In the introduction, Kelly-Holmes quotes Pierre Bourdieu on the difficulty, and the importance, of managing "to think in a completely astonished and disconcerted way about things you thought you had always understood" (1991:207). Her insightful study of the communicative uses of multilingual resources in mundane market-driven discourses shows that she has indeed managed to do so. Though quite a few surface tendencies in the actual data may be unsurprising for readers who have kept an eye on advertising trends, the pertinent questions that Kelly-Holmes has asked and the perceptive answers she has provided challenge truisms and simplifications. Her acute analyses and important conclusions provide food for thought for anyone interested in contextualized language use, and they should inspire and inform future studies in a wide range of subfields in language and communication studies, cultural studies, and social sciences, not to mention marketing.

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Deborah Levine Gera, *Ancient Greek ideas on speech, language and civilization*. Great Clarendon, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. vii-xii, 252. Hb $94.88.

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In her Preface to this book the author calls it a survey, and it is indeed a survey, but a very welcome one. Even though the sources on which Gera builds are numerous and heterogeneous, suggesting that there has been work done in this direction previously, we have not had in the past a book-length treatment focused exclusively on linguistic ideologies in ancient Greece. The book is useful and timely in helping us reexamine and deconstruct some inherited ideas concerning the role that we imagine ancient Greek ideas have played in shaping a large part

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of Western thinking. But a basic value of this work is also its major implication, and not merely what is explicitly stated on its pages, for the simple reason that the author does not make a commitment to any large-scale theory or paradigm. This way of approaching the subject is a warning against crediting ancient Greeks with an internally coherent philosophical scheme, which has been frequently imagined as lying at the roots of later rationalist thinking prioritizing reference and leading to Cartesian and modern linguistic rationalism-positivism. Not that such lines of theorizing are absent from ancient Greek thinking, but they do not stand alone, and the actual situation must have been more complex. The situation described by Gera resembles the one put forward by Dodds (1951:180) in his treatment of the rational and irrational elements of Greek thought with regard to the "soul" or "self": "On questions like that [pictures of soul, self, shadowy image in Hades, etc.] there was no 'Greek view', but only a muddle of conflicting answers." In Gera's book the same holds true for matters linguistic and ideological, implying that later treatments of the subject have constructed Greek thought as being of this or that kind, reading in it a more monolithic and internally coherent content than it actually had. The powerful process of erasure, a selective ideological reading (Gal & Irvine 1995), has played a decisive role in giving shape to what Greek metalinguistic thought has been or should have been, according to the historical contingencies and interests of each era and each individual thinker. Nevertheless, even though Gera deserves a credit for not allowing homogenizing readings to influence a realistic assessment of the variety of ancient Greek views of language, one would expect her to provide at least a basic understanding of her own of what kind of social species linguistic ideologies are.

Gera starts her journey into ancient Greek ideas on language and speech by discussing, in chap. 1, the myth of the Cyclops Polyphemus's inability to speak an articulate language. In the *Odyssey* the society of the Cyclopes is pictured by Homer as savage on the basis of three potent criteria: their partial command of language, their asocial or semicivilized way of life, and their cannibalistic dietary habits. Such a pattern offers a maximum polarity with Odysseus's habits. It is interesting that discussion of diet permeates a large part of Gera's analysis, providing classical scholarship with an emphasis (not, of course, unique to this book) that at times resembles more anthropological than classicist traditions. A recurrent theme of various sections of the book is one referring to the culture-nature opposition strongly reminiscent of Levi-Straussian analyses, and making a gesture of intellectual kinship (though unstated) to the earlier ethnological tradition in classical studies represented by great figures such as J. Harrison, G. Murray, F. M. Cornford, G. Thomson, and E. R. Dodds. But not all contradictions with regard to linguistic ideas held by the ancient Greeks are noticed by the author. When Polyphemus, blinded and tricked by Odysseus, turns to his ram, he wishes aloud, "If you could only think like me and become capable of speech."

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The Cyclops's partial speech does not prevent him from recruiting rational language-like thinking. Unless one wants to explain this element away as a Homeric literary convention, we obtain here a first taste of Dodds's muddle of conflicting ideas.

The author moves on, in chap. 2, to a discussion of the nature of language in the age of Kronos, a golden age in which, according to various ancient sources, men shared a joint language with gods, or men and animals spoke together. Again the question of diet looms large. You only share in a society of association with other beings if you have excluded them from your dietary consumption. But the queries raised in the chapter are much broader and of concern to modern scholarship as well. How has language evolved, according to the ancients? Has there been progress up from communicative rudiments, or has language decayed from an earlier and purer condition? Are these opposed views compatible or not? Did the Greeks develop a theory of an Adamic language, as in the Jewish tradition? What does this tell us about language universals? Gera traces these questions through a detailed discussion of Babrius and Plato, and through Lucretius, Vico, and Rousseau up to the modern theorizing of Bickerton and others. Hesiod and other ancient poets and thinkers become central sources for the investigation of problems such as women and speech, poetic languages, the golden age and vegetarianism, or animals and humans. Vico and Rousseau, deriving complex inspiration from the ancients, posited a passionate language or a poetic language, respectively, as the original tongue of humans (that recalls Voloshinov's 1973 critical discussion of Vossler's image of language vs. Saussurian objectivism). But in this context it would have been better if Gera had theorized this huge amount of information a bit more systematically. For instance, in several places we find information concerning what one may call primordial indexicality. Lucretius's primitive man signifies feelings and emotions by means of gestures and cries in ways similar to animal communication systems. Similar allusions are found in other chapters of the book. It is well known today that a major theoretical trend in the study of deixis views such a semiotic mode as socially constructed relations in complex reception and production frames (Hanks 1996). But the ancients had elaborated on the crucial distinction between reference and deixis to some extent. Apollonius Dyskolus distinguished between deixis and reference, the latter characterized by ποιότητα 'quality' in the sense of telling us something about the intrinsic properties of the referent (Bühler 1990:135).

The major canvas of chap. 3 is the story of the Egyptian king Psammetichus, who, according to Herodotus, raised two children in isolation in order to discover which would be the first language they would use. The experiment convinced him that the first language of humanity was Phrygian, since the children uttered to the shepherd who was raising them the word *bekos*, meaning 'bread' in the Phrygian language. For the Greeks the first language ought thus to be one of the existing languages, not a protolanguage. Again Gera traces the history and

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implications of this prototypical experiment by providing well-documented information on crucial issues such as ontogeny and phylogeny, thought experiments, isolation from society, feral children, Psammetichus and modern linguists, conjectural histories of the Enlightenment (Condillac, Rousseau, Smith, Herder, etc.), and ancient reactions to the experiment. Indexicality and iconicity again show up in various traditions of thinking (in Herodtus' *History*, foreign languages are fashioned according to the perceived characteristics of their speakers), and such points should have been more intensively theorized in the light of modern work.

Chap. 4, on the invention of language, forms a centerpiece of Gera's rich discussion. Who invented language, according to the ancients – gods, men, heroes, groups, individuals? A long list of thinkers and poetic creators is scrutinized for their ideas, and many of the contradictions in the evolution of thinking are noted. From the portrayal of Hermes and Prometheus by the tragic poets to the role of culture heroes, a fascinating picture is built that allows queries such as what the relations are between protolanguage and religious ritual (in the light also of modern scholarship), or the relations between language and building along with other human crafts, or links between language and a law-abiding society. The Cynics and other philosophical traditions are examined in depth, and major features of linguistic ideologies surface. Diogenes and the Cynics deconstructed everything but language, whereas Protagoras, the arch-relativist, criticized Homer for misusing grammatical gender. And at the center of all these is Plato, with his pivotal piece, the *Cratylus*. We are dealing here with a phenomenon characterizing most metalinguistic and metapragmatic notions that I (following Eagleton 1991) call "performative contradiction." We do one thing but state another. The Cynics preached the undermining of rule through the use of a law-governed means.

The book concludes with chap. 5, in which further discussion is provided of issues such as nonspeaking and speaking "savages," the role of gestures, weaving and the language of women, deaf-mutes, and gaining and losing speech. The author here bridges language with speech and communication. The book as a whole should appeal strongly to scholars interested in the history of ideas, linguistic anthropologists, sociolinguists, classicists, and social scientists. But, all of that said, we need further theorizing of aspects of linguistic ideologies, bringing into the discussion the implicit linguistic ideologies of the ancients and examining interpretive schemes.

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NEAL HUTCHESON (producer and director). *Mountain talk*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Language and Life Project, 2003. DVD $20.

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Twenty years ago, I met many of my grandmother's fifty-odd cousins for the first time. Born in Panther Hollow, North Carolina (pronounced "Painter Holler"), my grandmother moved to the nearest town, Asheville, when she was a child. On the occasion of her seventieth birthday, many of the cousins she left behind came down out of the mountains to celebrate with her. A few of them spoke in a unique dialect, a "brogue" riddled with odd turns of phrase and vocabulary.

As I learned in *Mountain talk*, a documentary on the language and culture of Southern Appalachia, my relatives' speech was informed by their Scots-Irish ancestry. Scots-Irish settlers brought a distinctive vocabulary and syntax to the region; the isolation of Appalachia helps to preserve its idiosyncrasies. The willing participants in *Mountain talk* are the residents of Robbinsville, North Carolina, a town of fewer than a thousand people situated deep in the western corner of the state, in the mountainous divide between Georgia and Tennessee. These people are articulate and knowledgeable historians of their language, able to share their mountain heritage and to detail the impact of modernity on rural life and "talk."

Jim Tom Hedrick, an elderly ham radio operator with a talent for introducing rural Robbinsville to a far-flung audience, negotiates the divide between past and present: Satellite technology links him to fellow ham enthusiasts, and a moped gets him down the mountain to the local general store. Popcorn Sutton, a moonshiner, drives a vintage Ford. The camera often peers out his car windows, providing the audience with a fast-moving view of the landscape and an apt metaphor: Mountain people hurtle through the modern world while retaining their antique and charming folkways. Missing from this community, however, are children; a younger generation could reveal how this language is changing at the moment of the documentary's production. While it is obvious that the older citizens of the

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