

S. D. OLSON, *Athenaeus, The Learned Banqueters, Books 1–III.106e*, edited and translated by S. D. O., Cambridge, MA–London: Harvard University Press, 2007, 597 pp., ISBN 0-674-99620-8.

The re-evaluation of Athenaeus continues. This is the very welcome first volume of a new Loeb edition of the *Deipnosophistae* intended to replace the set of volumes edited by Charles Gulick (1927–41). In both series, the first volume comprises the first three books. But whereas the old Loeb had 484 pages, the new one has 597. As we shall see, this expansion is accounted for by both layout and content — with improvements in both.

Douglas Olson has a twelve-page introduction to Gulick's eleven. The older Loeb wasted space on food and gourmards through the ages; but, although you might have thought it would be easy to parody this gentlemanly-gourmandising tone, and though there are disparaging remarks that would not pass muster in a more PC age, there is also good material here, some of which is carried over into Douglas Olson, beginning with the work's date and the identity of 'Larensius', the host. Here, Gulick had held that the host is the same as the *pontifex minor* P. Livius Larensis mentioned in *CIL* 6.2126, but Douglas Olson (who misrepresents the praenomen as L. and the reference to the inscription as *CIL* 6.212) seems to waver between the view that the inscriptional character 'is a different member of the family' (because he has a different title from Athenaeus' literary figure) and that 'the historical Larensis was the historical Athenaeus' friend and patron' (but *which* Larensis, if not the inscriptional *pontifex*)? This part of the argument needed tightening up. Then follow discussions of the work's value as a source of quotations from otherwise lost works; its literary form; possible connections with historical characters (Gulick was somewhat sceptical here, Douglas Olson still more so); genre / other literary descriptions of symposia;

occasion (the work in fact seems to describe a synthesis of different symposia set at different calendar dates); book divisions; sources; manuscript tradition (Gulick remarks on a couple of *recentiores*, of which Douglas Olson takes no notice); and the principles of the present edition. Gulick had said that his edition was based generally on Kaibel's, without some of its more venturesome emendations; Douglas Olson's, too, is based on Kaibel's, but he has made his own collations of the main manuscripts.

Some matters of page-layout first. The old Loeb had the big advantage of a running head in the top right hand margin to tell you which numerical section you are in. The new one does not do this, so you often have the inconvenience of flicking backwards or forwards a few pages to find out exactly where you are. The new Loeb, however, makes clear distinctions between numerical sections (derived from Casaubon's page-divisions) and sub-sections within them (a-e or a-f). The latter are marked off with | and the former with ||, whereas Gulick had simply indicated them by marginal annotations. But Casaubon did not always clearly align his divisions with the text, and so Douglas Olson has sometimes had to guess where to put those markers; as a result, his sections and sub-sections sometimes differ not insubstantially from Gulick's and Kaibel's (take the one at 1.5a-b, for instance, where the first Loeb puts the division a good three lines earlier than Douglas Olson). Here is scope for some referencing headaches.

One of the main attractions of Athenaeus for a scholar like Douglas Olson is obviously the fact that he quotes classical and Hellenistic authors in such extraordinary profusion, especially fragments of ancient comedy. And the presentation and treatment of fragments is one of the areas in which this volume scores decisively over the earlier edition. Almost all quotations of poetry begin on a new line and are indented. Gulick had not done this; in his edition, many quotations were embedded in the text (including and especially those that are textually incomplete or defective, where Athenaeus has omitted some words in a line), and some were not even marked off with quotation marks. So, on the most basic level, quotations are now much easier to see.

In his introduction, Douglas Olson explains an important principle. Where Athenaeus is the sole source of a quotation, he has presented that quotation in the form given in the best

modern edition. As he explains, this may involve substantial emendation—but it also tends to involve much less reportage of conjecture than Gulick had indulged, because the modern edition of the fragment in question can be consulted for any further information the reader needs. But where Athenaeus is not the sole source of a quotation, Douglas Olson has given it in the form Athenaeus knows (so that we can see what he, rather than someone else, knows). That means that Douglas Olson has sometimes had to rein himself back and does not always give a quotation in its fullest form, but truncated, if need be. This is a different principle from that of Gulick, who had tacitly filled out some quotations where a word was missing in the middle of a line (e.g. *Il.* 7.321 at 1.9a; *Od.* 8.98 at 1.12c; *Il.* 13.736 at 1.18f; *Il.* 11.266 at 2.41d). The sign <...> is used to indicate (a) a textual lacuna, and (b) that Athenaeus has quoted less than a complete line. It is used both where the missing material is not extant elsewhere, and where it is. Although Douglas Olson closely follows the treatment of fragments in the most up-to-date modern editions, he does not follow them (as, for instance, West's Archilochus) when they indicate the metrical shape of what is missing: the same sign <...> does duty for all.

Another area in which the new edition scores decisively over the earlier one is in the generosity of its annotation. There are two sets of notes, textual and exegetical. The textual notes are probably about as numerous as Gulick's, granted that Douglas Olson has been able to economise in the way explained above (by using the best modern editions of fragments, he reports less modern conjecture on Athenaeus' poetic quotations than Gulick had done); on the other hand, he reports some new conjectures and emendations—including several by himself (pp. 64, 274–5, 441, 453). The exegetical notes are particularly generous. Occasionally one can discern the genealogy of one note in another¹, but in the

¹ Gulick, p. 50, c.: "See the Scholiast, who reveals that this confusion about meals in Homer was an ancient puzzle. Athenaeus only adds to the confusion"; L.D. Olson, p. 61 n. 97: "homeric terminology for meals appears to have been a traditional topic of learned discussion ... and the treatment of the problem here does nothing to clarify it".

main Douglas Olson has a completely different approach. He has saved space by incorporating textual references and references to fragment collections in the text itself, with concomitant gains in clarity; and he has moved away from Gulick's culinary antiquarianism (the Greeks liked fish; the name of this meal, and of that drinking vessel). He is especially rich in biographical / prosopographical information (poets; performing artists; philosophers; even Roman emperors: Tiberius, p. 35, n. 67; Trajan, p. 37, n. 70); cross-references to other citations of an author or work in the *Deipnosophistae* (an interesting note on Athenaeus' citation-habits on p. 66, n. 102: he usually cites Homer by titles of episodes, and by book number only very rarely); and discussions of sources and possible attributions of material.

It is inconvenient, however, that both sets of notes, textual and exegetical, use the same numeration (arabic numerals). In the earlier Loeb, textual notes had Arabic numerals and exegetical notes letters. In practice it is possible to tell which is which because textual notes habitually live on the left and exegetical on the right, and if they spill over onto the other side of the page are separated from the register above by a horizontal divider — but it is still harder on the eye than when different numerations are used (and the horizontal divider is missing on p. 6). Gulick's numeration started afresh (1..., a...) on each page—one of the consequences of which was that all notes lived on the page to which they belonged. In Douglas Olson, there is through-numeration until the end of each book; and the typesetters have evidently not troubled too much about allowing a few notes to spill overleaf of where they properly belong (n. 37 on p. 50 (from 48–9); n. 185 on p. 123 (from 125); n. 102 on p. 278 (from 277); n. 141 on p. 312 (from 311); n. 167 on p. 332 (from 331); n. 86 on p. 505 (from 507); n. 92 on p. 511 (from 513); n. 107 on p. 529 (from 531)).

The translation reads well; colloquialisms in the translation of comedy of course date no less quickly than archaisms (1.7d ὁ τριᾶθλιος 'the wretch' (Gulick); 'the lousy bastard' (Douglas Olson), but in general I can imagine this weathering rather well. Some miscellaneous niggles and curious slips: p. vii, n. 3 'that that'; p. ix: '100s of fragments' reads like a shorthand that hasn't been filled out properly; p. 8, n. 16 'eluded to'; p. 206, Panyasis quotation: ῥΩραι; p. 383 n. 220 'pronunciation'; p. 513 'quote' (noun): sure,

informality's cool by me, but does the Loeb usually allow it?; p. 530 n. 108: why the claim that the *Epinomis*, which is available as large as life in the fifth volume of the Plato *OCT*, is lost?

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