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Lucian of Samosata, Lionel Casson
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# SELECTED SATIRES OF LUCIAN

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EDITED AND
TRANSLATED BY
LIONEL CASSON

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**Lucian of Samosata, Lionel Casson : Selected Satires of Lucian (The Norton Library)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Selected Satires of Lucian (The Norton Library):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. the antidote of laughterBy drollerei've purchased several recent

editions of Lucian, and this seems to me the best selection in the best (least mannered) translation. We get the "true story", precursor to all modern science fiction; "Alexander the False Prophet," a magnificent secular takedown of religious gullibility, and a wealth of sarcasms directed at fatuous fashions, authoritarian pretensions and superstitious idiocies that have not changed much across the centuries. Lucian's innovation of applying the solemn form of the philosophical dialog to the purposes of scathing and riotous satire seems to arise from the Epicurean belief that most philosophy is absurd fantasy and most social norms are unjustified habits. Epicurean philosophy always aimed by rational explanation of the physical world to relieve mankind of the anxieties that belief in the supernatural seems to feed, and in these works Lucian adds to reason the sparkling antidote of laughter and lighthearted parody. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Carlton H. Good quality and cheap. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. One of my favorite books... By Geoff Puterbaugh If you ever get in a mood where you're suspecting that philosophy rots the brain, take a break and dip into this wonderful book. Others have noted that Lucian influenced Erasmus. I would reply, "Not enough!" I have never been able to read more than two pages of the supposedly hilarious "In Praise of Folly," but I can read anything and everything by Lucian, including his great satire, "Philosophies For Sale," where Zeus tries to raise a little cash by auctioning off philosophers, beginning with "that long-haired guy over there," Pythagoras. His little dialogue, "Timon," has volumes to say about Wealth, and says it all in about fifteen pages. Lucian loves to poke fun at Socrates, as well, openly doubting the "purity" of Socrates' love for handsome young men. "Alexander the Quack Prophet" may be Lucian's best piece. It's based upon a real person who lived at the same time as Lucian. I think the most memorable character is one Rutilianus, who is a mature, sensible Roman who has served Rome well in many important functions, but has a serious screw loose when it comes to religious gullibility. The satire is really deadly, especially if you have ever known someone who fits "the Rutilianus Profile." :- ) It's fun reading, but, like most satire, it's making some serious points during all the fun.

"Lucian's genial mockery," writes Lionel Casson, "aimed at man's omnipresent failings, is never out of date: the jabs he gave the hypocrites, grandstanders, fakers, and boobs of the ancient world can just as appropriately be administered to their counterparts of the modern." Lucian, born in Syria in the second century C.E., came to Greece at an early age and mastered its language and literature. He took up law, left it for public speaking, then turned to full-time writing, producing the wide range of subject matter and literary form which is represented in this collection. A master of the vivid scene, Lucian used his pungent style to ridicule the tyrants, prophets, waning gods, and hypocrite philosophers of his own day and the centuries preceding him. His most typical genre is a parody of a Platonic dialogue, but he also excelled in straight narrative, as in the elaborate spoof "A True Story" and the old folk tale outrageously retold, "Lucius, the Ass." His skeptical mind and imaginative irony have influenced generations of artists and writers, and now in Professor Casson's new translations can be freshly enjoyed today.

This book is primarily intended for the man in the street. In a brief general introduction Casson gives a crisp account of Lucian's life, views, and influence on posterity. He helps non-specialists by short introduction to each work and by a generous ration of lucid notes. Casson's translation recaptures much of the wit and humor which are Lucian's greatest gifts. Casson's translation can be recommended. M. D. Macleod, *The Classical From the Back Cover* 'Lucian's genial mockery,' writes Lionel Casson, 'aimed at man's omnipresent failings, is never out of date: the jabs he gave the hypocrites, grandstanders, fakers, and boobs of the ancient world can just as appropriately be administered to their counterparts of the modern.' About the Author Lionel Casson is emeritus professor of classics at New York University, and is well-known as a lecturer and writer on the Greek and Roman Theater as well as books on the topic of ancient maritime travel. He is an editor and translator of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus and Terence, and has newly translated all the works in this volume. He has also been on the advisory boards of American Neptune and Archaeology. Lionel Casson is emeritus professor of classics at New York University, and is well-known as a lecturer and writer on the Greek and Roman Theater as well as books on the topic of ancient maritime travel. He is an editor and translator of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus and Terence, and has newly translated all the works in this volume. He has also been on the advisory boards of American Neptune and Archaeology.