used by Syracusan writers. The other Atticist sources (Ael.Dion. β 17 and Paus.Gr. β 14), equally critical of βουνός, are known via Eustathius (*in Il.* 3.311.22–312.1). However, based on these sources, Eustathius also mentions a second instance of βουνός in Philemon's Νόθος (fr. 52), in which the word was apparently not criticised.

In Philemon's fragment quoted above, βουνός is clearly singled out as an odd choice of word to Attic ears. βουνός must have been a familiar word in Doric dialects.[189] Herodotus uses it as a word of the dialect of Cyrene (4.192.3, 4.199.1).[190] Pausanias mentions the cult of Hera Βουναία at Corinth, which likely derived its name from Βοῦνος, the son of Hermes (Paus. 2.4.7). An entry in Hesychius informs us of the existence of a Τοξίου βουνός in Sikyon – that is, a hill consecrated to Apollo (Hsch. τ 1134). The adjective βοῦνις, an early derivative of βουνός, is a Doricism in the lyric parts of Aeschylus' *Suppliant Women* (117; 129; 776).[191] However, βουνός will later occur hundreds of times in koine texts, beginning with Polybius, before giving rise to numerous derivations.[192]

The reason that the occurrence in Philemon is significant is that the fragment is likely to be part of a report from a military expedition; this conclusion is strengthened by the direct comparison with Davus' report in the prologue to Menander's *Aspis* (40–4);[193] note Menander's use of λόφος, which is in fact the

189 For Kaibel (1899b, 199), Phrynichus' claim (*Ecl.* 332 = *Glossarium Italioticum* no. 9, *PCG* vol. 1, 304) that βουνός was common in Syracusan poetry relates to its use by the Syracuse-born Philemon and by Aeschylus, who famously spent a long time in Sicily. Kaibel concludes that the attribution of βουνός to Sicilian Greek should not be taken seriously. This is likely to be incorrect. First, unlike the ascription of Sicilian words to Aeschylus in Ath. 9.402b, Phrynichus does not state merely that βουνός is a Sicilian word but that it was used in Syracusan poetry; while Philemon is Syracusan by birth and Aeschylus lived in Sicily, it is highly unlikely that their writings could be called Syracusan poetry. Moreover, Phrynichus mentions Philemon after pointing out that words of foreign origin should not be adopted by those who aspire to use 'pure' Attic; therefore, Philemon exemplifies 'contaminated' Attic. Hesychius (β 945) attests to the use of βουνός also in Cypriot Greek.

190 See Aly (1906, 101) and Solmsen (1906, 756–7), followed by the standard lexica (see LSJ s.v. and *DELG* s.v.) and by the commentators of Herodotus (see Asheri, Lloyd, Corcella 2011, 715).

191 Solmsen (1906, 757) inferred that they were intended to carry an Argolic colouring, which would be consistent with the subject of the tragedy, but this remains speculative.

192 See *DELG* s.v. βουνός. Some remarks on the occurrences in documentary texts are provided by Lee (1983, 114–5).

193 See also Ferrari (2001, 1056 n. 2).

'good' Attic equivalent of βουνός.[194] Dietze (1901, 44), followed by Kassel and Austin (*PCG* vol. 7, 295 *ad* Philem. fr. 130), comments that speaker (A) in Philemon' fragment must be a 'miles peregrinus'. This is an unnecessary conclusion.[195] The speaker is likely using the military jargon, which βουνός may well have penetrated from the Doric dialects; indeed, the use of mercenary soldiers of various provenance must have greatly favoured the 'internationalisation' of military language during the 4th century BCE, and it is perfectly possible that βουνός entered the koine through military language as well.[196] Philemon, therefore, is an early witness to this process of 'internationalisation' of the Attic dialect. Finally, we should not be troubled by the fact that, as witnessed by Eustathius, Philemon (fr. 52) also used βουνός in the comedy entitled Νόθος without presenting it as an odd choice of word. As already discussed in the case of κοιτών (see Section 4.1), we should not take at face value the criticism of βουνός in Philemon's fragment 130, as though this word were truly unheard of. It is quite likely, rather, that βουνός, despite being rightly perceived as 'new' in Attic, had already become familiar and was also in expansion.

A comparable (but hitherto unnoticed) example of the comic use of innovative military jargon is offered by a fragment of Antiphanes (fr. 169):

(A) ἂν κελεύῃ μ' ἡ σταθμοῦχος (B) ἡ σταθμοῦχος δ' ἐστὶ τίς;
_ ⏑ ἀποπνίξεις με καινὴν πρός με διάλεκτον λαλῶν
(A) ἣ τέτακταί μοι στέγαρχος.

(A): If the σταθμοῦχος orders me.
(B): Who is the σταθμοῦχος? . . . You will choke me by talking this new language to me.
(A): She who is assigned to me as στέγαρχος.

Pollux (10.20–1) quotes this fragment in a discussion about the admissibility of σταθμοῦχος ('landlord').[197] It has recently been suggested that this fragment might contain a stock scene in which a cook – in this case, character (A) – is reproached by an interlocutor, character (B), for using unfamiliar, high-sounding

194 The fact that Menander uses λόφος is probably a result of the elevated tone of the passage, an emotional monologue with poetic and tragic reminiscences (see Ingrosso 2010, 125; 127; 129; 135; 155; 159–60; 161).

195 Considering ταύτῃ at line 1, the character cannot be a Doric speaker.

196 Huitink, Rood (2019, 31–2) offer some useful remarks on Xenophon's use of military jargon and its significance for the historical development of Greek.

197 Pollux's conclusion is that σταθμοῦχος, though not free from suspicion and to be used with caution, should not be wholly rejected either in light of its occurrences in Aeschylus and Antiphanes (see S. Valente 2013, 158 n. 90).

vocabulary, which is here described as καινὴ διάλεκτος.[198] Indeed, the vocabulary employed by (A) is uncommon. σταθμοῦχος is very rare, attested in Antiphanes only for the second time after Aesch. fr. 226: σὺ δ' ὁ σταθμοῦχος εὖ κατιλλώψας ἄθρει ('You, housemaster, squint the eye and take a good look'; from the satyr-play *Sisyphus*); in koine texts, except for grammatical and lexicographical sources, σταθμοῦχος is undocumented, save for a passage of Polyaenus and of Clement of Alexandria. στέγαρχος is equally rare: besides Antiphanes, it is attested once in Herodotus (1.133.4) and then only in ancient erudition. According to this interpretation, σταθμοῦχος and στέγαρχος would count as poeticisms. However, this is far from the only possibility.

Olson (2022, 259) argues that σταθμοῦχος is elevated language in Aesch. fr. 226. However, κατιλλώψας (from κατιλλώπτω 'to squint the eye') is clearly not a poeticism (being paralleled only in Philem. fr. 115.4), and the imperative ἄθρει is recurrent in comedy (5x in Aristophanes).[199] Further, in the Herodotean passage, στέγαρχος indicates the person who runs a place (private or public) in which Persians meet and talk, but it does not in any way resemble elevated vocabulary. It may well be a less than ordinary word (and the fact that Herodotus uses it does not prove that it was ordinary Ionic either), but this does not imply that it is a poeticism: it may be a word of relatively general meaning to indicate the person who runs a place. More importantly, as a development of the (already Classical) use of σταθμός indicating the quartier in which soldiers (and travellers) reside (LSJ s.v. I.3), already in the Hellenistic period, σταθμοῦχος is common in documentary papyri to indicate the keeper of a house in which soldiers are assigned to sleep (18x in papyri from as early as the mid-3rd century BCE, see *SB* 6.9556 (= TM 5787) (Arsinoites, 245 BCE), P.Stras. 2.92 (= TM 3919) (Oxyrhynchites, 244–243), and P.Enteux. 13 (= TM 3290) (Arsinoites, 222 BCE); see also Polyaen. 7.40.1).[200] The early date of several of these papyri is particularly relevant as it offers a close comparandum to Antiphanes' fragment.[201]

Therefore, Antiphanes' fragment is likely to involve not a wordy cook but a soldier who uses military jargon.[202] According to this new interpretation, στέ-

198 See Kassel (1974, 122) (= 1991, 311); Olson (2022, 258–9). This kind of formulation does not apply exclusively to comic cooks' speech.

199 In principle, one might claim that σταθμοῦχος is a poeticism used to create a contrast with more ordinary language, but there is no positive indication of this.

200 Note, however, that military jargon may not be the sole area in which the word is used in post-Classical times (see Clem.Al. *Strom.* 1.20.98.1 and *IGLS* 3,1.770.7 [Antiochia, 6th century CE]).

201 The fact that σταθμοῦχος was still very much alive in military vocabulary in Imperial Greek, as documented by later papyri, explains Pollux's interest.

202 Notice that, in the light of the early parallels in Aeschylus and Herodotus it would be hard to accept that σταθμοῦχος and στέγαρχος are καινὴ διάλεκτος, and the parodic neologisms of comic cooks are quite different (see Antiph. fr. 55, discussed by Olson 2023, 206–7).

γαρχος, which is unattested in documentary sources, may be either another item of specialised vocabulary that simply did not enter the koine or, more generally, another uncommon word that Antiphanes used to enhance the comic effect of this dialogue. However, as in the Herodotean passage, it may also be a generic word intended to explain σταθμοῦχος, and this is indeed the more likely conclusion; note also that Pollux (10.20) treats στέγαρχος on the same level as στεγονόμος, which he does recommend elsewhere as the good word (1.74). This new interpretation of Antiphanes' fragment would also work well with the verbs κελεύω (line 1) and particularly τέτακται (line 4).[203] Thus, it appears that this fragment of Antiphanes should be placed on a par with that of Philemon containing βουνός as evidence of the dissemination of new words in 'international' Attic and subsequently in the koine via military jargon.[204]

To conclude, the comic sources discussed in this and the previous section are of considerable importance not only for our understanding of the evolution of Attic and the interest in real-life language (rather than, e.g., the sophistic parody of *Clouds*) but particularly because they document the Athenians' consciousness of the evolution of their language and of the sociolinguistic changes regulating the use of certain words. As evinced by the comparison with Demosthenes, a prerogative of these sources is that they attest to an awareness of language change that had different connotations to those of the previous century. While they do not appear to be advocating for a specific variety of Attic as 'proper' and 'distinctive', they explicitly play with the audience's sensitivity to innovative usages with which they were familiar from their own lives. Evidence of this nature cannot be taken acritically, as though the simple fact that a fragment comments on a new word should mean that no resistance was mounted against linguistic innovation. Comparison with contemporary oratory indicates that the use of more conservative language was still perfectly normal in specific contexts. Rather, these sources' importance lies in their showing the clear perception of the ongoing changes in Attic and the fact that this also resulted in a gradual shift from more conservative

203 On this verb, Olson (2022, 258–9) comments that the speaker may feel constrained to stay there and that this may be owing to the notorious unpleasantness and abusive manners of female innkeepers. This psychological nuance is difficult to detect owing to the brevity of the fragment, although it remains possible that the scene involved a contrast between a soldier and a female innkeeper (and κελεύω at line 1 might perhaps support this).

204 Additionally, the fragment derives from a comedy entitled Ὄβριμος (literally 'The Strong'), and so it has been tentatively, though plausibly, suggested that the central character may have been a *miles gloriosus* (see Olson 2022, 255). Of course, this does not mean that character (A) in Antiphanes' fragment must be the one referred to by the play's title, but it is perfectly possible that among the play's main themes were soldiers and military life.

to more open linguistic conventions in the literary language, as we shall explore in greater detail later in this chapter (see Section 5).

4.3 Speaking Attic (and) Greek: From 'international' Attic to the koine

The Attic dialect's projection beyond the borders of Attica and its effects did not go unnoticed, and the Athenians surely became progressively aware of the growing divide between the (more or less) conservative Attic dialect and the new *Großattisch*, which was spreading rapidly throughout the Greek world to culminate in the koine. While in the previous section we examined the main 4th-century BCE texts that bear witness to the Athenians' acknowledgement of the rapid evolution that the Attic dialect was undergoing, in the present section, we shall focus on two key sources that reflect the emerging awareness of the dialectic between Attic and the koine. Interestingly, these sources also voice different attitudes towards the latter. Of course, we cannot take any of these texts at face value. Nevertheless, these opposing approaches must reflect the ongoing tension between innovation and conservation.

The ideal starting point is a deservedly famous fragment of the comic poet Posidippus (fr. 30), who was active in the first half of the 3rd century BCE. In this fragment, the opposition is drawn between the verbs ἀττικίζω ('to speak Attic') and ἑλληνίζω ('to speak common Greek'):

> Ἑλλὰς μέν ἐστι μία, πόλεις δὲ πλείονες·
> σὺ μὲν ἀττικίζεις, ἡνίκ' ἂν φωνὴν λέγῃς
> αὐτοῦ τιν', οἱ δ' Ἕλληνες ἑλληνίζομεν.
> τί προσδιατρίβων συλλαβαῖς καὶ γράμμασιν
> τὴν εὐτραπελίαν εἰς ἀηδίαν ἄγεις;
>
> Greece is just one, but the cities are multiple. You speak Attic when you speak your dialect (whichever [your native dialect may be]);[205] we, the Greeks, instead, speak Greek. Why do you care so much for syllables and letters and turn wittiness into odiousness?

205 The sense of σὺ μὲν ἀττικίζεις, ἡνίκ' ἂν φωνὴν λέγῃς | αὐτοῦ τιν' is not entirely clear. According to our interpretation, indefinite τιν(α) must have a generalising function and is key to the interpretation. One may compare τις accompanying nouns preceded by an article to indicate a specific case as reflecting a more general one (see K–G vol. 1, 662–3; LSJ s.v. A.II.10.b; Favi 2020, 370 on [Epich.] fr. *295.3–4); in Posidippus, the specifying function of the article is supplied by αὐτοῦ (one may compare the use of πᾶς in place of the article in the same type of construction in Soph. *Ph.* 174–5: ἀλύει δ' ἐπὶ παντί τῳ | χρείας ἱσταμένῳ, translated by Schein 2013, 155 as 'he is affected by madness by every [item] of need, whatever [it might be], as it arises'). Therefore, the

The speaker is apparently addressing someone who, we might guess, had previously advocated for the use of more conservative Attic.[206] To judge from the fragment, the speaker's interlocutor must have been drawing a sharp opposition between 'speaking Attic' and 'speaking Greek', which is likely an opposition between parochial Attic and innovative koine Greek. The speaker criticises the pedant's fastidiousness and his unpleasant behaviour, recommending instead a more open-minded outlook: all Greeks speak (koine) Greek, irrespective of their native, local dialect, and so one must welcome this shared language. We do not know the speaker's identity, nor do we know anything about the wider context around this brief fragment. In any case, there is no reason to assume that the speaker cannot be an Athenian, since they may very well be an Athenian who is simply more open to koine Greek and thus defends this variety.[207]

Posidippus' fragment contains several remarkable features. The formulation Ἑλλὰς μέν ἐστι μία, πόλεις δὲ πλείονες (line 1), to claim that Greek language is one, notwithstanding its multiple varieties, is not new.[208] However, the use of ἑλληνίζω to indicate neither the opposition between Greek and a non-Greek language nor the idea of speaking 'correct' Greek but a 'common' form of Greek is new and significant, particularly considering that the local variety to which ἑλλη-

opposition is drawn (at least potentially) not only between Attic and common Greek but between any local variety (including, but not limited to, Attic) and common Greek; thus, Attic is singled out because the speaker's interlocutor is an Attic speaker, but the same observation would apply to any other variety. Alternatively, φωνή could mean 'word' or 'phrase' ('You speak Attic, when you use an expression/word of yours', i.e. of your dialect), but this is unnecessarily specific. Other scholars generally avoid assigning τιν(α) any function (see Pfister 1951, 95). McInerney (2012, 259) takes αὐτοῦ to mean 'here'.

206 The source is a passage of *On the Cities of Greece* by the 3rd-century BCE periegetic writer Heraclides Criticus (*BNJ*^{2} 369a F 3.7; see Arenz 2006; McInerney 2012; McInerney 2019). Heraclides objects to the use of ἑλληνίζω as meaning 'to speak correct Greek', arguing that the verb indicates speaking shared, inherited Greek. Heraclides' discussion stems from an excursus on the geographic, ethnic, and linguistic definition of Ἑλλάς: it originally pertained to Thessaly, but in more recent times it is used extensively for Greece. In light of this, some modern scholars (following Salmasius) have wrongly inferred that the speaker in Posidippus is Thessalian (see Kassel, Austin, *PCG* vol. 7, 577).

207 Indeed, their language is Attic or koine. αὐτοῦ in place of σ(ε)αυτοῦ is well-paralleled in late Attic (see Chapter 5, Section B.4.1.2). Anyway, dialectal differences are regularly passed under silence in later comedy, in which every character, irrespective of their origin, speaks Attic (e.g. the Cypriot Crateia and her father Demeas in Menander's *Misoumenos*).

208 See Chapter 3, Section 1.1.

νίζω is opposed is Attic.[209] The remark about speaking Attic as having a local connotation (ἡνίκ' ἂν φωνὴν λέγῃς | αὐτοῦ τιν') appears to acknowledge the Athenians' awareness that they must adopt a more 'internationalised' language when abroad or when dealing with foreigners, which is precisely the point about the development of *Großattisch* and then of the koine.

But does the fragment pose a sharp divide between Attic and Greek, as though speakers of Attic were an entirely different group from speakers of Greek? Or does it pursue a milder approach, one that holds that – whatever the local variety of which any Greek is a native speaker – all Greeks speak Greek, and so one should avoid overly narrow views about language and identity and accept instead the supra-regional koine? The more inclusive reading appears more convincing. While ἀττικίζω and ἑλληνίζω are discrete entities, they are not separate; rather, they are presented as opposing poles along the same linguistic continuum, so that the 'Atticiser' (and, potentially, speakers of any variety that has claims to primacy or exclusivity) is invited to maintain an open mind towards koine Greek. Therefore, the 1st personal plural in οἱ δ' Ἕλληνες ἑλληνίζομεν should be taken to include the 'Atticiser' along with any other dialectal variety, consistent with the view that, at least for some, the koine was initially perceived as not merely another dialect but as 'an abstract concept which can subsume the koine as well as the dialects' (Morpurgo Davies 1987, 18).[210]

Furthermore, Posidippus' reference to εὐτραπελία as a quality that is being spoiled by Attic over-zealousness warrants closer attention. εὐτραπελία roughly overlaps with 'wittiness' and therefore is normally used (regularly in a positive sense, as a sign of mental versatility) in discussions of ethical and rhetorical subjects.[211] This does not necessarily mean that, in the original context of the fragment, some witticism was the object of conversation, and εὐτραπελία may refer more in general to a certain good quality of character in which the speaker's interlocutor is evidently found to be lacking. It is crucial to point out that the Athenian wit is topical.[212] Take the case of Alexis' fragment 200:

ἐπιπονώτερον
<ἔργον> μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον οὐκ εἴληφ' ἐγώ,
ἀφ' οὗ παρασιτῶ. μεμβράδας μοι κρεῖττον ἦν

209 See Morpurgo Davies (1987, 7; 26 n. 28), although she accepts the ill-founded connection with Thessaly (see above n. 206).

210 See also Cassio (1993, 86–8), who examines the works and doctrines of later grammarians.

211 Good exemplification in LSJ s.v.

212 But note that the 'versatility' (εὐτραπέλως) of the Athenian brand of education is already praised in a well-known section of Pericles' λόγος ἐπιτάφιος, in which Athens is described as the παίδευσις τῆς Ἑλλάδος (Thuc. 2.41.1).

> ἔχειν μετ' Ἀττικιστὶ δυναμένου λαλεῖν.
> ὀνησιφόρον ἦν τοῦτο.
>
> By Dionysus, since I live the life of the parasite, I have never taken up a more tiresome business! It would have been better for me to eat sprats with someone who can speak in the Attic manner. That would be remunerative.

The speaker is a parasite who complains about his patron, possibly a *miles gloriosus*. According to the convincing interpretation by Arnott (1996, 577–9), the parasite is not saying that the patron is unable to speak Attic (at least, this is not the point made in the fragment) but rather that he lacks the Athenian wit. Thus, being an Athenian is not simply a racial or dialectal matter but also involves behavioural aspects, such as witticism. To return to Posidippus' fragment, even those who claim to speak proper Attic (ἀττικίζω) may fail to do so properly, as instead of the characteristic Athenian witticism, their manner of speaking is filled with unpleasantness.

An even more relevant parallel for Posidippus' fragment is offered by a passage of an earlier text: Isocrates' *Antidosis* speech (353 BCE). In praising Athens as a sort of Mecca of rhetoric, Isocrates mentions that the city promotes success thanks to its dialect, the wittiness of its inhabitants, and their fondness for discussion (Isoc. 15.295–6):

> χρὴ γὰρ μηδὲ τοῦτο λανθάνειν ὑμᾶς, ὅτι πάντων τῶν δυναμένων λέγειν ἢ παιδεύειν ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν δοκεῖ γεγενῆσθαι διδάσκαλος, εἰκότως· καὶ γὰρ ἆθλα μέγιστα τιθεῖσαν αὐτὴν ὁρῶσιν τοῖς τὴν δύναμιν ταύτην ἔχουσιν καὶ γυμνάσια πλεῖστα καὶ παντοδαπώτατα παρέχουσαν τοῖς ἀγωνίζεσθαι προῃρημένοις καὶ περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα γυμνάζεσθαι βουλομένοις, ἔτι δὲ τὴν ἐμπειρίαν, ἥπερ μάλιστα ποιεῖ δύνασθαι λέγειν, ἐνθένδε πάντας λαμβάνοντας· πρὸς δὲ τούτοις καὶ τὴν τῆς φωνῆς κοινότητα καὶ μετριότητα καὶ τὴν ἄλλην εὐτραπελίαν καὶ φιλολογίαν οὐ μικρὸν ἡγοῦνται συμβαλέσθαι μέρος πρὸς τὴν τῶν λόγων παιδείαν. ὥστ' οὐκ ἀδίκως ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ἅπαντας τοὺς λέγειν ὄντας δεινοὺς τῆς πόλεως εἶναι μαθητάς.
>
> You must not ignore the fact that our city is thought to be the teacher of all those who are skilled in speaking and teaching. And this is reasonable, for people see that the city makes available the greatest rewards for those who have this ability and provides the greatest number and variety of opportunities for exercising them for those who choose to compete and wish to engage in such activities. Furthermore, everyone here acquires experience, which most of all produces the ability to speak. In addition, they think that our common dialect, and its moderation, our witticism, and our fondness of discussing contribute significantly to our culture of discourse. Hence, they are right to think that all who have skill at speaking are students of Athens. (Translation by Too 2008, 79–80, with modifications).

As part of a celebration of rhetorical training, Isocrates says that Athens has become the capital of oratory. Oratory and rhetorical training are integral to Athenian society and culture and have contributed significantly to Athens' prestige.

Some typical features of Athenian culture have favoured this. Two pertain to the linguistic sphere: the fact that the Attic dialect has become prominent all over the Greek world (κοινότης) and the fact that it is more moderate (μετριότης) than other dialects.[213] The other two aspects are the wittiness of the Athenians and their fondness for discussion. Finally, Isocrates adapts Pericles' claim in Thucydides' funeral oration and argues that every skilled orator is a pupil of Athens.[214] All this is fully in line with Isocrates' programmatic cultural panhellenism and his views regarding the leading role that Athens and Athenian culture are expected to play in this process. Thus, the passage from *Antidosis* is frequently compared with the passage from *Panegyricus* in which Athens is celebrated as having moved far beyond every other Greek city and having turned Greekness into a cultural, rather than strictly racial, category (4.50).[215] Interestingly, this also suggests that one can learn to be Greek and that Athens played a leading role in achieving this internationalisation of Greek culture, as already discussed in Chapter 3, Section 2.5–6. In light of this, it would be entirely consistent with Isocrates' panhellenism to suspect that the μετριότης of the Attic dialect consists in its ideal balance between parochialism and internationalism.

Despite the earlier date of *Antidosis*, there exist several important similarities between this passage and Posidippus' fragment, particularly the fact that Isocrates refers to the properties of the Attic dialect and to the Athenians' witticism in a context that is concerned with the celebration of Athens.[216] These sources portray a

213 As plausibly argued by some commentators (see Norlin 1929, 349 n. d, followed by Marzi 1991, 306 n. 186), Isocrates probably opposes Attic to the proverbial softness of Ionic and the harshness of Doric. On the softness of the Ionians also from the perspective of their language, see Section 3.1; Chapter 3, Section 3.1. Too (2008, 232) comments that τὴν τῆς φωνῆς κοινότητα καὶ μετριότητα refers to 'the historical consistency of the Attic dialect' and, for this, refers to Hdt. 1.57–8. This seems to miss the point. Not only does Herodotus say that the Athenians were originally Pelasgians who then learned the Greek language to abandon their own, but he also says that it was the Greek people as a whole who consistently used the Greek language (on the Herodotus passage see Chapter 3, Section 2.5).

214 On the funeral oration see Chapter 3, Section 2.5–6.

215 See Marzi (1991, 306 n. 187); Too (2008, 232).

216 In contrast with other occurrences, this instance of εὐτραπελία has more often been taken as a reference to flexibility of mind rather than witticism (notice that Too translates it as 'flexibility', which is modified in the text above; see also Norlin 1929, 349; Marzi 1991, 306). This is an unnecessary complication. First, Athenian witticism was famous (see above). Further, εὐτραπελία, meaning 'witticism' in the sense of a mental propension towards humour and levity, is not solely a rhetorical quality, as it also has a significant ethical component; as evidence of this, we may just mention Aristotle's magnificent depiction of youth in *Rhetoric*, at the end of which the youths are described as φιλευτράπελοι and characterised by εὐτραπελία (2.12.1389a.3–1389b.12); on εὐτραπελία as an ethical virtue in Aristotle, see Walker (2019). Other translations of this sen-

picture that differs considerably from the protectionist and exclusivist attitude encountered in 5th-century BCE texts. The passage of Isocrates relates closely to Athens' new aspirations to international influence and prestige. The fragment of Posidippus would appear to represent the refusal of the more parochial attitude of conservative Athenians to embrace instead the more open-minded attitude of late-Classical Athens. However, from at least one perspective, Posidippus' fragment introduces a shift compared to Isocrates: Posidippus presents Attic as one of the dialects and the Athenians as one ethnic group among the Greeks. This does not indicate that the historical significance of the Attic dialect and of Athenian culture, as described by Isocrates, are called into question, but it is nuanced, to say the least. This recalls the ways in which Hellenistic scholarship on dialects regarded Attic as one among the other local varieties.[217]

This does not mean that 'conservative' Attic was to die without fighting. A similar debate about the 'conservative' and 'innovative' language occurs in a fragment of the comic poet Euphron (fr. 3), who like Posidippus was active in the first half of the 3rd century BCE:

> (Πυ.) ἐπὰν δὲ καλέσῃ ψυγέα τὸν ψυκτηρίαν,
> τὸ τευτλίον δὲ σεῦτλα, φακέαν τὴν φακῆν,
> τί δεῖ ποιεῖν; σὺ γὰρ εἶπον. (Β.) ὥσπερ χρυσίου
> φωνῆς ἀπότισον, Πυργόθεμι, καταλλαγήν.
>
> (Pyrgothemis): When he (?) calls ψυγεύς a ψυκτηρίας, σεῦτλον a τευτλίον, φακέα a φακῆ, what should one do? You tell me!
> (B): Pyrgothemis, return the profit (obtained) from the word, like from (the change of) gold coins.

This fragment belongs to a play entitled Ἀποδιδοῦσα ('The woman who gives back'), whose plot is unknown.[218] Two characters discuss language. Pyrgothemis asks what

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tence evidently miss the mark (see López Eire 1981–1982, 38, who takes εὐτραπελία and φιλολογία as qualities of the φωνή, i.e. as governing τῆς φωνῆς like τὴν [. . .] κοινότητα καὶ μετριότητα; this is also unlikely because εὐτραπελία is introduced with καὶ τὴν ἄλλην, and so it represents a standalone element in the enumeration).

217 See Chapters 6 and 7.

218 Unlike other recent translations (R. Cherubina in Canfora 2001 vol. 2, 1248; Olson 2009, 459), we take καταλλαγή as indicating the profit made by the money changer (see LSJ s.v. I.2; speaker B metaphorically invites Pyrgothemis to return the 'profit' she made in changing 'good' with 'bad' words), καλέσῃ as the 3rd person active, εἶπον as the 2nd person imperative active of the alphathematic aorist εἶπα (see Chapter 5, Section C.3.2.1), and the sequence σύ + γάρ + imperative to indicate that speaker B is especially qualified to answer or that they have already discussed the subject (see Ar. *Pax* 1279; *Ec*. 607).

one should do with someone who uses forms that are unfamiliar in Attic, such as ψυγεύς (a wine vessel used to cool the beverage) in place of ψυκτηρίας, σεῦτλον ('beet') in place of τευτλίον, φακέα ('lentil soup') in place of φακῆ.[219] We shall discuss these forms shortly. Owing to the lack of τις in the protasis, it is possible that the unidentified person whom Pyrgothemis reproaches had already been mentioned; this might mean that other mistakes had also been examined, unless Pyrgothemis focused on other aspects of the person's behaviour. Speaker B replies with a metaphor derived from the practice of moneychangers – namely, he suggests that Pyrgothemis return to this person the profit made in exchanging words of unequal worth (i.e. 'good' and 'bad' forms), as a moneychanger would do when changing gold coins. Owing to the fragment's brevity and the lack of any other information about the play's plot, we are left to speculate about the identity of the speakers and the broader context of this exchange. It is possible, in any case, that Pyrgothemis was a haughty woman (as her name, or nickname, would eloquently suggest),[220] whose pretence of using 'pure' Attic sounded somewhat ridiculous and pretentious.[221] Accordingly, we might compare the first element of her name with the metaphorical use of πυργόω in Aristophanes' *Frogs* to indicate Aeschylus' use of solemn words (Ar. *Ra.* 1004).

The forms stigmatised by Pyrgothemis are recognisably late Attic, possibly Ionicising, or quite simply already the koine forms. ψυγεύς is a rare word that is otherwise attested in literature only in Alex. fr. 65 (where it does not receive any qualification).[222] The erudite sources are keen to stress that it is the modern form

219 Arnott (1996, 432) suspected, based on the reference to σεῦτλον in Alex. fr. 146, that Euphron's fragment was the parody of a foreign doctor. However, none of the forms discussed belongs to medical vocabulary (on σεῦτλον/τεῦτλον see Hunter 1983, 126; the ψυγεύς is a wine vessel used to cool the liquid, see Arnott 1996, 58; the φακῆ is a common dish).

220 According to *LGPN* s.vv. and *LGPN-Ling* s.vv., personal names with the first element Πυργ(ο)- attested from the second half of the 6th century BCE include Πυργαλίων, Πύργαλος, Πυργέα, Πυργίας, Πυργίων, Πύργος, Πυργοτέλης, Πύργων. Those with a second element -θεμις are many more (69x). In a name of this kind, Πυργο- must function as an intensification of the base (as in Ὑψίθεμις; see also Ἀβρόθεμις, Ἀγνόθεμις, Ἀριστόθεμις, etc.). Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 5, 286) describe it as 'nomen magnificum' and say that it would be more in place in Plautus than in New Comedy.

221 The form ἐπάν is common in Middle and New Comedy and so is entirely compatible with Pyrgothemis being haughty. The same applies to εἶπον from the alphathematic εἶπα (see above n. 218). Pyrgothemis was perhaps coupled with an uneducated husband whose way of speaking she loathes (one may think, e.g., of Strepsiades and his wife in Aristophanes' *Clouds*). Is she, then, the Ἀποδιδοῦσα of the title, who maybe initially returned to her husband or father something that she had been given (e.g. the dowry or a gift from her husband)?

222 Arnott (1996, 193) comments that the use of ψυγεύς in place of its more common Attic equivalents is unclear.

corresponding to ψυκτηρίας or ψυκτήρ.[223] Note, also, the short [a] in ψυγέα, which violates the usual Attic prosody (Chapter 5, Section B.2.8). Regarding σεῦτλον in place of Attic τευτλίον, it was definitely considered a dialectal, non-Attic feature (see Alex. fr. 146, where σεῦτλον in place of τεῦτλον is one of the hallmarks of the Doric doctor, but it is also Ionic); it is, however, also the koine form.[224] Finally, φακέα is the non-contracted equivalent of φακῆ. Besides an occurrence in Epicharmus (fr. 30), φακέα is unattested in literary (also Ionic) and documentary sources.[225] φακέα should perhaps represent the 'simplified' retention of the more transparent form (i.e. the contracted φακῆ is less clearly a nominative form than φακέα) as happens with other similar forms (i.e. κωλέα in place of κολῆ, λεοντέη/λεοντέα in place of λεοντῆ, etc.);[226] this squares well with the avoidance of a variety of contracted stems in late Attic and then predominantly in the koine (i.e. contracted thematic nouns and adjectives; 'contracted' genitive and accusative, singular and plural of the *eu*-stems; accusative singular and plural of the *eu*-stems).[227]

Euphron's fragment provides further evidence of the growing separation between a conservative and an 'international' Attic, which, by Euphron's time, is essentially the koine.[228] At least one of the linguistic features highlighted in the fragment – namely, the non-contracted φακέα – is either a low late-Attic feature or must be regarded as already a koine form. In any event, it is possible that Pyrgothemis, who defended 'good' Attic, was not presented in an entirely positive light, and so, while the Athenians were certainly conscious of the growing divide between 'conservative' Attic and the koine, it is far from certain that the general view must have been consonant with the kind of indignation expressed by char-

223 See Heracleon Gramm. 7 Berndt = Ath. 11.503a (where Euphron's fragment is quoted and which is probably the reference for Heracleon's comment that τοὺς δ' Ἀττικοὺς καὶ κωμῳδεῖν τὸν ψυγέα ὡς ξενικὸν ὄνομα) and Hsch. ψ 264.

224 This consonantism is discussed by Lucian in *The Consonants at Law* (9). σεῦτλον is the transmitted reading at Antiph. fr. 71.1, apparently without any justification (there is no indication of foreign speech; notice too πατάνια rather than the later form βατάνια), and therefore Volkmar Schmidt (see Kassel, Austin, *PCG* vol. 2, 349) suggested restoring the expected Attic τεῦτλον (approved by Olson 2023, 267–8).

225 One would expect it to surface at least in documentary papyri, in which φακῆ is common.

226 See Lobeck (1820, 78–9); Meineke (*FCG* vol. 4, 490). Notice that the transmitted κωλέα Anaxipp. fr. 1.38 has rightly been emended into κολῆν ἢ by Kaibel. Indeed, the non-contracted inflection (which is post-Classical) is foreign to Attic.

227 See Chapter 5, Section B.2.3; Section B.2.7; Section B.2.8. One may also compare the uncontracted *s*-stems in Aeneas the Tactician (see Vela Tejada 1991, 125–6). See also Section 5.2 regarding ἔπη/ἔπεα in the 4th-century BCE *defixio* Peek, *Kerameikos* III.C.3.

228 It is also possible that Pyrgothemis concentrates specifically on the Ionicising features in the early koine, perhaps advocating for retaining the Attic equivalents.

acters such as Pyrgothemis. Interestingly, this passage represents the first, hitherto unnoticed example of the use of the metaphor of coins and money with reference to the comparative quality of words, which would also be commonly exploited in Atticist lexica.[229] It is possible that exchanges of this nature and the kind of vocabulary and images adopted to express the unequal value of old and new forms may have directly inspired the later scholars who, perceiving the more and more increasing divide between Classical Attic and the koine, recommended the more conservative and archaicising language.

5 The 'new' language of a brave new world: 4th-century BCE literary Attic

As already discussed, the 4th century BCE was a key transitional phase in the evolution of Attic, during which the dialect's role as a means of expressing Athenian identity changed considerably compared to the 5th century BCE. The literary language did not remain unaffected, although some literary genres document this better than others, which in turn tend to adopt a more conservative language.

In the first place, the 'international' literary Attic used by 5th-century BCE authors such as Thucydides and Antiphon finds further development in the innovative language of Xenophon, who programmatically rejects the parochial form of Attic in favour of an ampler linguistic palette, simultaneously more inclusive and forward-looking, that welcomes colloquialisms, poeticisms, and foreign elements to create a highly variegated language that better suits the needs of his equally varied literary production. Second, already in the early 4th century BCE, the language of comedy undergoes a paradigm shift: as part of the ongoing transition towards the 'new' and 'international' Attic that precedes the koine, the poets of Middle and New Comedy employ a more realistic language, increasingly adopting elements that were previously foreign to the literary Attic and confined to informal registers. Finally, the 4th century BCE also sees the affirmation of Attic as the international literary language to be used also by non-Athenian authors, such as Aeneas the Tactician, who wrote for the wider Greek audience rather than for a primarily Athenian one. Their adoption of literary Attic constitutes proof of the dialect's emancipation from the narrowly localistic dimension and its transformation into a truly international language that rapidly became the literary language of all Greeks.

229 See Lamagna (2004a); Kim (2023). See also Chapter 2, Section 3.1 on evaluative terminology.

This picture, however schematic, reveals that the 4th century BCE was a dynamic phase of experimentation in literary Attic, and for this reason, it eluded, and partly continues to elude, attempts to rigidly define the boundaries of 'pure' Attic. Indeed, the terrain on which the ideological clashes between the Atticist lexicographers became more heated coincides precisely with the evaluation of the role that 4th-century BCE Attic literary sources should have for the purpose of defining the kind of Attic that is worthy of imitation. The main 4th-century BCE sources used by the Atticists are the orators, Plato, Xenophon, and the poets of Middle and New Comedy. Some of these, notably Demosthenes and Plato, are considered by the Atticists to be among the most authoritative models of Attic together with Aristophanes.[230] Other orators receive a less conciliatory treatment: for example, Atticist lexicographers occasionally stigmatise the unapproved forms used by Lysias and Hyperides.[231] In any case, the language of Xenophon and especially that of Middle and New Comedy are undoubtedly those that created the greatest difficulties for the Atticists' attempts to define Classical Attic. In fact, while these are Classical writers, their language is considered defective in several respects, in that it adopts 'innovative' forms, colloquialisms, dialectalisms, and poeticisms.

However, the expectations of ancient lexicographers and the parameters by which they judge the quality of a writer's language presuppose an ideological and anti-historical concept of 'pure' Attic. In fact, neither Xenophon nor the language of Middle and New Comedy are examples of 'contaminated' Attic as opposed to the 'pure' Attic of, e.g., Demosthenes. Rather, compared with the more conservative language of oratory, these writers are more open to adopting elements of 'New' Attic in a way that closely mirrors the social and cultural transformations of 4th-century BCE Athens. Thus, both ancient and modern scholarship has deceptively considered the language of 4th-century BCE oratory to be the canon of 'pure' Attic, when, in fact, it presents a crystallised and depurated form of the dialect.[232] Of course, this does not imply that innovative traits are absent from the

230 Still, on occasion the peculiarities of their language are underlined (for Plato see, e.g., Moer. δ 33, ε 39, and σ 25).

231 On Lysias' reception in Atticist lexicography see Phryn. *Ecl.* 90, 323, and 330. On the innovative features of the language of Hyperides, see López Eire (2002).

232 See Adrados (2005, 160), 'we are dealing with a somewhat artificial regularisation of Attic prose, beneath which strong forces were stirring which would end up creating *koine*'. Similar conclusions are already formulated by Wilamowitz (1969, 481) (in a paper originally delivered in 1928); Thumb, Scherer (1959, 304; 311–2). On the features of 4th-century BCE prose, see Adrados (2005, 154–60). Dover (1968b, 83–6) discusses the evidence from Lysias showing that the language of oratory, despite the plain style, is more remote from comedy's more colloquial language and style.

language of the Attic orators, but they are generally present to a lesser degree than in the language of Xenophon or in Middle and New Comedy.[233]

To conclude, the 4th-century BCE writers who adopt 'innovative' Attic embody the overcoming of the tension between conservation and innovation that was already operating during the 5th century BCE and that anticipated the affirmation of 'international' Attic as the literary language of the entire Greek-speaking world and its subsequent evolution during the Hellenistic period.

5.1 The language of Xenophon

Xenophon's language is a province of studies that, despite repeated calls to arms, has yet to attain full maturity.[234] Besides a few studies that, although useful, are of comparatively more limited scope and follow in the footsteps of earlier scholarship, in recent years, important contributions by Luuk Huitink and Tim Rood have begun to change this condition of relative stasis, suggesting a new interpretative framework in which to historically place Xenophon's language. We shall provide a brief overview of the state of the art and then explain in what ways Huitink and Rood have re-defined the ways in which scholarship should approach Xenophon's Greek.

The language of Xenophon has long posed a problem for ancient and modern scholars alike. The opinion of ancient lexicographers, notably those of Atticist orientation, is instructive.[235] Xenophon's language was not an undisputed model of Attic, in that he was responsible for using a 'contaminated' language that resulted in a mixture of poeticisms, dialectalisms, and koineisms. The Atticist lexica often single out forms attested only in Xenophon and more generally stress his highly 'unorthodox' language.[236] Largely similar views have been upheld by modern

233 Detailed references to the language of 4th-century BCE oratory with respect to the evolution of Attic are provided in Chapter 5.

234 The standard work on Xenophon's language remains Gautier (1911). See also Rutherford (1881, 60–74); Cavenaile (1975); V. Gray (1985, 170–2); Pomeroy (1994, 9–15); Lipka (2002, 46–53); V. Gray (2006); V. Gray (2007, 22–9); V. Gray (2011); V. Gray (2017); Huitink, Rood (2019, 23–32); Huitink, Rood (2020); Favi (forthcoming a).

235 On the ancient reception of Xenophon's language, see Münscher (1920, 163–80); Sgobbi (2004). A more positive view of Xenophon's language is presupposed by the Atticist lexicon contained in the 6th-century CE P.Oxy. 15.1803 (see Favi 2022t, 319–20).

236 To mention but the most famous cases: ὀδμή in place of ὀσμή, which is reproached for being Ionic (Phryn. *Ecl.* 62; *PS* 97.21–2; Poll. 2.76; *Antiatt.* o 13; [Hdn.] *Philet.* 304); ἠώς in place of ἕως, which is reproached for being too poetic (Phot. ε 2535); apocopated ἀγκράτος in place of ἀνὰ κράτος, which is also lamented as a poeticism that one should avoid (Σ α 79 = Σ^{b} α 158 = *Su.* α 250 (*ex*

scholars, whose judgements regarding Xenophon's language have been cautious at best, if not downright negative.[237] As is clear from the structure of the lexicon produced by Sauppe (1869) and the monograph by Gautier (1911), the two standard reference works for Xenophon's language, that which has attracted most (negative) attention is the blending of words unique to Xenophon or first attested in Xenophon and then in the koine; dialectalisms, such as Ionicisms, Doricisms, or both; poeticisms; and words used by Xenophon with a special meaning. Although this linguistic 'contamination' is particularly apparent in the lexicon, the phonology and morphology of Xenophon's language also contain some surprises, as exemplified (to mention but a few cases) by forms with Ionic and poetic phonology (according to the ancient sources, Xenophon used ὀδμή and ἠώς, and his writings also offer relatively ample evidence of apocopated prefixed verbs)[238] and by the productive use of normally recessive morphemes (notably, archaisms such as the *nomina agentis* in -τηρ), and the extensive use of other suffixes to create neologisms (notably, abstract nouns in -σύνη).[239]

The underlying assumption shared by ancient and modern scholars is that all the seemingly 'exceptional' features in Xenophon's language should be explained according to the three main categories of dialectalisms, poeticisms, or koineisms. Therefore, the widespread view is that Xenophon falls short of adhering to an ideal notion of 'good' or 'pure' Attic, a notion first conceived by Atticist lexicography and then borrowed by default by modern scholars. The late-antique lexicographer Helladius (4th/5th century CE) already explained Xenophon's composite language as a consequence of his having travelled far and wide throughout Greece and the Near East and encountered speakers of many varieties of Greek and of non-Greek languages.[240] Despite some critical voices,[241] this explanation has also been accepted by modern scholars.[242]

We owe to Huitink and Rood a fundamental change in perspective that has enabled us to re-think the approach and conclusions of ancient and modern scholar-

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Σ′), Σ^{b} α 276 = Phot. α 184 (*ex* Σ‴; Phryn. *PS* fr. *72)); ἀκμήν in place of ἔτι, which is faulted as a post-Classical usage (Moer. α 149; Phryn. *Ecl.* 93).

237 See the examples collected by Huitink, Rood (2019, 24). The chauvinistic analysis by Rutherford (1881, 160–1) is particularly amusing.

238 However, not all cases of apocopated prepositional prefixes are poeticisms. On καμμύων in X. *Cyr*. 8.3.27–8, see Section 5.2.

239 On these categories see Gautier (1911, 43–7; 77; 79; 160); Favi (forthcoming a).

240 See Helladius *ap*. Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 279.533b.25–8.

241 See Dover (1997, 110).

242 See Adrados (2005, 160).

ship.[243] Huitink and Rood have demonstrated that the notion that Xenophon was unable to write 'good' or 'proper' Attic is unfounded. First, Xenophon evidently interacted with other Athenian literature, and so he cannot simply have forgotten what Attic was like. More importantly, however, the very notion of 'pure' or 'genuine' Attic, the benchmark by which Xenophon is considered unsuccessful, is clearly misguided, being an ideologically loaded and essentially anti-historical concept. Indeed, scholarship has customarily taken for granted that the language of 4th-century BCE Attic prose, especially oratory, corresponds to the 'pure' Attic vernacular, which came to maturation and developed as a literary language after the Ionic influence, which was so significant in early Attic prose, gradually waned.[244] However, if we examine 4th-century BCE literary Attic from a wider perspective, considering the significant developments related to the emergence of 'international' Attic and the convergence of Attic and Ionic, we must conclude that the truth is actually the opposite.[245] The language of prose, particularly oratory, is more likely a construct, a 'purified' diction which deliberately avoids marked traits, both those which belong to innovative or colloquial Attic and those which, however consecrated by literature, were considered non-strictly Attic. In this sense, the comparison between the language of Xenophon and that of Middle and New Comedy is probably more revealing about 4th-century BCE Attic than the language of Demosthenes. We should add that the idea of 4th-century BCE literary Attic as a more mature literary language that gradually emancipated itself from the influence of Ionic is misleading. Since, as we discussed above (see Section 2.1), the Ionic features of early Attic prose are not mechanical imports into literary Attic, it would be perverse to envisage a process whereby a form of Ionicising early literary Attic was then supplanted by the 'genuine' Attic of 4th-century BCE oratory.[246] Rather, the apparently more 'genuine' Attic of 4th-century BCE oratory compared with Thucydides or Xenophon is further proof that oratory adopts a deliberately conservative and more selective language than more open-minded prose writers, such as Thucydides, Antiphon, and Xenophon and, we may add, Middle and New Comedy.

In light of this, there is no reason to assume that Xenophon failed to write good Attic or that, to successfully write in Attic, he should have adopted the same approach as the orators of his time, even more so given that the entirely different

243 Huitink, Rood (2019, 23–32); Huitink, Rood (2020). Several important observations, which go in the same direction as Huitink and Rood, were also made by López Eire (1981–1982, 28–30; 41).

244 See Huitink, Rood (2020, 425–6); Section 5.

245 On 'international' Attic see Section 4.

246 Commenting on the poeticism δοῦπος in Xenophon (*An.* 2.2.19) and Thucydides (3.22.4), Rutherford (1881, 168) remarks that the occurrence in Thucydides is 'an indication of the immaturity of Attic in the historian's time'.

literary genre(s) he practised must have presented him with different needs and possibilities (also compared to oratory).[247] The key outcome of this change in perspective is that the very categories by which ancient and modern scholars have considered Xenophon's language exceptional ought to be systematically re-thought. Huitink and Rood offer many examples of this.[248] To begin with, some of the words that Xenophon shares with tragedy may originally have been colloquial traits that were then excluded from literary language. Second, the forms that Xenophon shares with Ionic literature may also be Attic archaisms that Xenophon revived or that may have had a subterranean life while being kept outside the realm of literary language. Regarding dialectal forms, they may be examples of innovative 4th-century BCE Attic or may serve as the mimesis of foreign diction, but they may also imbue Xenophon's language with a more 'international' aura. Similarly, it has long been acknowledged that poeticisms often fulfil a precise function, that of creating pathos.

To conclude, we owe to the most recent scholarship the long-awaited definition of a convincing interpretative framework of Xenophon's language. Not only has this new approach proven more consistent, preventing the unwelcome consequence of having to interpret the individual features of Xenophon's language as discrete pieces of a larger jigsaw puzzle, but it also allows the definition of a more pluralistic form of literary Attic in line with the new trends of 4th-century BCE Attic literature and culture.

5.2 The language of Middle and New Comedy

Among the various Greek literary languages, the language of comedy has regularly been considered, equally in ancient and modern times, to be the closest approximation to the vernacular.[249] However, not all phases of Attic comedy have been cred-

247 See also how Pomeroy (1994, 14), in comparing the uneven evaluations of Xenophon's language and style among ancient and modern critics, offers the important remark that 'one conclusion is obvious: not being an orator, Xenophon does not observe the restrictions and rules that the orators show; his style is characterized by diversity rather than by uniformity'. Pomeroy also refers to the praise of Xenophon's stylistic versatility by Dio Chrysostom (18.14–7), who considers Xenophon a model for every kind of oratory and for every occasion.

248 See Huitink, Rood (2019, 27–31). On military jargon, see Section 4.2.

249 Modern scholars explicitly indicate comedy, together with oratory and the inscriptions, as the most reliable source of information about spoken Attic. See Colvin (2014, 166): 'If a word or a grammatical form appears in at least two categories of the following list, which is generally regarded as conclusive evidence that it was current in spoken Attic: (a) either Lysias or Demosthenes; (b) Aristophanic comedy (not in choral sections); (c) Athenian prose inscriptions'.

ited with the same level of trustworthiness as documents written in the kind of Attic that scholars variously indicate as 'good', 'real', or 'pure'. Indeed, while the poets of Old Comedy are typically considered to constitute eminently reliable evidence of 'good' Attic (although not all of them are on the same level),[250] the poets of the later phases of Attic comedy – namely, Middle and New Comedy – have often been regarded with suspicion even by more open-minded scholars, both ancient and modern. Nonetheless, it is precisely these later phases in the history of comedy that are worthy of closer inspection for the purposes of our research on linguistic purism. We shall analyse the peculiarities of the language of Middle and New Comedy in greater detail in the next chapter; in this section, we shall provide a more general presentation of the evolution of the language of Attic comedy.

The language of Attic comedy is especially varied, and multiple registers may be adopted for a variety of purposes. Previous scholarship has investigated this aspect thoroughly.[251] It is particularly interesting for our purposes that comic language admits of several innovative linguistic features that likely belonged to spoken Attic and point further towards the koine. However, some features of colloquial Attic admitted in early Attic prose are largely avoided by Aristophanes and the other poets of Old Comedy (see Section 2.1). Interestingly, however, these features would soon become increasingly common in Middle and New Comedy. At first glance, it would be tempting to explain these 'modern' elements in the language of Middle and New Comedy in diachronic terms – that is, as indications of the development of 'international' Attic and as a prelude to the koine. However, despite this seemingly straightforward explanation, things are more complicated.

In an important study, Willi (2003b) thoroughly investigated the language of *Plutus*, Aristophanes' most recent preserved play (388 BCE). Having collected and discussed a wealth of innovative linguistic features which occur in this play but are unparalleled in Aristophanes' earlier comedies, Willi explained that such linguistic peculiarities cannot possibly be accounted for solely in light of the play's date – that is, as a mere reflection of a sudden diachronic development of Attic. Rather, a gradual shift in the defining linguistic parameters must have occurred in the language of Attic comedy, the consequence of which was the inclusion of more colloquial (and even low-class) features and 'international' (especially Ionic) elements to achieve realism.[252] This process is certainly not limited to Aristo-

250 See Tribulato (2024).

251 To mention just a few contributions (which also provide further references), see López Eire (1996b); Colvin (1999); Willi (2003a); Redondo (2016).

252 This increased realism is also discussed by Dickey (1995) in relation to forms of address in Aristophanes and Menander. It is surely no coincidence that the only parallel in Aristophanes for the fragments of Middle and New Comedy commenting on 'new' words is the passage of *Plutus*

phanes. To mention just one other example, Alcaeus is another poet of (late) Old Comedy who appears to have used seemingly 'deviant' forms, and, in fact, several of his fragments are quoted by the *Antiatticist* and other open-minded Atticist sources precisely because they bear witness to forms which are unexpected in 'pure' Attic.[253]

Willi's conclusions about the language of *Plutus* thus shed light more widely on the transitional phase from Old Comedy to Middle and then New Comedy in the context of the emerging 'international' Attic.[254] This shift in linguistic paradigms also mirrors the major socio-political transformations taking place in 4th-century BCE Athens, which surely exerted a significant effect on the literary language, which, in the case of comedy, was verging towards an increased realism.[255]

That the language of Old Comedy was different from that of Middle and New Comedy was widely acknowledged in antiquity.[256] An instructive example is provided by a passage of *Prolegomena de comoedia* 3.42–5 Koster, which states that 'the poets of Middle Comedy did not employ the poetic style, but through familiar language they have rhetorical qualities, so that the poetic style is rare in them. Instead, they are all entirely concerned with the plots'. This is a perceptive (although possibly not neutral) observation.[257] However, it did not find wider diffusion among ancient

in which the use of χαίρειν for greeting is described as 'old and rotten' (Ar. *Pl.* 322–5). See also the discussion of Men. fr. 330 at Section 4.1.

253 See Orth (2013, 15–6). Other cases are discussed by Willi (2010c, 473–6).

254 See Section 4. On Menander's language as a form of 'international' Attic, see López Eire (2002).

255 See Willi (2003b, 66–8) (with previous bibliography on *Plutus*). As observed by Willi (2003a, 169), 'the transition from Old to Middle Comedy is one of the symptoms of an increasingly 'privatized' and domesticized Athenian world'. This also makes the para-tragic or para-dithyrambic passages of Middle Comedy even more interesting (see Dobrov 2002).

256 The opposition between Old Comedy and (Middle and) New Comedy was thus used for the periodisation of the different stages of the Attic dialect (see Phryn. *Ecl.* 390 and *Ecl.* 391, schol. Thuc. 1.30.1a). How this may have impacted the Atticists' perception of the chronological differentiation of Attic and their appreciation of different phases of the dialect will be discussed in *Ancient Greek Purism* Volume 2. See also Chapter 7, note 217 on how the Greek grammarians address the diachronic evolution of Attic.

257 See Nesselrath (1990, 49–50; 241–2), who discusses the various qualifications attributed by *Prolegomena de comoedia* 3 to the main poets of Greek comedy. Notice that Cratinus is described as ποιητικώτατος for his reproduction of Aeschylus' style: since Eupolis is similarly described as δυνατὸς τῇ λέξει for being an imitator of Cratinus (3.34 Koster), the sense is likely that Cratinus' powerful style was reminiscent of Aeschylus' (see Silk 2000, 304–6). As always, the first prize is for Aristophanes, who is described as μακρῷ λογιώτατος, best of all comic poets, an imitator of Euripides, and very refined in choral songs (3.36–7 Koster). See also *Prolegomena de comoedia* 5.1–7 Koster: τῆς κωμῳδίας τὸ μέν ἐστιν ἀρχαῖον, τὸ δὲ νέον, τὸ δὲ μέσον. τῆς δὲ νέας διαφέρει ἡ παλαιὰ κωμῳδία χρόνῳ, διαλέκτῳ, ὕλῃ, μέτρῳ, διασκευῇ. [. . .]. διαλέκτῳ δέ, καθὸ ἡ μὲν νέα τὸ

scholars, who typically explain the peculiarities of the language used by later comic poets as a weakness rather than a sign that they may be, in fact, even closer to 'real' Attic than the poets of Old Comedy.[258] In light of this, the role assigned to Middle and New Comedy (and to the 'minor' poets of Old Comedy) in the canon is precisely the area in which dissent between 'strict' and 'open-minded' Atticist lexicography arose.[259]

Pollux's discussion of κοιτών exemplifies this quite explicitly, demonstrating that the canon is the guiding criterium for Atticists more than any other aspects (see also Chapter 1, Section 4.3). While in an unspecified passage of Menander's (fr. 614), a character must have expressed scepticism about κοιτών (this probably being the consolidated comic scheme we discussed extensively above), Pollux concludes that since Aristophanes used κοιτών in *Aeolosicon* (fr. 6), all doubts are allayed. κοιτών is indeed a 'new' word in 4th-century BCE Attic and will only surface again in the Septuagint. Furthermore, *Aeolosicon* is Aristophanes' last play, and so it must have been part of the same linguistic shift towards the use of more realistic language that is evident in *Plutus*. As such, there is no opposition between the use of κοιτών by Aristophanes and the potentially critical remark made in the passage of Menander, whose character was simply pointing out the use of such a 'new' word. Nevertheless, the simple fact that Aristophanes used it is sufficient evidence for ancient scholars to approve its use, with little or no concern for the wider linguistic implications of the use of such a form.

σαφέστερον ἔσχε τῇ νέᾳ κεχρημένη Ἀτθίδι, ἡ δὲ παλαιὰ τὸ δεινὸν καὶ ὑψηλὸν τοῦ λόγου· ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ ἐπιτηδεύουσι λέξεις τινάς, where it is stated that New Comedy adopts 'New Attic' with the aim to achieve clarity. On *Prolegomena de comoedia* 15.43 Koster (*Tractatus Coisinianus* 14a Janko): κωμική ἐστι λέξις κοινὴ καὶ δημώδης as referring to New Comedy, see Nesselrath (1990, 134–5).

258 See also Monaco (2023, 15) discussing Phrynichus' (*Ecl.* 393) misinterpretation (or, better, partial understanding) of σύσσημον in Men. *Sam.* 792.

259 See, e.g., Poll. 3.29: οἱ δ' ἐκ τῶν ἀνεψιαδῶν ἀλλήλοις ἐξανέψιοί τε καὶ ἐξανέψιαι. τούτῳ δὲ τῷ ὀνόματι οὐ πάνυ τετριμμένῳ κέχρηται Μένανδρος, ᾧ ἀεὶ μὲν οὐ χρηστέον ὡς οὐκ ἀκριβῶς Ἑλληνικῷ, ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἀκατονομάστων πιστευτέον· ὧν γὰρ γενῶν ἢ πραγμάτων ἢ κτημάτων ὀνόματα παρ' ἄλλοις οὐκ ἔστι, ταῦτα ἀγαπητὸν ἂν εἴη καὶ παρὰ τούτου λαβεῖν ('Those [who are born] from second-cousins are, to one another, 'children of second-cousins' (masc. and fem.). Menander (fr. 619) uses this not quite common word (i.e. ἐξανέψιοι/ἐξανέψιαι). One must not always rely on him (i.e. Menander), since he does not use accurate Greek, but one must trust him for those things for which there is no word. Indeed, regarding the words for kinship relationships and things and possessions which are not attested in other [writers], one must be content to take these words also from him'). On the implausibility of Pollux's interpretation of ἐξανέψιος, which is more likely the same as ἀνεψιαδοῖ 'second-cousins, the children of first-cousins', see Nauck's observations quoted by Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 6,2, 318).

The next chapter will be devoted to a closer inspection of the language of Middle and New Comedy, including in relation to how its reception in ancient scholarship defined the ancient views about 'pure' Attic. Here, to provide further evidence of the 'programmatic' linguistic shift from Old Comedy to Middle and New Comedy, we shall collect examples of continuity in the use of some 'colloquial' new features in Attic comedy. This discussion, however selective, aims to demonstrate that, to some degree, the colloquial Attic of the 5th and 4th centuries BCE were less discrete entities than one might suppose. Hence, when 'new' forms begin to surface in later comedy, they are not necessarily to be taken as 'new' in Attic, but simply as 'newly' permitted in the literary language. Of course, none of this is to say that the language of later comedy contains no truly innovative elements compared to 5th-century BCE Attic. We need only bear in mind that no sharp transition should be posited.[260]

Besides the passages of Old Comedy in which 'low' linguistic features are used for comic effect (see Pl.Com. fr. 183 on Hyperbolus' careless pronunciation), the insightful observation that some innovative elements of colloquial language may be used 'seriously' (i.e. without a parodic aim) had already been made in antiquity. In his treatise *On the Words Suspected of Not Being Used by the Ancients*,[261] Aristophanes of Byzantium (fr. 25) discussed the 'serious' use (i.e. without any comic function) of the gender metaplasm ὁ πρόσωπος (i.e. in place of τὸ πρόσωπον) and the two-syllable genitive τοῦ γάλα (i.e. as though τὸ γάλα were indeclinable) by Plato Comicus (fr. 247).[262] Both cases are somewhat problematic, however. The former, although no other instance of ὁ πρόσωπος is known, is not impossible to believe given that declension metaplasms are common.[263] The indeclinable τὸ γάλα proves highly challenging, and in the lack of any occurrence or parallel, doubts are not allayed.[264] However, other cases are more productive for discussion.

260 See also Redondo (2022).

261 See Chapter 7, Section 2.1.

262 Cassio (1981, 84) draws attention to these fragments.

263 See Chapter 6, Section 5.1. Note, e.g., that the first examples of τὸ σκότος in place of expected ὁ σκότος may occur in Ameipsias (see further Chapter 5, Section B.2.11). However, Slater (1986, 22) suspects a faulty segmentation from the adjective εὐπρόσωπος.

264 For a possible instance of γάλατι in place of γάλακτι in Pherecr. fr. 113.18, see Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 7, 158). Presumably, Aristophanes of Byzantium inferred that Plato Comicus used such forms 'seriously' because in the passages he found no explicit remarks on their being unacceptable, as for instance in the case of Hyperbolus in Pl.Com. fr. 183 (see Section 3.3), or any trace of parody. However, this is no guarantee, and Aristophanes may simply have been superficial or used faulty manuscripts. Slater (1986, 22) stresses that τοῦ γάλα is not included by ancient grammarians among the indeclinable nouns and suspects corruption. Kassel, Austin (*PCG* vol. 7, 535) are also unconvinced that Aristophanes of Byzantium should be taken literally.

The first such case is the analogical inflection of γυνή as an *ā*-stem, which is well documented from Old to New Comedy (Pherecr. frr. 96 and 206; Alc.Com. fr. 32; Men. fr. *457; Philippid. fr. 2; several of these fragments are preserved by the same lexicographical sources).[265] Threatte (1996, 274) records no occurrence in Attic inscriptions, and earlier scholars have concluded that the comic poets simply made up the inflection γυνή, γυνῆς.[266] However, the accusative γυνήν is certainly attested in a 4th-century BCE *defixio* from the Ceramicus (Peek, *Kerameikos* III.C.3.71–5: καὶ ψυχήν | [τ]ὴν Ἐργασίωνο[ς] | κ̣αὶ [γ]υ̣νὴν | τ̣ὴν Ἐργασίω- | -ν̣ο̣ς καταδῶ).[267] Therefore, γυνή, γυνῆς must actually have existed in spoken Attic in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, although it was normally confined to 'subterranean' circulation.[268] The instance of γυνήν in the *defixio* is especially revealing, even more so considering that this *defixio* is quite accurately written. The analogical γυνήν, although it would typically be relegated to the spoken language, is employed in this case as it parallels the sustained repetition of ψυχήν throughout the text.[269]

An even more impressive case is the use of forms with an apocopated prefix, notably with a first element κατα-. This phenomenon is foreign to Attic, and in comedy, apocopated forms are usually limited to the parody of high language.[270] However, some instances counter this. Firstly, the poet of Old Comedy Ameipsias (fr. 12.1) used καββαλών (= καταβαλών) in a passage which shows no sign of parodying the high language (see Orth 2013, 263–4). Further, the Atticist lexica inform us that Alexis (fr. 320) too used καμμύω in place of καταμύω, and this apocopated form is also likely to occur in X. *Cyr*. 8.3.27–8. In light of its widespread use in koine texts, it is highly likely that apocopated καμμύω was a colloquial element in Alexis and Xenophon, and this may well be the case of καββαλών in Ameipsias as well.[271] An

265 See Chapter 5, Section B.2.11.

266 See Schwyzer (1939, 582–3) and the bibliography collected at *CGMEMG* vol. 2, 533.

267 On this text, until recently dated to the mid-5th century BCE and considered the oldest known *defixio* from Attic, see Lamont (2023, 147–53).

268 This inflection is also known from Sicilian Doric (see Greg.Cor. 3.492, where γάναν must be a mistake for γυνάν). Mayser (*Gramm*. vol. 1,3, 30–1) is sceptical about the analogical inflection on the papyri and argues that γυνή may have become indeclinable. Gignac (1981, 52) is more positive and stresses that disyllabic γυνή, γυνῆς is also used in Medieval Greek (see *CGMEMG* vol. 2, 533).

269 The variation ἔπεα/ἔπη on this *defixio* is also revealing of a possibly 'pluralistic' language (i.e. partly Ionicised informal Attic; see Vela Tejada 1991, 125–6 on uncontracted *s*-stems in Aeneas the Tactician and Section 4.3 for the discussion of uncontracted φακέα in Euphron fr. 3).

270 See K–B (vol. 1, 180); Threatte (1980, 410–1). To the examples collected by K–B add ἄγχασκε (= ανάχασκε) in Pherecr. fr. 211 and καββαλών (= καταβαλών) in Amips. fr. 12.1 (on this latter see above).

271 See Favi (2022u).

important parallel is the occurrence of καδδίδημι (= καταδίδημι, the athematic reduplicated equivalent of Attic καταδέω) in a *defixio* written in Boeotian but found in Attica (*DTA* 74, unspecified date).[272] This occurrence makes it quite possible that apocopated forms with the κατα- prefix were not unfamiliar in the informal language spoken in Attica.[273] This inference is strengthened considering that the non-Attic verb καταδίδημι entered low-register Attic via Boeotian, as demonstrated by its use in *defixiones* found in Attica and undoubtedly written in Attic.[274] This picture, whereby apocopated forms in κατα- entered low-register Attic, aligns with the evidence for καββάλλω (= καταβάλλω) in Old Comedy (Ameipsias) and καμμύω in Middle Comedy (Alexis) and Xenophon. However, while the former did not persist into the koine, the latter is widely attested in post-Classical times.

This parallel between the 'new' language of Middle and New Comedy and the 'new' language of Xenophon corroborates the interpretation suggested above concerning the special characteristics of 4th-century BCE literary Attic (see Section 5). The language of Middle and New Comedy and the factors determining its development demonstrate that the more open approach to Attic, as witnessed in early prose, would ultimately win out, not only in the 'international' prose of Xenophon but also in a 'realistic' and eminently 'local' genre such as comedy, whereby in the 5th century BCE, 'pure' Attic was prominently employed to promote a certain kind of civic identity and ideology (see Section 3).

5.3 Attic as the literary language of all Greeks

As part of the same process exemplified by Xenophon, during the 4th century BCE, Attic rapidly developed into an international literary language for use across a variety of genres. This is best documented in writers who adopt a form of literary Attic despite the fact that they themselves are not from an Athenian background and that their audiences are not primarily Athenian.

The first example that comes to mind is obviously historiography. While the language of historical prose was Ionic until the 5th century BCE, following the model of Thucydides and Xenophon, 'international' Attic replaced Ionic as the literary language for writing history, and non-Athenian writers, such as Philistus of Syracuse, Ephorus of Cyme, and Theopompus of Chius, adopted it as the new lin-

272 On the apocope of preposition in Boeotian and other epichoric dialects (not in the Ionic-Attic group) see Buck (1955, 81–2) and κὰτ θάλατταν in *IG* 7.2407.10.
273 This closely recalls other shared features of low-register Attic and Boeotian (see Section 3.1).
274 See the evidence collected by J. J. Bravo (2016, 136 n. 27).

guistic standard for this genre.[275] The use of Attic by Ephorus and Theopompus is particularly significant, since, being Ionian by birth, they would have had an even greater claim to the use of their native variety of Greek in historical writing.

However, the generalisation of Attic as the literary language of historical prose to the detriment of Ionic was not invariably undisputed, and it is instructive to approach the subject with attention to nuance. Indeed, there is evidence for the continued use of Ionic in Hellenistic prose as part of a conscious attempt on the part of writers to distance themselves from the influence of Attic literary culture.[276] A clear example is offered by Ctesias of Cnidus.[277] A contemporary of Xenophon, Ctesias was also roughly contemporary with Philistus and one or two generations older than Ephorus and Theopompus. Of his historical writings, we are better informed about *Persiká* (in 23 books) and *Indiká* (in 1 book). In his summary of *Persiká*, Photius (*Bibl.* cod. 72.45a.5–19 = *FGrHist* 688 T 13) remarks that Ctesias' use of Ionic was not thorough, but it was limited to ἔνιαι λέξεις, whereas he observes that the *Indiká* were written more consistently in Ionic (Phot. *Bibl.* cod. 72.45a.20–1 = *FGrHist* 688 T 10); that this information is reliable is also confirmed by the surviving fragments of *Persiká*. Such an inconsistent choice has been explained as part of a different agenda on Ctesias' part. The *Persiká* were a historical writing of broad scope, written in emulation of Herodotus' *Histories*, and so the use of a more modern language (i.e. the adoption of new Attic elements as well as more traditional Ionic ones) was yet another element that Ctesias used to distinguish himself from his illustrious rival and to present his writing as more innovative and up-to-date. By contrast, *Indiká* was a more traditional ethnographic work, and so the more consistent use of Ionic is unexceptional in a work of this scope. As Cassio (1996, 156) remarked, 4th-century BCE Ionic prose (Ctesias and others), while revealing its affiliation to the earlier phases of the historiographical tradition, is not a strictly archaicising enterprise, neither on the level of language nor on that of the contents: the adoption of Attic elements is thus allowed in this kind of dialectal prose.

A different example of resistance towards the generalised adoption of Attic in historical writings is provided by the use of Argive Doric in the *Argoliká* by Hagias and Dercylus.[278] Like Ctesias' *Indiká*, this too was a work of local historiography. With his examination of the scanty surviving evidence, Cassio (1989a) demonstrated not only the presence of Argive features in the preserved quotations but

275 See Horrocks (2010, 70); Willi (2014, 55).

276 On the continuing tradition of Ionic prose, see Cassio (1996).

277 See Cassio (1996, 153–5).

278 For recent scholarship on these authors and the many problems with the surviving evidence, see Engels (2011); Fowler (2013, 621–2); Ornaghi (2015); Pellé (2015).

also the peculiar blending of poeticisms, which he convincingly explains as a means of imbuing the *Argoliká* with a more international dimension.[279]

This sketchy overview of historical prose has demonstrated, on the one hand, the rapid adoption of Attic as the new intra-generic linguistic standard and, on the other hand, that this adoption did not go wholly unchallenged. However, other prose texts provide supplementary evidence that, already around the mid-4th century BCE, Attic represented the unavoidable term of reference.

Let us consider the Derveni Papyrus.[280] As noted by Willi (2014, 54–60), the Derveni Papyrus likely aims to use an Atticising language, although in a not entirely consistent way (some Ionic elements are undeniable) and possibly with the additional intrusion of non-Attic and non-Ionic features (i.e. anaphoric νιν, which may be a West Greek element). An operation of this nature is far from obvious, in that the author does not have an Attic background and does not target a specifically Athenian audience. This choice of Attic is rendered even more striking by the fact that, unlike the historians who follow in the footsteps of Thucydides (and to a lesser extent, if only for chronological reasons, Xenophon), the author of the Derveni Papyrus did not choose Attic as the conventional language prescribed for the literary genre that he was practising.

However, the more instructive proof that, already by the mid-4th century BCE, Attic has become something of a requirement for prose writing across various genres is the consistent use of this dialect by Aeneas the Tactician in his *Poliorcetica*. Aeneas, whom we may date to the mid-4th century BCE, was likely an Arcadian.[281] However, since his work was aimed at the wider Greek audience, he chose to adopt a form of 'international' Attic as the language that would allow for the widest readership.[282] Aeneas' language has been the object of close examination.[283] As scholars have pointed out, it is an innovative form of 'international' Attic, which results from the blending of features belonging to both the higher,

279 Argive Doric was no literary dialect; in the 5th century BCE, Acusilaus of Argus regularly wrote in Ionic (with just one uncertain exception: see most recently Andolfi 2019, 23–5; 88–9). For a wider assessment of Doric prose, see Cassio (1989b). We should briefly mention that the addition of a poeticising touch to historical prose was not unfamiliar in Hellenistic times, as demonstrated by exponents of tragic history, such as Duris and Phylarchus. See also the extremely interesting parody of Mnesiptolemus' *Histories* in Epin. fr. 1.

280 The papyrus is datable to the 340s/320s BCE, but the text is probably older.

281 See Lane Fox (2018).

282 His treatise reflects the growing professionalisation of warfare which is typical of the 4th century BCE. See also Section 4.2 on the elements of military jargon in Philem. fr. 130 and Antiph. fr. 169.

283 See Behrendt (1910, 104–34); Hunter, Handford (1927, xxxvii–lxxxii); Vela Tejada (1991); Vela Tejada (2018).

literary language and the innovative, spoken variety. In this sense, Aeneas truly represents one of the earliest examples in Greek literature of the koineisation of Attic.[284] One aspect that has garnered attention is that Aeneas' Attic is also 'international' in the sense that it may permit comparisons with formulas and vocabulary adopted in roughly contemporary non-Athenian inscriptions that deal with issues similar to those examined by Aeneas.[285] This further indicates that quite early in the history of Greek literature, the adoption of 'international' Attic does not also presuppose the selection of Athens as one's sole cultural parameter, and the use of Attic, however freely compared with the traditional dialect, has rapidly become a means of asserting Greekness and relating to the other Greeks on equal terms. We may easily imagine some of the Aeneas' Athenian readers reacting similarly to the characters who recommend the use of more conservative, localistic Attic in Posidippus' and Euphron's fragments (see Section 4.3).

6 Conclusions

This chapter has aimed to chart the evolution of Athenian language identity through the 5th and 4th centuries BCE and to assess how it interacted with social and historical transformations and how it influenced literary language. We have sought to shed light on the dialectic between conservation and innovation in the history of Attic by examining the literary sources that comment on linguistic variation and revising the main developments that literary Attic underwent. We have demonstrated that such variation was a subject of intense discussion and that examination of these reflections on linguistic change illuminates several key moments of transition in Athenian cultural history.

The picture that emerges from 5th-century BCE sources is one in which different varieties of Attic are associated with different socio-political connotations. While we find no authoritative definition of what 'good' Attic is but are left to infer this based on the linguistic choices made by each writer, the Athenians did have a notion of a kind of unmarked or neutral Attic with respect to which the super- and the sub-standard were defined. These linguistic poles are also reflected in literary and documentary texts: while early Athenian prose writers adopt an 'internationalised' form of literary Attic more open to contamination with elements of linguistic variation from within the Attic dialect and with prestigious external elements (pre-

284 See Vela Tejada (2018, 99): 'after the high variety enters into conversational language, we see a development of regularization and simplification of this new combination'.
285 See Knoepfler (2002, 169–70); Liddel (2018, 133).

dominantly Ionic), informal documentary texts and occasionally also literary ones that are closer to the spoken language may exhibit non-standard, low-register elements that are foreign to standard Attic. However, several sources explicitly present these two competing varieties as disrupting the social order, which, in turn, is associated with the standard variety. The period of the Peloponnesian War coincided with major changes in Athenian culture and society, and the Athenians' perception that their language was under threat and had to be defended closely mirrors this time of change. This is typical in societies that undergo phases of crisis and transformation, during which the dominant class perceives the usual certainties with respect to linguistic, political, and cultural identity as lacking (see Chapter 1, Section 2; Chapter 2, Section 2). Thus, the literary sources document the conflict between traditional order and (perceived) innovative chaos; between that which is shared by all (at least, by all those who represent the dominant class) and that which, being new, is introduced in the first stages by a sub-group of the population (whether super- or sub-standard) and represents a threat to the established order.

Following Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian War and the fall of her maritime empire, Athenian society entered a period of swift evolution that would exert a considerable influence not only on the socio-economic level but also on Athenian identity. Among other aspects, this is reflected in the affirmation of new linguistic varieties that had previously remained marginal. As witnessed by several literary sources, 4th-century BCE Attic was in rapid transformation and far more open than before to the adoption of innovative elements. This is evidenced in both documentary and literary language. With respect to the former, despite the loss of the maritime empire, the Athenian cultural and economic influence on the wider Greek world did not cease abruptly, and this coincides with the affirmation of so-called 'international' Attic or *Großattisch* (i.e. a Ionicised or de-Atticised form of Attic), which would swiftly expand throughout the Greek-speaking world and ultimately culminate in the development of the koine. Regarding the literary language, writers such as Xenophon and the poets of Middle and New Comedy exemplify a new kind of literary language, which, following an innovative trend that was already germinating before them, would gradually evolve into the standard literary language of the post-Classical period. None of these innovations in 4th-century BCE Attic are the result of a sharp divide in the history of the dialect. Rather, they are the consequence of substantial ideological changes in the way in which the Attic dialect was used in literary and documentary texts and the role that it played in shaping and defining Athenian identity. Indeed, the innovative trends of 4th-century BCE literary Attic, which increasingly adopt elements of contemporary language, overcame the dialectic between innovation and conser-

vation that had been a defining characteristic of 5th-century BCE Athenian culture and was still partly a factor in 4th-century BCE Athenian literature.

The affirmation of Attic on the international stage represents the first phase in the process whereby 'international' Attic would evolve into the koine. However, there is more to this process than simply a sign of the prestige of Athenian language and culture. Non-Athenian authors writing for the wider Greek audience also began to adopt literary Attic as the language that would provide them with the widest possible readership. In this sense, this responds to the claims of Athenian intellectuals such as Isocrates that Athens had a leading role in cultural panhellenism. However, besides consecrating the transformation of Attic as the language of all Greeks, this process has more significant implications if observed from an Athenian perspective. The adoption of Attic by non-Athenians and the use they make of this language to address all Greeks represents the emancipation of Attic from Athenian localism and the sublimation, at least for a period, of the purist and protectionist approaches to this dialect. However, this would also foster awareness of the growing divide between traditional Attic, which by the late 4th century BCE had almost become a crystallised literary variety, and the new 'international' Attic, which was on the verge of evolving into the koine. It was from this point that Hellenistic scholars would question the boundaries of literary Attic and its status vis-à-vis the common language.