

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

**CORAX IN CHALK:**  
**A DISCURSIVE ECOLOGY OF *DEIPNOSOPHISTAE***

A Dissertation in  
Communication Arts and Sciences

by

Adam Cody

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2020

The dissertation of Adam Cody was reviewed and approved by the following:

Rosa A. Eberly  
Associate Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences and English  
Dissertation Advisor  
Chair of Committee

Stephen H. Browne  
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences

Michele Kennerly  
Associate Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences and Classics and  
Ancient Mediterranean Studies

Anna I. Peterson  
Assistant Professor of Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies

Denise Solomon  
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences  
Head of the Department

## ABSTRACT

*Deipnosophistae*, initially composed in Greek around 200 CE, is a massive, eclectic compilation of excerpts drawn from texts that are otherwise lost. Scholarly readings of *Deipnosophistae* have typically focused on the text's function of transmitting these excerpts. There has been a subsequent turn in Athenaeus studies away from this functional attitude, instead advocating attention to the text's coherent form. This dissertation acknowledges the durable significance of the form-function distinction in interdisciplinary rhetorical studies and advances toward a synthesis of the formal and functional dispositions in Athenaeus studies.

This dissertation first relates *Deipnosophistae*'s development as a text through an ecological analysis of its transmission. *Deipnosophistae* displays the features of recursive composition, as the text slowly accumulates commentary and emendations from multiple contributors over its various editions. The dissertation then explains how *Deipnosophistae*'s rhetorical processes of information presentation attract those contributors who perpetuate the text's survival in circulating discourse. By providing incomplete, uncertain, and contradictory information, *Deipnosophistae* conveys a fragmentary authority capable of influencing but not determining its audience's interpretations. Further, *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpted information is organized into a coherent textual form by its narrative framework. This narrative framework describes a network of topical associations, the iterated patterns of which familiarize *Deipnosophistae*'s readers with an active mode of reading termed creative intertext.

*Deipnosophistae*'s information-presenting function incentivizes its contributors to formalize it as a text, and the components of *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative form facilitate the text's functionality for information reference. In its recursive composition, fragmentary authority, and creative intertext, *Deipnosophistae* is animated by regenerative entropy, whereby the text makes its capacity to decay into a resource for reproduction in circulating discourse.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my dissertation advisor, Rosa A. Eberly, for her patience, her wit, her diligence, and her wisdom. I have found Rosa's presence to be consequential in bringing about things beautiful, good, and true. She is a visionary artist, an incisive reader, a dedicated teacher, and a friend to all.

I likewise thank the faculty members of my dissertation committee: Stephen H. Browne, Michele Kennerly, and Anna Peterson. Each consistently demonstrates their care and consideration for their students, as well as their investment in scholarly excellence. I feel honored and humbled to have been afforded their guidance and support.

This project is brought to you in part by funding from the Pennsylvania State University's Department of Communication Arts and Sciences, Center for Humanities and Information, and College of Liberal Arts.

I am deeply obliged to the various scholars who inquired into or offered feedback on this project at one point or another: Tasos Aidonos, Carol Atack, Koen de Temmerman, Robert N. Gaines, Jean Goodwin, John Jasso, and Ned O'Gorman. Their interest and appreciation helped me to feel welcome participating in the unending conversation.

During the period of my graduate education at the Pennsylvania State University, I have benefited from the excellent leadership displayed by numerous members of the Communication Arts and Sciences Department, among them David Dzikowski, Andrew C. High, Peter Miraldi, Rachel Smith, Denise Haunani Solomon, Mary E. Stuckey, and Kirt H. Wilson. I thank them for their stewardship of intellectual community and for the opportunity to learn by their example.

I thank also those consummate table-talkers who shepherded me through my graduate education: Kellie St. Cyr Brisini, Travis Brisini, Michael Broghammer, Brandon Johnson, Curry Kennedy, Youllee Kim, Derek Lewis, Dominic Manthey, J. David Maxson, John Rountree, Haley Schneider, Bryce Tellmann, and Xi Tian. I hold an abiding esteem for their sterling character as scholars and as friends.

If my efforts may in some small way reflect the homage due to Robert Sullivan on my behalf, I would be content. I know him to be a paradigm rhetorician, as full of learning as he is fond of learning, and the life he breathes into the word is without compare.

Through this dissertation, I also endeavor to express the impression left on my education by Bruce Henderson. In these pages, performance roams about wearing the garb of interpretation and, for that matter, vice versa. For grace, for understanding, and for refined good taste, I maintain that he is unsurpassed.

While we're on the subject of teachers, this dissertation owes much and more to Lee Lorber, for her insistence that critics should ground their divergent claims in a shared return to the text, and to Ron Pfeiffer, for his insistence that a historian's proper positioning is *sub specie aeternitatis* and not *ad usum Delphini*.

Flowers, it may be said, come from fertilizer. This dissertation represents but one shoot of that vast garden germinated in the rich, deep fertilizer of the Rodney's Speakeasy art collective, component parts of which include: Marcus D. Baldwin, Margaret C. Fancher, Addison S. Hoff, Hanna Litwinowicz, Tim Sampson, Eric Weathers, and Rodney. I thank them for their enduring and energizing influence.

I would like to convey a special appreciation for the discernment, confidence, and resolution of Nikki Orth. When it comes to speaking, listening, reading and writing, I would tolerate few to claim that they are better suited to the study, practice, and teaching of the art than she is. An exception could perhaps be made for her sometime collaborator, Mika J. Orth (see note 31 on page 130).

This dissertation owes its research method to my mother, Marcy, its theoretical commitment to my father, Vincent, and its aesthetic unfolding to my sister, Mel. Each individually and all collectively represent a walking library, and I hope only that I have approached their example by approximation.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

In “A Hoot in the Dark: The Evolution of General Rhetoric,” George A. Kennedy suggests that the apparent practice of epideictic rhetoric among crows may be the reason why “the Greeks gave the name Corax, or ‘crow,’ to the ‘inventor’ of rhetoric.”<sup>1</sup> Ancient Greek words for animals are often less precise than modern taxonomical designations, so the word *corax* may be translated as either crow or raven,<sup>2</sup> even though the two birds differ greatly in their size, anatomy, and behavior. Under no circumstances, however, would those ancient rhetoricians have had in mind the specific bird about which Kennedy muses, *Corvus brachyrhynchus*, because that species is found only in North America.

The crow to which the word *corax* and the name Corax might have referred would be *Corvus corone*, the carrion crow. Derek Goodwin, the ornithologist whom Kennedy cites for his account of corvid rhetoric, explicitly notes that the vocalizations of *Corvus brachyrhynchus* are “not much like any of the usual calls of the Carrion Crow known to me.”<sup>3</sup> Instead of the “assembly call” and “contact call” of the American crows which so fascinated Kennedy, most of the carrion crow vocalizations described by Goodwin are either “self-assertive” calls used to deter

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<sup>1</sup> George A. Kennedy, “A Hoot in the Dark: The Evolution of General Rhetoric,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 25, no. 1 (1992): 5.

<sup>2</sup> *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon Founded Upon the Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon*, s. v. “κόραξ.”

<sup>3</sup> Derek Goodwin, *Crows of the World* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1986), 85.



rivals from claimed territory or alarm calls indicating the presence of threats and opportunities.<sup>4</sup> These crows, after which it is at least possible for Corax to have been named, differ from Kennedy's crows precisely due to their tendency toward apotroptic dissuasion over epideictic display.

Although it is not possible, as a matter of historical fact, for the precise epideictic vocalizations of *Corvus brachyrhynchus* to have been the source of Corax's name, one need not rely on *Corvus corone*'s self-assertive and alarming calls as an alternative origin point for the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition. When editing the corvid rhetorical tradition, it is advisable to attend to Patricia Bizzell's invitation "to reconsider formerly minor figures because they often worried over theoretical problems that the traditional tradition abandoned without solving but that return to haunt us today."<sup>5</sup> According to Goodwin's account, the traditional rhetorical tradition among carrion crows would emphasize calls of self-assertion and alarm.

Carrion crows may be seen to practice an epideictic rhetoric of their own, however, and we can support and extend Kennedy's conclusions by responding to Bizzell's call to reconsider the tradition's formerly minor figures. Alongside calls of self-assertion and alarm, Goodwin also records a somewhat more uncommon call, which he has heard only among juveniles and, occasionally, from sitting females.<sup>6</sup> He describes this call as "a soliloquy of very variable calls that seem to represent low-intensity versions of most of the innate calls and, possibly, some vocal mimicry."<sup>7</sup> Despite Kennedy's elision of the difference between *Corvus brachyrhynchus* and *Corvus corone*, his significant point about the potential relationship of Corax to crow might be repaired and reanimated by centering this uncommon soliloquy instead of the bird's more common calls of self-assertion and alarm.

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<sup>4</sup> Goodwin, *Crows of the World*, 114.

<sup>5</sup> Patricia Bizzell, "Editing the Rhetorical Tradition," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 36, no. 2 (2003): 117.

<sup>6</sup> Goodwin, *Crows of the World*, 114.

<sup>7</sup> Goodwin, 114.

Speaking analogically, Athenaeus's *Deipnosophistae* may be considered the counterpart in (hominid) Greco-Roman rhetoric to the uncommon soliloquy of the carrion crow. Dated to approximately 200 CE, *Deipnosophistae* is a fifteen-book collection of excerpts and anecdotes drawn from ancient texts covering a variety of topics and fields of knowledge.<sup>8</sup> *Deipnosophistae*, too, is composed of very variable calls, as its internal heterogeneity is considered by Christian Jacob<sup>9</sup> and John Paulas<sup>10</sup> to be one of the text's most salient qualities. *Deipnosophistae* also shares the corvid soliloquy's low intensity, as its expression of discursive practices found more commonly in the rhetorical tradition ("innate calls" in Goodwin's terms) are subtle and obscure. Most significant to the purposes of the present project, *Deipnosophistae* participates enthusiastically in vocal mimicry, reproducing excerpts drawn from prior texts, many of which would be entirely lost today if not for their appearance in *Deipnosophistae*. Indeed, vocal mimicry is one significant quality that crows (both *Corvus brachyrhynchus* and *Corvus corone*) share with ravens,<sup>11</sup> making it a fitting referent for the word *corax*, which may denote either animal. Whether *Deipnosophistae* can properly be said to be a soliloquy, however, is a complicated question, and one to be explored in the unfolding of this dissertation.

### A "Noah's Ark" of Lost Texts

As an analogue to the *corax*'s vocal mimicry, *Deipnosophistae* is conspicuous in its reproduction of quotations, lists, and anecdotes excerpted from prior discourse. To convey the staggering scope of the information transmitted through *Deipnosophistae*, Jacob characterizes the wide range and profound detail of *Deipnosophistae*'s information as an "inexhaustible quarry of

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<sup>8</sup> Jeroen Lauwers, "The Dictates of Language: Food, Words, and Narcissism in Athenaeus's *Dinner of the Sophists*," *Arethusa* 49, no. 1 (2016): 54.

<sup>9</sup> Christian Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2013), 100.

<sup>10</sup> John Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," PhD diss. The University of Chicago, 2008, 78.

<sup>11</sup> Goodwin, *Crows of the World*, 127.

data, information, words, citations, *curiosa* and various antiquarian oddities,” which make the text “an inevitable starting point” for investigation into lost texts from antiquity.<sup>12</sup> According to Monica Berti, Christopher Blackwell, Mary Daniels, Samantha Strickland, and Kimbell Vincent-Dobbins, *Deipnosophistae* mentions over 1,000 distinct authors, representing about 38% of all figures today associated with ancient Greek literature,<sup>13</sup> the majority of those presently lost but for their appearance in this text.<sup>14</sup> Jacob figures *Deipnosophistae* “as a sort of Noah’s Ark,” in the sense that it “preserves for us the memory of hundreds of authors and thousands of works which in many cases, without Athenaeus, would have been totally unknown to us.”<sup>15</sup> *Deipnosophistae* is accordingly considered a window through which excerpts of lost texts may be viewed.<sup>16</sup>

A substantial portion of *Deipnosophistae*’s collected excerpts would not be extant at all if not for their transmission through this specific text. Benjamin Baade Gracy observes that the text’s reputation is closely tied to its function of “transmitting to modern times thousands of fragments from ancient literature, drawn from some 800 authors, many of whom would be otherwise unknown.”<sup>17</sup> On account of the text’s capacity to preserve that “which would otherwise have escaped our knowledge altogether,” its excerpts take on the appearance of “so many treasures preserved from a shipwreck.”<sup>18</sup> The “great shipwreck of Greek ancient texts,” against which *Deipnosophistae* preserves its treasures, is extensive, as “most of the texts of ancient Greek literature are irremediably lost and preserved only through quotations and text-reuses by later

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<sup>12</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, vii.

<sup>13</sup> Monica Berti, “Athenaeus as Exemplary Challenge,” *The Banquet of the Digital Scholars: Humanities Hackathon on Editing Athenaeus and on the Reinvention of the Edition in a Digital Space*, Leipzig University and the German Archaeological Institute, Berlin, October 10-12, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Monica Berti, Christopher Blackwell, Mary Daniels, Samantha Strickland, and Kimbell Vincent-Dobbins, “Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis,” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 59, no. 2 (2016): 122.

<sup>15</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 8.

<sup>16</sup> E. B. C., “An Hour with Athenaeus,” *The Literary World* 4, no. 114 (April 7, 1849): 317.

<sup>17</sup> Benjamin Baade Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind: Utilitarian and Didactic Aspects of Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” (PhD diss., The University of Colorado, 2008), 17-18.

<sup>18</sup> E. B. C., “An Hour with Athenaeus,” 317.

authors.”<sup>19</sup> For the period inclusive of the eighth century BCE through the third century CE, only 29% of known Greek authors are identifiable with complete surviving texts; 59% are preserved through fragments alone, with the remaining 12% able to be reconstructed through a combination of fragment and text.<sup>20</sup> The figuration of the transmission of ancient literature as a shipwreck reflects the precarious relationship of prior to posterior discourse.

The figuration of *Deipnosophistae* as a “Noah’s Ark” of lost texts celebrates the text’s capacity to transmit information at the same time as it obscures the extent of the text’s influence in that regard. Jason König and Greg Woolf identify *Deipnosophistae* as a major source of knowledge for entire subjects of learned culture, such as ancient dining customs, certain genres of poetry and drama, or the sayings of famous *hetaerae*.<sup>21</sup> *Deipnosophistae*’s compilation of excerpts encompasses a range “from Homer to tragic and comic poets and lost historians, [as well as] Greek theatre, poetry, historiography, botany, zoology, and many other topics.”<sup>22</sup> By the calculations of Berti et al., the index for S. Douglas Olson’s edition of the text for the Loeb Classical Library lists 227 historians, 118 comic poets, 91 philosophers, 74 grammarians, and 34 tragic poets as distinct cited authors.<sup>23</sup> *Deipnosophistae* is used as a key pillar validating a considerable amount of what is today known about learned culture in Greek and Latin antiquity.

According to König and Woolf, *Deipnosophistae* cites over a thousand unique works and more than ten thousand lines of poetry.<sup>24</sup> Mark De Kreij observes that, among the text’s “myriad of quotations” on poetry, the lyric mode appears with particular prominence.<sup>25</sup> In Pauline A. Leven’s tally, 70% of all surviving late Classical melic poetry—lyric poetry composed for

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<sup>19</sup> Berti et al., “Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis,” 121.

<sup>20</sup> Berti et al., 121.

<sup>21</sup> Jason König and Greg Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 56.

<sup>22</sup> Berti et al., “Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis,” 122.

<sup>23</sup> Berti et al., 122.

<sup>24</sup> König and Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” 56.

<sup>25</sup> Mark De Kreij, “Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα: Variants of Sappho’s Songs in Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 136, (2016): 60.

instrumental accompaniment—derives from *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts; Plutarch comes second to Athenaeus in this measure, with a supply of ten lines.<sup>26</sup> For many of the 227 quoted historians, *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts are the principal extant source.<sup>27</sup> More impressive even than the text's record of poetry and history is the information it offers on ancient drama, quoting from tragedy and comedy more than 250 times each.<sup>28</sup> *Deipnosophistae* is the only extant source for approximately two-thirds of these quotations from tragedy.<sup>29</sup> Not to be outdone, ancient comedy is better represented in the text's excerpts than any other genre.<sup>30</sup> Oswyn Murray notes that there are extensive references to the Old Comedy of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE,<sup>31</sup> and many of the attestations to poets of the Middle and New Comedy are recorded in this text alone.<sup>32</sup> Not only is *Deipnosophistae* thorough in its account of ancient learned culture, but it is also notable for its ability to report on works that are otherwise irretrievably lost.

*Deipnosophistae*'s information is valued not only for its extensive excerpting of discursive artifacts from ancient learned culture but also for its detailed citations. Berti et al. describe how *Deipnosophistae*'s citations might mention, in addition to authors' names: biographical information about an author, a text's literary category, the intellectual school with which a text is associated, information for dating a text, the number of book-rolls in a text, a text's title, varying editions or titles for the same text, or the first lines of a work where stable titular data are unavailable.<sup>33</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s extraordinary content lends it a unique position

<sup>26</sup> Pauline A. Leven, "New Music and its Myths: Athenaeus' Reading of the Aulos Revolution ('Deipnosophistae' 14.616E-617F)," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 130, (2010): 35.

<sup>27</sup> Robert J. Gorman and Vanessa B. Gorman, "The Tryphê of the Sybarites: A Historiographical Problem in Athenaeus," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 127, (2007): 38.

<sup>28</sup> Laura McClure, "Subversive Laughter: The Sayings of Courtesans in Book 13 of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," *The American Journal of Philology* 124, no. 2 (2003): 260.

<sup>29</sup> C. Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* 97, (1969): 178.

<sup>30</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 86.

<sup>31</sup> Oswyn Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," *Rivista storica italiana* 126, no. 3 (2014): 707.

<sup>32</sup> E. B. C., "An Hour with Athenaeus," 317.

<sup>33</sup> Berti et al., "Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis," 123.

in the transmission of ancient literature over time and across cultural contexts, but as a discursive artifact itself, it reflects several major themes indicative of the period in which it was initially composed.

### **Circulating Discourse in the Second Sophistic**

With its focus on compiling information, *Deipnosophistae* is typical of learned culture during the Roman Empire. According to Barry Baldwin, the text may be aligned with the literary movement known as the Second Sophistic not only by a coincidence of time and place but also by its animating theme of collecting and curating knowledge.<sup>34</sup> *Deipnosophistae* arranges informational bits extracted from other sources into a cohesive text, a quality which Teresa Morgan considers “the heart and pinnacle of the literature of the Roman empire” with reference to the genre of the miscellany as a whole.<sup>35</sup> Anthological, lexical, and encyclopaedic literature had been produced in large quantities in the Hellenistic world in the centuries prior to *Deipnosophistae*’s composition at the turn of the third century CE,<sup>36</sup> and miscellanistic and encyclopaedic writing became increasingly common starting in the first century CE.<sup>37</sup> This period was marked by increasing interest in texts summarizing and organizing existing bodies of information.<sup>38</sup> Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh note that “it is sometimes hard to avoid the impression that accumulation of knowledge is the driving force for all of Imperial prose literature.”<sup>39</sup> According to Jason König, the Second Sophistic is notable not only for the quantity

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<sup>34</sup> Barry Baldwin, “The Minor Characters in Athenaeus,” *Acta Classica* 20, (1977): 48.

<sup>35</sup> Teresa Morgan, “The Miscellany and Plutarch,” in *The Philosopher’s Banquet: Plutarch’s Table Talk in the Intellectual Culture of the Roman Empire*, ed. Frieda Klotz and Katerina Oikonomopoulou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 54.

<sup>36</sup> Collard, “Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy,” 178.

<sup>37</sup> Jason König, “Representations of Intellectual Community in Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, and Aulus Gellius,” *Archime de arche’ologie et histoire ancienne* (2019): 56.

<sup>38</sup> Lauwers, “The Dictates of Language,” 49.

<sup>39</sup> Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh, “Ordering Knowledge,” in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

of its informational compilations but also for the rich and variable quality of their techniques of performing authority.<sup>40</sup> The proliferation of texts of a type with *Deipnosophistae* during the Second Sophistic may be attributed at least in part to the conditions of public discourse in the Roman Empire.

Information compilations like *Deipnosophistae* developed in tandem with the expanding volume and complexity of the information to which they could refer. König and Woolf describe how the decades preceding *Deipnosophistae*'s composition saw the tail-end of a flowering of book production in both the Greek and Latin tongues.<sup>41</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s concern with collecting information made it responsible to this lush landscape of letters under the principle that, in John Wilkins words, "the rarer the better, the more canonical the better."<sup>42</sup> Books of massive scale were fashionable during the Second Sophistic,<sup>43</sup> and the text displays an interest in unusual and uncommon examples.<sup>44</sup> Rome during the early Empire "was awash with information," granting a "particular utility" to texts that could select and coordinate excerpts from other sources.<sup>45</sup> Morgan, when comparing Plutarch's *Table Talk* to *Deipnosophistae*, identifies both as sympotic works evoking a world of learning,<sup>46</sup> which textual function was characteristic of the Second Sophistic. During the early centuries of the common era, Frieda Klotz and Katerina Oikonomopoulou describe how Roman intellectual society displayed a "fascination with

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<sup>40</sup> Jason König, "Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing," in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 5.

<sup>41</sup> König and Woolf, "Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire," 32.

<sup>42</sup> John Wilkins, "Galen and Athenaeus in the Hellenistic Library," in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. Jason König and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 81.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Hogg, "Libraries in a Greek Working Life: Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Case Study in Rome," in *Ancient Libraries*, ed. Jason König, Katerina Oikonomopoulou, and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 138.

<sup>44</sup> Ruth Webb, "Picturing the Past: Uses of Ekphrasis in the *Deipnosophistae* and Other Works of the Second Sophistic," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 226.

<sup>45</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 20-21.

<sup>46</sup> Morgan, "The Miscellany and Plutarch," 73.

polymathy” and that works of learned display like *Deipnosophistae* could expect to reach “what must have been an eager and enthusiastic body of readers.”<sup>47</sup> *Deipnosophistae*’s particular subject matter—the affairs of an erudite banquet—enhanced the complexity of its task, as “the domains of food and pharmacology had become vast and complex by the second century CE.”<sup>48</sup> The early Roman Empire enjoyed a discursive context marked by the conspicuous proliferation of books and bookish knowledge.

At the same time, Rome was developing sophisticated systems for collecting and coordinating information in the form of public libraries. Although individuals may for some time have maintained private collections, libraries in the sense of public institutions dedicated to holding and making available a variety of texts did not exist in Rome until after 28 BCE, and would remain dwarfed by the more venerable Hellenistic libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum until the end of the first century CE.<sup>49</sup> Krista Kennedy writes that the work of both museums and libraries is “to order collected, filtered knowledge in ways that are publicly accessible not only textually but also in terms of findability and structure,”<sup>50</sup> and this function may be properly applied to the introduction of public libraries to Rome by the imperial administration. According to Chris Ingraham, libraries have played varying roles across different times and cultural contexts in “giving citizens access to the information and resources that are prerequisite for participation in civic affairs”<sup>51</sup> and “building local communities able to participate meaningfully in the public sphere.”<sup>52</sup> According to Yun Lee Too, the discourse produced by ancient Greek and Roman

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<sup>47</sup> Frieda Klotz and Katerina Oikonomopoulou, “Introduction,” in *The Philosopher’s Banquet: Plutarch’s Table Talk in the Intellectual Culture of the Roman Empire*, ed. Frieda Klotz and Katerina Oikonomopoulou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22.

<sup>48</sup> Wilkins, “Galen and Athenaeus in the Hellenistic Library,” 69.

<sup>49</sup> Ole Olesen-Bagneux, “Mnemonics in the Mouseion: Considerations on Spatial Mnemonics as a Tool for Classification and Retrieval,” *Journal of Documentation* 71, no. 2 (2015): 280.

<sup>50</sup> Krista Kennedy, *Textual Curation: Authorial Agency in Wikipedia and the Chambers’ Cyclopaedia* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2016), 5.

<sup>51</sup> Chris Ingraham, “Libraries and Their Publics: Rhetorics of the Public Library,” *Rhetoric Review* 34, no. 2 (2015): 148.

<sup>52</sup> Ingraham, “Libraries and Their Publics,” 153.



writers about libraries suggests the centrality of their function to “issues of power, authority, cultural identity, memory, canonicity, and totalization.”<sup>53</sup> The curation and circulation of knowledge in the form of public libraries gesture to the conditions and concerns of public discourse during the Roman Empire.

The circulation of information may be considered coextensive with these Roman libraries themselves. Library curation in the ancient Mediterranean world may be figured as “a process of palimpsesting, of layering meanings and significations where texts are concerned individually and as a body.”<sup>54</sup> Too notes of modern research libraries that the accumulative growth of libraries is, in some sense, self-perpetuating, as writers who read and readers who write make of the library a “source and origin of further, newer books, which [the library] will in turn contain.”<sup>55</sup> The same may be said of an ancient library, which constantly grew and changed as the books in the collection and the collection itself was written and rewritten according to the conditions of their continued existence.<sup>56</sup> That libraries may, however, not grow constantly would have been especially evident at the time of *Deipnosophistae*’s composition. The year 192 CE was marked by a devastating fire in Rome’s main library quarter, in which “the imperial libraries of the Palatina and the Domus Tiberiana, together with the library in the Templum Pacis, went up in flames...along with the whole booksellers’ quarter.”<sup>57</sup> As an information compilation implicated in a context of knowledge circulation, *Deipnosophistae* enables the survival of its subject by supplanting it.

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<sup>53</sup> Yun Lee Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 8.

<sup>54</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 9.

<sup>55</sup> Too, 6.

<sup>56</sup> Olesen-Bagneux, “Mnemonics in the Mouseion,” 289.

<sup>57</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 703.

### Reading Excerpts Through *Deipnosophistae*

*Deipnosophistae* has proven so useful for the preservation of lost source texts that its informational function is often considered to have eclipsed the text itself. Baldwin regards Athenaeus of Naucratis, to whom authorship of *Deipnosophistae* is attributed, as “a diffuse antiquarian, to be consulted for the remains of Middle and New Comedy, and savoured as a dispenser of curious lore.”<sup>58</sup> Under this interpretive framework, readers leaf through the text to access the information excerpted within it, should they interface with it at all.<sup>59</sup> Dominique Lenfant describes readers of this kind as not quite attending to *Deipnosophistae* itself, but treating the text as a container for the discursive artifacts it excerpts.<sup>60</sup> *Deipnosophistae* has tended to have been used as a vehicle for the investigation of ancient learned culture, rather than read conventionally as a coherent text.<sup>61</sup> Too notes that *Deipnosophistae* is unlikely to be read as a straightforward text with a coherent narrative form, but instead employed as a scholarly research tool and mined for access to its excerpted information.<sup>62</sup> Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz identify a common aim of studying texts which, like *Deipnosophistae*, transmit excerpts of other works: “tracing the ‘sources,’ i.e. the lost texts, on which [the excerpts] are based.”<sup>63</sup> In a similar manner, Jeroen Lauwers describes how *Deipnosophistae* facilitates the reconstruction of ancient lost texts that are preserved in *Deipnosophistae* because of their lexical curiosity.<sup>64</sup> Laura McClure relates the standard view of *Deipnosophistae* as having little literary merit beyond its

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<sup>58</sup> Barry Baldwin, “Athenaeus and His Work,” *Acta Classica* 19, (1976): 21.

<sup>59</sup> Baldwin, “Athenaeus and His Work,” 42.

<sup>60</sup> Dominique Lenfant, “The Study of Intermediate Authors and its Role in the Interpretation of Historical Fragments,” *Ancient Society* 43, (2013): 290.

<sup>61</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 689.

<sup>62</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 110.

<sup>63</sup> Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz, “‘Condensation’ of Literature and the Pragmatics of Literary Production,” in *Condensing Texts – Condensed Texts*, ed. Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), 6.

<sup>64</sup> Lauwers, “The Dictates of Language,” 47.

functionality for transmitting its many quotations from other lost texts.<sup>65</sup> Given the uncommon and extensive qualities of *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpted information, to be valuable only for this purpose is no mean feat. The consistent expression of this complaint in Athenaeus studies, however, suggests its suitability for focused investigation.

*Deipnosophistae*'s reproduction of information excerpted from prior discourse sets the conditions for the interpretive tendency toward functionality described by the scholars above. According to Paulas, the four basic factors disadvantaging a conventional reading of *Deipnosophistae* as a coherent text include "its length, its condition as a text, its structure and its content," which would seem to account for nearly the whole of the artifact.<sup>66</sup> Considering two of these factors—the work's length and its content—John Davidson describes *Deipnosophistae*'s single-minded commitment to presenting its informational content,<sup>67</sup> and Wilkins describes its insistent focus on its subject matter and on presenting direct quotations.<sup>68</sup> In Paulas's judgment, the functional orientation toward reading *Deipnosophistae* as a presentation of excerpts has hindered further analysis of the text.<sup>69</sup>

The other two factors—*Deipnosophistae*'s structure and its condition as a text—are conspicuous in their disorderly character, and Joseph A. Howley notes how such an absence of structure might make a text seem "sub-literary" when he observes the same quality in Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae*.<sup>70</sup> "Athenaeus was not," as Baldwin puts it, "always in firm control of his teeming pages."<sup>71</sup> Paulas considers the text's external and internal layers to vacillate between the

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<sup>65</sup> Laura McClure, *Courtesans at Table: Gender and Greek Literary Culture in Athenaeus* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 37.

<sup>66</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 7.

<sup>67</sup> James Davidson, "Pleasure and Pedantry in Athenaeus," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 298.

<sup>68</sup> John Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 128, (2008): 132.

<sup>69</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 36.

<sup>70</sup> Joseph A. Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture: Text, Presence and Imperial Knowledge in the Noctes Atticae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 21-22.

<sup>71</sup> Baldwin, "Athenaeus and His Work," 22.

underdeveloped and the bizarre.<sup>72</sup> Gracy describes how the excerpts often appear to be “insufficiently integrated into the whole of the work,” their placement in the text seeming arbitrary and belabored.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, before reconstructing any ancient Greek literature from *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts, *Deipnosophistae* itself is the first “lost text in need of reconstruction.”<sup>74</sup> Within the text itself, there are several gaps of apparently missing words.<sup>75</sup> Markus Dubischar describes how a number of auxiliary texts, of which *Deipnosophistae* is an example, have lost their original prefaces,<sup>76</sup> and *Deipnosophistae* adds to that conventional absence a missing ending as well. Although *Deipnosophistae*’s readers have not tended to engage the artifact as a cohesive text, neither does the work seem to incentivize approach from this direction.

Although *Deipnosophistae*’s reputation is tightly connected to its capacity to present voices excerpted from prior discourse, the precision of those quotations relative to their source material is notoriously difficult to verify. Of immediate and unavoidable consequence for any reading of *Deipnosophistae* is “the state of the surviving text,” which Kirsten Harshman Lengyel describes as displaying “inconsistencies and errors throughout.”<sup>77</sup> Daniel Marder, borrowing a term from the field of physics, considers entropy in rhetorical systems to be defined by “the unfamiliarity of content, the levels of abstraction and ambiguity, and the density of these

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<sup>72</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 9.

<sup>73</sup> Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind,” 19.

<sup>74</sup> Malcolm Heath, “Do Heroes Eat Fish?: Athenaeus on the Homeric Lifestyle,” in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 351.

<sup>75</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.214b, 5.52; XV.699f, 15.57-58; XV.700e, 15.60. Textual gaps identified by Olson in: Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, ed. and trans. by S. Douglas Olson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007-2012), vol. II, 424; vol. VIII, 192 and 204.

<sup>76</sup> Markus Dubischar, “Survival of the Most Condensed? Auxiliary Texts, Communications Theory, and Condensation of Knowledge,” in *Condensing Texts – Condensed Texts*, ed. by Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), 44.

<sup>77</sup> Kirsten Harshman Lengyel, “Athenaeus on Spartan Diata,” *Tyche: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 22, (2007): 47.

relationships.<sup>78</sup> Krystyna Bartol explains that some degree of entropy is entirely typical for a text like *Deipnosophistae*, due to both the wide variety materials it compiles and the polyphony of sympotic literature.<sup>79</sup> According to Christopher Pelling, the nature of the relationship between *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts and the source texts to which they are attributed is unclear, and in some cases, the very existence of such a relationship at all is itself unclear.<sup>80</sup> The general inscrutability of *Deipnosophistae*'s informational content, which Wilkins attributes to damage to the manuscript and to the compilation of prior material, "has led a number of scholars to doubt the competence of the author and the integrity of the text."<sup>81</sup> *Deipnosophistae* seems to be of dubious reliability as a witness to excerpts of ancient Greek literature, the role in which it has been most esteemed.

It is precisely that for which *Deipnosophistae* has been so valued—its record of excerpts from texts that have otherwise been lost entirely—that also makes its information difficult to verify. A great deal of *Deipnosophistae*'s information is extant only in *Deipnosophistae*, making entire bodies of literature highly resistant to assessment for accurate transmission.<sup>82</sup> Ancient practices of quotation were not necessarily concerned with precise reception, which can "cause problems in the collecting of fragments of authors of whose works some, but not all, survive."<sup>83</sup> For instance, the text attributes to Plato a story about Socrates's wife Xanthippe pouring washing-

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<sup>78</sup> Daniel Marder, "Entropy in Rhetoric," paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Anaheim, CA, April, 1976, 6.

<sup>79</sup> Krystyna Bartol, "The Voice of Tradition: Representations of Homeric Singers in Athenaeus 1.14a-d," *The Classical Quarterly* 57 (New Series), no. 1 (2007): 232.

<sup>80</sup> Christopher Pelling, "Fun with Fragments: Athenaeus and the Historian," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 188.

<sup>81</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 133.

<sup>82</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 39.

<sup>83</sup> R. W. Sharples and D. W. Minter, "Theophrastus on Fungi: Inaccurate Citations in Athenaeus," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 103, (1983): 154.

water over Socrates's head, but such a detail does not appear in the extant Platonic corpus.<sup>84</sup> Elisabetta Villari's survey of the quotations of Aristoxenus in *Deipnosophistae* demonstrates how difficult it is to distinguish between direct and indirect citation where there is no point of independent comparison.<sup>85</sup> Too observes that *Deipnosophistae*'s near-monopoly on its excerpts is so extensive that "it is perhaps not too far-fetched to suggest that these [excerpts] have been invented."<sup>86</sup> *Deipnosophistae* conveys extensive intertextual connections to its library of learned culture, but that library, having been almost completely destroyed, cannot be deployed to verify many of the references recorded by *Deipnosophistae*.

### **Reading *Deipnosophistae* Through Its Excerpts**

The apparent opacity of the information presented in *Deipnosophistae* casts some doubt on interpretations of the text emphasizing functionality. Concerning antiquarian compilation literature, a category in which *Deipnosophistae* may be included, Erik Gunderson observes that the saturation of such works with informational content, and the corresponding disposition of scholars to read that information through the text, have together prompted readers to be ill-disposed toward them.<sup>87</sup> By ignoring the text's own peculiar narrative progression, those who would harvest excerpts from it stand accused by McClure of "dismissing Athenaeus as a collector of quotations."<sup>88</sup> In a similar manner, Baldwin considers that the utilitarian approach to *Deipnosophistae*, which focuses on minute detail instead of the text's coherent qualities, "has

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<sup>84</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.219b (Casaubon numbering), 5.61 (Kaibel numbering). Text and translation from Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, ed. and trans. by S. Douglas Olson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007-2012).

<sup>85</sup> Elisabetta Villari, "Aristoxenus in Athenaeus," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 448.

<sup>86</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 114.

<sup>87</sup> Erik Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae: Aulus Gellius and the Fantasy of the Roman Library* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 6.

<sup>88</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 37.

been needlessly narrow, to the detriment of proper knowledge and appreciation.”<sup>89</sup> According to this perspective as articulated by Murray, searching through the text for indications of lost works displaces the text’s coherent foundation from the center of the analytic project.<sup>90</sup> Observing the disservice done to the text by reading it as a vehicle for information presentation is, in the words of John Paulas, preliminary to envisioning *Deipnosophistae* “no longer as an encyclopedia or ‘library’ with a touch of literariness” but as a text with a coherent literary form in its own right.<sup>91</sup> This consideration that it is improper to engage the text as an avenue to the information it presents buttresses one of the predominant hermeneutic themes in scholarship on *Deipnosophistae*.

Functional, information-centered readings of *Deipnosophistae* have provided exigence in Athenaeus studies for calls to attend to the text’s coherent literary qualities. Daniel Harris-McCoy attests with regard to compilatory texts as a general category that readers tend initially to rely on them as a vehicle for information.<sup>92</sup> According to Paulas (in both his dissertation and his article), the idea that “the work has always been used as a mine for [information]” but that “no one can take it seriously as a piece of literature” is so widespread in Athenaeus studies that it is identifiable as “a *topos*” with a “usual form.”<sup>93</sup> Joseph A. Howley identifies this trend with regard to Aulus Gellius’s *Noctes Atticae*, writing that “the great challenge is to understand the complete thing as an artifact, and not to prejudge its purpose or its project before we hear that project articulated in its own terms.”<sup>94</sup> The first of these concerns, as Howley expresses them, is “to step

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<sup>89</sup> Baldwin, “Athenaeus and His Work,” 21.

<sup>90</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 719.

<sup>91</sup> John Paulas, “How to Read Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” *American Journal of Philology* 133, no. 3 (whole number 531) (2012): 405.

<sup>92</sup> Daniel Harris-McCoy, “Making and Defending Claims to Authority in Vitruvius’ *De Architectura*,” in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 128.

<sup>93</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 3; Paulas, “How to Read Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” 404.

<sup>94</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 6.

back from the essays and fragments, the individual islands, and take in the whole, crowded, bustling sea.”<sup>95</sup> The second, allowing the project to articulate itself in its own terms, is born of a commitment that the present scholarly needs for the text’s presented information not dull our understandings of the text itself and its own relationship to its world.<sup>96</sup> This turn, as Jacob expresses it in Athenaeus studies, calls upon readers to recognize that “beyond the heterogeneous surface of the text, beyond the excesses, the fun, the parody, and the comedy, there is a project, an intent, a scholarly base.”<sup>97</sup> Jacob considers this hermeneutic turn, attending to the text’s formal continuity rather than its excerpted information, to allow for readings of *Deipnosophistae* that can act as a catalyst for new insights on a text long disregarded as merely a useful means to other goals.<sup>98</sup> This thesis-antithesis moment in Athenaeus studies represents a profound and significant complication in the transmission of knowledge about and appreciation of texts from antiquity.

The proposed turn in Athenaeus studies from reading *Deipnosophistae* for its information-presenting function to reading its coherent literary form is readily familiar from the perspective of interdisciplinary rhetorical studies. This theoretical re-orientation in Athenaeus studies reverses what Richard A. Lanham calls “the Freshman Objection” to rhetorical education: “that the instructor should attend *what* [writing students] say rather than *how* they say it.”<sup>99</sup> Contrary to Lanham’s eponymous first-year student, the new movement in Athenaeus studies argues that to comprehend *Deipnosophistae*, in Lanham’s terms, one “must look *at* its stylistic surface as well as *through* it” and recognize “that style is as important as substance.”<sup>100</sup> In Lanham’s opinion, the oscillation “between narrative and speech, between the event and the speech celebrating it, between self-conscious and unselfconscious attitudes toward words” is

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<sup>95</sup> Howley, 13.

<sup>96</sup> Howley, 13.

<sup>97</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, ix.

<sup>98</sup> Jacob, vii.

<sup>99</sup> Richard A. Lanham, “‘Only Rhetoric’ and ‘Rhetoric,’” *Man and the Economy* 3, no. 2 (2014): 246.

<sup>100</sup> Lanham, “‘Only Rhetoric’ and ‘Rhetoric,’” 243.



characteristic of Western literary culture as a whole.<sup>101</sup> While Lanham's term for the tension between looking *through* and looking *at* verbal symbols implies that it is one of the first problems presented by the study and practice of artful language, his historical account indicates its durability for the field.

The "Freshman Objection" is implicated in some of the most persistent and fundamental controversies animating the development of rhetorical criticism. Early in the twentieth century, Kenneth Burke articulated Lanham's "Freshman Objection" in the disjunction between the consumption-focused standards of criticism oriented around a receptive audience and the production-focused standards committed to an artist's capacity for creative self-expression.<sup>102</sup> Stephen Lucas characterized the schism between "rhetorical criticism" and "rhetorical history" as an argument over the extent to which investigations of artful discourse should account for a text's internal qualities or its external influences.<sup>103</sup> A distinct but related *agōn* in interdisciplinary rhetorical studies saw the ship of genre split on the rock of form-versus-substance, and then be repaired by the functional definition advanced by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson<sup>104</sup> and Carolyn Miller.<sup>105</sup> Michael McGee inaugurated critical rhetoric with the observation that speakers and writers in a post-modern condition assemble discourse from fragments, which only take on the appearance of a finished text in the esteem of an audience,<sup>106</sup> which position Michael Leff described as attending to rhetoric's extensional dimension, in

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<sup>101</sup> Lanham, 245.

<sup>102</sup> Kenneth Burke, "Antony in Behalf of the Play," *The Southern Review*, (January 1, 1935): 308.

<sup>103</sup> Stephen E. Lucas, "The Schism in Rhetorical Scholarship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 67, no. 1 (February 1981): 5.

<sup>104</sup> Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: An Introduction," in *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (Falls Church, VA: The Speech Communication Association, 1978), 21.

<sup>105</sup> Carolyn R. Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70, (1984): 151.

<sup>106</sup> Michael Calvin McGee, "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54, (Summer 1990): 279 and 288.

opposition to the intentional concerns of textual criticism.<sup>107</sup> These examples demonstrate a few of the ways that Lanham's "Freshman Objection" has manifested at moments of consequence in the theoretical development of interdisciplinary rhetorical studies.

This dissertation seeks not to resolve the disjunction of Lanham's "Freshman Objection" in favor of one pole or the other, but to advance toward a synthesis of form and function through a focused analysis of *Deipnosophistae* and its accumulated commentary. Of principal concern is investigating how *Deipnosophistae* managed to survive the shipwreck of ancient transmission at all and what among its qualities as a discursive artifact may have contributed to its continued existence in circulation.

Chapter 2 considers the critical lexicon developed by scholars of *Deipnosophistae* to navigate their encounter with Lanham's "Freshman Objection," articulates that lexicon with interdisciplinary rhetorical studies' current ecological turn, and relates the history of *Deipnosophistae*'s transmission as an ecological process of evolving discourse along a model of slow circulation. *Deipnosophistae*'s present existence as a text is the product of its continuous, recursive composition by generations of commentators and editors, each of whom writes *Deipnosophistae* as part of their attempts to read it.

After having traced the trajectory of *Deipnosophistae*'s textual development, Chapter 3 contextualizes the text as an instance of knowledge-writing and considers the organs by which the text presents its information: quotation and citation. Chiefly, *Deipnosophistae* presents contradictory, incomplete, or absent information and influences—but doesn't determine—the interpretations of its audience. Rather than displaying editorial authority, which overwhelms its audience with comprehensive expertise, *Deipnosophistae* conveys fragmentary authority, which provides its readers with the resources to form their own judgments.

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<sup>107</sup> Michael Leff, "Things Made By Words: Reflections on Textual Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78, (1992): 223.

Chapter 4 then extends this interpretation by attending to the text's coherent literary form, the narrative by which it coordinates and indexes its information. *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework supplies its readers with an organizational and mnemonic structure for accessing its information. The text's explicitly artificial narrative form describes a network of topical association which readers may imitate and extend in a process of creative intertext. By facilitating information presentation, *Deipnosophistae* serves the very function that incentivized generations of commentators and editors to organize the discursive artifact into a stable text.

The dissertation's conclusion, Chapter 5, explores the implications of *Deipnosophistae*'s mutually co-productive relation of function and form for interdisciplinary rhetorical studies. The text's recursive composition, fragmentary authority, and creative intertext prompt an investigation into the precision with which *Deipnosophistae* transmits its excerpts from their source texts. The conclusion proposes that *Deipnosophistae* is animated by a process of regenerative entropy, whereby it makes use of its own capacity for decay and distortion to continue its survival in circulating discourse.

## Chapter 2

### Textual Transmission

The introduction to *Deipnosophistae*'s fourth book makes explicit reference to the text's own position within a network of circulating discourse. The introductory passage relates the story of Hippolochus and Lynceus, who agreed to send each other an account of any great banquets they attend,<sup>1</sup> and proposes to reproduce the exact contents of Hippolochus's letters in summary.<sup>2</sup> Specifying that the details can be learned from dinner-party letters by both men that were preserved, this passage verifies the authority of the information conveyed by claiming to copy it from an external source text.<sup>3</sup> This introductory passage gestures outward, beyond the text of *Deipnosophistae*, toward a real world of letters from which the excerpts are extracted. Moreover, the narrator claims to be giving the letters just as they are, without interposition as a creative writer.<sup>4</sup> The introduction to the fourth book of *Deipnosophistae*, with its description of the correspondences of Hippolochus and Lynceus, illustrates the text's explicit recognition of its place within an ongoing network of circulating discourse.

This chapter considers the theme expressed in the citational apparatus contextualizing the letters of Hippolochus and Lynceus, that the text of *Deipnosophistae* is part of an iterated and contextually-situated process of discursive reproduction. This chapter begins by assaying the critical lexicon developed for navigating the complex network of intertextual relations displayed by the text. The chapter explains the alignment of this critical lexicon with the ecological turn in interdisciplinary rhetorical studies, which attends to a text's continuous and open-ended

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<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.128a, 4.1.

<sup>2</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.128b, 4.1.

<sup>3</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.128a, 4.1.

<sup>4</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.128c, 4.1-2.

composition over time and by a variety of contributors. This chapter then documents *Deipnosophistae*'s ecological development through the history of its textual transmission. *Deipnosophistae*'s textual transmission describes the text's accumulation through a process of recursive composition and its survival in circulating discourse according to a model of slow circulation.

### Performances of Circulation

*Deipnosophistae* represents a node in a network of intertextual relationships, a crystallization of one moment in an ongoing flow of discursive circulation. *Deipnosophistae* makes explicit reference to its place in a larger network of text-reuse in the eighth book when it quotes Theophrastus's treatise *On the Ridiculous*. In this passage, Athenaeus calls Theophrastus in to support the claim that a certain quotation can be attributed to Stratonicus.<sup>5</sup> The text then quotes a similar excerpt attributed to the actor Simycas of which the Stratonicus quotation appears to be a modification. In this passage, the text explicitly acknowledges the network of discursive circulation from which it arises and to which it contributes, as well as the capacity for variable reproduction enabled by this kind of intertextual network. *Deipnosophistae*, with both its excerpts and its commentary, provides a fossil record of a continuous process by which "language shapes language."<sup>6</sup> The fossil record, in this sense, displays individual instances that have been preserved from a continuous evolutionary process and from which associations may be inferred that eluded direct preservation themselves. The text seems to freeze one point in the circulating discourse that both precedes it and follows from it.

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<sup>5</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VIII.348a, 8.40.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen H. Browne, "Rhetoric, Text, Effect," in *The Effects of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Effects*, ed. Amos Kiewe and Davis W. Houck (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2015), 123.

Reading *Deipnosophistae* through its use of sources instead of reading original sources through *Deipnosophistae* has been a recent font of theoretical invention for Athenaeus studies. This latter tendency—reconstructing source texts from *Deipnosophistae*'s informational content—receives expression in the use of the term “fragment” to identify the text's compiled quotations. Lenfant declines to refer to the excerpts in *Deipnosophistae* and other compilatory works as “fragments,” because to do so would conflate such excerpts with material papyrus fragments and reinforce the interpretive disposition that seeks to rediscover lost texts within extant works.<sup>7</sup> Berti et al. have acknowledged the significant contribution to modern knowledge of ancient literature accomplished by such reconstruction work, but cautions against the assertions of clear and direct access to lost works implied by figuring *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts as fragments.<sup>8</sup> To refer to compiled excerpts as fragments infers accurate knowledge of ancient learned culture from circulating bits of discourse that cannot reliably support such claims.

The unique problems posed by reading *Deipnosophistae* have necessitated the development of a critical lexicon for Athenaeus studies. Lenfant, drawing on Guido Schepens, denominates *Deipnosophistae* itself and other works of its kind as a “cover-text,” so called because it covers excerpted works in three ways: preserving them, concealing them, and enclosing them in a new interpretive context.<sup>9</sup> Lenfant also acknowledges the term “intermediate author” as an imperfect way of conveying the same idea, as each intermediate author represents a stage in a continuous process of transmission.<sup>10</sup> Berti et al. use the term “text-reuse” to describe the entire process of composition through the reproduction of prior discourse within a context of

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<sup>7</sup> Lenfant, “The Study of Intermediate Authors and its Role in the Interpretation of Historical Fragments,” 289-290.

<sup>8</sup> Berti et al., “Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis,” 121.

<sup>9</sup> Lenfant, “The Study of Intermediate Authors and its Role in the Interpretation of Historical Fragments,” 291.

<sup>10</sup> Lenfant, 290.

continuous transmission.<sup>11</sup> The conceptual shift toward reading *Deipnosophistae* through its intertextual network is implicated with a terminological framework suited specifically for describing the text's organs of information presentation.

This conceptual shift and its attendant interpretive lexicon allow for a fresh perspective on the text as a performance of circulating discourse. Considering the compilation of excerpted quotations as positioned as somewhere between automatic duplication and creative originality directs attention to the practices of "selection and adaptation made by the intermediate author."<sup>12</sup> Reading along this dimension of the text emphasizes the interactions among excerpted sources, intermediate authors, and potential future readers. If any reliable information can be transmitted through *Deipnosophistae*, perceiving it would require accounting for the interposition of the intermediate author as an agent of circulation.<sup>13</sup> Lenfant attests that perceiving excerpted voices through *Deipnosophistae* is a complicated and dynamic task, requiring "a familiarity with the other fragments of the lost writer, but also knowledge of the intermediate author and his habits," rather than an assumption of precise, transparent transmission or of total, opaque uncertainty.<sup>14</sup> The use in Athenaeus studies of such terms as cover-text, intermediate author, and text-reuse reflects the nascent assemblage of a hermeneutic disposition suitable for advancing insights of sufficient dynamism and complexity.

### **The Ecological Turn in Rhetorical Studies**

Interdisciplinary rhetorical studies also offers a hermeneutic disposition well-suited to the problems of reading *Deipnosophistae*. The difficulties of reading the text as a performance of

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<sup>11</sup> Berti et al., "Documenting Homeric Text-Reuse in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus of Naucratis," 121-122.

<sup>12</sup> Lenfant, "The Study of Intermediate Authors and its Role in the Interpretation of Historical Fragments," 290.

<sup>13</sup> Lenfant, 292.

<sup>14</sup> Lenfant, 303.

circulating discourse may be sensibly negotiated in alignment with what Joe Edward Hatfield has called “the ecological turn in contemporary rhetorical scholarship”<sup>15</sup> Justine Wells defines the object of study for this ecological turn in rhetorical scholarship as “an evolving collective both emergent from and determinant of rhetorical forces, and one necessarily imbricated in other ecologies.”<sup>16</sup> Krista Kennedy considers the ecological model to emphasize rhetoric functioning among various points within an open-ended interactive and performative network, and this perspective may be productively applied to *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>17</sup> Of particular significance to Kennedy’s ecological perspective is the notion of continuous emergence, as the ecological turn attends to composition and recomposition as parts of a constantly unfolding process of collaborative development.<sup>18</sup> An ecological model for reading *Deipnosophistae* recognizes its processes of partial replication as constituting a system of symbolic evolution.

The ecological turn in rhetorical studies would excuse readers of *Deipnosophistae* from attempting to see an accurate image of ancient learned culture through the transparent medium of the text. Instead, an ecological model emphasizes the fact itself of the text’s continued existence. Jenny Edbauer theorizes a shift in focus for interdisciplinary rhetorical studies from rhetorical situations to rhetorical ecologies according to the circulation of effects, enactments, and events in public rhetoric.<sup>19</sup> In a similar manner, Rebecca A. Alt and Rosa A. Eberly refer to different and overlapping publics as “interconnected ecologies”<sup>20</sup> among which discourse circulates and develops. Likewise, the ecological view employed by Nathaniel A. Rivers and Ryan P. Weber

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<sup>15</sup> Joe Edward Hatfield, “The Queer Kairotic: Digital Transgender Suicide Memories and Ecological Rhetorical Agency,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (2019): 29.

<sup>16</sup> Justine Wells, “W. E. B. Du Bois and the Conservation of Races: A Piece of Ecological Ancestry,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (2019): 350.

<sup>17</sup> Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 35.

<sup>18</sup> Kennedy, 28.

<sup>19</sup> Jenny Edbauer, “Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2005): 9.

<sup>20</sup> Rebecca A. Alt and Rosa A. Eberly, “Between Campus and Planet: Toward a Posthumanist *Paideia*,” *Review of Communication* 19, no. 2 (2019): 100.



attends to the circulation of a variety of texts and the rhetorical networks among which they circulate.<sup>21</sup> According to Rivers and Weber, an approach to discourse informed by the ecological turn “highlights the affective, social, distributed, and coordinating guts of public rhetorical action.”<sup>22</sup> Krista Kennedy observes through her reading of Ephraim Chambers’s *Cyclopaedia* that knowledge is created, adjusted, maintained, and verified through its circulation across both time and space, and is responsive to the information ecologies within which it develops.<sup>23</sup> Although Kennedy is referring to a modern encyclopedia, her observations may be applied to interpreting *Deipnosophistae*. A discursive ecology changes with each iterated contribution, and those changes survive to the extent that they are able to reproduce in reading and listening publics.

The ecological turn imagines discursive circulation as an open system, continuously subject to growth and change as its component elements circulate and reproduce. Amy Mandelker attests how rhetoric’s ecological turn portrays the interaction of these parts as a continuous “dialogue of difference.”<sup>24</sup> As Edbauer articulates it, the ecological model’s openness describes discourse as a fluid system of interactions iterated among irregular constituent parts.<sup>25</sup> Each circumstance in which discourse comes to be received, interpreted, and repurposed is part of an ecology of interactions, in which ideas and symbols are adapted to the conditions of each situation through which they circulate. Edbauer describes how each bit of discourse undergoes continuous mutations and adaptations, so that its composition appears less as a single enunciative instance and more “as a process of distributed emergence and as an ongoing circulation

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<sup>21</sup> Nathaniel A. Rivers and Ryan P. Weber, “Ecological, Pedagogical, and Public Rhetoric,” *College Composition and Communication* 63, no. 2 (2011): 202.

<sup>22</sup> Rivers and Weber, “Ecological, Pedagogical, and Public Rhetoric,” 202.

<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 15.

<sup>24</sup> Amy Mandelker, “Logosphere and Semiosphere: Bakhtin, Russian Organicism, and the Semiotics of Culture,” in *Bakhtin in Contexts: Across the Disciplines*, ed. Amy Mandelker (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 190.

<sup>25</sup> Edbauer, “Unframing Models of Public Distribution,” 19.

process.”<sup>26</sup> In an ecological model of discourse, symbolic complexes are created through an evolutionary process of variation, selection, and reproduction.

The ecological turn’s focus on the open-ended circulation of discourse leads it to adopt an orientation toward time privileging continuity and sequence. Hatfield’s ecological analytic maintains that rhetorical activity, as an open-ended system of circulating symbols, evolves diachronically over time and across a variety of contexts.<sup>27</sup> In Rivers and Weber’s ecological model, “rhetorical acts are dynamic, ongoing, and open to influence,” meaning that they cannot exist apart from their connection to other interactants in the ecology.<sup>28</sup> Further, according to Rivers and Weber, these rhetorical acts mutate with each partial replication and adapt according to the conditions necessary to secure continued reproduction.<sup>29</sup> It is through this process, what Rivers and Weber call “the concatenation of texts over time,”<sup>30</sup> that publics are formed, as interested actors engage with and reproduce bits of discourse among other interested actors. The ecological turn attends to discourse as it unfolds through time and across communication contexts.

An ecological model of discourse is well-suited to address the interpretive difficulties presented by *Deipnosophistae*. For one, the text is replete with vocal plurality at various levels of analysis, including the reuse of prior discourse through quotation and paraphrase, the arrangement of these excerpts into antithetical relations within the text, and the staging of a dialogue among the characters in the text’s narrative.<sup>31</sup> Making sense of *Deipnosophistae* requires accommodating this polyphony and reading the text as a part of an open-ended system of circulating discourse. Rivers and Weber attest that an ecological approach highlights “the mundane alongside the

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<sup>26</sup> Edbauer, 13.

<sup>27</sup> Hatfield, “The Queer Kairotic,” 30.

<sup>28</sup> Rivers and Weber, “Ecological, Pedagogical, and Public Rhetoric,” 194.

<sup>29</sup> Rivers and Weber, 208.

<sup>30</sup> Rivers and Weber, 217.

<sup>31</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 12.

monumental,<sup>32</sup> and so may be fitting to capture the eclectic disposition of *Deipnosophistae*'s informational content. At the same time, Krista Kennedy's ecological analysis of modern encyclopedias enables her to investigate "the vital points of articulation that influence performances of authorial agency,"<sup>33</sup> and the same operation may be applied with respect to *Deipnosophistae*'s complex reproduction of prior discourse and continuous development over multiple editions. The text's internal and external systems, characterized by their polyphonic and eclectic qualities, make *Deipnosophistae* an appropriate object of study for ecological analysis.

*Deipnosophistae* responds particularly well to Kyle Jensen's notion of genetic rhetorical criticism, a methodological intervention within the broader framework of the ecological turn in interdisciplinary rhetorical studies. Genetic rhetorical criticism proposes to analyze a text's evolutionary development over time in order to explain some aspect of the specific work itself as well as more general observations about the operation of rhetorical discourse.<sup>34</sup> Genetic rhetorical criticism integrates analysis of the text's rhetorical processes with an account of what Jensen calls "the broader historical and material pressures that shape its invention, circulation, revision, and, in some cases, misappropriation."<sup>35</sup> In compensation for its heightened awareness of discourse's evolution over time through variation, selection, and reproduction, genetic rhetorical criticism limits its concepts of author and editor to sites of influence within the work's larger system of discursive ecology.<sup>36</sup> With this theoretical orientation, genetic rhetorical criticism prepares itself to study the evolution of rhetorical works as they develop in multiple different versions through time and across contexts.<sup>37</sup> Genetic rhetorical criticism's primary focus is on the variation in and through a text over time without deferring to the authenticity of any one version.

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<sup>32</sup> Rivers and Weber, "Ecological, Pedagogical, and Public Rhetoric," 194.

<sup>33</sup> Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 11.

<sup>34</sup> Kyle Jensen, "Genetic Rhetorical Criticism: An Alternative Methodology for Studying Multi-Versioned Rhetorical Works," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 102, no. 3 (2016): 267.

<sup>35</sup> Jensen, "Genetic Rhetorical Criticism," 267.

<sup>36</sup> Jensen, 271.

<sup>37</sup> Jensen, 266.

Of particular significance for reading *Deipnosophistae*, genetic rhetorical criticism enables one to trace a text's development through its multiple circulatory iterations. Genetic rhetorical criticism seeks after a range of interpretations potentiated by multi-versioned rhetorical works.<sup>38</sup> Jensen proposes the methodological scope of genetic rhetorical criticism to be the tracking of "the evolution of texts both prior to and following their public circulation," as well as "the complex historical and material motives that both informed its production and spur its ongoing revision."<sup>39</sup> As a result, genetic rhetorical criticism may advance interpretive claims about a range of factors influencing the existing status of incomplete discursive materials, inferring continued momentum extended from an observed, partial trajectory.<sup>40</sup> In this sense, genetic rhetorical critics advance probabilistic claims about possible missing links based on the contiguity of works preserved in the fossil record. Accordingly, to account for the fact of *Deipnosophistae*'s continued circulation, this chapter now analyzes the text according to its variation and reproduction over time in and as a discursive ecology.

### **The Mother of All Lists<sup>41</sup>**

The text of *Deipnosophistae* has never been more standardized or more easily accessible than it is at present, due to the Internet's utility as a medium for circulating discourse. The full text—in English translation or its original Greek—is available via the Perseus Digital Library hosted by Tufts University,<sup>42</sup> the Loeb Classical Library hosted by Harvard University,<sup>43</sup> the

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<sup>38</sup> Jensen, 268.

<sup>39</sup> Jensen, 268.

<sup>40</sup> Jensen, 270.

<sup>41</sup> Umberto Eco, *The Infinity of Lists* (New York, NY: Rizzolo International Publications, Inc., 2009), 360. Eco refers to the World Wide Web as "the Mother of all Lists."

<sup>42</sup> "Athenaeus," Perseus Collection,

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection?collection=Perseus%3Acorpus%3Aperseus%2Cauthor%2CAthenaeus>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>43</sup> "ATHENAEUS, The Learned Banqueters," Loeb Classical Library,

[https://www.loebclassics.com/view/atheneus\\_grammarian-learned\\_banqueters/2007/pb\\_LCL204.3.xml](https://www.loebclassics.com/view/atheneus_grammarian-learned_banqueters/2007/pb_LCL204.3.xml). Accessed June 25, 2020.

Digital Collections hosted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison,<sup>44</sup> Project Gutenberg hosted by the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill,<sup>45</sup> the HathiTrust Digital Library hosted by HathiTrust,<sup>46</sup> the Internet Archive hosted by the Internet Archive,<sup>47</sup> ToposText hosted by the Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation,<sup>48</sup> Google Books hosted by Google, Inc.,<sup>49</sup> and attalus.org hosted independently by Andrew Smith.<sup>50</sup> The English versions of *Deipnosophistae* available online generally reproduce the 1854 translation by Charles Duke Yonge, the 1927 translation by Charles Burton Gulick, or some combination of the two. The Yonge and Gulick translations are suited to digital circulation on account of their seniority, positioning them within the public domain. Only the Loeb Classical Library deviates from this pattern of using the Yonge and Gulick translations by publishing S. Douglas Olson's 2007-2012 English translation of *Deipnosophistae*.

Alongside these digital reproductions, there are two Internet editions of the text that are notable for their performances of the functional and formal hermeneutic dispositions in Athenaeus studies. The *Digital Athenaeus* project, hosted by Leipzig University and directed by Monica Berti, is the consummate expression of the functional, excerpt-retrieving approach to *Deipnosophistae*. The two main foci of the *Digital Athenaeus* project are to “provide an inventory of authors and works cited by Athenaeus” and to “implement a data model for identifying,

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<sup>44</sup> “The Deipnosophists, or, Banquet of the Learned of Athenaeus,” UW Digital Collections, <https://uwdc.library.wisc.edu/collections/literature/deipnosub>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>45</sup> “The Deipnosophists; or, Banquet of the Learned of Athenæus by Athenæus - Free Ebook,” Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/36921>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>46</sup> “Catalog Record: The Deipnosophists; or, Banquet of the learned,” HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009797164>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>47</sup> “The Deipnosophists; or, Banquet of the learned, of Athenæus,” Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/deipnosophistsor01atheuoft/page/n6/mode/2up>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>48</sup> “Athenæus, Deipnosophists,” ToposText, <https://topostext.org/work/218>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>49</sup> “The Deipnosophists; Or, Banquet of the Learned - Athenæus (of Naucratis.),” Google Books, [https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Deipnosophists\\_Or\\_Banquet\\_of\\_the\\_Lea.html?id=A0\\_lgVLTOIsC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Deipnosophists_Or_Banquet_of_the_Lea.html?id=A0_lgVLTOIsC). Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>50</sup> Andrew Smith, “Athenæus: Deipnosophists – translation,” Attalus, <http://www.attalus.org/info/athenæus.html>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

analyzing, and citing uniquely instances of text reuse.”<sup>51</sup> To that end, the *Digital Athenaeus* project has developed a suite of tools for trawling and manipulating *Deipnosophistae*’s distinct bits of information. *Deipnosophistae*, in some ways, anticipates its expression in Berti’s *Digital Athenaeus*, as the work has been characterized as an early form of hypertext.<sup>52</sup> The *Digital Athenaeus* project optimizes *Deipnosophistae*’s presented information for a digitally networked medium, abandoning the linear arrangement of the book-roll or codex.

The edition of *Deipnosophistae* published on LacusCurtius, hosted by the University of Chicago and directed by William Thayer, provides an ideal formal foil to the *Digital Athenaeus*’s functional mission. Rather than acting as an information resource, the LacusCurtius *Deipnosophistae* is a performance of Thayer’s own engagement with the text. Instead of scanning the text or copying it from another digital edition, Thayer proposes to retype *Deipnosophistae* by hand that he might minimize transcription errors and facilitate his own intimate familiarity with the text.<sup>53</sup> He declines to duplicate the text automatically because doing so “would merely turn [him] into some kind of machine.”<sup>54</sup> Consequently, Thayer’s transcription project reproduces one of the most conspicuous features of *Deipnosophistae*: its incompleteness. As of present writing, Book 1 through Book 4 has been transcribed and proofread, Book 5 through Book 8 (and part of Book 9) has been transcribed but not proofread, and the rest of Book 9 through Book 15 has not been transcribed.<sup>55</sup> The text’s incompleteness, restored by the LacusCurtius edition, has been a

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<sup>51</sup> Monica Berti, “About,” *Digital Athenaeus*, <http://www.digitalatheneus.org>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>52</sup> Christian Jacob, “Athenaeus the Librarian,” in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 105; König and Whitmarsh, “Ordering Knowledge,” 34; Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind,” 29; Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 107.

<sup>53</sup> William Thayer, “Athenaeus — *Deipnosophistae*,” LacusCurtius, <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Athenaeus>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>54</sup> William Thayer, “Athenaeus — *Deipnosophistae*,” LacusCurtius, <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Athenaeus>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

<sup>55</sup> William Thayer, “Athenaeus — *Deipnosophistae*,” LacusCurtius, <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Athenaeus>. Accessed June 25, 2020.

major exigence animating the transmission of *Deipnosophistae* over the centuries, as successive editions have attempted to minimize the apparent influence of entropy on the text.

### **The Schweighaeuser Print Edition, 1801**

The impulse to repair *Deipnosophistae*'s gaps and inconsistencies culminated in the 1801 print edition published in Strasbourg by Jean Schweighaeuser, from which all present versions of the text are descended.<sup>56</sup> The Schweighaeuser edition presents the Greek text of *Deipnosophistae* alongside a Latin translation, with both versions supplemented by copious notes and commentary. Much of these notes and commentary were accumulated by drawing on *Deipnosophistae*'s deep tradition of distributed authorship. In preparing his published edition, Schweighaeuser compared multiple existing copies of *Deipnosophistae* with particular emphasis on their informal marginalia. One of these copies, which Schweighaeuser found in the Strasbourg library, had belonged to Ludolf Kuster, a German scholar of antiquity living in the late seventeenth century.<sup>57</sup> Kuster was an inveterate traveler, whose broad experience with manuscripts, libraries, and expert authorities was reflected in the extensive notes he wrote in the margins of this copy of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>58</sup>

With some difficulty, Schweighaeuser was also able to obtain two copies of *Deipnosophistae* that had belonged to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century classical scholar Richard François Philippe Brunck.<sup>59</sup> As a translator and editor in his own right, Brunck was notable for his unusual and intrusive style. Although he would add little or no commentary to his own publications, Brunck

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<sup>56</sup> Thomas Frognall Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics* (London: W. Dwyer, 1804), 47.

<sup>57</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 48.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 149.

<sup>59</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 48.

modified texts with a free hand, trusting to his intuition over traditional readings or manuscript evidence to discern the text's original meaning. Although Brunck is not known to have written on *Deipnosophistae*, he was evidently familiar with the text. Like Kuster, Brunck added extensive marginalia to his copies of *Deipnosophistae*, notes which Schweighaeuser's own editorial comments, as Arnott attests to them, indicate were treasured for their insight.<sup>60</sup>

Pressed between the leaves of one of Brunck's copies were excerpts from an entirely different text, scraps torn or cut from an anthology compiled by Ermolao Barbaro.<sup>61</sup> A fifteenth-century Venetian politician and scholar, Barbaro had translated and published an edition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in 1479 and was a contributor to a partial manual transcription of *Deipnosophistae* in 1482.<sup>62</sup> Someone—perhaps Brunck—had inserted these excised passages from Barbaro between the pages of *Deipnosophistae* to supplement the information presented therein. Schweighaeuser painstakingly transcribed both Kuster's and Brunck's marginalia, as well as Barbaro's excisions, for his 1801 printing.<sup>63</sup> Schweighaeuser's use of handwritten marginalia and excised scraps expresses the distribution of *Deipnosophistae*'s authorship across multiple voices in a variety of media.

Alongside this deep tradition of informal marginal commentary, Schweighaeuser relied on the expertise of two contemporaries for advice on passages of particular complexity. Schweighaeuser corresponded with Francois-Jean-Gabriel de La Porte du Theil, who was charged with the care of the Greek manuscript collection at the French National Library.<sup>64</sup> The same year that Schweighaeuser's *Deipnosophistae* was printed, lithographic copies of the Rosetta Stone

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<sup>60</sup> Geoffrey Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome: Texts, Manuscripts, and Early Editions," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 52.

<sup>61</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 48.

<sup>62</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 46.

<sup>63</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 48.

<sup>64</sup> Dibdin, 48.



arrived in Paris, and de La Porte du Theil was one of the earliest scholars to work on translating the Greek portion of that artifact. Schweighaeuser also received “profound and admirable emendations of some of the more difficult passages of Athenaeus” from Adamantios Korais, a classical scholar and Greek expatriate in Paris.<sup>65</sup> Sophia A. Xenophontos accounts for how Korais’s translations and publications of ancient Greek literature stimulated a modern Greek cultural sensibility, and his political convictions tended to align with the revolutionary republican and nationalist movements of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>66</sup>

Schweighaeuser’s admitted editorial debt to de La Porte du Theil and Korais further indicate the range of influences in *Deipnosophistae*’s ecology of discursive circulation. The oral contributions of de La Porte du Theil and Korais and the supplemental notations made by Kuster, Brunck, and Barbaro each add to Schweighaeuser’s edition a claim to partial authorship, layered over the many contributing authors to the text from which Schweighaeuser was working: the 1597 Casaubon edition of *Deipnosophistae*.

### **The Casaubon Print Edition, 1597**

Before the 1801 publication of Schweighaeuser’s edition, the standard text for *Deipnosophistae* was that published by Isaac Casaubon in either Heidelberg or Geneva.<sup>67</sup> It was copies of this Casaubon edition that Kuster and Brunck annotated to the enormous gratitude of Schweighaeuser. The Casaubon edition was first printed in Greek letters in 1597 but would receive multiple additional printings over the course of the early seventeenth century.<sup>68</sup> Casaubon published a second volume in 1600, in which was included two appendices: a Latin translation of

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<sup>65</sup> Dibdin, 48.

<sup>66</sup> Sophia A. Xenophontos, “Reading Plutarch in Nineteenth-Century Greece: Classical *Paideia*, Political Emancipation, and National Awareness—the Case of Adamantios Korais,” *Classical Receptions Journal* 6, no. 1 (2014): 132.

<sup>67</sup> Arnott, “Athenaeus and the Epitome,” 51.

<sup>68</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 45.

the text and commentaries on the text from Casaubon. Thomas Frognall Dibdin considers the Commentaries to be the most valuable part of the edition, more so even than Casaubon's version of the text itself.<sup>69</sup> Mark Stephen Caponigro describes Casaubon's "liberated"<sup>70</sup> imagination, as the editor was not above making modifications to the existing manuscript tradition if the modification seemed to correct an error, even where those emendations deviated from the text as it had been traditionally established.<sup>71</sup> Nonetheless, Casaubon's publication innovated on previous editions of *Deipnosophistae* by maintaining a tight focus on the pertinent information presented in the text and restricting to the background his own critical voice.

The Casaubon edition was the culmination of a century-long sequence of translations and publications of *Deipnosophistae*. Numerous commentaries and emendations of *Deipnosophistae* were printed over the course of the sixteenth century, including one by Casaubon's own father-in-law.<sup>72</sup> These editions each had their own tradition of conjectures and corrections on the text, which were incorporated by Casaubon into his own version.<sup>73</sup> Madeleine Henry observes that *Deipnosophistae* was well-known enough during this period that Rabelais, writing in the middle of the century, mentions it with respect seven times as an authoritative source throughout *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.<sup>74</sup> Murray considers *Deipnosophistae* to have had a strong resonance during the Renaissance period and to have been a productive germ for the development of humanist thought.<sup>75</sup> *Deipnosophistae* was an attractive subject for classical scholars during the

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<sup>69</sup> Dibdin, 45.

<sup>70</sup> Mark Stephen Caponigro, "Five Men and Ten Ships: A Riddle in Athenaeus," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 25, (1984): 289.

<sup>71</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 45.

<sup>72</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 51.

<sup>73</sup> W. G. Arnott, "A Note on the Two Manuscripts of Athenaeus' *Dipnosophistae* in the British Museum," *Scriptorium* 18, no. 2 (1964): 269.

<sup>74</sup> Madeleine Henry, "Athenaeus the Ur-Pornographer," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 509.

<sup>75</sup> Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 719.

Renaissance due to the wealth of insight it offers into Greek and Roman antiquity. Concerning this period, Rosemary Bancroft-Marcus describes how the end of the Byzantine Empire as a political and cultural force in the eastern Mediterranean created an appetite for and an anxiety over continuity with ancient Greek ideas, letters, and practices.<sup>76</sup> As the Ottoman State extended its sovereignty over the Adriatic basin, culminating in the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, some Byzantine books and scholars relocated north to Russia or west to Europe. This movement of people, materials, and ideas created an exigence in the areas of their refuge to store and catalogue the culture and knowledge they represented.

### **The Sixteenth-Century Print Tradition**

The first version of *Deipnosophistae* to be printed rather than transcribed by hand was produced in the Greek language in 1514 on the press owned by Aldus Manutius. Manutius was the founder of the Aldine Academy of Hellenists, a learned society for the propagation of Greek studies. The Aldine edition of *Deipnosophistae* was a collaboration between Manutius and a fellow member of the Aldine Academy, Venetian professor of Greek Marcus Musurus.<sup>77</sup> Despite the society's commitment to the preservation of ancient Greek culture, the original manuscript on which Manutius and Musurus relied for their edition was apparently destroyed in the process of publication (excepting six folios now held in the University Library of Leiden).<sup>78</sup> This action suggests that creating multiple new copies of the text serves the aim of propagating Greek culture as understood by Manutius and Musurus, even at the cost of destroying an older manuscript.

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<sup>76</sup> Rosemary Bancroft-Marcus, "A Dainty Dish to set before a King: Natale De' Conti's Translation of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 54.

<sup>77</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 50; David Braund and John Wilkins, "Section 2 Introductory Remarks," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 40; Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 44.

<sup>78</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 46.

Dibdin considers their edition to have generated a conspicuous degree of entropy in the form of errors and omissions<sup>79</sup> when he compares it to the later Casaubon edition.<sup>80</sup> Arnott describes how, unlike Casaubon, the Aldine edition tends to leave erroneous or corrupt passages untouched but adds speculative interpolations to fill in textual gaps.<sup>81</sup> Despite any errors that Manutius and Musurus may have left uncorrected, Schweighaeuser used Musurus's informed estimations as the basis for deciding upon a true reading where all manuscripts appeared to be equally defective.<sup>82</sup>

Although the Aldine edition was the first version of *Deipnosophistae* to be produced on a printing press, it did not circulate much outside of Italy.<sup>83</sup> The second printing, then, was an attempt to adapt the Aldine edition for availability north of the Alps. In 1535, Christian Herlinus, professor of mathematics, geography, and rhetoric, and James Bedrotus, professor of Greek, both of the University of Strasbourg, published in Greek an edition of *Deipnosophistae* on the press owned by Johannes Valderus of Basel.<sup>84</sup> It was this Basel edition that Casaubon relied upon in preparing his own printing.<sup>85</sup> It may even have been the case that Casaubon did not have access to the Aldine edition, as he consistently reproduces the Herlinus-Bedrotus version of the text wherever the two early printings differ.<sup>86</sup> Herlinus and Bedrotus seem to have been chiefly concerned with spreading *Deipnosophistae* to a new audience rather than improving on the work of Manutius and Musurus, as their edition presents all of the errors of the Aldine version and adds many new ones.<sup>87</sup> In the estimation of Casaubon as reported by Dibdin, Bedrotus and Herlinus

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<sup>79</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 44.

<sup>80</sup> Dibdin, 45.

<sup>81</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 51.

<sup>82</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 45.

<sup>83</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 51.

<sup>84</sup> A. Clerval, "Strasbourg et la réforme française (octobre 1525-décembre 1526)," *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France* 7, no. 35 (1921): 144.

<sup>85</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 51.

<sup>86</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 45.

<sup>87</sup> Dibdin, 45.

possess “more enthusiasm than correctness,” but nonetheless should be “praised for their attempt, in which they would probably have succeeded better had their judgement and maturity of reading been equal to their ardour.”<sup>88</sup> The Basel edition expresses a commitment to reproducing and circulating *Deipnosophistae*’s information, even as reproduction and circulation introduce additional entropy into the text.

Bedrotus and Herlinus’s transalpine edition of *Deipnosophistae* was followed by two translations of the text to Latin: by Natale de’ Conti in 1556 and by Jacques Dalechamp in 1583.<sup>89</sup> For Renaissance scholarship, translating a Greek text into Latin allowed the text to circulate more widely within international intellectual circles.<sup>90</sup> Just as Bedrotus and Herlinus reproduced the Aldine edition for circulation in a new geographical environment, de’ Conti and Dalechamp expanded *Deipnosophistae*’s reach to a new language space. De’ Conti had already by the time of his publication of *Deipnosophistae* established himself as a poet, historian, and numismatist, and had translated into Latin the works of several minor Greek orators.<sup>91</sup> Bancroft-Marcus considers de’ Conti’s edition to represent a “transparent” translation, in which the Latin diction follows the Greek original word-for-word, making his publication suitable as a supplement for the Greekless reader.<sup>92</sup> Dalechamp’s edition took him thirty years to adapt from the version of Bedrotus and Herlinus.<sup>93</sup> His diligence made his publication useful to later editors and commentators, as his translation introduced clarity to some of the earlier text’s infelicities.<sup>94</sup> Casaubon valued Dalechamp’s translation enough to include it alongside his Commentaries in the second volume

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<sup>88</sup> Dibdin, 45.

<sup>89</sup> Bancroft-Marcus, “A Dainty Dish to set before a King,” 53; Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 46.

<sup>90</sup> Bancroft-Marcus, “A Dainty Dish to set before a King,” 57.

<sup>91</sup> Bancroft-Marcus, 55.

<sup>92</sup> Bancroft-Marcus, 63.

<sup>93</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 46.

<sup>94</sup> Dibdin, 46-47.

of his edition.<sup>95</sup> Over the course of the sixteenth century, a substantial body of commentary and cross-reference had accumulated around the only version of *Deipnosophistae* then widely known: a sparse, incomplete summary called the Epitome.

### **Pre-Modern Witnesses to *Deipnosophistae***

The sixteenth-century printing tradition of *Deipnosophistae*, which runs from the Aldine edition through Bedrotus and Herlinus, de' Conti, and Dalechamp to Casaubon, drew its publication content from a text known in Athenaeus studies as the Epitome. The Epitome is a summary of *Deipnosophistae* in which some of the narrative framework and many of the original citations and titles of quoted sources have been stripped away, rearranged, or paraphrased.<sup>96</sup> Although the Epitome represents a thorough summary and an indispensable supplement to the full text, it lacks the continuity and coherent structure of the original.<sup>97</sup> The Epitome survives in two complete manuscripts—the *Parisinus suppl. gr. 841* and the *Laurentianus LX.2*—as well as a third that has lost its opening books and a fourth that seems to be a manual reproduction of the *Laurentianus* manuscript.<sup>98</sup> These artifacts were written in the late fifteenth century; the sources from which they were copied are now lost.<sup>99</sup> The author of the original Epitome of *Deipnosophistae* is unknown, but the text seems to have been composed in Constantinople in the late tenth or early eleventh century.<sup>100</sup> This skeletal witness to the text of *Deipnosophistae* was the only version of the text generally accessible to the printers and scholars of Renaissance and early modern Europe until the publication of Schweighaeuser's 1801 edition.

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<sup>95</sup> Braund and Wilkins, "Section 2 Introductory Remarks," 40.

<sup>96</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 47; Lengyel, "Athenaeus on Spartan *Diaita*," 48.

<sup>97</sup> Paulas, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," 406.

<sup>98</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 47.

<sup>99</sup> Arnott, 47.

<sup>100</sup> Arnott, 47.

Although each of *Deipnosophistae*'s earliest manuscripts represents an incomplete record of the text, they are in another sense more than complete, as they include marginal commentary, or scholia, from generations of scribes and editors. It is on account of these scribes and editors that *Deipnosophistae*, like other ancient texts, has been preserved against the entropic influence of time and circumstance by which texts come to be completely lost.<sup>101</sup> Concerning Byzantine manuscript production generally, Vessela Valiavitcharska describes the scholia as “eclectic compilations”<sup>102</sup> which, in the case of *Deipnosophistae*, run alongside the more formal but no less eclectic compilation of the text itself. The scholia occasionally take the form of reactions to and clarifications of the material the scribe is copying, making present the human voice of the transcriber in the polyphonic chorus of *Deipnosophistae*'s distributed authorship.<sup>103</sup> The text includes a tradition inherited from its copyists that the third book—and no other book—begins with a short section of “Excerpts from Book III” before restarting with the prose of the book proper, where the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 manuscript begins.<sup>104</sup> The third book, due to the text's distributed authorship, starts again after it has started and references itself as an object to be excerpted and commented upon within its own text. Elsewhere, the marginalia take a position in dialogic response to the text proper, as commentary or an answer to a textual puzzle. In the sixth book, the copyist for the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 manuscript expands the word *mētragyrountas* (a mendicant priest of Cybele) into the nonsensical construction *mētrarpatōntasgyrgountas*.<sup>105</sup> In Geoffrey Arnott's consideration, this intercalation reflects the scribe's opinion that such priests were robbers (*harpa-*) and cheats (*apatōntas*).<sup>106</sup> While the scribal copyists provided for the work

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<sup>101</sup> Michele Kennerly, *Editorial Bodies: Perfection and Rejection in Ancient Rhetoric and Poetics* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2018), 211.

<sup>102</sup> Vessela Valiavitcharska, “Rhetoric in the Hands of the Byzantine Grammarian,” *Rhetorica* 31, no. 3 (2013): 240.

<sup>103</sup> Arnott, “Athenaeus and the Epitome,” 45.

<sup>104</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.72a, 3.1.

<sup>105</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.226e, 6.5.

<sup>106</sup> Arnott, “Athenaeus and the Epitome,” 45.

to be repaired and rebound over dozens of generations, the physical realities of manuscript transmission introduce an entropic complication to the text's communication of information.

Even for artisans of such skill as the ancient and medieval scribes, transcription by hand nonetheless presents unavoidable opportunities for the entropic modification of information. If Christopher Collard is correct in his judgment that *Deipnosophistae*'s "processes of manuscript transmission as a whole have done surprisingly little damage to the texts," the effect of scribal reproduction on the integrity of the text is, if small, nonetheless significant.<sup>107</sup> A non-trivial amount of *Deipnosophistae*'s uncertainties and inconsistencies must be attributed to copying error.<sup>108</sup> Michele Kennerly accounts for how, in any text with a manuscript tradition, each edition will transmit a unique signature of copying errors, and such errors may, in time, become orthodox features of the text due to the norms of scribal transmission.<sup>109</sup> De Kreij explains that, when preparing a new version of an old and weathered book, one scribe with perhaps an unusually dutiful habit of mind might precisely copy the letters of the old edition into the new edition, even where those letters are unintelligible.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, at one point in the fifteenth book, the text of *Deipnosophistae* transmits a sequence of words with no known sensible meaning and no conformity to any known grammatical convention, despite the attempts of generations of editors and commentators to render the passage legible.<sup>111</sup> Elsewhere, the scribal impulse to resolve *Deipnosophistae*'s uncertainties overflows the constraints of precise transmission, and the copyist's alterations appear to improve upon the original source material.<sup>112</sup> The text's survival

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<sup>107</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 177.

<sup>108</sup> Collard, 162.

<sup>109</sup> Kennerly, *Editorial Bodies*, 3.

<sup>110</sup> De Kreij, "Ὅκ ἐστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα," 68.

<sup>111</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XV.673e, 15.15. The illegible passage is noted in: Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, ed. and trans. by S. Douglas Olson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), vol. VIII: 46.

<sup>112</sup> De Kreij, "Ὅκ ἐστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα," 68-69.



and renewal through practices of scribal transmission further amplify the dubious reliability of *Deipnosophistae*'s information.

There are various types of errors that could be introduced by scribal transmission. One common kind is the inadvertent omission of data where it should exist or the addition of data where it should not be. In *Deipnosophistae*, scribal omission may be as simple as the loss of a single letter<sup>113</sup> or as significant as the loss of entire phrases.<sup>114</sup> Olson identifies where a copyist error seems to have assigned a particular quotation of Xenophon to the sixth book of *Anabasis* rather than the seventh book, where it may be found today.<sup>115</sup> Excerpts from works written in non-Attic Greek dialects—such as those of Homer, Herodotus, or Sappho—have been partially converted into Attic for smooth integration with the rest of the text.<sup>116</sup> Concerning dialectal diversity, grammatical notations of accent seem to have fared particularly poorly in transmission. According to de Kreij, the transition in the early Middle Ages from papyrus scroll to codex corresponded with a change in scribal preference from lower-case fonts to majuscule lettering, which omitted accentuation marks.<sup>117</sup> By the time the minuscule came back into fashion in the ninth century CE, the original accents had, in many cases, been lost. In these cases, the scribal modifications seem to be entropic variations born of the reproductive process of manuscript transmission.

The presence of accidental copying errors is compounded by the appearance in *Deipnosophistae* of purposeful modification of the text. Scribes have minds as well as hands, and some may have considered it within the appropriate scope of their office to correct what they believed to be an error in the original text. Kennerly describes with regard to the Ciceronian

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<sup>113</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 161.

<sup>114</sup> Gorman and Gorman, "The Tryphê of the Sybarites," 56.

<sup>115</sup> S. Douglas Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," *American Journal of Philology* 139, (2018): 439.

<sup>116</sup> Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," 430.

<sup>117</sup> De Kreij, "Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφουῶς τοῦτο τὸ ῥῆμα," 63.

corpus how a critic with a favorable interpretation of Cicero might be inclined to correct a perceived error in the text.<sup>118</sup> In sections of *Deipnosophistae* where multiple extant versions of the text exist, Collard considers it clear that certain scribal contributors were more alive to the accuracy of the quotations than others.<sup>119</sup> Such scribal corrections are unevenly applied, and they display a range of accuracy within and across manuscripts.<sup>120</sup> Some modifications are so jarring or counterintuitive that Arnott ascribes them to ineptitude or carelessness.<sup>121</sup> Other than the Epitome and its attendant scholia, *Deipnosophistae* is not frequently attested to before the adoption in Europe of modern practices of print publication.

There are precious few references to the existence of *Deipnosophistae* prior to the drafting of the Epitome in the fifteenth century. Ironically, given the turn in Athenaeus studies toward an appreciation of the text's coherent form, these references occur in the context of using *Deipnosophistae* as a functional information reference.<sup>122</sup> The tenth-century Byzantine encyclopedia known as the *Suda* includes an entry on *Deipnosophistae* characterizing it as a source of information about ancient Greek symposium and dining culture.<sup>123</sup> One of the earliest witnesses to *Deipnosophistae* may be found in the sixth-century text *De Magistratibus Populi Romani* by John Lydus, who cites Athenaeus on the subject of Roman cultural practice.<sup>124</sup> Significantly, as Paulas points out, John Lydus uses *Deipnosophistae* for information about second-century Rome and not about ancient Greek literature.<sup>125</sup> Other than these brief glimpses, *Deipnosophistae*'s presence trails off, with little that can be said today about the text's initial publication or transmission beyond the fact that it somehow came to be available for the

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<sup>118</sup> Kennerly, *Editorial Bodies*, 2.

<sup>119</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 163.

<sup>120</sup> Collard, 163.

<sup>121</sup> Arnott, "A Note on the Two Manuscripts of Athenaeus' *Dipnosophistae* in the British Museum," 270.

<sup>122</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 5.

<sup>123</sup> Paulas, 6.

<sup>124</sup> Paulas, 5.

<sup>125</sup> Paulas, 5.

ministrations of tenth-century Byzantine scribes working on the manuscript reproduction of ancient Greek texts.

### **The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 Manuscript**

The earliest and most significant version of *Deipnosophistae* produced by tenth-century Byzantine copyists is the manuscript called the *Venetus Marcianus* 447, but this artifact was unknown to the world until relatively recently. The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 is a single codex, written in Constantinople sometime around 900 CE, recording the complete text referred to in summary by the Epitome.<sup>126</sup> The Schweighaeuser edition's major distinction is to be the first printing to combine the Epitome and its surrounding commentary tradition with this alternative expression of the text. The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 arrived in Paris in 1797, along with about 200 other rare manuscripts, taken as spoils of war after a young Napoleon's conquest of Venice.<sup>127</sup> When Schweighaeuser learned of the book's presence in Paris from his son Geoffroi, it enabled him to offer a signature innovation on the textual rendering of *Deipnosophistae*: synthesizing and integrating together the existing Epitome tradition transmitted through Casaubon with the fresh and unexplored *Venetus Marcianus* 447.<sup>128</sup>

The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 displays two different scribal hands: one providing marginal commentary and the other, typically identified as John the Calligrapher, transcribing the main body script.<sup>129</sup> John the Calligrapher, who worked under the patronage of Archbishop Arethas of Caesarea, also produced well-known and important copies of Plato and Aelius Aristides.<sup>130</sup> T. W. Allen describes this scribal hand as beginning severely but adopting an easier and less meticulous

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<sup>126</sup> Braund and Wilkins, "Section 2 Introductory Remarks," 39.

<sup>127</sup> Dibdin, *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, 47-48.

<sup>128</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 52.

<sup>129</sup> T. W. Allen, "The Venice Athenaeus," *The Academy* 35, no. 895 (June 29, 1889): 451.

<sup>130</sup> N. G. Wilson, "Did Arethas Read Athenaeus?," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 82, (1962): 147.

style after the first 120 pages.<sup>131</sup> John's handwriting gradually becomes larger as the text progresses, a tendency which N. G. Wilson considers to be common among scribal copyists.<sup>132</sup> If the attribution of the scribal hand to John the Calligrapher is correct, Wilson calculates that the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 manuscript may then be dated to between 895 and 917 CE, much earlier than the extant versions of the Epitome and contemporary with *Deipnosophistae*'s mention in the *Suda*.<sup>133</sup> Just as William Thayer's LacusCurtius digital edition of *Deipnosophistae* lists page numbers from a print edition, the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 codex includes marginal notes indicating where papyrus rolls began and ended in that outdated format, suggesting to Murray that the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 was not far distant from its original source edition.<sup>134</sup> By dating the manuscript to the turn of the tenth century, Wilson buttresses the claim *Deipnosophistae* was one of the earliest texts to receive care and attention during the revival of scholarship at the end of the Byzantine Dark Ages, preceding even the classical poets in this regard.<sup>135</sup>

While the Epitome presents the whole progression of the text in summarized form, the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 manuscript presents the unabridged prose, but incompletely due to the manuscript's physical decay.<sup>136</sup> The artifact is severely damaged, having lost its beginning and some of its end.<sup>137</sup> The page at the fifteenth and final book has been cut or torn away, so that it displays only a thin column of letters.<sup>138</sup> Despite the physical damage, the rest of the manuscript's text appears to be complete and not, in the judgment of Lucía Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén,

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<sup>131</sup> Allen, "The Venice Athenaeus," 451.

<sup>132</sup> Wilson, "Did Arethas Read Athenaeus?," 147.

<sup>133</sup> Wilson, 147.

<sup>134</sup> Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 693.

<sup>135</sup> Wilson, "Did Arethas Read Athenaeus?," 147.

<sup>136</sup> Heath, "Do Heroes Eat Fish?," 344.

<sup>137</sup> David Braund and John Wilkins, "Section 1 Introductory Remarks," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 1.

<sup>138</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XV.700, 15.59. The damage to this page is illustrated in: Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, ed. and trans. by S. Douglas Olson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), vol. VIII: 200-205.

excerpted from a significantly different original.<sup>139</sup> Likewise, Murray considers this carefully transcribed manuscript to indicate the text's original organization, allowing for clarification of the Epitome's untidy summarization.<sup>140</sup> For whatever errors it may present, the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 is the sole source for the unepitomized *Deipnosophistae*, with similar extant manuscripts traceable as copies of this codex.<sup>141</sup> Through separate and distinct traditions of transmission, the Epitome and the *Venetus Marcianus* 447, each incomplete in different ways, seem to point back to a shared, speculated ur-text.<sup>142</sup>

The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 codex represents the oldest witness to the text of *Deipnosophistae*, as there is no extant version of the work over the seven centuries between its transcription around 900 CE and its original composition around 200 CE.<sup>143</sup> The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 artifact is first identifiable as an acquisition of Sicilian book dealer Giovanni Aurispa, who traveled the eastern Mediterranean in 1405-1413 and 1421-1423 buying ancient books for resale in Italy.<sup>144</sup> Aurispa had a reputation both for skill in the procurement of texts and for ignorance regarding their contents. Arnott describes how, when Aurispa acquired the *Venetus Marcianus* 447, he misidentified the author as Naucratis of Athens, rather than Athenaeus of Naucratis.<sup>145</sup> This error of authorship attribution persisted in later inventory documents as the codex passed from one library collection to another. Despite Aurispa's suboptimal attention to the contents of the books that were his stock-in-trade, he is responsible for introducing to Italy a considerable number of ancient works that were otherwise unknown in that region at the time.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Lucía Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén, "Are the Fifteen Books of the *Deipnosophistae* an Excerpt?," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 255.

<sup>140</sup> Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 693.

<sup>141</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 41 and 45.

<sup>142</sup> Arnott, 42.

<sup>143</sup> Braund and Wilkins, "Section 2 Introductory Remarks," 39.

<sup>144</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 42.

<sup>145</sup> Arnott, 50-51.

<sup>146</sup> *The Biographical Dictionary of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, vol. IV, s. v. "Aurispa, Giovanni."

He sold the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 manuscript, along with other texts, to Cardinal Basilios Bessarion, a classical scholar and patron of antique culture.<sup>147</sup> Born in Trebizond in the late fourteenth century, Cardinal Bessarion was educated in Constantinople and Greece and later relocated to Italy, where he was an influential patron of classical learning. Venturing to provide the foundation for a new public library, Cardinal Bessarion donated his collection of Greek and Latin books to the Venetian Republic toward the end of his life.

The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 was transferred to Venice in one of two bequests, either the initial donation in 1468 or upon the Cardinal's death in 1472.<sup>148</sup> The book would remain in storage for decades, crated up in the ducal palace along with the rest of the library. For four years during this period of storage, Marcus Musurus was a professor of Greek in Venice and had been charged with curating and cataloguing the library.<sup>149</sup> Despite his simultaneous editorial work on the Aldine edition of *Deipnosophistae*, the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 managed to escape Musurus's notice, perhaps due to Aurispa's mislabeling of the author. The *Venetus Marcianus* 447 codex was not completely lost at this time, as several manuscripts were copied from it by hand over the course of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>150</sup> In 1531-1532, the Venetian Senate proposed to construct a library to house Bessarion's donation, and the collection was catalogued and inventoried in 1545, some 77 years after its initial bequest. Construction on the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana was completed in 1588 after about five decades of intermittent work, during which time the likes of Bedrotus and Herlinus, Dalechamp, de' Conti, and Casaubon were publishing their print editions of *Deipnosophistae* from the Epitome manuscripts.

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<sup>147</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 50-51.

<sup>148</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 42.

<sup>149</sup> Arnott, 50.

<sup>150</sup> Arnott, 46.

### Recursive Composition

Over the centuries of *Deipnosophistae*'s development, the text displays a distributed authorship, with multiple hands and voices contributing to its creation. This theme is most evocatively represented in the physical artifact of Brunck's copy of Casaubon's *Deipnosophistae* on which Schweighaeuser based his edition. In the process of developing his own synthetic version of the miscellaneous reference compendium *Deipnosophistae*, Schweighaeuser referred to a previous edition that was itself a culmination of the existing Epitome tradition, in which had been written marginalia and to which had been added intercalated scraps of Barbaro's compilation manuscript. The textual transmission of *Deipnosophistae* shows how the development of the text is characterized by a process of reflecting on and rewriting existing discourse.

Both *Deipnosophistae*'s distributed authorship and its compilation of excerpts from other works affirm the text's reflexive and self-referential expression. The appearance within the text of self-conscious reference to its own ongoing production performs what Kennerly calls "recursive composition."<sup>151</sup> In the case of *Deipnosophistae*, the appearance of the features of recursive composition are an artifact, at least in part, of the text's continuous reproduction by various interactants within an ecology of circulating discourse. Over each of its editions, *Deipnosophistae* has turned upon itself as an object of commentary, integrating that self-commentary into the flow of its own prose. Concerning antiquarian literature generally, Gunderson observes that commentary on it tends, as both "an after-discourse and a with-discourse," to become inextricably entwined with the text proper.<sup>152</sup> The general quality may be seen to apply to *Deipnosophistae* as a specific instance in the text's reproduction and of prior discourse and its ecological development over time and across contexts. In this fashion, *Deipnosophistae* explicitly articulates

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<sup>151</sup> Kennerly, *Editorial Bodies*, 3.

<sup>152</sup> Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae*, 9.

its self-conscious reflection on its own status as a text and its place in a circulating network of text-reuse.

*Deipnosophistae* achieves its textual form in its iterated processes of revision as it circulates in public discourse. In *Deipnosophistae*, just as Joseph A. Howley observes in Aulus Gellius's *Attic Nights*, "texts are constantly being consumed and commented upon" as the cover-text composes itself through its preparation of excerpts for its readers.<sup>153</sup> *Deipnosophistae*, on the one hand, reproduces excerpts extracted from prior discourse and compiles them into a new text. It also, on the other hand, is itself the product of having been copied, edited, revised, and compiled by multiple contributors in various mediums over time and across different contexts. The text of *Deipnosophistae* displays the artifacts of its own recursive composition due to its continuous adaptation to the conditions of reproduction in an ecology of circulating discourse.

### Slow Circulation

*Deipnosophistae*'s survival relies on persuading at least some of its readers to contribute to the text's reproduction as editors, commentators, scribes, or publishers. According to Markus Dubischar, a text without any potential to be read at all has failed to survive and becomes lost, so an environment of circulating discourse will select over time in favor of features that facilitate a text's readability.<sup>154</sup> Among the most significant environmental selection pressures guiding *Deipnosophistae*'s textual evolution is the attention and energy of readers. Dubischar attests regarding texts generally that readers find themselves making selections and rejections concerning continued discursive circulation.<sup>155</sup> As Gracy contends concerning the specific case of *Deipnosophistae*, its readers are generally considered to select for interesting bits of information,

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<sup>153</sup> Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae*, 141.

<sup>154</sup> Dubischar, "Survival of the Most Condensed?," 55.

<sup>155</sup> Dubischar, 56.



so its textual qualities have developed to present information to this audience.<sup>156</sup> Efforts to secure the text from precarity and increase its circulation display a frequent association with searches for authoritative information on ancient Greek literature and culture, whether that of Basilios Bessarion's philhellenism, Musurus and Manutius's humanism, or Adamantios Korais's republicanism.

Consequently, the commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers involved in the reproduction and circulation of *Deipnosophistae* have negotiated various balances between creative originality and automatic duplication according to the changing conditions of circulating discourse. One pole of this balance, represented by the likes of Manutius and Musurus, Bedrotus and Herlinus, and de' Conti, affirms a faithfulness to prior manifestations of the text and the information it contains, even where it might be erroneous. The other pole, represented by Dalechamp, Casaubon, and Brunck, exercises a freer hand with modifying the text to correct for perceived errors, even where those corrections might be misplaced. On account of its development through an ecology of circulating discourse, *Deipnosophistae* encodes within itself the varied judgments of those among its readers who would become its compositional contributors, incorporating the public acts of interpretation described by Eberly<sup>157</sup> into its own textual form. Over the course of its unsettled and polyphonic transmission, *Deipnosophistae* has gravitated to the pole of creative originality or the pole of automatic duplication according to the conditions of continued reproduction in its various environments.

Consistent with Jensen's notion of genetic rhetorical criticism,<sup>158</sup> an ecological account of *Deipnosophistae* would attend to this internal oscillation of the text as it is adapted in different versions to changing circumstances of reproduction. Of particular interest for an analysis of

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<sup>156</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 82.

<sup>157</sup> Rosa A. Eberly, *Citizen Critics: Literary Public Spheres* (Urbana, IL, and Chicago, IL: The University of Illinois Press, 2000), 2.

<sup>158</sup> Jensen, "Genetic Rhetorical Criticism," 267.

circulating discourse are what Jonathan L. Bradshaw identifies as “rhetorical transformations across time, space, and media.”<sup>159</sup> The history of *Deipnosophistae*’s evolution indicates that the text is particularly responsive to changes in the medium of its reproduction through circulating discourse. The text’s survival has been precarious for most of its existence, avoiding extinction in large part due to accidents of fortune. The entire modern knowledge of the text is derived from three physical objects—the two manuscripts of the Epitome and the singular *Venetus Marcianus* 447 codex—each of which is incomplete in different ways. The status of these artifacts before the fifteenth century can only be speculated upon, and any versions that may have existed between their tenth-century transcription and the text’s third-century CE composition are no longer extant at all. It was not until *Deipnosophistae* reached the printing press that the text achieved some level of relative reproductive stability, and the development of the Internet as a medium of circulating discourse performed the same service for the text’s survival.

*Deipnosophistae*’s pattern of reproductive stabilization in response to new technologies of mass communication might suggest that it follows a reproductive model of expansive growth. This would conform to what Bradshaw considers to be the typical focus of circulation studies on “speed and reach as the defining elements of digital distribution...[and on] the rapid and unanticipated transformation across a rhetorical ecology.”<sup>160</sup> Dubischar, describing a similar model of expansive growth, considers the selection factors favoring continued survival in circulating discourse to include adequate length, validity, relevance, and perspicuity, which determine a text’s wide acceptability in an attention-poor environment.<sup>161</sup> In Dubischar’s model, as an auxiliary text reproduces a primary text, the demands of attention-efficient acceptability will

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<sup>159</sup> Jonathan L. Bradshaw, “Slow Circulation: The Ethics of Speed and Rhetorical Persistence,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 48, no. 5 (2018): 480.

<sup>160</sup> Bradshaw, “Slow Circulation,” 480.

<sup>161</sup> Dubischar, “Survival of the Most Condensed?,” 56.

select in favor of optimized length, validity, relevance, and perspicuity;<sup>162</sup> the alternative is extinction from circulation. Dubischar's model, iterated over an infinite time horizon, a text that reproduces in response to such environment selection factors will become increasingly distilled and clarified, so that "survival of the fittest can mean survival of the most condensed."<sup>163</sup> This reproductive model imitates the features of an invasive species, expanding its population broadly, swiftly, and with maximum resource utilization.

Contrary to this reproductive model of circulating discourse, *Deipnosophistae* displays none of the features of wide acceptability. The text is notorious for its gargantuan size and opacity, and its information often requires some imagination and patience to be understood as validated or relevant to its context, but the text survives all the same. This suggests that the reproductive model of expansive growth is inappropriate for *Deipnosophistae* and that the text's evolution might be explained instead through Bradshaw's concept of "rhetorical persistence," which accounts for stability as well as change over time.<sup>164</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s discursive reproduction is notable not for its expansive growth but for its resistance to extinction, a quality that Bradshaw calls "slow circulation."<sup>165</sup> A reproductive model of slow circulation emphasizes stability and continuity rather than accelerating population spread.<sup>166</sup> Bradshaw affirms that slow circulation still requires continuous motion, as adapting to a constantly changing environment calls for concomitant adjustments for maintenance and renewal.<sup>167</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s massive size, obscure contents, and opaque structure made it attractive to the commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers, among whom the text circulated durably and slowly.

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<sup>162</sup> Dubischar, 57.

<sup>163</sup> Dubischar, 64.

<sup>164</sup> Bradshaw, "Slow Circulation," 481.

<sup>165</sup> Bradshaw, 481.

<sup>166</sup> Bradshaw, 496.

<sup>167</sup> Bradshaw, 486.

### Conclusion

The two physical objects of Brunck's Casaubon and the *Venetus Marcianus 447*, combined together for the Schweighaeuser edition, represent two distinct reproductive strategies by which the text managed to avoid extinction. Brunck's Casaubon, the culmination of the Epitome tradition, accreted over centuries, as scholia and commentaries affixed themselves to the skeletal outline of a text otherwise believed to be lost. The Epitome manuscripts, with their scribal interventions, were compared and interrogated by a series of editors, printers, and translators in the sixteenth century. Isaac Casaubon produced a version of *Deipnosophistae* that remained authoritative for two centuries before the arrival of the *Venetus Marcianus 447* in Paris necessitated Schweighaeuser's update. Brunck's specific copy of Casaubon, like Schweighaeuser's other points of textual reference, had accumulated its own further layer, composed of Brunck's marginal notations on the pages and Barbaro's excisions pressed between them.

For one accustomed to the Epitome tradition of *Deipnosophistae* transmitted through Casaubon, the appearance of the *Venetus Marcianus 447* codex must have been like finding a living fossil. This coelacanth tradition, surviving in large part due to chance, had amassed its own marginalia, its own commentary, and its own entropy. Although not quite dormant, the codex's authorial misattribution and physical inaccessibility hindered its reproductive capacity and dulled its influence on Renaissance and early modern classical studies. *Deipnosophistae's* insights—however imperfect—into ancient Greek and Roman culture made it attractive to Renaissance and early modern scholars of classics, creating a reproductive selection factor in the Epitome's favor. At the end of the eighteenth century, the *Venetus Marcianus 447* was able to graft itself onto the existing reproductivity of the Epitome tradition. The text of *Deipnosophistae* has survived to reach its current state of relatively high reproductive stability due to its capacity to present

information about ancient Mediterranean culture and society to interested readers, who in turn would have to satisfy the publishers and scribes who preserved old books and created new ones.

This chapter established the fact of *Deipnosophistae*'s existence as part of a continuous intertextual network and examined conditions of its variable reproduction within an ecology of circulating discourse. Crucial to *Deipnosophistae*'s reproductive system is its capacity to attract the attention of scribes, commentators, editors, publishers, and readers interested in authoritative knowledge about antique culture. The next chapter of this dissertation will consider the rhetorical processes by which the text presents and authorizes its information to these audience participants.

### Chapter 3

#### Information Presentation

*Deipnosophistae* begins with an act of self-citation. The introduction of the first book defines its author, its addressee, its title, and its topic. “Athenaeus is the father of the book,” the introduction proclaims, “and is offering his account to Timocrates; the book’s title is *The Learned Banqueter*.<sup>1</sup> The central character is Larensius of Rome, a conspicuously wealthy man who is entertaining the greatest experts in every field of knowledge at a banquet in his own house.”<sup>2</sup> Even from its first sentence, the text reflects on its status as a text; *Deipnosophistae* is among the books recorded in *Deipnosophistae*’s reference compilation. In this opening passage, *Deipnosophistae* explicitly recognizes the part it plays as a node in an intertextual network. This passage positions the text’s creation in the dynamic tension between book (*biblos*)—of which Athenaeus may claim paternity—and story (*logos*)—which is drafted for Timocrates. By referencing the tensions between book and story, and between author and audience, the text prefigures its information-presenting function: to circulate among its readers excerpts of a library of learned culture.

As part of its circulating function, *Deipnosophistae* proposes the comprehensiveness of the information presented. The opening passage of *Deipnosophistae*’s first book asserts the completeness of its knowledge of learned culture, as the author “omits no one’s finest sayings.”<sup>3</sup> If Athenaeus, the father of the book, has omitted nothing, then reading *Deipnosophistae* must be,

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<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere in this dissertation, I have left *Deipnosophistae*’s title untranslated to distinguish the text as the object of study and to convey its complicated relationship with interpretive efforts. In this quotation, the text mentions its own title in the course of a normally constructed passage of prose.

<sup>2</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1a, 1.1.

<sup>3</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1b, 1.1.

according to the text's internal reasoning, a perfect account of learned culture. In the same passage, though, the text's narrator insists that the text covers "so many other items that I could not easily mention them all, or else the day would end as I was still going through them category by category."<sup>4</sup> The text claims that the constraints of time prevent it from listing all of its subjects that it itself contains. Compounding this contradiction, *Deipnosophistae*'s introduction purports to offer a complete account of learned culture and, in the same breath, declares such a task to be beyond its ability. The paradox of consummate expertise incompletely expressed is an area of durable concern for scholarship on ancient texts that function to present information.

The previous chapter documented how *Deipnosophistae* has been shaped over time into its current textual form and propagated into relatively stable patterns of circulation because it could offer to the likes of Basilios Bessarion and Aldus Manutius an authoritative source on Greek antiquity. This chapter positions *Deipnosophistae*, as a compilation of informational content, within the ancient tradition of "knowledge-writing." Some current theoretical developments regarding ancient knowledge-writing describe how such texts secure their own authority by supplanting the agency of their readers. After assessing that theoretical contention, this chapter analyzes the rhetorical processes by which *Deipnosophistae* presents its excerpted information: quotation and citation. The analysis of *Deipnosophistae*'s information-presenting processes finds the text to introduce uncertainty in its information and to influence—but not determine—readers' interpretation of this uncertainty, positioning readers like Isaac Casaubon or Jean Schweighaeuser to extend the text's search for information. The chapter concludes by arguing that *Deipnosophistae* contradicts its own claim to display editorial authority, instead displaying fragmentary authority, dismantling its authoritative voice to maximize the agency of its readers.

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<sup>4</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1b, 1.1.

### Knowledge-writing

*Deipnosophistae*'s above-referenced opening passage contextualizes its information-presenting function by establishing the common trait of the characters at the banquet: their profound experience with learned culture.<sup>5</sup> The passage goes on to elaborate on the sort of subjects one might encounter in the text: "fish...and the ways they are prepared and the derivations of their names, as well as every sort of vegetable, animals of every kind, and authors of historical works, poets, and philosophers...musical instruments, a million types of jokes, different styles of drinking cups, the wealth of kings, huge ships."<sup>6</sup> In this list, *Deipnosophistae* gives consummate expression to one of the major themes of its age: knowledge-writing.

Knowledge-writing refers to those texts which propose to present information gleaned from a specific external origin.<sup>7</sup> Ancient knowledge-writing may be referred to in modern

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<sup>5</sup> Verifying social status through performative reference to erudite culture is a key component of *paideia*. Although comprehensive discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the present project, see also: Luca Graverini and Wytse Keulen, "Roman Fiction and its Audience: Seriocomic Assertions of Authority," *Ancient Narrative Supplements 12: Readers and Writers in the Ancient Novel*, (1995): 205-206; McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 30-31, 36, 81, and 169; König and Whitmarsh, "Ordering Knowledge," 5 and 25; Stephen J. Harrison, "The Sophist at Play in Court: Apuleius' *Apology* and His Literary Career," *Ancient Narrative Supplements 11: Paideia at Play*, (2008): 3; James B. Rives, "Legal Strategy and Learned Display in Apuleius' *Apology*," *Ancient Narrative Supplements 11: Paideia at Play*, (2008): 17, 35 and 37; Tim Whitmarsh, "Conversational and Citational Brevity in Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions*," in *Condensing Texts – Condensed Texts*, ed. Marietta Horster and Christiane Reitz (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), 346; Wytse Keulen, "Different Drinking Habits: Satirical Strategies of Self-Fashioning in Antonine Ego-Narrative," *Ancient Narrative* 8, (2010): 89; Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 91, 103, 105, and 174; Jeffrey Walker, *The Genuine Teachers of this Art: Rhetorical Education in Antiquity* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), 3; Jás Elsner, "Paideia: Ancient Concept and Modern Reception," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 20, no. 4 (2013): 151; Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 3, 51, and 74; König and Woolf, "Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire," 31; Lieve Van Hoof, "Performing *Paideia*: Greek Culture as an Instrument for Social Promotion in the Fourth Century A.D.," *Classical Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2013): 387; Lauwers, "The Dictates of Language," 49; Michael Trapp, "Philosophical Authority in the Imperial Period," in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 30; Kennerly, *Editorial Bodies*, 8; König, "Representations of Intellectual Community in Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, and Aulus Gellius," 56.

<sup>6</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1b, 1.1.

<sup>7</sup> Ancient knowledge-writing studies refers to that field of scholarship energetically propounded by Jason König and Katerina Oikonomopoulou, as in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire* (2007), *The Philosopher's Banquet* (2011), *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (2013), *Ancient*



scholarship by a variety of names, including “knowledge-ordering,”<sup>8</sup> “encyclopaedism,”<sup>9</sup> “scientific and technical writing”<sup>10</sup> “miscellany,”<sup>11</sup> and “prosography.”<sup>12</sup> Howley explains, in his study of Aulus Gellius’s *Noctes Atticae*, that the application by modern scholars of such generic designations is always a retrospective acknowledgement of some salient quality of the text’s appearance rather than a clear categorical definition.<sup>13</sup> Concerning the designation of such ancient texts as “encyclopaedism,” König and Woolf argue that it is more proper to think in terms of a “spectrum of texts,” each of which deploys “a set of shared encyclopaedic motifs and ambitions and techniques” in their own unique way.<sup>14</sup> König exercises similar caution with the category of the “miscellany,” advising that it is more productive to note the recurrence of a number of miscellanistic characteristics across various kinds of writing.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, König and Whitmarsh recognize that “knowledge-ordering” texts express “a broadly ‘compilatory’ aesthetic, accumulating information in often enormous bulk, in ways that may look unwieldy or purely functional to modern eyes.”<sup>16</sup> Although ancient texts of a kind with *Deipnosophistae* travel under

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*Libraries* (2013), and *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture* (2017). The field has also attracted sustained attention from such figures as Tim Whitmarsh, Greg Woolf, and Yun Lee Too. Christian Jacob, John Wilkins, and Christopher Pelling, in addition to their central roles in Athenaeus studies, may be observed participating in ancient knowledge-writing studies. Alongside Athenaeus, the authors most typically treated of in ancient knowledge-writing studies are Plutarch, Galen, and Aulus Gellius, although the field may extend to the works of a number of polymaths, historians, biographers, linguists, and technical specialists.

<sup>8</sup> König and Whitmarsh, “Ordering Knowledge,” 3; König, “Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing,” 5.

<sup>9</sup> König and Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” 23 and 54; Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 12-13.

<sup>10</sup> König, “Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing,” 5.

<sup>11</sup> König, “Fragmentation and Coherence in Plutarch’s *Sympotic Questions*,” 43; König and Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” 54; Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 6 and 12-13;

<sup>12</sup> Tim Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic: Adventures in Greek Postclassicism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013), 190.

<sup>13</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> König and Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” 23.

<sup>15</sup> Jason König, “Fragmentation and coherence in Plutarch’s *Sympotic Questions*,” in *Ordering Knowledge in the Roman Empire*, ed. König, Jason, and Tim Whitmarsh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 43.

<sup>16</sup> König and Whitmarsh, “Ordering Knowledge,” 3.

many names, they are joined in their function of presenting information derived from a specific external origin for the benefit of their potential readers. In sum, knowledge-writing may be best understood not according to its internal qualities, but according to its position with reference to other texts and to the readers and writers among which it circulates.

Despite knowledge-writing's resistance to generic definition, its role in circulating discourse has received robust theorization. Regarding *Deipnosophistae* specifically, Jacob considers this text's central function as being its ability to excerpt as many ancient authors as possible and associate their extracted bits of information into a new compilation text.<sup>17</sup> David Braund argues that, by collating figures drawn from across five hundred years of ancient learned culture, *Deipnosophistae* performs "the interaction between texts, persons and places otherwise kept apart by centuries."<sup>18</sup> In its condensation of this trans-historical landscape of bookish culture, *Deipnosophistae* shares the textual function that Howley attributes to Aulus Gellius's similar text *Noctes Atticae*, which is to stand in as a testament and a supplement to the entire library from which it extracts its information.<sup>19</sup> Knowledge-writing, with its distinctive focus on functionality for discursive circulation, imitates the structure of a library collection.

*Deipnosophistae*, as an instance of knowledge-writing, displays a coherent form following from its functional imitation of a library. Jacob attests that, beyond referencing the extratextual existence of a physical collection of books, *Deipnosophistae* itself performs the condensation of an entire library of learned culture.<sup>20</sup> It is for this reason that Ruth Webb identifies *Deipnosophistae* as a "virtual library" and "a museum of words."<sup>21</sup> Jacob considers *Deipnosophistae* to represent one instance, crystallized and frozen, within a living, circulating

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<sup>17</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 86.

<sup>18</sup> David Braund, "Learning, Luxury and Empire: Athenaeus' Roman Patron," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 10.

<sup>19</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 87.

<sup>21</sup> Webb, "Picturing the Past," 225.

chain of discourse, which reduces the entire library to a practical scope for readers to interact with as a reference.<sup>22</sup> *Deipnosophistae* filters the enormous mass of information that it represents through “the sieve of the library,” gathering and organizing that information as cited excerpts.<sup>23</sup> According to Too, *Deipnosophistae* becomes in this manner a text that is a collection of texts, a synecdoche for the whole of the library itself.<sup>24</sup> Jacob considers the interplay of presented content and textual structure associating that content to lend *Deipnosophistae* a “mirror-like construction,” in which the text and the library represented by the text are reflections of each other.<sup>25</sup> The single text of *Deipnosophistae* is also a collection of texts, and a reader engaging with it is simultaneously engaging *through* it to the library from which the content was excerpted. As an imitation library, *Deipnosophistae* achieves a quantum status of maintaining multiple structural forms simultaneously. “Athenaeus’ text” Jacob writes, “is at the same time a symposium, a library, a collection of curiosities, and a lexicon.”<sup>26</sup> Jacob observes that all of these forms—a miscellaneous reference text, a material collection of books in a library, and a symposiastic gathering of people for the purpose of learned discourse—can all be referred to with the same ancient Greek term: *synagōgē*.<sup>27</sup>

*Deipnosophistae*’s synagogic arrangement evokes at once the books from which its content is derived, the shared body of knowledge represented by those books, and the extensive and ongoing set of people who have contributed to and contested that knowledge. Murray notes that *Deipnosophistae* explicitly defines itself as a *synagōgē* within the text, and he interprets this identification as an acknowledgement of the text’s creation through a process of “accretive

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<sup>22</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 109.

<sup>23</sup> Jacob, 7.

<sup>24</sup> Yun Lee Too, “The Walking Library: The Performance of Cultural Memories,” in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 120.

<sup>25</sup> Jacob, “Athenaeus the Librarian,” 86.

<sup>26</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 32.

<sup>27</sup> Jacob, “Athenaeus the Librarian,” 103.

transformation.”<sup>28</sup> *Deipnosophistae* selects salient bits from its larger context of source materials and synthesizes those bits into a new unified collection. The world of libraries condensed into the text of *Deipnosophistae* is, for the most part, lost to time, so its function as an indexical reference transforms to stand in for the entire library itself. McClure considers that *Deipnosophistae*’s collection of excerpted quotations reflects the patterns of collecting and coordinating a multiplicity of other source texts constitutive of ancient libraries.<sup>29</sup> This capacity to imitate a library benefited *Deipnosophistae*’s continued reproduction in discursive circulation, attracting as it did the attention of information-oriented publishers and editors.

Although *Deipnosophistae*’s information presentation proved an advantageous survival strategy in retrospect, it also responded to similar selection factors in the third century when it was initially composed. Whitmarsh considers *Deipnosophistae* to be an example of the sort of prosaic polymathy which was the hallmark of Roman Greece, on account of its self-consciously posterior position with regard to the power of language to structure knowledge.<sup>30</sup> This sort of compilation literature, what Whitmarsh here refers to as prosography, flourishes in discursive contexts where there is a drive toward systematizing information.<sup>31</sup> Just as Too observes with regard to Apollodorus’s *Library*, *Deipnosophistae* consumes other books and takes their place, revealing the information necessary to know *about* other books while standing in for them.<sup>32</sup> Dubsichar, who observes the same function in the general category of auxiliary texts, argues that the existence of a summary text for a given body of knowledge implies that the body of knowledge needs the auxiliary text’s supplementary support in order to be understood.<sup>33</sup> Dubsichar’s auxiliary texts facilitate readers to understand a vast and complex field of

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<sup>28</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 704.

<sup>29</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic*, 190.

<sup>31</sup> Whitmarsh, 191.

<sup>32</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 122.

<sup>33</sup> Dubsichar, “Survival of the Most Condensed?,” 42.

information by transmitting a partial version of that information.<sup>34</sup> Jacob describes how texts that supplement and supplant a larger, more complex body of knowledge enhance the accessibility of information for readers unwilling or unable interface with the entire library themselves.<sup>35</sup> The essential function of knowledge-writing is to refine and adapt a complicated body of knowledge for the accessibility of its readers.

By excerpting and presenting passages of interest from external sources, knowledge-writing enables those excerpts to circulate more widely and fluidly than had they remained only in their original context. Mary Deagon identifies the claim that a given text offers “a labour-saving path to knowledge for the busy man of affairs,” and so constitutes “a kind of public service,” as one of the commonplace conventions of ancient encyclopaedic and compilatory works.<sup>36</sup> Gracy sees in *Deipnosophistae* an application of these principles, as he characterizes *Deipnosophistae* as a “review course in literature,” providing the materials necessary for performing a social code of inclusion in the erudite society of the Roman Empire.<sup>37</sup> Ancient knowledge-writing offers to enhance the status of its readers by empowering their participation in the circulation of useful information.

Knowledge-writing is animated by an impulse toward establishing the authority of the body of knowledge condensed under conditions in which such matters are uncertain yet consequential. According to Horster and Reitz, abridgment as a general discursive function tends to wax in value and esteem “where literary attainments are ranked highly by a society, and the ‘cultured classes’ strive to show off their learning,”<sup>38</sup> and this general observation may be productively applied to the conditions of the Second Sophistic. Whitmarsh identifies this function

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<sup>34</sup> Dubischar, 42.

<sup>35</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 114.

<sup>36</sup> Mary Deagon, “*Labores Pro Bono Publico*: The Burdensome Mission of Pliny’s *Natural History*,” in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 92.

<sup>37</sup> Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind,” 89.

<sup>38</sup> Horster and Reitz, “‘Condensation’ of Literature and the Pragmatics of Literary Production,” 10-11.

in his account of prosography, which performs the continued presence and significance of existing, culturally sanctioned knowledge.<sup>39</sup> König articulates how, during the Roman Empire, the discursive performance of ancient intellectual authority was consequential for achieving, maintaining, and disputing social and political status.<sup>40</sup> *Deipnosophistae* is recognizable as an expression of the animating impulse that König and Woolf identify in Roman encyclopaedic writing, in that it makes available authoritative information about Greek culture by which one might signal inclusion in elite learned culture.<sup>41</sup> *Deipnosophistae*, as a knowledge-writing text, offers its readers access to information that was significant for participation in certain modes of public discourse in the Roman Empire.

### **Editorial Authority**

*Deipnosophistae* derives its authority as knowledge-writing from its ability to portray its collection as a faithful reduction of the total library of learned culture. Harris-McCoy remarks regarding information-centric texts generally that their distinct expression of authority is displayed in their orientation toward completeness and objectivity as the ideals of authoritative knowledge-writing.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, König and Woolf point out that a text is most readily recognizable as encyclopaedic to the extent that it conveys stable authority, completeness, and comprehensive order.<sup>43</sup> Based on his study of Vitruvius's *De Architectura*, Harris-McCoy identifies this quality of excellence in the compilation and dissemination of knowledge with the term "editorial authority."<sup>44</sup> With regard to Vitruvius, Harris-McCoy considers editorial authority to manifest in the impression of closure and coherence which resolves for the benefit of its readers the

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<sup>39</sup> Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic*, 190.

<sup>40</sup> König, "Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing," 5.

<sup>41</sup> König and Woolf, "Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire," 29.

<sup>42</sup> Harris-McCoy, "Making and Defending Claims to Authority in Vitruvius' *De Architectura*," 107.

<sup>43</sup> König and Woolf, "Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire," 32.

<sup>44</sup> Harris-McCoy, "Making and Defending Claims to Authority in Vitruvius' *De Architectura*," 107.

contradictions and subtleties of a complicated field of information.<sup>45</sup> Alternatively, Harris-McCoy shows in the case of Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* how authority in knowledge-writing may manifest not through expertise in a specific body of knowledge, but through a convincing performance as a condenser of a wide body of knowledge across a variety of fields.<sup>46</sup> A text that achieves editorial authority asks its readers to place some trust in it as an honest and insightful condensation of the library of learned culture.

Editorial authority must be achieved in the conjoined action of author and audience.

Nicolas Wiater shows in the case of Dionysius of Halicarnassus's *Early Roman History* how the authority of knowledge compilation depends as much on the author's demonstration of competency as on readers' sense of their own mastery of the material after having read the text.<sup>47</sup> According to Wiater, a narrator's successful self-presentation as a source of authority in knowledge-writing should also position its readers as able exponents of the compilation's subject matter.<sup>48</sup> In Wiater's reading of Dionysius's *Early Roman History*, although editorial authority attempts to cultivate readers toward a level of expertise comparable with the author's own, this task necessarily implies that the reader would have profoundly inferior knowledge if not for the availability of the compilation.<sup>49</sup> The impression that Wiater understands Dionysius to give is that readers could not have even recognized uncertainties and contradictions in the body of knowledge, let alone set about resolving them, without the guidance of the editorial authority.<sup>50</sup> Articulating Harris-McCoy's and Wiater's theories with reference to each other, editorial authority then appears to be a double-edged sword, enabling a reader to access and participate in

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<sup>45</sup> Harris-McCoy, 108.

<sup>46</sup> Harris-McCoy, 116.

<sup>47</sup> Nicolas Wiater, "Expertise, 'Character,' and the 'Authority Effect' in the *Early Roman History* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus," in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 240.

<sup>48</sup> Wiater, "Expertise, 'Character,' and the 'Authority Effect' in the *Early Roman History* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus," 258.

<sup>49</sup> Wiater, 243.

<sup>50</sup> Wiater, 257.

specialized knowledge at the same time as “it is designed to diminish the reader’s confidence in his own ability to extract a meaningful interpretation from the confusing, multifarious and arcane material.”<sup>51</sup> This conceptual thread within the larger fabric of ancient knowledge-writing studies suggests that a text produces editorial authority through the conjoint engagement of author and audience, and by the submission of the latter party’s agency and will to the former.

According to this perspective on editorial authority, the author’s authority is mutually exclusive with that of the text’s readers. As Wiater articulates the theory with reference to Dionysius, although knowledge-writing invites readers to involve themselves in the text, it puts those readers to work in service of enhancing the status of the text.<sup>52</sup> In this theory, knowledge-writing presents its readers with a point of confusion or disputation only to demonstrate the insufficiency of their judgment. Wiater describes how readers can either defer to the view of the editorial authority or, rejecting that view, perform their own stubborn ignorance.<sup>53</sup> As Gunderson puts it, it is only by refusing to place one’s faith in the competence of the editorial authority that one is able “to call upon [one’s] own erudition in order to render a judgment.”<sup>54</sup> This relationship between reader agency and author agency expands upon Murray’s observation about the apathy toward originality at the heart of compilatory literature.<sup>55</sup> In this sense, a comprehensive and authoritative piece of knowledge-writing paralyzes the agency of its readers to the extent that it successfully achieves its information-presenting function. The introduction to *Deipnosophistae*’s first book claims for itself the sort of editorial authority described by Harris-McCoy with regard to Vitruvius or Wiater with regard to Dionysius, but its actual rhetorical processes of information presentation deviate from qualities associated with editorial authority.

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<sup>51</sup> Wiater, 239.

<sup>52</sup> Wiater, 257.

<sup>53</sup> Wiater, 251.

<sup>54</sup> Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae*, 83.

<sup>55</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 704.



### Quotation

To assess *Deipnosophistae*'s introductory contention that it conveys editorial authority through a complete and comprehensive account of learned culture, the chapter now offers a focused analysis of *Deipnosophistae*'s rhetorical processes of information presentation. Chief among these rhetorical processes is quotation. Although the text's information is eclectic in substance, McClure indicates that the iterated rhetorical form of quotation "merits special attention as a literary strategy for confronting problems of authenticity and origin, cultural identity and dislocation during the second century C.E."<sup>56</sup> The text's quotations condense the total body of knowledge from which *Deipnosophistae* excerpts its material, evoking the lost library of learned culture.<sup>57</sup> Bartol considers the performative display of learned culture through quoting past literature to suffuse the entire progress of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>58</sup> In its extensive compilation of quotations, the text conveys a performance of erudition by which is expressed the authority of learned culture.<sup>59</sup> Further, de Kreij says of the arrangement of quotations from various sources into a new pattern of association, as if each in sequence answers the last, that it intensifies the text's impression of masterful cultural authority.<sup>60</sup> In this sense, quotations act as supporting evidence to validate the information conveyed, just as Whitmarsh reads Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions* as "cycling through one witness after another...as if to give an impression of the wealth of supporting authority which lies behind their claims."<sup>61</sup> In *Deipnosophistae*, quoting provides proof of the text's claim to represent the authority of learned culture.

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<sup>56</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 6.

<sup>57</sup> McClure, 5.

<sup>58</sup> Bartol, "The Voice of Tradition," 242.

<sup>59</sup> Bartol, 232.

<sup>60</sup> De Kreij, "Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ἄσμα," 62.

<sup>61</sup> Whitmarsh, "Conversational and Citational Brevity in Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions*," 340.

For the effective demonstration of cultural authority, the text must give discursive expression to its quotations' external points of origin. Central to the rhetorical process of quotation is to indicate a break in the author's voice, as modern convention accomplishes with inverted commas, to accommodate the excerpted voice. So indicated, a quotation opens an intertextual aperture, a portal through which another voice—separate from the quoting voice—is made present and appears to speak. The text frequently announces an imminent quotation with the stock phrase “[author] says/writes [quotation].”<sup>62</sup> The repeated use of this phrase produces a standardized syntax which Olson describes as expressing a disconnection between the text's excerpted information and the shelving of its imitation library.<sup>63</sup> Although direct and informative, this phrase is the same formulation used for dialogue among characters within *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework, obscuring any clear distinction between the quoted and quoting voices.

The dual function of this ubiquitous phrase creates a blending effect between characters within the text and the evocation of voices from beyond the text. Jason König describes how the words of quoted authors might appear where one might expect dialogue from a character in the narrative, or vice versa, creating the impression that the excerpted voice is not merely mentioned, but enters into the fictional space inhabited by the text's characters.<sup>64</sup> Likewise, the text uses the dicolon mark (:) as punctuation indicating a shift in voice, but Arnott observes this shift occurring before a quotation, within a quoted passage of dramatic dialogue, or in the middle of a sentence.<sup>65</sup> The devices used within the text to indicate a change in voice can confuse as much as they clarify the presentation of authorizing cultural information.

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<sup>62</sup> Jacob, “Athenaeus the Librarian,” 92.

<sup>63</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus' ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 429.

<sup>64</sup> Jason König, *Saints and Symposiasts: The Literature of Food and the Symposium in Greco-Roman and Early Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 77-78.

<sup>65</sup> Arnott, “Athenaeus and the Epitome,” 44.

In a style that may seem asymmetrical to modern readers, the beginning of a quotation can be signaled by the addition of a syntactical marker—whether words or punctuation—but the end of a quotation is typically signaled by a symbolic removal. Arnott describes how the *Venetus Marcianus* 447 codex frequently presents a blank space about two or three letters wide as a visual cue of the ending of a quotation.<sup>66</sup> Quotation is initiated by the inclusion of the “[author] says/writes [quotation]” formulation or a dicolon mark and is terminated by an absence, the introduction of an empty space where there might otherwise be letters. To further complicate *Deipnosophistae*’s organs of quotation, the two-letter-wide “null character” seems to be an all-purpose symbol of transition, appearing not only at the end of a quotation but also at the end of a paragraph or section.<sup>67</sup> As markers of a change in voice or topic, the absent letters create an optic arrangement for a given page of the text. The insertion of blank spaces among the words enables the page to be scanned for the presence of quotations, read for its material construction in ink and papyrus. Searching for quotations, one could read the physical presence or absence of ink on the page, on a different register than interpreting meanings represented by the language.

The text of *Deipnosophistae* makes explicit reference to the authorizing force of quotation when it designates its own quotations with the term *martyrion*.<sup>68</sup> *Martyria* are testimonies or pieces of evidence, information that would be produced by a *martyr*, or “witness.” Referring to its quotations by this name, *Deipnosophistae* evokes its intertextual relationship with its source materials. The quotations gesture backward to the books from which they were drawn and to which they testify, books that are in many cases no longer extant. In one notable passage, a character interrupts his own list to assert that he has “other examples [*martyria*]” on an unrelated topic that he could mention, but does not actually provide that information.<sup>69</sup> The gesture to an

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<sup>66</sup> Arnott, 43.

<sup>67</sup> Arnott, 43.

<sup>68</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.241e, 6.39-40; XI.500f, 11.102-103.

<sup>69</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.590b, 13.57.

external source is entirely hypothetical, and the original authorizing source is evoked without the actual presence of the excerpted voice.

Used in this manner, the term *martyrion* also indicates the future-oriented trajectory of the quotations as pieces of evidence for composing new arguments. Identifying quotations as *martyria* contextualizes them within *Deipnosophistae*'s intertextual network of circulating discourse. Reference to quotations as *martyria* in *Deipnosophistae* tends to accompany a specification that the quotation has already appeared elsewhere within this same text. *Deipnosophistae* repeatedly deploys rhetorical processes of self-referential indexing throughout the text.<sup>70</sup> The text expresses reflexivity, bending back upon itself to comment on its own information presentation in a manner that facilitates cross-referencing. *Deipnosophistae*'s many commentators and editors have, in the course of reproducing the text, followed and extended these lines of cross-reference, clarifying the *Deipnosophistae*'s connections and supplementing them with other extant sources.

The reflexive structure of *Deipnosophistae*'s network of excerpts facilitates quotation's capacity for repurposing in future discourse. Kennerly describes how Quintilian attests to extracting and repurposing quotations from authoritative sources as a centrally important skill for rhetorical education.<sup>71</sup> Although the practice of quoting reproduces information from an existing source, the information in the existing source does not become a quotation until its reproduction in consequent discourse. In Gary Saul Morson's general theory of quotation, one of the conditions of a quotable passage is its capacity to appear in everyday life or to be anthologized in a collection of quotations.<sup>72</sup> For Morson, quotations achieve their status as quotation in their repurposed repetition, even when the extracted sentiment differs from the appearance it takes in

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<sup>70</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.300d, 7.56-57; VII.303b, 7.65-66; XIII.601e, 13.76-77.

<sup>71</sup> Michele Kennerly, "Quintilian on the Quotable," *Rhetorica* 37, no. 2 (Spring 2019): 124.

<sup>72</sup> Gary Saul Morson, "Bakhtin, the Genres of Quotation, and the Aphoristic Consciousness," *The Slavic and East European Journal* 50, no. 1 (2006): 214.

its original source.<sup>73</sup> To interpret a discursive sequence as a quotation is to experience it as a statement one is already expected to know and might recognize as emanating from a voice beyond the one giving it present expression.<sup>74</sup> Quotations are recognizable as such due to their ability to detach from their original setting and to circulate in continued discourse.

*Deipnosophistae* recognizes this quality of quotation when it refers to its excerpted passages as *apophthegmata*.<sup>75</sup> An *apophthegma* is a pithy saying on the order of a maxim, a self-contained and consummately expressed idea, well-suited by its brevity and artful construction to travel and reproduce throughout a discursive culture. As a participle, *apophthegma* is an inflection of the verb *phtheggomai*, which can refer not only to human speech but also to a sound made by an animal or an inanimate object. To refer to a quotation as an *apophthegma* emphasizes its sensory character—as an enunciation of a sound—rather than the meaning conveyed by those symbols. The *apophthegmata* are adapted for mobility and recognizable primarily in the opaque, solid texture of their expression. When *Deipnosophistae* terms its excerpted information as *apophthegmata*, it emphasizes the capacity of that information to receive structure in its discursive circulation.

By excerpting passages and presenting them as extracts from an existing body of discourse, *Deipnosophistae* actualizes the circulatory formation of quoted material. As a passage may be considered a quotation only when it is reanimated in that manner, Morson considers quoting to be a literary form beyond any consideration of the practice as transparent, automatic duplication.<sup>76</sup> Despite quotation's essential reliance on attribution to some past voice preceding its iteration in a present discourse, Morson claims that “a quotation has its own shadowy kind of

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<sup>73</sup> Morson, “Bakhtin, the Genres of Quotation, and the Aphoristic Consciousness,” 216.

<sup>74</sup> Morson, 215.

<sup>75</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.245d, 6.47.

<sup>76</sup> Morson, “Bakhtin, the Genres of Quotation, and the Aphoristic Consciousness,” 215.

*second* speaker, not entirely identical with the speaker of the source.”<sup>77</sup> Nonetheless, in Morson’s theory, a new version of a quotation that changes the meaning of its precedent is a misquotation rather than a fresh, original statement.<sup>78</sup> Even when the quoted passage differs from the source passage, the attribution to an original is part of the rhetorical process of quotation.<sup>79</sup> Part of the second speaker’s creative enterprise in quoting is to displace their own voice and distribute it to the quoted speaker, identifiable by citation. The quoter amplifies their cultural authority by attributing the quotation to the words of some past dignitary, but the attribution is itself built upon the quoter’s own authority.<sup>80</sup> McClure identifies the same operation in *Deipnosophistae* specifically that Morson articulates with regard to quotation generally when she observes that *Deipnosophistae*’s association of a quotation with a named and respected figure charges that excerpt with cultural authority.<sup>81</sup> Citations and quotations travel together, as pilot fish and sharks do, symbiotically supporting and indicating the presence of each other.

### Citation

The process of citation and quotation expressed in *Deipnosophistae* reflects a mutually co-productive relationship of authorization between quoting and quoted voices. Concerning antiquarian literature generally, Gunderson writes that a quoted voice’s authority grows to the extent that it is cited, while the quoting voice’s ability to iterate citations is enabled by demonstrating expert knowledge of authorities worthy of quoting.<sup>82</sup> *Deipnosophistae*’s formula for citation includes within it an attribution of the quotation’s origin, and it may include the author’s name, the source’s title, or both. In the *Venetus Marcianus* 447’s punctuation, citations

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<sup>77</sup> Morson, 217.

<sup>78</sup> Morson, 218.

<sup>79</sup> Morson, 217.

<sup>80</sup> Morson, 217.

<sup>81</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 38.

<sup>82</sup> Gunderson, *Nox Philologiae*, 74.

are frequently but not consistently indicated with a carrot (>) in the left-hand margin next to the line in question.<sup>83</sup> As with the use of a null character, this syntactical marker facilitates a visual scan of the text for certain types of informational content. *Deipnosophistae*'s rhetorical processes for presenting quotations and citations are fully integrated with the text's functional network of internal arrangement.

Jacob sees these practices of bibliographical indexing as indicating the text's information-presenting function, as they prepare readers to navigate the imagined space of the library of learned culture represented by *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>84</sup> Too considers the commentary and annotation supplied in acts of citation in Apollodorus's *Library* to provide for the excerpted authors to be integrated in the compilation text,<sup>85</sup> and a similar function animates *Deipnosophistae*'s organs of information presentation. The cited quotations in *Deipnosophistae* seem to Wilkins to be selected partly for commonplace canonicity and partly for extraordinary rarity, with their commentary framework assessing questions of authenticity and intellectual reputation.<sup>86</sup> One of *Deipnosophistae*'s citations is preceded by an intimation that "although I did considerable research on the matter and questioned many people, I learned nothing," contextualizing the inaccessibility of this particular piece of information.<sup>87</sup> Elsewhere, the text attributes a series of quotations to the comic poet Machō by preceding these quotations with a quotation of Machō's epitaph, which itself acts as a citation.<sup>88</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s citations are regulated not by an abstractly standardized system, but by their function as navigational aids for voyagers in the library of learned culture.

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<sup>83</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 44.

<sup>84</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 64.

<sup>85</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 186.

<sup>86</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 133.

<sup>87</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XV.675f, 15.17-18.

<sup>88</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.242a, 6.40.

*Deipnosophistae*'s functional approach to information presentation introduces a degree of irregularity to its citational practices. Arnott considers *Deipnosophistae*'s citations usually to be precise and methodical,<sup>89</sup> but their expression can be highly subject to variability. By art or by accident, some quotations are decoupled from citation, some citations are partial, and others cite euphemistically, referring to, say, Pindar as "the Theban poet." Christopher Collard characterizes this citational irregularity as being entirely typical of *Deipnosophistae*, as the citations are often incomplete and may be just as likely to cohere with the flow of the narrative as they are to interrupt it.<sup>90</sup> Gorman and Gorman note how the text might cite one principal authority on a topic but intersperse that set of quotations with quotations from other voices without indicating the shift.<sup>91</sup> Collard notes that, elsewhere, excerpted material is transported into its new textual location without direct reference to the original author.<sup>92</sup> According to Murray, particularly long quotations may at times take over presence entirely from the narrating voice of *Deipnosophistae* itself.<sup>93</sup> In the rhetorical process of citation, the text acknowledges and comments upon uncertainty in its informational content and positions its readers to assess the information presented.

Another kind of uncertainty recognized in *Deipnosophistae*'s citations is that which is due to homonymy. In these cases, more than one person might be referred to by the same name, and here the text does clarify the potential source of confusion. In one case of uncertain citation, the text specifies that the author of a particular excerpt is named Philoxenus, but acknowledges that there are two authors named Philoxenus who might have been the source of the quotation.<sup>94</sup> In another passage, the text attempts to differentiate between two authors with the same name by

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<sup>89</sup> Arnott, "Athenaeus and the Epitome," 41.

<sup>90</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 157.

<sup>91</sup> Gorman and Gorman, "The Tryphê of the Sybarites," 39.

<sup>92</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 168.

<sup>93</sup> Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 705.

<sup>94</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.146f, 4.27-28.



distinguishing them by their city of origin, as one is from Rhodes, and the other is from Naucratis in Egypt.<sup>95</sup> Similarly, *Deipnosophistae* defines which person named Archytas it cites by specifying his profession as a musician.<sup>96</sup> At yet another point, the text acknowledges two homonymous authors and goes on to differentiate between them with reference to other texts they have written. The narrator specifies that the citation in question refers not to Sōtadēs the author of the *Ionian Songs*, but to Sōtadēs the writer of Middle Comedy.<sup>97</sup> In this case, where *Deipnosophistae* is able to argue in favor of the identity of an author that shares a name with other authors, it is through reference to an existing corpus of authorship. Sōtadēs's citation can be verified through his association with other books to which his authorship can be appended.

*Deipnosophistae* also acknowledges where there exist multiple possible attributions for a quotation. For instance, the text presents two possible claims side by side when citing either Aristotle or Theophrastus as the author of a *Commentaries*.<sup>98</sup> The confusion of attribution between the First Teacher and his pupil hints at a limitation in *Deipnosophistae*'s knowledge of its source material, calling on assistance from its readings to verify, ignore, or discard that bit of information. In like manner, the fourteenth book attributes a quotation either to Aristophanes or to Plato the comedian.<sup>99</sup> These recognitions in the text of inconclusive information provide its readers with resources for disputing and deciding upon the knowledge among other potential readers, as has manifested historically in the body of commentary that has accumulated around *Deipnosophistae*'s text. Sometimes, this citational uncertainty is expressed conditionally, as when *Deipnosophistae* attributes a quotation to the play *Nanniōn*, but only "if the play is by Eubulus rather than Philippus."<sup>100</sup> This sort of conditional citation gestures outward to the society of

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<sup>95</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.283d, 7.18-19.

<sup>96</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.600f, 13.75.

<sup>97</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.293a, 7.40-41.

<sup>98</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.173e, 4.74.

<sup>99</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIV.628e, 14.25.

<sup>100</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.568f, 13.24.

intellectual contestation beyond the text, in which it would be a point of consequence and interest to dispute whether *Nanniōn* was written by Eubulus or Philippus.

At times, *Deipnosophistae*'s open-ended protocol for citation creates more uncertainty than it resolves. For instance, with reference to the *Telechinian Story*, the text records the author as either "Epimenidēs of Crete, or Teleclidēs, or someone else."<sup>101</sup> This passage relates two conflicting authorial traditions together but adds a third possibility that the book might have been written by someone else entirely. This citational structure leaves the attribution open-ended, implying a somewhat greater probability of authorship by the two named individuals, but acknowledging that the *Telechinian Story* might have been written by anyone. A similar form of citation is given a few pages earlier, when the text identifies the author of the *Titanomachia*, "whether it is Eumēlus of Corinth or Arctinus or whatever name he likes to use."<sup>102</sup> Although similar in structure, this passage displays a slight variation. The open-ended third possibility in the list casts the unnamed potential author of *Titanomachia* as the subject in a verbal clause. This citation imagines the ambiguously named author as an agential person, with motivations and preferences about his own authorial identity. Distancing naming from the act of writing *Titanomachia*, this passage gives primacy to the anonymous figure associated with the book and renders inert by comparison the names that might be affixed to that writer as mere names, and not as subjects attached to an active verbal phrase.

*Deipnosophistae* cites not only what exists in other sources but also what does not. For instance, the text gestures at one point to the fact that "Aristoxenus knows nothing about it."<sup>103</sup> That certain information is missing from the source material where it might be expected to appear is worthy of noting. Rather more flippantly, one quotation is cited only by mentioning that

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<sup>101</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.282e, 7.17-18.

<sup>102</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.277d, 7.5.

<sup>103</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.174c, 4.75.

Eratosthenes “said somewhere” the quoted words.<sup>104</sup> Likewise, *Deipnosophistae* remains agnostic regarding which book of the Aristotelian corpus in which a particular quoted passage might be found, whether it is in *On Animals* or *On Fish*.<sup>105</sup> In this way, *Deipnosophistae* makes an absence into a presence and a void into a substance. In recognizing this limitation of knowledge, the text does not aim for a perfect and complete link to the source material. Rather, it announces partial knowledge and provides its audience with what guidance it can. In this way, *Deipnosophistae* displays the tendency in communication that Mari Lee Mifsud characterizes as “a kind of potlatch, an excessive expenditure, a scattering, without concern, regard, strategy, or expectation of return.”<sup>106</sup> The text trusts its readers to complete the connection through their own ingenuity, to leave the uncertainty in unresolved tension, or to ignore the passage entirely. By presenting its information in this way, *Deipnosophistae* anticipates the continuous reconstruction of its own disorderly and decaying text by generations of commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers.

*Deipnosophistae* sometimes supplements its citational absences with an account of the author’s own experience searching for verifiable attribution. In the eighth book, the author records that he found a mention of a play by Alexis called *The Teacher of Profligacy* in Sōtiōn of Alexandria’s treatise *On Timōn’s Satires*. The first-person narrator remarks, “I never encountered the play myself; despite reading over 800 so-called Middle Comedies and compiling extracts from them, I never came upon *The Instructor in Profligacy*, and I know of no one who thought it deserved to be catalogued; because neither Callimachus nor Aristophanēs catalogued it, and neither did the cataloguers working in Pergamum.”<sup>107</sup> Despite offering evidence against the play’s very existence, the author ends the passage by diligently recording what Sōtiōn writes about Alexis’s

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<sup>104</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.588a, 13.53.

<sup>105</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.305f, 7.72-73.

<sup>106</sup> Mari Lee Mifsud, *Rhetoric and the Gift: Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Contemporary Communication* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2015), 2.

<sup>107</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VIII.336d, 8.14-15.

play. In this passage, the author reveals the extent to which he has searched to confirm an attribution he found in his own reading. Additionally, the passage shows that the presence of information in circulating discourse is the sort of evidence the author would have considered in undertaking his research. By reporting on this research, even when it fails to resolve uncertainty, *Deipnosophistae* can intervene in readers' interpretation of citational absences. After quoting a list of *hetaerae* mentioned in a speech by Lysias, the author muses, "But perhaps Anteia ought to be written in place of Antheia; because I find no reference in any author to a courtesan named Antheia, whereas an entire play gets its title from Anteia, as I noted earlier, specifically the *Anteia* of Eunicus or Philyllius. The author of the speech *Against Neaera* mentions her as well."<sup>108</sup> Here, recording his research methods and preferred sources of evidence allows the author to argue against the veracity of his primary material and to persuade readers to adopt his view concerning the uncertain information.

Elsewhere, absences in citation are presented as evidence themselves for other claims. When discussing philosophers who became military commanders, the text takes up the theme of Socrates's military career, writing, "although no one else records this, [Plato] also claims that Socrates won the prize for valor when all the Athenians ran away and many of them actually died. Everything he says is a lie."<sup>109</sup> Here, *Deipnosophistae* cites the lack of corroboration in historical writing for the claims of Socrates's exemplary military service. The text makes present the non-existence of support as a way to discredit Socrates's account as without authority. Following this passage is a citation to Thucydides's history documenting positive evidence to the contrary position, that Socrates was without military distinction. Not only does the text acknowledge a void in the record, but it uses that void as the basis for asserting the authenticity of a piece of information. Through commentary, inconsistency, and absence, *Deipnosophistae* presents

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<sup>108</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.586e, 13.51.

<sup>109</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.215d, 5.55.

uncertain information and provides its readers with resources for resolving those interpretive difficulties.

*Deipnosophistae*'s presentation of quotations and citations not only provides information for reference but also uses rhetorical processes to influence readers' judgment of that information. Paola Ceccarelli notes how, in some cases, *Deipnosophistae*'s strategic citations serve an aesthetic purpose, supporting the characterization of fictional speakers within the text.<sup>110</sup> Bartol observes that citations in *Deipnosophistae* can perform an authorizing function, where attributing a quotation to a well-known and revered figure (such as Homer) lends that quotation special precedence as an answer to uncertainty.<sup>111</sup> *Deipnosophistae* also presents its information persuasively, as in the fifth book, when the text quotes Plato to contradict Plato.<sup>112</sup> Claiming that eternity would not be enough time to produce all relevant arguments against Plato's philosophical program, this passage presents a critique of Plato composed of Plato's own inconsistencies, then announces its intention to remain silent on the subject beyond strategic citation. Concerning this theme in *Deipnosophistae*, Gracy argues that the text demonstrates Plato's insufficiency and inconsistency through Plato's own words, without making such an assertion directly.<sup>113</sup> This method of citing inconsistencies in an author's source texts is a common mode by which *Deipnosophistae* expresses critique of other intellectual and literary figures, and one which Paulas recognizes as part of *Deipnosophistae*'s anti-philosophical position.<sup>114</sup> The text expresses a polyphonic commitment to allow the external sources being quoted to advance the proposition being made, content to curate the intertextual information in a way that supports its own contentions.

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<sup>110</sup> Paola Ceccarelli, "Dance and Desserts: An Analysis of Book Fourteen," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 280-281.

<sup>111</sup> Bartol, "The Voice of Tradition," 241.

<sup>112</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.220f, 5.63.

<sup>113</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 147.

<sup>114</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 26.

*Deipnosophistae* explicitly characterizes itself as a complete and comprehensive record, consistent with the theory of editorial authority defined above. Rather than presenting a conclusive synopsis of its subject matter, though, *Deipnosophistae* includes the contentions and uncertainties surrounding its excerpts within the scope of its expertise. Moreover, *Deipnosophistae* documents the process by which it has sought out and verified its information, offering readers a model for continuing the text's investigative project, thus influencing their critical dispositions. Cecarelli argues that some of the text's processes of citation may be taken as evaluations of the quality of the literature cited, in terms of what is included as relevant information and how that information is categorized.<sup>115</sup> This evaluative citation can take the shape of a clarification, as when *Deipnosophistae* explains the meaning of a pun excerpted from Old Comedy: "The coot [is associated] with Aphrodite, as Aristophanes says in *Birds*, alluding to the word 'phallus'."<sup>116</sup> The text also weighs in where it considers a transmitted citation to be of doubtful authenticity. For instance, when discussing treatises on the erotic arts, *Deipnosophistae* mentions one such text with particularly scandalous content that is commonly attributed to Philaenis.<sup>117</sup> A character in *Deipnosophistae* named Democritus then provides evidence to the contrary, suggesting instead that the treatise in question had been written by the sophist Polycrates and published under Philaenis's name in an attempt to discredit her. By modifying its readers' interpretations of the excerpt's origin, this passage gestures to the opacity of *Deipnosophistae*'s rhetorical processes of information presentation. Moreover, the text of *Deipnosophistae* puts its thumb on the scales, contriving a fictional character to offer what seems to be superseding evidence of authorship. With its explicit reference to the capacity of

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<sup>115</sup> Ceccarelli, "Dance and Desserts," 285.

<sup>116</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.325b, 7.126.

<sup>117</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VIII.335b, 8.12-13.

information presentation to influence readers' judgments, the text calls on its own readers to apply the same standard to *Deipnosophistae* itself.

### Informational Plurality

One of *Deipnosophistae*'s most common reasons for acknowledging plurality in authorized information is a recognition of uncertainty in the recorded traditions it presents. Whitmarsh notes, regarding Hellenistic texts broadly, that they display a tendency to convey a "relativization of narrative authority, based on the conflict between local traditions,"<sup>118</sup> and this tendency may be observed in the specific case of *Deipnosophistae*. For instance, when discussing a figure by the name of Glaucus, the text records a number of contradictory explanations of his birth and death.<sup>119</sup> Likewise, a lengthy passage in the fourth book investigates what role the "table-maker" plays in preparing a feast by rehearsing the various contradictory ways that different authors use the term.<sup>120</sup> Elsewhere, the text provides competing authorizations of information in local variations of dialect, as for regional names of a species of fish<sup>121</sup> and grammatical declensions of the word "polyp."<sup>122</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s lexical investigations give reason to mention this type of ambiguity when the same name refers to different animals<sup>123</sup> or when ancient authors disagree on what musical instrument is signified by a certain word.<sup>124</sup> In these cases, the divergent traditions are presented side-by-side without evaluative commentary on the likelihood of one interpretation over another.

As part of its rhetorical processes of citation, *Deipnosophistae* recognizes plurality in its authorizing citations where relevant. König considers proliferation to be a major theme in

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<sup>118</sup> Whitmarsh, *Beyond the Second Sophistic*, 19.

<sup>119</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.296a, 7.47.

<sup>120</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.170d-e, 4.70.

<sup>121</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.300f, 7.58-59.

<sup>122</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.316a-b, 7.100.

<sup>123</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.327c, 7.132-133.

<sup>124</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIV.635c-636c, 14.36-39.

*Deipnosophistae*, as both questions and answers to those questions multiply in excess.<sup>125</sup> This tendency is one of the many causes influencing the contradictions and antitheses that Paulas affirms to be characteristic of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>126</sup> Bartol advises that informational plurality is entirely consistent with *Deipnosophistae*'s compilatory aesthetic and may be attributed, at least in part, to the text's extraction and coordination of various excerpts from other sources.<sup>127</sup> With regard to Dionysius's *Early Roman History*, Wiater argues that conveying informational plurality through countervailing citations fortifies the author's performance of superabundant expertise by diminishing the agency of readers.<sup>128</sup> According to Wiater, the copious repetition of conflicting authorities does not reflect a transparent disclosure of pluralistic influences, but rather has the strategic purpose of making readers feel lost without the author's guidance.<sup>129</sup> According to Wiater's account of informational plurality in Dionysius's *Early Roman History*, citing multiple conflicting authorities induces in readers a hermeneutic paralysis.<sup>130</sup> Although *Deipnosophistae* displays similar features of citational plurality, its copious authorities stimulate, rather than paralyze, readers' judgment and agency.

*Deipnosophistae* equips its readers with conflicting information that must be navigated through inquiry and interpretation if the text is to be encountered sensibly. As König documents in Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions* and generalizes to sympotic writing more generally, readers are presented with a variety of alternative explanations from different authorities, which they may verify as best they can or let stand in unresolved complexity.<sup>131</sup> In *Deipnosophistae*, for instance, after providing a series of quotations from Polemōn, the text introduces a quotation attributed to

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<sup>125</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 103.

<sup>126</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 11.

<sup>127</sup> Bartol, "The Voice of Tradition," 232.

<sup>128</sup> Wiater, "Expertise, 'Character,' and the 'Authority Effect' in the *Early Roman History* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus," 239.

<sup>129</sup> Wiater, 242.

<sup>130</sup> Wiater, 240.

<sup>131</sup> König, "Fragmentation and Coherence in Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions*," 52-53.



Didymus the Grammarian by explicitly stating that the latter contradicts the former.<sup>132</sup> Just as König further notes with regard to Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions*, *Deipnosophistae*'s internal credibility contest not only allows for the comparison of divergent authorities but also of different ways of knowing.<sup>133</sup> In a striking example of this rhetorical process of information presentation, *Deipnosophistae* stages a scenario in which Gorgias of Leontini is asked how he has lived such a long life in good health.<sup>134</sup> Clearchus, in his *Lives*, records the answer as, "I never did anything simply because it felt good," while Dēmētrius of Byzantium, in *On Poetry*, contrives for Gorgias to reply, "I've never done anything for anyone else." In this passage, readers are simultaneously invited to judge the character of Gorgias based on the relative authorities of Clearchus and Dēmētrius, the relative authorities of Clearchus and Dēmētrius based on the character of Gorgias, and the divergent functions of biography and poetry based on the Gorgianic answer circulating in either field. Through citational plurality, the text presents authority as subject to non-trivial uncertainty, requiring the judgment of discerning readers for the actualization of that authority, and variably contingent upon the circumstances of its circulation.

By presenting information that could be otherwise, *Deipnosophistae* entrusts each of its readers to make of that information what they will. The authoritative voice of *Deipnosophistae* does not stand outside its readers' weighing of informational options, as is demonstrated in the text's continuous composition by multiple compilers and contributors. *Deipnosophistae* casts doubt on its own presented information, as when Sōphrōn's *Mimes of Men* is cited calling a particular type of fish a *botis*, but the text's citation suggests instead that "he is perhaps referring to a plant."<sup>135</sup> One citation attributes an oration to Lysias, but insinuates that the attribution might

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<sup>132</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.139c, 4.16-17.

<sup>133</sup> König, "Fragmentation and Coherence in Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions*," 54.

<sup>134</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XII.548d, 12.71.

<sup>135</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.286d, 7.26.

not be legitimate by means of the statement: “if the story is genuine.”<sup>136</sup> More forcefully, in the thirteenth book, *Deipnosophistae* announces its own judgment of a particular quotation’s legitimacy: “that this song is not by Sapphō is obvious to everyone, I suppose, and in my judgment Hermesianax is joking when he refers to their love-affair,” the love-affair in question having been used as evidence of Sapphō’s authorship of this particular song.<sup>137</sup> By shifting to the first-person voice and providing reasons to support the assertion, *Deipnosophistae*’s authorizing voice appears in the text as a character itself, subject to the judgment of its readers alongside the cited authors. Indeed, one Hephaestion receives an even more extensive commentary than the aforementioned Hermesianax, as *Deipnosophistae*’s author embarks on a digression of some length accusing him of being a plagiarist and providing evidence to support that conclusion.<sup>138</sup> The authorizing voice could very well propose Hephaestion’s plagiarism as incontrovertible fact, but in supplementing the position with persuasive evidence, the text displays an anxiety to secure the thoughtful approval of its readers. Far from overwhelming readers with its hefty expertise, *Deipnosophistae*’s plurality of authorities establishes the limits of its influence and entrusts the discursive future of its information to those who would circulate it.

### **Fragmentary Authority**

One of the paradoxes of knowledge-writing is that the act of assembling an all-encompassing record demonstrates the impossibility of achieving such a level of completeness. Too notes of encyclopaedic and compendium books as a general category that part of their basic premise is to assert the comprehensiveness of their account and, at the same time, to deny that such a goal might be realistically achieved.<sup>139</sup> Too remarks that texts of knowledge-writing which

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<sup>136</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.586e, 13.51.

<sup>137</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIII.599d, 13.72.

<sup>138</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XV.673e, 15.15.

<sup>139</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 117.

claim to represent comprehensive literary knowledge are identifiable as standing in as an incomplete approximation of the full discourse they represent.<sup>140</sup> Likewise, Oikonomopoulou observes among projects of knowledge accumulation in the Roman Imperial period an inclination to display their own incomplete and inconclusive state.<sup>141</sup> Knowledge-writing must be incomplete because its subject of compilation is incomplete, ever awaiting the next innovation or disputation. Oikonomopoulou goes on to define a text as being truly encyclopaedic insofar as it is “both elastic (that is, receptive of accretion and augmentation, and, equally, of abbreviation or omission) and plastic (that is, open to reshaping and restructuring).”<sup>142</sup> Knowledge-writing may approach its purported goal of a comprehensive accounting only through the embrace of its own insufficiency in comparison to the full field of its subject matter.

The demystifying character of knowledge-writing does not imply that *Deipnosophistae*'s condensation of learned culture constitutes a diminishment of learned culture. Howley affirms that viewing compilations and miscellanies from the period of the Roman Empire as inferior to the body of knowledge from which it is extracted is not a fair assessment of the functions of knowledge-writing.<sup>143</sup> It may be the case that knowledge-writing accomplishes a distillation of the prior discourse from which it derives its excerpts, but the reduced text so composed does not converge on some zero point of absolutely reduced information. Instead, the refinement of knowledge potentiates a concomitant expansion in circulating discourse. As Dubischar notes, a text that is sufficiently obscure will hinder its own capacity for circulation and so assure its continued obscurity.<sup>144</sup> This tendency, in its extreme expression, will load the text with such a

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<sup>140</sup> Too, 124.

<sup>141</sup> Katerina Oikonomopoulou, “Plutarch’s Corpus of *Quaestiones* in the Tradition of Imperial Greek Encyclopaedism,” in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 131.

<sup>142</sup> Oikonomopoulou, “Plutarch’s Corpus of *Quaestiones* in the Tradition of Imperial Greek Encyclopaedism,” 134.

<sup>143</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 22.

<sup>144</sup> Dubischar, “Survival of the Most Condensed?,” 42.

heavy interpretive burden that it may become entirely lost.<sup>145</sup> On the contrary, *Deipnosophistae*'s process of condensing and coordinating excerpted information through iterated patterns of topical association mobilizes readers to engage actively in selecting bits of discourse, which they can then animate in continued circulation. As extensive as the field of cultural knowledge conveyed by *Deipnosophistae* may be, it is dwarfed in comparison to the open-ended set of opportunities for discursive performance it makes possible.

*Deipnosophistae*'s accumulative arrangement of incomplete and inconsistent information emphasizes the creative potential of reproducing and modifying existing source materials. Interacting with *Deipnosophistae*, one is constantly reading bits of presented information in discord and harmony with each other. Jacob articulates the disjointed arrangement of informational bits found in *Deipnosophistae* as being part of a process by which a new kind of knowledge is produced.<sup>146</sup> Buffeted by a rapid succession of distinct and sometimes countervailing voices, readers are called upon by the text's syntax to invent their own comparisons and categories for making sense of the presented information. The basic unit of composition for *Deipnosophistae*'s heterogeneous text is the modular and partially autonomous bit of information, which Dwora Gilula recognizes as enabling smooth repurposing for changes in circumstance and the character of the speaker.<sup>147</sup> By framing its information as the product of an ongoing investigation, *Deipnosophistae* enables its readers to collect, reorganize, and repurpose that information, actions that are continuously performed by the text's commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers.

*Deipnosophistae*'s articulation of knowledge-writing does not supersede the agency of its readers, but relies upon them to achieve its own authority. König envisions authority in ancient

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<sup>145</sup> Dubischar, 42.

<sup>146</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 104.

<sup>147</sup> Dwora Gilula, "Stratonicus, the Witty Harpist," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 429.

knowledge-writing as a two-way process,<sup>148</sup> in which a piece of writing confers authority on its readers by condensing a complex field of knowledge while readers confer authority on a piece of writing by attending to it as a reliable source of information. *Deipnosophistae* does not provide information that can be accrued passively but, after the fashion that König describes with regard to Plutarch, requires cooperative readers to engage with and to puzzle over the relative positions of the multiple plural authorities it presents.<sup>149</sup> The result is a mutually co-productive process in which readers enhance both their own authority and that of *Deipnosophistae* by choosing what among its excerpts to recirculate in their own open-ended networks of discursive interaction. As König observes, with regard to Plutarch<sup>150</sup> and also with regard to Athenaeus by means of an analogical comparison,<sup>151</sup> *Deipnosophistae* stages a conversation among the voices of the past and provides its readers with the means and opportunity to participate in it. By collecting and presenting the sort of excerpts from existing sources most likely to facilitate continued circulation, *Deipnosophistae* expresses “the centuries-old tension in ancient knowledge-ordering between innovation and tradition” that König considers Plutarch to dramatize.<sup>152</sup> The text relies for its existence and its authority on the energy and appetites of its readers, who are empowered to select or reject the text and its contents according to their interests and needs. With regard to Dionysius, Wiater describes authority in knowledge-writing as being based on the exclusion of reader authority.<sup>153</sup> Despite *Deipnosophistae*’s claim to offer a complete and comprehensive account of the library of learned culture, its processes of information presentation demonstrate the mutual co-production of discursive authority in conditions of incomplete knowledge compilation.

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<sup>148</sup> König, “Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing,” 9.

<sup>149</sup> König, 16.

<sup>150</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 89.

<sup>151</sup> König, 103.

<sup>152</sup> König, “Introduction: Self-Assertion and Its Alternatives in Ancient Scientific and Technical Writing,” 18.

<sup>153</sup> Wiater, “Expertise, ‘Character,’ and the ‘Authority Effect’ in the *Early Roman History* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus,” 239.

In this sense, *Deipnosophistae*'s rhetorical processes of information presentation perform a function of knowledge-writing that may be termed fragmentary authority. Harris-McCoy, who also theorizes editorial authority as a quality of Vitruvius's *De Architectura*, proposes the concept of the "fragmentary encyclopaedia" to refer to the capacity of a text like Artemidorus's *Oneirocritica* to display self-conscious awareness of its own incompleteness through self-criticism.<sup>154</sup> Although Gracy argues that *Deipnosophistae* may be called an encyclopedia on account of its extensive presentation of miscellaneous information and its concern with *paideia*,<sup>155</sup> that classification is somewhat misleading. As Wilkins explains, *Deipnosophistae* differs from a modern dictionary or encyclopedia in its lack of a clear and systematic ordering principle.<sup>156</sup> Nonetheless, *Deipnosophistae* shares with Harris-McCoy's category of the fragmentary encyclopedia its "recognition of the very instability of knowledge," its "ever-changing and elusive" arrangement, and its tendency to "call into question the authorized version of knowledge."<sup>157</sup> In contrast to the disabling operation of editorial authority, a fragmentary encyclopaedia reminds its readers that they can supplement the text to activate its information-presenting function.<sup>158</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s fragmentary authority has manifested historically in the commentators and editors who have extended and revised the text's compilatory project.

*Deipnosophistae*'s incompleteness attracts the very attention from readers that it requires for its continued reproduction in circulating discourse. As Diane Favro argues with regard to the material rhetoric of Augustine building projects, displaying the construction in progress bears as

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<sup>154</sup> Daniel Harris-McCoy, "Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica* as Fragmentary Encyclopaedia," in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 154.

<sup>155</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 36. Krista Kennedy (*Textual Curation*, 33) also traces the encyclopedia back to the "unending process of discovery and development" conveyed by the ancient Greek term *enkyklios paideia*.

<sup>156</sup> Wilkins, "Galen and Athenaeus in the Hellenistic Library," 73.

<sup>157</sup> Harris-McCoy, "Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica* as Fragmentary Encyclopaedia," 157.

<sup>158</sup> Harris-McCoy, 168.

much meaning as does the final architectural product.<sup>159</sup> Favro envisions the spectacle of active building, which *Deipnosophistae* communicates through its informational gaps and inconsistencies, to enable bystanders to feel involved with the work underway.<sup>160</sup> Fully announcing its in-progress status allows the text of *Deipnosophistae* to activate the thoughtful judgment of its readers. Howley notes how Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae* engages actively with its own instability as a presentation of information.<sup>161</sup> As with *Noctes Atticae*, *Deipnosophistae*'s complex reliability enjoins its readers as active seekers after knowledge. *Deipnosophistae*'s incompleteness serves the text's utility by augmenting its capacity to attract the attention of potential readers, which then incentivizes some among those readers to support the reproduction of the text.

Moreover, by frustrating readers' expectations, *Deipnosophistae* places itself at a proper distance from those readers for inventive and critical engagement. Jacob considers *Deipnosophistae*'s incompleteness and inconsistency to insist upon a protocol for reading that separates represented informational content from the opaque surface of the text.<sup>162</sup> In *Deipnosophistae*, as in *Noctes Atticae* as Howley reads it, the bugs of inconsistency, contradiction, and incompleteness become positive features, enabling innovative strategies for both reading and writing.<sup>163</sup> A text that disappoints the norms of comprehensive information presentation as consistently as does *Deipnosophistae* helps readers to resist the force of editorial authority's imposing expertise. *Deipnosophistae*'s incompleteness entrusts a degree of agency for creating knowledge to the critical and inventive participation of its readers.

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<sup>159</sup> Diane Favro, "Reading Augustan Rome: Materiality as Rhetoric in Situ," *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 20, no. 2 (2017): 190.

<sup>160</sup> Favro, "Reading Augustan Rome: Materiality as Rhetoric in Situ," 192.

<sup>161</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 52.

<sup>162</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 97.

<sup>163</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 23.

By partially dismantling the agency of its own author, *Deipnosophistae* empowers its readers to construct their own authorizations of the information presented. Stanley E. Fish explains such moments in which a text frustrates its readers' expectations as serving a double function, in that they both provide instruction to readers and undermine the narrator's authority.<sup>164</sup> Liesbeth Korthals Altes describes a hermeneutic process by which frustrated expectations accumulate so that the narrator's authority seems more and more a subject for investigation and judgment, and the narrator's "ethos becomes itself a central riddle."<sup>165</sup> In the process of accumulative skepticism described by Altes, with sufficient uncertainty, readers' skepticism about the reliability of the narrator transfers to a skepticism about the reliability of the author.<sup>166</sup> Altes judges such ambiguous texts to be more interesting from both an ethical and an aesthetic perspective, as the active cognitive engagement they induce in readers draws attention to the text's performance of their own themes.<sup>167</sup> The accumulative process of active cognitive engagement described by Altes is given expression in *Deipnosophistae*'s presentation of informational bits. Wilkins reads *Deipnosophistae* as performing precisely the kind of ambiguity described by Altes, in that *Deipnosophistae* destabilizes conventional forms of ordering and classification.<sup>168</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s fragmentary authority reverses its own explicitly stated claim to editorial authority by refusing to offer a simplified image of its subject matter in return for readers' deference to its expertise.

Instead, *Deipnosophistae* activates its readers' capacities to engage critically and inventively with its subject matter. Each instance of incomplete or inconsistent knowledge in the text signals to readers that their attentive scrutiny will be necessary to make sense of the

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<sup>164</sup> Stanley E. Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA, and London: University of California Press, 1972), 263.

<sup>165</sup> Liesbeth Korthals Altes, *Ethos and Narrative Interpretation: The Negotiation of Values in Fiction* (Lincoln, NE, and London: The University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 20.

<sup>166</sup> Altes, *Ethos and Narrative Interpretation*, 125.

<sup>167</sup> Altes, *Ethos and Narrative Interpretation*, 188.

<sup>168</sup> Wilkins, "Galen and Athenaeus in the Hellenistic Library," 71.



information. Howley describes how incomplete headings in *Noctes Atticae* may surprise readers and cause them to consider the information presented under that heading more closely.<sup>169</sup>

According to Howley, the inconsistent and disorderly aspects of *Noctes Atticae*'s information presentation create an appetite for readers to understand disparate parts of the intellectual experience as being related.<sup>170</sup> Likewise, readers of *Deipnosophistae* may seek out topical associations that they may have missed on initial reading or that may be obscured by the text's own disjointed structure. Fish describes this sort of relationship between reader and text as obviously rhetorical, in the sense that it prompts original innovation on the part of the reader to discover more order and regularity than actually exists within the text.<sup>171</sup> In a similar manner as Altes describes with regard to Philip Roth's constructions of character<sup>172</sup>—which prompt a certain reading strategy, then turn that reading strategy upon itself—attempting to make sense of *Deipnosophistae* conditions readers to an inquiring and skeptical disposition toward the information presented. Far from paralyzing the agency of readers, *Deipnosophistae*'s peculiar take on its own authority implores its readers—especially those with access to scribal, print, or digital reproduction technologies—to make their own sense of its untidy collection of cultural knowledge.

*Deipnosophistae* dismantles its own authority through its incompleteness and inconsistency, passing that authority on to its readers as far as they are willing to accept it. Just as Leah Kronenberg argues on the subject of Varro's *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum*,<sup>173</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s narrating voice dismantles its own authority through its attempts to reconcile multiple competing perspectives on its subject matter. The text explicitly acknowledges its

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<sup>169</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 60.

<sup>170</sup> Howley, 32.

<sup>171</sup> Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts*, 333.

<sup>172</sup> Altes, *Ethos and Narrative Interpretation*, 110.

<sup>173</sup> Leah Kronenberg, "Varro the Roman Cynic: The Destruction of Religious Authority in the *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum*," in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 306.

playful presentation of uncertain and contradictory information at the beginning of the fifteenth book, when Athenaeus apologizes to Timocrates for not being able to remember everything mentioned at the banquet<sup>174</sup> (despite the first book's assurance, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that Athenaeus has omitted nothing). Athenaeus attributes this lapse of memory to two qualities in the topics discussed: their variety (*poikilian*) and their similarity (*homoiotēta*). The text of *Deipnosophistae* itself insists that readers should approach the text with cautious scrutiny, as the narrator cannot be trusted to be straightforward even when explaining why he cannot be straightforward in his explanations.

“All that is said in Athenaeus,” Christian Jacob observes, playfully reusing one of Athenaeus's own quotations about Homer, “is not always said by Athenaeus.”<sup>175</sup> The contrary of this statement may be even more revealing: nothing that is said in Athenaeus is ever said by Athenaeus. The text's many uncertainties cause the details of the content to fade into one another, directing reader attention instead to the text's associative structure of arrangement. The text's own authoritative voice leaves readers to choose whether to make sense of the text and, if so, how such a task might be accomplished.<sup>176</sup> *Deipnosophistae* relies for its status as a text on the willingness and ability of its potential readers to assemble and recreate it in the act of their reading, as is continuously accomplished by successive generations of commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers.

### Conclusion

*Deipnosophistae* imitates a library in that it curates a collection of excerpts from other sources and indexes that collection to facilitate access to its informational content.

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<sup>174</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XV.665a, 15.1.

<sup>175</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 46.

<sup>176</sup> Fish, 322.

*Deipnosophistae* expresses the value it places on recording and circulating knowledge in an anecdote it relates about the sixth-century BCE sophist Democritus. The anecdote describes how “when the people of Abdera tried Democritus for having squandered his inheritance, he read them his *Great Diakosmos* and the sections about what goes on in Hades, and said that this was what the money had been spent on, and he was acquitted.”<sup>177</sup> The case of Democritus suggests that investigating uncertain situations and circulating one’s conclusions as knowledge-writing can justify the loss of one’s patrimony as a worthwhile expenditure rather than a practice of prodigality. *Deipnosophistae* treats information as intrinsically valuable, deserving of attention and disputation for its own sake.

The theory of editorial authority outlined in this chapter maintains that works of information compilation overwhelm the agency of their readers with the supposed comprehensiveness of their record of an imitation library. Despite *Deipnosophistae*’s own assurances otherwise, its excerpted quotations display an orientation toward their reuse in future discourse, and its citations convey uncertainty and inconsistency. *Deipnosophistae*’s rhetorical processes for information presentation accommodate authoritative plurality and equip readers with the means and material for evaluating uncertain information. Instead of the comprehensive account that its introduction claims for itself, *Deipnosophistae* presents fragmentary authority in the wide variety of interpretations for its content. Among the imitation library’s rhetorical processes for information presentation are those that use the symptoms of entropy— inconsistency, incompleteness, and uncertainty—strategically to influence and stimulate readers’ critical and inventive engagement. The next chapter considers the indexing device by which *Deipnosophistae* frames its information for functional accessibility: the text’s formal narrative structure.

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<sup>177</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.168b, 4.65-66.

## Chapter 4

### Imitative Fiction

Considerations of *Deipnosophistae*'s status as a coherent literary text typically acknowledge that the narrative's action is staged over the course of a banquet. Indeed, the text defines itself in this way in the introduction to the first book, with the narrator explaining that "the account [*logou*] is arranged to imitate the extravagance of the dinner party."<sup>1</sup> A number of scholars in the field of Athenaeus studies have since followed *Deipnosophistae* in this regard, defining the text's structure as a reflection of the sequence of dishes in a lavish dinner.<sup>2</sup> Over fifteen books, the text's narrative describes the full progression of events and conversation at a fictionalized Roman-era banquet from the appetizers served at the start to the closing song recited at the meal's conclusion.<sup>3</sup> Projects in Athenaeus studies frequently place *Deipnosophistae* within the genre tradition of the literary symposium, which follows through numerous intermediary texts from Plato's dialogue of that name.<sup>4</sup> Even considering *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative form in its simplest terms, one is immediately confronted with the paradox that the narrative is simultaneously an imitation of a banquet scene and an imitation of other existing narratives that also depict banqueting.

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<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1b, 1.1.

<sup>2</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 36; Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 132; Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 28; Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 61.

<sup>4</sup> McClure, "Subversive Laughter," 260; Wilkins, "Galen and Athenaeus in the Hellenistic Library," 73; Bartol, "The Voice of Tradition," 232 and 243; Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 132; Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 13 and 249; Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 84; Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 6; Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 709.

This chapter explores that paradox, taking seriously the injunction by many in Athenaeus studies<sup>5</sup> to treat of the artifact in its aspect as a textual whole rather than as a collection of isolated excerpts. *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative elements draw attention to its own artificiality, providing the text with an organizational and mnemonic structure for its excerpted information. The chapter then explains the ways that the text's self-consciously artificial and non-realistic narrative form supports its information-presenting function. The imitative fiction of the banquet organizes the presented excerpts according to the sequence of courses in the meal, and the explicitly artificial narrative draws attention to the patterns of topical association by which the excerpts are connected. Elaborating on that point, this chapter ends with the assertion that *Deipnosophistae*'s network of topical association performs creative intertext, a model of the process by which one reads and interacts with an imitation library.

### Walking Libraries

*Deipnosophistae*'s knowledge-writing project, with its recursive composition and fragmentary authority, describes a continuous process of collecting and coordinating bits of circulating discourse. In heeding the recent calls of Athenaeus studies to attend to *Deipnosophistae*'s qualities as a coherent literary text, one finds that the text's literary qualities orient its readers back toward its informational content. The previous chapter showed how the text's modular composition from bits of prior discourse lends it a self-referential artificiality. Gracy asserts that *Deipnosophistae*'s characteristic patchiness indicates that its narrative is of secondary interest in comparison to the text's information-presenting function.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Wilkins contends that *Deipnosophistae*'s continuously shifting and non-realistic polyvocality

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<sup>5</sup> Baldwin, "Athenaeus and His Work," 21; Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, vii; McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 37; Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 719; Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 3; Paulas, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," 404.

<sup>6</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 12.

concentrates attention on the information presented and not on the narrative framework itself.<sup>7</sup>

Considering the writing technique performed in *Deipnosophistae*, Jacob notes that the text's narrative elements supply excerpted quotations with a syntactical sequence by which they might be extracted from their source text and recontextualized among other quotations with which they are associated.<sup>8</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework plays a crucial role in conveying and supplementing the informational content itself.

*Deipnosophistae*'s coherent textual form supports its information-presenting function by coordinating the informational content excerpted from other sources. Concerning miscellaneous literature as a general category of which *Deipnosophistae* is an example, Gracy considers it appropriate to investigate the means by which such texts organize and present their information according to their suitability for functional reference.<sup>9</sup> Pelling suspects *Deipnosophistae*'s organizational structure to be constructed with evident care indicating purpose and forethought in the text's overall progression.<sup>10</sup> McClure identifies *Deipnosophistae*'s placement of its excerpts within fictional character dialogue as creating "a veritable library replete with bibliographers and librarians."<sup>11</sup> Jacob describes *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative form as "a complex, multidimensional space, where it is possible to move on several levels, horizontally and vertically, between the primary and the secondary literature, between literary genres, between books, and between extracts and words," providing readers with a framework for tracing the interactions among the items in the text's imitation library.<sup>12</sup> What Jacob calls the "cartographical nature" of the text's narrative arrangement "organizes a space, subdivides it, and proposes different points of view," so that the text's coherent form and its excerpted content may be considered in unity.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Wilkins, "Dialogue and Comedy," 24.

<sup>8</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 104.

<sup>9</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 23.

<sup>10</sup> Pelling, "Fun with Fragments," 187.

<sup>11</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 35.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 104.

<sup>13</sup> Jacob, 71.

*Deipnosophistae*'s narrative form provides the imitation library with resources for searching out and accessing information.

In imitating a library, *Deipnosophistae* also imitates the experience of interacting with a library. Just as Klotz and Oikonomopoulou say of Plutarch's *Table Talk*, *Deipnosophistae*'s conversation-focused narrative structures its informational excerpts along an associative path which "invites closer scrutiny of association as an organizational *technique* in imperial library practice."<sup>14</sup> According to Gracy, in *Deipnosophistae*'s organizational formula, it would be difficult to locate a specific quotation or a complete set of a single author's words without extensive searching and a pre-existing knowledge of the text, but exploratory reading on any given topic yields rich resources to facilitate further searching.<sup>15</sup> *Deipnosophistae* has a similar project as that ascribed by Howley to Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae*: "[sending] its tendrils deep into the library shelves around it, referring to obscure and ancient volumes."<sup>16</sup> *Deipnosophistae* positions its readers to participate in and continue that project, a positioning that has manifested historically in the compilers, commentators, editors, and scribes who have shaped and stretched the text into its present form as part of their acts of reading it. Instead of optimizing the efficiency by which a search query might be answered, *Deipnosophistae*'s arrangement prompts readers to continue searching further.

In this sense, *Deipnosophistae*'s enormous and complex structure models a network of intertextual relationships, which Ole Olesen-Bagneux sees expressed both in a library of learned culture and also in the memory of a participant in learned culture.<sup>17</sup> Just as König and Woolf describe with regard to Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae*, *Deipnosophistae* conveys "a particular ethic of what it is to be educated," presenting "the educated life as a mode of being, and learning

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<sup>14</sup> Klotz and Oikonomopoulou, "Introduction," 23.

<sup>15</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 83.

<sup>16</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> Olesen-Bagneux, "Mnemonics in the Mouseion," 279.

as a process” of constructing visions and values.<sup>18</sup> Oikonomopoulou writes of Plutarch’s *Table Talk* that the text draws attention to the disposition of mental dexterity cultivated in discursive circumstances “when the speakers seek to refute their interlocutors and defend their own positions,” which practices rely on a reliable and versatile memory, and the same may be said of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>19</sup> Deagon’s characterization of the ancient polymath is appropriate to *Deipnosophistae*’s textual performance, which depicts “an intellect in motion,” an animated system of text-reuse characterized by free wandering in both mind and body.<sup>20</sup> By arranging its information through the conceit of a fictional dinner conversation, *Deipnosophistae* not only imitates a library but also stages the continuous process of accessing and updating that information.

For this reason, *Deipnosophistae*’s knowledge-writing project seems to be an elaboration on an embodied habit of learning. Too explains that the ancient library refers not only to physical bookcases and buildings, but also to compilation literature and to people who can memorize and recall great quantities of information.<sup>21</sup> Calling *Deipnosophistae* an imitation library reflects its metonymic relationship to the textual performance of all three of these referents. According to Too, Greco-Roman antiquity recognized the idea that literary texts could be embodied by persons, and she identifies this embodied receptacle of bookish culture with the term “walking library.”<sup>22</sup> Too considers the characters of *Deipnosophistae*’s narrative framework to serve as fictional examples of this kind of person, in that they act as living vehicles for the texts and knowledge of their communities.<sup>23</sup> Too considers *Deipnosophistae* to be an evolution of the

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<sup>18</sup> König and Woolf, “Encyclopaedism in the Roman Empire,” 55.

<sup>19</sup> Katerina Oikonomopoulou, “Peripatetic Knowledge in Plutarch’s *Table Talk*,” in *The Philosopher’s Banquet: Plutarch’s Table Talk in the Intellectual Culture of the Roman Empire*, ed. Frieda Klotz and Katerina Oikonomopoulou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 113-114.

<sup>20</sup> Deagon, “*Labores Pro Bono Publico*,” 103.

<sup>21</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 7-8.

<sup>22</sup> Too, “The Walking Library,” 84.

<sup>23</sup> Too, “The Walking Library,” 123.



walking library into the textual form of an extensive reference source collecting informational bits from other texts.<sup>24</sup> Under Too's interpretation, *Deipnosophistae* is the written record of an intellectual activity practiced by walking libraries, who are saturated with bookish knowledge to the extent that they can recall the library of learned culture from memory and are empowered to curate what is selected and what is rejected from that library.<sup>25</sup> As Too demonstrates, *Deipnosophistae* encodes in text the same compiling, curating, and circulating functions performed by the embodied habits of walking libraries.

### Deipnosophistic Mnemonics

Among the embodied habits of the walking library encoded by *Deipnosophistae* is a model of mnemonic training. The versatile mobility of the walking library, as Oikonomopoulou sees it performed in Plutarch's *Table Talk*, relies upon the quick and effective scanning of one's memory for information to be repurposed in circulating discourse.<sup>26</sup> Lengyel notes that, as a specific passage in a physical book might not have been easily accessible when needed, performance as a walking library called for books to be accurately committed to memory.<sup>27</sup> According to Jacob, in addition to memorizing a book's contents, the mnemonic training of a walking library required an indexing device for accessing the memorized information in any order, not just according to the linear progression of the physical scroll or codex.<sup>28</sup> Accordingly, *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework for coordinating its excerpts supplies its readers with a "mnemonic architecture" that could be browsed mentally, a textual function that Olesen-Bagneux speculates may have structured the lost work of Callimachus's *Pinakes*.<sup>29</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s form

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<sup>24</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 102.

<sup>25</sup> Too, *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World*, 84.

<sup>26</sup> Oikonomopoulou, "Peripatetic Knowledge in Plutarch's *Table Talk*," 115.

<sup>27</sup> Lengyel, "Athenaeus on Spartan *Diaita*," 47.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 77.

<sup>29</sup> Olesen-Bagneux, "Mnemonics in the Mouseion," 289.

as a coherent text is also implicated in its function as a presentation of information excerpted from circulating discourse.

By the time of *Deipnosophistae*'s original composition around 200 CE, mnemonic training had long been a well-established and sophisticated component of rhetorical education. Olesen-Bagneux claims that practices of artful memorization would have been familiar to teachers, students, practitioners, and audiences of public speaking in the Second Sophistic period, as mnemonics had been refined and revised as part of rhetorical education for centuries by that point.<sup>30</sup> In Olesen-Bagneux's account, ancient mnemonic training, by which bits of information could be retained, arranged, and accessed, relied in part on associated words and sounds and in part on the basis of conceptualized spatial mapping.<sup>31</sup> This spatialized memory aid, commonly associated with the sixth-century BCE poet Simonides of Ceos, is the variety of ancient mnemonic training most widely recognized in present interdisciplinary rhetorical studies. Jason Kalin and Jordan Frith offer a fairly typical formulation of the "memory palace" technique,<sup>32</sup> by which the walking library could construct an imagined setting, populate that setting with *topoi*, and plot a path through those *topoi* for any given speech situation. According to Kalin and Frith, with a well-constructed and amply stocked memory palace, a speaker can "adapt to changing rhetorical situations by moving to any place in the architectural structure to retrieve the appropriate information."<sup>33</sup> Mnemonic training provides an indexing device by which walking libraries can access their learning and adapt it for discursive performance in a particular situation.

The narrative framework by which *Deipnosophistae* arranges its information portrays an alternative practice of mnemonic training to the Simonidean memory palace. Gracy notes that the

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<sup>30</sup> Olesen-Bagneux, 281.

<sup>31</sup> Olesen-Bagneux, 280.

<sup>32</sup> Jason Kalin and Jordan Frith, "Wearing the City: Memory P(a)laces, Smartphones, and the Rhetorical Invention of Embodied Space," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (2016): 230.

<sup>33</sup> Kalin and Frith, "Wearing the City," 231.

text of *Deipnosophistae* places explicit emphasis on memorization and remembering, suggesting the involvement of its information-presenting function with mnemonic training and, by extension, rhetorical education.<sup>34</sup> In Gracy's interpretation, the variety and abundance of the text's excerpts reflect the focus of *Deipnosophistae*'s educational process on reading and memorization.<sup>35</sup> While the Simonidean memory palace organizes information according to a spatial figuration through which the memory artist travels, deipnosophistic mnemonics proceeds according to the temporal sequence of courses in a meal. Jacob adds that *Deipnosophistae*'s banquet narrative is an intensely social affair, in which the excerpted quotations are portrayed as speech acts remembered and enunciated by the characters over the course of the dinner conversation.<sup>36</sup> Paulas notes how the fictional recollections by the characters at the banquet encode for reader accessibility the intertextual network of *Deipnosophistae*'s knowledge-writing project.<sup>37</sup> In Jacob's reading, *Deipnosophistae*'s mnemonic structure activates the library of learned culture through a socially-embedded performance unfolding in time with the narrative of the banquet.<sup>38</sup> Wilkins describes how the fiction of the text contrives for the host of the dinner to ask each of his guests to contribute quotations and anecdotes that they have found through their own scholarly searching of books and libraries.<sup>39</sup> The text's narrative qualities allow each fictional character to operate as a node through which various aspects of *Deipnosophistae*'s total library may be accessed. The remainder of this chapter analyzes the narrative components of *Deipnosophistae*'s organizational and mnemonic structure.

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<sup>34</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 67.

<sup>35</sup> Gracy, 43.

<sup>36</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 75.

<sup>37</sup> Paulas, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," 422.

<sup>38</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 108.

<sup>39</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 135.

### Actional Mimesis and Narrative Levels

*Deipnosophistae*'s narrative form records a verbal transcription of non-verbal events. This rhetorical process—the verbal transcription of non-verbal events—is called in Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's narrative theory "actional mimesis," a mode of fiction which "maximizes information and minimizes the narrator as informant."<sup>40</sup> Actional mimesis draws attention to the imitated events themselves and away from the medium of narration, creating the impression that the text acts as an aperture through which readers might make contact with the fictional world depicted. In the process of imitating, actional mimesis creates in the text a stratum of narrative levels, which distinguish between different modes of narration, all taking place within the fiction of the text.<sup>41</sup> By purporting to represent non-verbal events through verbal signs, actional mimesis divides a narrative into at least two narrative levels.

To discern a storyteller from a story being told is to recognize a narrative's division into levels. The presence of information being conveyed implies a voice conveying that information, even if that voice is covert. Rimmon-Kenan writes that "there is always a teller in the tale, at least in the sense that any utterance or record of an utterance presupposes someone who has uttered it."<sup>42</sup> This distinction between the voice of the narrator and the information conveyed in that voice forms the basis for discerning narrative levels. In Rimmon-Kenan's theory, the act of narrating is at "a higher narrative level" than the story being told, so narrative levels reduce to a question of figuring out who is relating a story to whom.<sup>43</sup> The audience to whom the narrator addresses the narrative is the narratee and is implied by the presence of a narrative, even when the narrative is self-addressed.<sup>44</sup> The narrator and the narratee exist on the same narrative level, together

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<sup>40</sup> Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), 108.

<sup>41</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 108.

<sup>42</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 88.

<sup>43</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 92.

<sup>44</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 89.

occupying a fictional plane above the narrative being related.<sup>45</sup> An analysis of narrative levels tracks the multiple, simultaneous dimensions of imitated events conveyed through a text like *Deipnosophistae*.

Rimmon-Kenan's fleet of terms for various narrative levels is formed around the word "diegesis." Diegesis refers to the narrative level on which the action of a story takes place and in which the characters of a story dwell.<sup>46</sup> The "higher level," inhabited by the narrator and narratee who participate in the telling of the diegetic story, is then called extradiegetic.<sup>47</sup> Where characters within the diegetic level relate a narrative of their own, the events of that "second-degree narrative" form a hypodiegetic level.<sup>48</sup> These narrative levels "create a stratification of levels whereby each inner narrative is subordinate to the narrative within which it is embedded," fanning out "in infinite regress," limited in degree only by aesthetic and practical considerations.<sup>49</sup> A narrative conveyed by hypodiegetic characters in a "story within a story" would be termed a hypo-hypodiegetic level.<sup>50</sup> The stratified terminology of diegetic narrative levels allows for analytic clarity in explaining *Deipnosophistae*'s complex processes of narrative imitation.

For instance, Rimmon-Kenan's theory of narrative levels indicates that it is not strictly accurate to describe the text of *Deipnosophistae* as an imitation of a banquet. The events of the banquet are, in fact, a "story within the story," a hypodiegetic narrative being related over the course of a fictional conversation between characters named Athenaeus and Timocrates.<sup>51</sup> This Athenaeus and this Timocrates are fictional personas within the text of *Deipnosophistae*, who

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<sup>45</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 104.

<sup>46</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 92.

<sup>47</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 91.

<sup>48</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 91-92.

<sup>49</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 91.

<sup>50</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 94.

<sup>51</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 139; König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 104-105; Paulas, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," 406-407; Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 699.

may or may not correspond with any real people who lived and died under those names.<sup>52</sup> True to form, the diegetic conversation between Athenaeus and Timocrates is narrated by an extradiegetic narrator. This extradiegetic narrator is mainly covert and transparent, but may occasionally be found identified in the first person. Though scarcely addressed, the extradiegetic narratee is referred to as “my friends”<sup>53</sup> or as “fellow diners.”<sup>54</sup> The anonymous extradiegetic narrator tells *Deipnosophistae*’s readers—with whom the narrator claims a warm and intimate relationship—the story of Athenaeus and Timocrates conversing about a particularly sophisticated banquet.

The diegetic dialogue between Athenaeus and Timocrates is often overlooked in favor of the banquet proper due to the dialogue’s function as a framing device for the banquet’s more substantial scenes. Paulas interprets the conversational framework to be given sparse expression, as it often disappears abruptly and without clear transition into the hypodiegetic banquet narrative, “leaving readers with no clear sense of who is speaking.”<sup>55</sup> Jacob calls Athenaeus’s character an “enigmatic silhouette,”<sup>56</sup> who appears in the text at two different narrative levels: as the diegetic narrator and as a diner in the hypodiegetic banquet.<sup>57</sup> In the judgment of Murray, the diegetic narratee, Timocrates, “remains a completely colourless character,” who hardly ever speaks and may less plausibly than any other named character be considered an active participant in the story.<sup>58</sup> The diegetic conversation, despite its thin descriptive contribution to the story and its imprecise distinction from other narrative levels, performs an important function within the text as a whole.

After the self-citation with which *Deipnosophistae*’s first book opens (“Athenaeus is the father of the book and is offering his account to Timocrates”), there appears a question directed to

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<sup>52</sup> Baldwin, “The Minor Characters in Athenaeus,” 694.

<sup>53</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.82c, 3.23.

<sup>54</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.203b, 5.35-36.

<sup>55</sup> Paulas, “How to Read Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” 407.

<sup>56</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 17.

<sup>57</sup> Jacob, 12.

<sup>58</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 700.

Athenaeus, in a voice identified a few lines later as belonging to Timocrates.<sup>59</sup> Timocrates asks Athenaeus if he himself had been present at the learned banquet related in the hypodiegetic narrative.<sup>60</sup> On the one hand, the conversational framework is a generic convention of the literary symposium imitated by the text. On the other hand, it draws attention to and inquires into the text's authorship and its degree of imitation. The diegetic narratee is portrayed asking the author—who appears in the text as a character—about the fictional status of the story itself. From the very outset, *Deipnosophistae* raises as a question for its readers the extent to which the text's narrative form and informational substance should be considered as creative originality or transparent duplication.

Although Athenaeus assures Timocrates that he was personally present for the events and will relate them faithfully, the text's narrative does not achieve the realistic imitation that it proposes to accomplish. First, as Paulas notes, the hypodiegetic story itself does not appear to be an attempt to recreate an ancient dinner party or symposium.<sup>61</sup> König explains that, although many of the guests depicted in attendance at the dinner party represent real figures in Roman intellectual culture, they are drawn from across an extensive span of time and could never have joined with each other at table in the real world.<sup>62</sup> Second, Paulas writes that *Deipnosophistae* “punctures the illusion” of formal realism by allowing its narrative levels to collide with and blend into each other,<sup>63</sup> a compositional feature that serves the text's information-presenting function. The information presented connects in some manner with the actional mimesis of the banquet, but that point of connection is often quite understated.<sup>64</sup> Third, the information presented often overtakes the hypodiegetic narrative itself, running to such a length that Paulas considers it

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<sup>59</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1a, 1.1.

<sup>60</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.2a, 1.1.

<sup>61</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 61.

<sup>62</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 106.

<sup>63</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 109.

<sup>64</sup> E. B. C., “An Hour with Athenaeus, continued,” *The Literary World* 4, no. 115 (April 14, 1849): 330.

likely that readers may forget that the quotation is framed within hypodiegetic and diegetic structures at all.<sup>65</sup> The unfolding of *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative qualities manages to dissolve their coherent literary form.

The characters' conversation represents a particularly egregious example of the hypodiegetic narrative's rejection of realistic imitation. Wilkins notes that, despite the story taking place during a banquet, the characters spend very little time actually eating, devoting nearly the entire text to discussing and quoting from books they have read that mention the food on the table.<sup>66</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s dinner-table conversation, with its dense and lengthy lists of literate references, does little in König's opinion to portray banquet conversation realistically.<sup>67</sup> Whitmarsh says of *Deipnosophistae* that the monologues of the banqueters are "so exhaustive that they wipe out any sense of dynamic conversational exchange," a textual quality that is especially apparent as he compares it to the brief exchanges in Plutarch's *Table Talk*.<sup>68</sup> The text's functional preoccupation with presenting information excerpted from antique culture manages in Lauwers's judgment to replace the sensory perception of food with the mediation of language.<sup>69</sup> Rather than experiencing the hypodiegetic banquet scene through the text's imitative narrative, readers interface with the surface of the text itself, which does not maintain the plausible illusion of reference to some real event or to its literary antecedents.

### **Imitative Arts**

*Deipnosophistae*'s narrative elements lend the text its coherent structure, even as they reveal the work's artificiality. The text's esteem for artful imitation that excuses itself from

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<sup>65</sup> Paulas, "How to Read Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*," 407.

<sup>66</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 134.

<sup>67</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 95.

<sup>68</sup> Whitmarsh, "Conversational and Citational Brevity in Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions*," 326.

<sup>69</sup> Lauwers, "The Dictates of Language," 48.



realistic representation is paralleled in one of the themes repeatedly expressed through *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpted content. The sprawling, eclectic compilation returns with some regularity to the theme of making false fish out of root vegetables.<sup>70</sup> The first mention of this practice appears in a quotation from the comic poet Euphrōn when a coastal king has an appetite for anchovy during a journey twelve days from the sea. The king's cook cut a turnip thin and long so that it looked like a small fish, then boiled it and added salt, oil, and poppy seeds.<sup>71</sup> After tasting the cook's imitation, the king declares, "The cook's no different from the poet, for the genius of each consists of his technical skill."<sup>72</sup> This fragment from Euphrōn's comedy celebrates both cookery and poetry precisely for their capacity to disguise reality with imitative fiction. A key part of this defense of mimetic invention is the assertion that cookery and poetry are indeed artistic practices. It is for this reason, among others, that Gracy places *Deipnosophistae* in a position "counter to the traditional evaluation of cooks and cooking as expressed in Plato's *Gorgias*."<sup>73</sup> Moreover, this quotation maintains that the domain of an imitative art such as cookery is not turnips and poppy seeds but the mind itself. When coordinating excerpted information through actional mimesis, *Deipnosophistae* imitates for the sake of performing imitation and presenting information, rather than as a means to an end of realistic representation.

*Deipnosophistae*'s actional mimesis of a banquet serves to arrange and to present its quotations. As Ceccarelli explains, the text's narrative qualities do not strive to convey an accurate or convincing illusion of the fictional scene.<sup>74</sup> Rather, the function of presenting information stretches the narrative framework of the banquet into grotesque shapes and monstrous sizes. For instance, the seventh book contains an extensive list of different types of

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<sup>70</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, II.57b, 2.48-49; IV.164d, 4.57-58; VII.277c, 7.5.

<sup>71</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.7e, 1.13.

<sup>72</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.7f, 1.13-14.

<sup>73</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 147-148.

<sup>74</sup> Ceccarelli, "Dance and Desserts," 289-290.

fish, organized in alphabetical order by the name of each fish, but the actional mimesis gives the impression that each fish is being served in that order.<sup>75</sup> The depicted table talk is but “a *shadow* of a dialogue,” which facilitates the presentation of the book’s informational content.<sup>76</sup> De Kreij describes how the scene of the banquet and the actions of its attendant characters are sidelined whenever there is an opportunity for elaborating on informational bits referencing other literary works.<sup>77</sup> In the ninth book, the narrator explains that many kinds of vegetables and birds were brought to the table at this time but adds that “I will describe only those that deserve special mention,” confirming the precedence of information presentation over realistic representation.<sup>78</sup> James Rives argues that the text’s coherent structure serves as a fictional framework for coordinating the bookish knowledge that is both conveyed in and performed by the text of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>79</sup> The relationship between the text’s actional mimesis and its excerpted content indicates *Deipnosophistae*’s priorities as a presentation of information.

Although *Deipnosophistae*’s narrative qualities are often subsumed to its function as a reference text for quotations, its elements of artistic imitation remain indispensable to that purpose. Paulas notes that the text’s framework of actional mimesis and characterization is integral enough to its general function that they were preserved even in the Byzantine Epitome summarizing *Deipnosophistae*’s informational content.<sup>80</sup> The text insists that each excerpted quotation should be connected to others within the actional mimesis of the banquet, even when the shift to the hypodiegetic narrative constitutes a jarring intrusion. For instance, there is a brief appearance of actional mimesis in the second book between two long passages of quotations and citations. After describing a series of synonyms for various kinds of meals, the text reports that,

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<sup>75</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.277e, 7.5-6.

<sup>76</sup> E. B. C., “An Hour with Athenaeus,” 317.

<sup>77</sup> De Kreij, “Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ἔσμα,” 60.

<sup>78</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IX.368f-369a, 9.7.

<sup>79</sup> Rives, “Legal Strategy and Learned Display in Apuleius’ *Apology*,” 36.

<sup>80</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 4.

upon hearing the preceding quotations, the diners took their places at the dining couches without waiting to be directed to do so.<sup>81</sup> On mentioning the couches, the text immediately proceeds to quote attestations to various kinds of dining couch in ancient Greek literature. Here, the actional mimesis of the guests sitting on their couches serves as a transition indicating a topical change from one list to another. The hypo-hypodiegetic level of excerpted information is not permitted to exist outside the hypodiegetic banquet scene or to break the hypodiegetic narrative by directly addressing readers. This transition passage expressly mentions that the informational content is presented in time with the actions of the characters in the hypodiegetic level of the banquet—that is, that the narrative level of the banquet remains in contact with the level of the excerpts.

More than merely abutting the information, the hypodiegetic characters are able to hear and to respond to the quotations and citations presented in hypo-hypodiegetic speech. In the third book, there is a section of hypodiegetic actional mimesis within the course of a body of quotations about fruit.<sup>82</sup> Concerning the citron, the characters of the fictional banquet begin “considerable discussion” about whether the word can be found in the corpus of ancient writers. As with the aforementioned passage on couches, this bit of actional mimesis serves as a transition within the topic of fruits from the subtopic of stone-fruits to the subtopic of citrus. Further, this passage insists that the hypodiegetic characters in attendance at the banquet are present and attentive to the excerpted quotations and citations, even on occasions when the enormous volume of information seems to overflow the vessel of the actional mimesis. The diners are later reported to be amazed at the excerpted information they have heard and voraciously devour the hypodiegetic citrons on their plates.<sup>83</sup> The text insists on containing its excerpted information within the hypodiegetic narrative framework to the extent that the characters hear and respond to

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<sup>81</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, II.47e, 2.28-29.

<sup>82</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.83a, 3.24-25.

<sup>83</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.85c, 3.29-30.

the cited information. In this way, the text's actional mimesis and narrative levels direct the attention of readers toward its informational content as bits of knowledge to be used, questioned, and adjusted.

The relationship between *Deipnosophistae*'s coherent literary form and its excerpted content is demonstrated in one of its other scenes regarding the imitation of fish by means of cookery. In an illustration of ancient Athenian abstemiousness, Athenaeus cites an anecdote from Chrysippus, in which the philosophers of the Lyceum flog a cook for the transgression of making up a piece of meat in the appearance of saltfish.<sup>84</sup> This excerpt reverses the fortunes of the imitating cook who was commended for making a slice of turnip seem to be an anchovy. On the contrary, Chrysippus's cook fails to work his art on the minds of the Peripatetic philosophers. In like manner, *Deipnosophistae* creates an actional mimesis that does not conceal its artifice in faithful representation of real events. Rather, the text's imitative fiction supports the presentation of excerpted quotation in a way that draws attention to its own artificiality as an indexical framework.

*Deipnosophistae*'s superabundant informational content and rejection of realistic imitation draw explicit attention to the text's artificiality. Rather than referring to the events of an external banquet, the text's narrative expresses a series of self-referential internal imitations. Luciana Romeri attests to how the banquet narrative "is reproduced and repeated an infinite number of times" in the speeches on other banquets given within the narrative as if "by a trick of mirrors."<sup>85</sup> Likewise, the excerpted quotations are arranged within the narrative framework in an imitation of erudite table talk. According to Rimmon-Kenan, such shifts of narrative level can "question the borderline between reality and fiction," collapsing "the very distinction between

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<sup>84</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.137f, 4.14.

<sup>85</sup> Luciana Romeri, "The *Logodeipnon*: Athenaeus between Banquet and Anti-Banquet," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins, trans. Kerensa Pearson (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 262.

outside and inside, container and contained, narrating subject and narrated object, higher and lower level.”<sup>86</sup> Composed as it is of multiple cross-referencing levels, *Deipnosophistae*’s complicated narrative structure resides entirely along its surface of imitative fiction. According to Rimmon-Kenan, ambiguous and opaque narrative levels such as are found in *Deipnosophistae* serve to draw the attention of readers to the text’s status as a created artifact.<sup>87</sup> Rather than portraying a seamless illusion of the narrator reporting on real events, *Deipnosophistae*’s ambiguous and non-realistic use of actional mimesis confronts its readers with the narrative’s status as a functional framework for conveying excerpted information.

*Deipnosophistae* expresses this theme in the first book’s introduction, when the extradiegetic narrator defines the scope and purpose of the text for a second time, asserting that “Athenaeus imitates Plato in his dramatization of the dialogue. It begins, at any rate, as follows.”<sup>88</sup> Here, within the diegetic narrative, the text announces who created it and by what active verb. The author of the text appears in this passage as a diegetic character within the text, and his actions of creating the text are reported by the extradiegetic narrator. By depicting the text’s creation as an event within the text’s diegetic story, *Deipnosophistae* imitates its own composition in actional mimesis and creates a recursion of narrative levels. Then, after the text had already been underway for several paragraphs, the passage indicates that the text begins. This functions to delay the beginning of the text, displacing the start into the middle of the series of words that constitute the text itself. Portraying the creation of the text within the text and delaying the beginning of the text until well after its beginning serve to draw attention to *Deipnosophistae*’s artificial composition. This passage presents an instance of actional mimesis so unreal in the proportions of its self-reference that it negates its own capacity to present a

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<sup>86</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 94.

<sup>87</sup> Rimmon-Kenan, 93.

<sup>88</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.1f, 1.2-3.

realistic illusion. Unable to represent real events, this instance of imitation indicates the primacy of the information-presenting function for *Deipnosophistae*'s actional mimesis.

### ***Deipnosophistae*'s Network of Topical Association**

Throughout *Deipnosophistae*, the appearance in the text of the hypodiegetic banquet narrative serves to organize and coordinate fragments of information. According to Lauwers, *Deipnosophistae* breaks with generic convention in the emphasis it places on the food of the meal itself.<sup>89</sup> The device mentioned in the above paragraph—in which the actional mimesis of the banquet prompts the recitation of excerpts related to the imitated event—appears throughout *Deipnosophistae*, regarding music, dance, condiments, serving dishes, and any other topic relevant to the narrative's setting.<sup>90</sup> Where the action of the banquet is mentioned, it often serves to indicate a break and a bridge between two topics, as between mollusks and meats,<sup>91</sup> between meats and proper behavior at a symposium,<sup>92</sup> or between Epicurean thought and crayfish.<sup>93</sup> The actional mimesis of the banquet functions in *Deipnosophistae* to collate the quotations and citations presented, so that information about a given topic is presented at the point in the dinner when that topic would actually appear.

The succession of dishes served within the fiction of the meal provides an opportunity for the characters to list quotations and citations topically relevant to the food in question. As Lauwers notes, each new dish presented invites the fictional characters to recite the attestations in ancient literature to words for that dish and to debate the provenance of those words.<sup>94</sup> The

<sup>89</sup> Lauwers, "The Dictates of Language," 53.

<sup>90</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.120b, 3.90-91; III.125a, 3.98-99; IV.174a, 4.74-75; V.221a, 5.63-64; VIII.335a, 8.12; VIII.354d, 8.50; VIII.361e, 8.62-63; IX.384f, 9.33-34; IX.403d, 9.67-68; IX.406b, 9.70-71; XIV.639b, 14.44; XIV.664f, 14.85.

<sup>91</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.94c, 3.47.

<sup>92</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.96e-f, 3.50-51.

<sup>93</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, III.104c, 3.63-64.

<sup>94</sup> Lauwers, "The Dictates of Language," 53.

appearance in the fictional banquet of a dish of crab prompts an account of various references to crabs in literature, drama, natural philosophy, and other genres. Wilkins considers the contents of the library to be closely related to the sequence of courses in the banquet,<sup>95</sup> so that the familiar sequence of courses in the banquet can provide an indexing structure for the information presented. As Romeri explains, while the banquet narrative imitates an actual banquet, the conveyed information also imitates the food described.<sup>96</sup> The narrative's actional mimesis creates a thematic parallel between the variety of excerpted content referenced in the text and the magnificent banquet courses served to the characters.<sup>97</sup> König observes that, as dish after dish arrives at the table and quotation after quotation is recited in response, the hypodiegetic narrative and the hypo-hypodiegetic content grow inseparably together.<sup>98</sup> In *Deipnosophistae*, the aggregation of quoted information is fully integrated with the unfolding of courses and conversations in the banquet narrative.

In their function as transitions, the instances of actional mimesis link two sequential topics together into a cohesive textual flow. In this manner, the excerpts derived from external sources are connected with sinews of imitative fiction so that they might appear to readers as parts of a shared whole. Murray considers the delicate and occasional gestures to the text's narrative sequence to operate as a reading guide to coordinate the topics of quotation with the course of the meal.<sup>99</sup> The stages of *Deipnosophistae*'s progression, formalized in both the conventions of the banquet and of the literary symposium, offer in Jacob's words "a familiar connecting thread to help the reader move and orient himself in the labyrinth of words and quotations" and "a point of reference to the reader, who can thus follow the distribution of topics

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<sup>95</sup> Wilkins, "Athenaeus the Navigator," 135.

<sup>96</sup> Romeri, "The *Logodeipnon*," 261.

<sup>97</sup> Romeri, 260.

<sup>98</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 90.

<sup>99</sup> Murray, "Athenaeus the Encyclopedist," 701.

within the fifteen books according to the development of a typical banquet.”<sup>100</sup> The use of actional mimesis to furnish the quotations with connective tissue arranges the excerpted content chronologically according to the banquet’s sequence of events.

The narrative which lends coherent textual structure to *Deipnosophistae* also acts as a referential aid for readers. Murray considers that a person familiar with the conventions of a second-century Roman banquet, having grasped the text’s overall structure, could be able to navigate the sequence of excerpts with relative ease.<sup>101</sup> This hypothetical reader could know what topics they might expect to encounter in a given section of the text, as well as where in the text they might look to find a particular topic about which they desire to read. One would expect to find quotations regarding fruit and nuts at the point in the narrative when the diners are enjoying appetizers of fruit and nuts. Readers can search *Deipnosophistae*’s informational bits by remembering the placement of the topics in the sequence of the banquet, an organizational technique which Murray considers to have a distinct functionality in comparison to an abstract indexing principle like alphabetization.<sup>102</sup> The text’s narrative elements are divested of consistent representation of real events when that representation conflicts with the text’s information presentation, but the instances of actional mimesis retain a crucial role in facilitating access to that information.

Directing notice to the text’s artificiality draws the attention of readers away from both the narrative framework and the informational content, and to the text’s patterns of topical association. In the introduction to the first book, the diegetic narrator of Athenaeus explains the setting in which the hypodiegetic narrative takes place: a banquet held at the house of Larensius. By way of explaining Larensius’s intellectual credentials, Athenaeus claims that Larensius

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<sup>100</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 45.

<sup>101</sup> Murray, “Athenaeus the Encyclopedist,” 719.

<sup>102</sup> Murray, 710.



“owned more old Greek books than any of the people regarded as having marvelous collections [*synagōgē*].”<sup>103</sup> This passage, like other instances of actional mimesis, serves to frame the information presented. In order to convey the scope of Larensius’s library, the diegetic character of Athenaeus goes on to list several examples of famous figures who were celebrated for the extent of their library collections. In this way, the text takes advantage of an opportunity presented by the in-fiction exigence of praising Larensius to afford its readers an antiquarian list of the world’s greatest libraries. In addition to whatever historical instruction is provided in the list of people with celebrated libraries, this passage supplies readers with an example of how to construct a hyperbole. A reader can directly imitate this passage should they need to praise someone’s extensive library, or they can model the general form of the hyperbole provided here and apply it to another subject matter.

After the list of notable library collections, the character Athenaeus suggests that Larensius’s curiosity and hospitality might inspire someone to apply certain famous quotations to him. At this point, the text lists such quotations with their attributions. Within the diegetic context of the narrative framework, these quotations serve as further illustration of Larensius’s character. But the copious and meandering extent of this illustration points toward the information-presenting function of the passage; the in-fiction exigence of illustrating Larensius’s character could have been satisfied with one comparison. If anyone reading *Deipnosophistae* might have need of a catalogue of quotations and citations about culture and wit, it is provided here under the guise of identifying the qualities of the hypodiegetic fictional character of Larensius.

Moreover, the quotations achieve an internal organization by slight topical variation as the list proceeds. Each new quotation is prompted by a topic in the one that preceded it so that the list progresses by partial replication. A snippet from one of Apollodorus’s comedies in which a

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<sup>103</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.3a, 1.4.

visitor receives a welcome as warm as if he himself were home is preceded by a couple of anonymous lines about homesickness prevented by a friendly, open home, a sentiment in turn preceded by lyrics from the Poet of Thebes about a friendly, open table cultivating the arts of the Muses.<sup>104</sup> As readers navigate through the series of associated quotations in that order, the topical pattern reproduces itself over the course of the reading. Just as the above example of a hyperbole provides one who reads it with a model for imitation, so too this pattern of topical reproduction provides a model. This model offers a strategy for arrangement and memory, a rhetorical device that can aid in the organization and recall of information.

This form of topical association by partial replication is deployed throughout *Deipnosophistae*. For instance, a quotation of a cook boasting about his superlative preparation of fish is used to transition from the topic of fish to that of unwarranted boasting.<sup>105</sup> Elsewhere, *Deipnosophistae* organizes a series of quotations by a variety of comedic poets around their shared object of mockery, a hapless character by the name of Eucratēs Korydos.<sup>106</sup> The text also accomplishes this pattern of topical association through words with similar phonetic sounds, as when the transition from one section to another hinges on the homophonic relationship of two titles in subsequent citations.<sup>107</sup> As here the domain of imitative arts is the mind, *Deipnosophistae* repeats a specific pattern of topical association by partial replication to familiarize its readers with an iterated mode of lateral thinking.

### Performing Creative Intertext

By organizing its information within the narrative frameworks of the diegetic dialogue and the hypodiegetic symposium, *Deipnosophistae* imitates an investigative and socially

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<sup>104</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.3b, 1.4.

<sup>105</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.289a, 7.32-7.33.

<sup>106</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.240e-241e, 6.38-40.

<sup>107</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, IV.164a, 4.56-57.

embedded mode of reading. In addition to imitating a banquet in its actional mimesis, a literary symposium in its genre, and a library in its collection of literary works, Paulas considers *Deipnosophistae* to dramatize the act of reading itself in the structure of its topical associations.<sup>108</sup> Jacob finds the fictional contrivances of the dialogue and the banquet to translate “the temporality of reading” into a presentational form based around the alternative temporality of hearing.<sup>109</sup> Just as König observes with regard to Aulus Gellius’s similar text *Noctes Atticae*, the work’s authorizing voice expresses not only “things he has come across in reading” but also “the way in which he has puzzled over them and pursued them by looking at other books.”<sup>110</sup> *Deipnosophistae* announces in first-person that it will supplement the contributions of dinner-goers with “everything else I was able to find out in addition about these topics from my extensive reading.”<sup>111</sup> The text explicitly discards the conceit of realistically relating any actual events to affirm instead that its purpose is to convey reference material for further reading. According to Paulas, the mode of reading imitated by *Deipnosophistae*’s arrangement is one of active critical engagement with the expressions of thoughtful minds, “of the questions that readers ask of texts, of the competing outlooks that readers face within themselves and from others, of the rereading of texts, of the remembering of texts and of the choices made by readers.”<sup>112</sup> By selecting, condensing, and coordinating outstanding samples of literate culture, *Deipnosophistae*’s coherent structure imitates reading as a social process for seeking, judging, and applying knowledge.

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<sup>108</sup> Paulas, “How to Read Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” 405 and 412.

<sup>109</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 12.

<sup>110</sup> König, “Representations of Intellectual Community in Plutarch, Pliny the Younger, and Aulus Gellius,” 65.

<sup>111</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XIV.654a, 14.68-69.

<sup>112</sup> Paulas, “How to Read Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistae*,” 407-408.

Consequently, *Deipnosophistae*'s network of topical association imitates and provides a model of imitation for an active process of knowing.<sup>113</sup> Just as Howley argues regarding Aulus Gellius's similar text *Noctes Atticae*, draped across *Deipnosophistae*'s informational content is "an active discourse *on knowing*, on the desire to have knowledge and how to identify it in others," a dynamic program for gaining and maintaining the material of learned culture.<sup>114</sup> Rather than acting as a transparent conduit for its information, the text's arrangement adjusts the influence of its contents on the interpretation of its readers. *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative structure contextualizes its excerpted information within an in-progress discourse about the origins and implications of that information, establishing as the text's literary form what Jacob refers to as "a polyphony of speeches that follow the development of the table conversations, [stressing] the construction of knowledge, and not only its objective content."<sup>115</sup> Gracy contends that *Deipnosophistae* does not treat its excerpts as static objects to be observed and manipulated in their passivity but stands as an imitation of actively knowing the material through intimate and engaged familiarity.<sup>116</sup> As much as *Deipnosophistae* imitates a banquet or a library, it also reflects a world of ideas that can be navigated through the associative network provided by the text.

In framing excerpted quotations through a fictional banquet scene, *Deipnosophistae* arranges for a convenient mental pathway among and within the topics it covers. Jacob indicates that the sequence of comestibles, utensils, and rituals staged over the course of the banquet

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<sup>113</sup> The active process of knowing depicted by *Deipnosophistae* is a key component of *paideia*. Although comprehensive discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the present project, see also: Too, "The Walking Library," 115 and 123; König and Whitmarsh, "Ordering Knowledge," 31; Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 3, 47, 50, 68, and 77; Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 40, 62, 80, 92, 109, and 126; Oikonomopoulou, "Peripatetic Knowledge in Plutarch's *Table Talk*," 115; Oikonomopoulou, "Plutarch's Corpus of *Quaestiones* in the Tradition of Imperial Greek Encyclopaedism," 153; Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 33; Robert E. Terrill, "Reproducing Virtue: Quintilian, Imitation, and Rhetorical Education," *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 19, no. 2 (2016): 158, 161, and 167-168; Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 33, 157, and 252; Alt and Eberly, "Between Campus and Planet: Toward a Posthumanist *Paideia*," 100; Kennerly, "Quintilian on the Quotable," 130.

<sup>114</sup> Howley, *Aulus Gellius and Roman Reading Culture*, 255.

<sup>115</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 71.

<sup>116</sup> Gracy, "Nourishing the Mind," 88.

provides the stimulus for remembering and reproducing the literary information selected from the contributors' wide reading.<sup>117</sup> The sequence is not deterministic, not for readers and not for the characters within the text. König envisions the text's organizational structure branching out in an open-ended fashion, seemingly improvised as one quote comes to mind after another and "from there to other subjects, pursuing links indiscriminately, as one quotation leads [the author] to another by a process of potentially endless association."<sup>118</sup> This pattern of association according to shared keywords models for its readers a deipnosophistic technique of what Jacob refers to as "non-linear memory," in which an existing reference acts as a spring-board launching the mind toward fresh references for recollection."<sup>119</sup> Acquiescing to *Deipnosophistae*'s network of topical association maximizes the creative agency of its readers, who may trace the linked quotations in various directions across the text in a manner similar to that described by Krista Kennedy with regard to Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*.<sup>120</sup> Rather than constraining or determining how its readers might understand and make use of the information presented, *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework models a mental disposition toward inventive and thoughtful engagement with its materials, such as would encourage editors and commentators to reproduce the text in circulating discourse.

This fresh, inquiring mental disposition is precisely the attitude that allows a reader to make sense of *Deipnosophistae*. Jacob characterizes *Deipnosophistae*, with its massive and eclectic collection of references to other books, as "a textual, a scholarly, an antiquarian ocean, and the reader feels disorientated, lost, and puzzled by such a vast and unknown space whose mapping and survey seem out of reach."<sup>121</sup> It is precisely this sort of cultural environment,

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<sup>117</sup> Jacob, "Athenaeus the Librarian," 110.

<sup>118</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 100.

<sup>119</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 76.

<sup>120</sup> Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 100.

<sup>121</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, vii.

however, that stimulates creative exploration and repurposing. According to Jacob, following *Deipnosophistae*'s network of topical association does not clarify the complex of information but instead deepens the text's mystery with ever more intricate and elaborate uncertainties.<sup>122</sup> The text's coherent form leads back to its excerpted content, and its networked structure of association leads the reading mind away from a comprehensive and bounded field of knowledge.

The topical associations are not exhaustive or systematic, but follow an indiscriminate thread of delight and utility, as each quotation appears in the text in response to whatever situation would cause that quotation to attract interest. The recitation of that quotation then creates a new situation, summoning in turn other quotations likely to draw attention and lead reading minds away from the original point of focus.<sup>123</sup> Like König describes with regard to ancient miscellanies generally, *Deipnosophistae*'s disorienting and surprising paths of association are coextensive with the text's intellectual program, which entices its readers to seek out patterns in the wild and unwieldy world of learned culture it reflects.<sup>124</sup> By modeling a mental process for searching through and connecting bits of knowledge, *Deipnosophistae* expresses what Paulas identifies as "a sophistic system meant to cultivate the individual readers and their intellectual groups."<sup>125</sup> The text's organizational structure not only communicates information excerpted from other texts but also provides for readers to seek out and assimilate new knowledge into their own living library.

*Deipnosophistae*'s qualities of literary form point back to its informational content, but they remain indispensable as a guide for how readers might engage with that content. According to Paulas, the diegetic and hypodiegetic conversations in which the quotations are embedded perform the associative mental connections that active readers form as they navigate through the

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<sup>122</sup> Jacob, 5.

<sup>123</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 93.

<sup>124</sup> König, "Fragmentation and Coherence in Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions*," 44.

<sup>125</sup> Paulas, "Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology," 68.

text of *Deipnosophistae*.<sup>126</sup> To understand the information conveyed in *Deipnosophistae* means recurring engagement with the library of learned culture referenced by the text.<sup>127</sup> For this reason, *Deipnosophistae* sets the conditions for a kind of meaning-making called by Paulas “creative intertext,” in which readers must answer for themselves open-ended questions of interpretation presented by the text.<sup>128</sup> Readers are invited to come up with reasons and explanations behind the text’s strange inclusions or mysterious associations within or beyond the text according to a shared element that readers imagine themselves.<sup>129</sup> *Deipnosophistae* provides both a model for imitation and the materials for invention to readers engaging with the text through a process of creative intertext, as has manifested historically in the text’s accumulation of commentary, emendation, and cross-reference.

*Deipnosophistae*’s complicated textual structure calls on readers to comprehend simultaneously the fictional events of the narrative, the excerpted information conveyed through this narrative, and the patterns of creative association performed by the narrative. *Deipnosophistae* does not assert what Paulas calls its “larger message” clearly and directly, but performs that message “in its rhetoric or fiction, like a poem or novel.”<sup>130</sup> As Braund and Wilkins articulate it, performed in the “complex pattern of references which elides narrative voices and speakers,” this larger message is that of “playful engagement” with the narrative itself, with the excerpted sources, with the process of topical association, and with the readers themselves.<sup>131</sup> *Deipnosophistae* performs this playful engagement in the variety of its content and the open-endedness of its topical associations, the enactment of a continuously generative force of

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<sup>126</sup> Paulas, 435.

<sup>127</sup> Paulas, 411.

<sup>128</sup> Paulas, 428.

<sup>129</sup> Paulas, 408.

<sup>130</sup> Paulas, “Athenaeus and the Advantages of Philology,” 11.

<sup>131</sup> David Braund and John Wilkins, “Section 4 Introductory Remarks,” in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 241.

fragmentation and comprehension, similar to that process which König attributes to Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions*.<sup>132</sup> *Deipnosophistae*, by means of its miscellaneous information and patently artificial literary form, manages to create a coherent framework for knowledge in the patterns of topical association with which it presents its readers.

Although self-consciously imitative of existing events and discourses, the text of *Deipnosophistae* produces a fresh perspective on the world of knowledge it reflects. According to Braund *Deipnosophistae*'s vocal mimicry of prior discourse achieves "an idiosyncratic form of originality."<sup>133</sup> For instance, the text ends its discussion of notable watercraft in literature and history by retroactively naming the section its "catalogue of ships," in reference to the portion of the *Iliad* with that title, adding that it breaks with Homer by not beginning with the Boeotians.<sup>134</sup> The imitation both of real banquets and of the text's literary antecedents allow *Deipnosophistae* to achieve originality in its intertextual network of excerpted quotations. Just as Anna Peterson observes of Lucian, *Deipnosophistae* evokes the influence of existing tradition for the purpose of creating something fresh out of that tradition, continuing an old *logos* in new variations.<sup>135</sup> *Deipnosophistae* achieves its idiosyncratic originality as a whole that transcends the sum of its parts, just as a collection of books gives rise to a new library when the collection is organized and made accessible for readers.

### Conclusion

This chapter considered the narrative components by which *Deipnosophistae*'s contents cohere into a textual form. The text's narrative framework, imitating the events of a lavish dinner,

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<sup>132</sup> König, "Fragmentation and Coherence in Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions*," 56.

<sup>133</sup> Braund, "Learning, Luxury and Empire," 18.

<sup>134</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, V.209f, 5.44-45.

<sup>135</sup> Anna Peterson, "Philosophers Redux: The *Hermotimus*, the *Fisherman*, and the Role of Dead Philosophers," *Illinois Classical Studies* 41, no. 1 (2016): 188.



provides organizational and mnemonic structure to its excerpts, making them accessible to readers. The sequence of events at the banquet coordinates transitions between bits of information and establishes a network of topical association. By following along the network of topical association, readers participate in and are positioned to extend the text's performance of creative intertext. The next chapter, the conclusion of this dissertation, explains how *Deipnosophistae*'s features of recursive composition, fragmentary authority, and creative intertext contribute to its continued survival in circulating discourse through a process of regenerative entropy.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

At the start of *Deipnosophistae*'s sixth book, the diegetic Athenaeus displays an uncharacteristic impatience with the text's own narrative framing device. "When we meet, my friend Timocrates, you constantly demand an account of the learned banqueters' conversation," he remarks.<sup>1</sup> It is not Timocrates's curiosity irritating Athenaeus but his incredulity, as the former seems to think the latter is "inventing odd fictions."<sup>2</sup> Athenaeus does not deny Timocrates's unspoken accusation of creative originality, but answers obliquely, saying, "I will remind [*hypomnēsomen*] you of what Antiphanes says in *Poetry*, which is along the following lines [*tropon*]."<sup>3</sup> The verb *hypomnēsomen*, with its etymological connection to the idea of memory, is commonly used in *Deipnosophistae* to indicate an excerpted quotation. By appropriating an internal narrative exigence as an opportunity to present a bit of external information, Athenaeus's reply in this passage neatly conforms to the arrangement of the rest of the text.

This dissertation has traced the development of *Deipnosophistae*'s current textual form, observing that the text exists today because it attracted the attention and enlisted the effort of generations of commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers. These contributors reproduced the text through multiple manuscripts and printings because *Deipnosophistae* promised knowledge of Greek antiquity but needed cross-reference and reconstruction for its clear interpretation. The dissertation then examined the internal rhetorical processes by which the text presents and organizes its information as material to be reproduced by readers such as those contributors. The

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<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.222a, 6.1.

<sup>2</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.222a, 6.1.

<sup>3</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.222a, 6.1.

fragmentary authority of its quotations and citations stimulates uncertainty and judgment, while the narrative framework establishes an iterated pattern of topical association to be extended in a practice of creative intertext.

### Textual Curation

*Deipnosophistae*, with its performance of creative intertextual reuse iterated over time and across various contexts, suggests the text as an application of what Krista Kennedy calls textual curation. Kennedy's textual curation derives from a theoretical disruption of concepts of authorship. Textual curation describes a notion of rhetorical agency suitable to conditions of collaborative writing.<sup>4</sup> The compilation of existing discourse is, in Kennedy's theory of textual curation, a foundational part of the art of composition.<sup>5</sup> Concerning the two modern encyclopedias that serve as the foci of Kennedy's study, Kennedy writes that each interactant in their composition may be considered as a point of articulation through which the forces and technologies shaping the production of the text can be perceived,<sup>6</sup> and the same may be said of *Deipnosophistae*. In Kennedy's encyclopedia, as in *Deipnosophistae*, no single actor can take complete credit for originating and executing the text, but neither is it the case that each actor has equal influence on the text produced, including the readers who follow, in Kennedy's words, "nonlinear readings of a text that progress according to individual interests and serendipitous links."<sup>7</sup> Kennedy's approach, although developed in accord with modern encyclopedia writing, is appropriate for a work like *Deipnosophistae*, delicately positioned as it is between creative originality and automatic duplication.

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<sup>4</sup> Kennedy, *Textual Curation*, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Kennedy, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Kennedy, 4.

By emphasizing a text's open-ended and continuous construction, Kennedy's theory of textual curation advances a distributed notion of authorship. Textual curation's recognition of a text's multiple continuous sites of composition demonstrates the extent to which ideas of authorial agency can be contextual.<sup>8</sup> Kennedy's analysis shows how authority is spread across the work's many interactants,<sup>9</sup> from the original sources excerpted to the potential repurposing of those excerpts in future discourse. Kennedy affirms that the composition of a reference text is a task well-suited to the work of a collective, as it requires "careful consideration of existing literature and information gathered from one's contemporaries, recombination of those gleanings into a new, coherent text, and the creation of a useable information architecture and interface."<sup>10</sup> Kennedy's theory of textual curation deemphasizes individual originality in order to draw readers' attention to "the unending work of curating a living text or body of knowledge that is in constant flux."<sup>11</sup> This dissertation has accounted for the manifestation of this aspect of Kennedy's theory in *Deipnosophistae's* historical transmission, its information-presenting function, and its textual form.

*Deipnosophistae*, though, has a vexed relationship to vocal mimicry of prior discourse and to creative originality. Consider the introduction of the sixth book mentioned above, when Athenaeus responds to Timocrates's skepticism by quoting the words of Antiphanes. The passage dodges Timocrates's implied question but, applying with enigmatic color the rhetorical scheme called *conglobatio* by Henry Peachum,<sup>12</sup> gives the impression of answering by reciting a series of tangential instances. The words of Antiphanes, through which the text supposes to answer Timocrates's question about creative originality, are: "Tragedy's a thoroughly enviable type of

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<sup>8</sup> Kennedy, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Kennedy, 13.

<sup>10</sup> Kennedy, 134.

<sup>11</sup> Kennedy, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Henry Peachum, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London: H. Jackson, 1577), schemates rhetorical, third order, item 47.

poetry! The plots [*logoi*] first of all, are familiar to the audience before anyone speaks a word; so all the poet has to do is offer a reminder [*hypomnēsai*] ... We [comedic poets] don't have these advantages, so we have to invent [*heurein*] everything."<sup>13</sup> Instead of clarifying Timocrates's disjunction between words remembered and those discovered fresh, the presentation of Antiphanes's quotation complicates the matter further by raising the question of whether *Deipnosophistae* should be considered tragedy or comedy.

After listing a few quotations on the same topic, the voice of the diegetic narrator returns to address his interlocutor directly: "I am accordingly giving the learned banqueters' leftovers back [*apodidomen*] to you, Timocrates, rather than giving [*didomen*] them to you."<sup>14</sup> Although this passage would seem to settle the question in favor of *Deipnosophistae*'s status as duplication, Athenaeus then admits to deriving his language in this passage by modifying the words of the Attic orator Aeschines. According to Athenaeus's attribution, Aeschines sought to make a gift of land from Philip of Macedon more palatable to the Athenians by claiming the king was *returning* the region to Athens, not *granting* it. For one, by explaining the context for the external source being modified, Athenaeus openly recognizes that his claim to duplicate quotations from existing sources is a disguise for his creative adaptation, just as Aeschines cloaked Philip's display of sovereignty under an Athenian attitude of revanchism. For another, the text performs the same creative intertextual reuse that it describes, as Athenaeus is portrayed reproducing a bit of circulating discourse through partial replication. This passage is closely followed by a series of quotations from dramatists who similarly repurposed Aeschines's turn of phrase, with Antiphanes, who so bitterly complained of comedy's duty to originality, first among the entries.

In passages like the sixth book's introduction, *Deipnosophistae* draws direct attention to its own status as a node in a network of circulating discourse. *Deipnosophistae* reproduces itself

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<sup>13</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.222b-c, 6.1.

<sup>14</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VI.223d, 6.2-3.

as a text by performing both the critical investigation into situations of uncertain information and the creative extension of an intertextual network of topical association. Neither of these performative acts, however, function overmuch to secure the precise correspondence of an excerpted quotation to the original passage from which it is sourced. *Deipnosophistae* has been figured as a Noah's Ark of ancient Greek literature, preserving through the deluge a miscellaneous sample of lost texts, gathered in units appropriate to potentiate future reproduction. The mutations and adaptations manifesting in *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts, however, suggest some qualification may be appropriate for such figurations of the text.

### A White Raven

With apologies to Tertullian,<sup>15</sup> we can consider *Deipnosophistae*'s figuration as a Noah's Ark in conjunction with one of *Deipnosophistae*'s own anecdotes. The eighth book tells of a fortified city on the island of Rhodes which, while subjected to a siege by one Iphiclus, received an oracle to the effect that the city would hold out against the attackers until the ravens turned white.<sup>16</sup> Iphiclus (or perhaps, as the text points out, his lover Dorcia) smeared some ravens with gypsum and released them in view of the city, at which point the demoralized defenders surrendered despite their otherwise secure position. The biblical Noah, grounded among the peaks of Ararat, is said to have loosed two birds to discern if the waters had receded enough for his passengers to disembark: a raven first and then a dove. Happening upon one of these birds and noticing its pale feathers, we might learn a lesson from the besieged Rhodians and examine the creature more closely. We may find that our Naucratic Noah has, in fact, released to us a dove, but then again, we may find that the bird in our hand is just some chalky old *corax*.

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<sup>15</sup> Who famously asked, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" in *Prescription against Heretics*, trans. Peter Holmes (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1884), 7.

<sup>16</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VIII.360e-361c, 8.61-62. *Corax* is the term translated in this passage as "raven."

A skepticism, after the pattern attributed to Timocrates in the sixth book's introduction, has stimulated a series of research projects comparing *Deipnosophistae*'s sources—where such sources survive in an independent record—to the variations on those sources excerpted in *Deipnosophistae*. In the judgments of Arnott and of McClure, the text reproduces excerpted words from other sources “as accurately as possible” for the time and with the modes of authorial verification then available.<sup>17</sup> Such judgments load the qualifier of “as possible” with a significant weight, because, as Collard explains, the text seeks after uncommon words, refers to works found in no other source, and has survived through a highly unstable transmission process.<sup>18</sup> Ceccarelli adds that the text's complicated narrative structure and its propensity to accumulate entropy mean that any modifications to the excerpted information could escape a reader's notice.<sup>19</sup> John Davies demonstrates with regard to *Deipnosophistae*'s record of epigraphic material that the text does not seem to reproduce information from sources that one might reasonably expect it to use extensively.<sup>20</sup> The conclusion here looms that, as Olson puts it, “Athenaeus often quotes (and sometimes even paraphrases) his sources more or less accurately—except when he does not.”<sup>21</sup> Although this statement is judicious and even-handed, it lacks a certain satisfaction as a hermeneutic guide for reading the text's excerpts.

If it is the case that *Deipnosophistae* presents information as accurately as possible, that would offer some comfort to those concerned about the text's evident degree of entropy. Olson notes that, because *Deipnosophistae* is often put to use in the partial reconstruction of lost works, otherwise minor variations in its excerpts can be fairly substantial when they are taken as a

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<sup>17</sup> Arnott, “Athenaeus and the Epitome,” 41; McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 37. Both authors use the same exact phrase.

<sup>18</sup> Collard, “Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy,” 178.

<sup>19</sup> Ceccarelli, “Dance and Desserts,” 290.

<sup>20</sup> John Davies, “Athenaeus' Use of Public Documents,” in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, ed. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 217.

<sup>21</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus' ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 448.

precise record of the prior discourse from which they are excerpted.<sup>22</sup> Gracy considers *Deipnosophistae* to display an apparent indifference to the original context of the excerpts it presents.<sup>23</sup> Olson finds that, even where the text preserves most of the wording of its original source, the “seemingly anodyne cuts and edits” can change the meaning conveyed by the excerpted passage in significant ways.<sup>24</sup> Pelling observes that, at times, *Deipnosophistae*’s adaptation of its source material is more “enterprising,” rising even to the level of travesty.<sup>25</sup> As it relates to *Deipnosophistae*, “as accurately as possible” may signify that the text’s informational content is not conspicuously accurate at all.

S. Douglas Olson provides in his 2018 article a compelling account of the growing case against *Deipnosophistae*’s accuracy as a vehicle for accessing lost texts. Olson fixes Christopher Pelling’s 2000 study as the landmark piece of scholarship challenging the precision of *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts.<sup>26</sup> Although Olson considers Pelling’s article to have been the first systematic exploration of *Deipnosophistae*’s accuracy, it was preceded by some interventions of a similar kind but on a smaller scale. In 1962, N. G. Wilson discovered that a scholium to an edition of Lucian’s *Lexiphanes* quotes a passage of Antiphanes otherwise known only from *Deipnosophistae*, demonstrating the metrical and semantic incompleteness of *Deipnosophistae*’s version.<sup>27</sup> Two decades later, R. W. Sharples and D. W. Minter examined the five passages of *Deipnosophistae* excerpted from Theophrastus’s *Historia Plantarum*, finding that three of the five are inaccurate and the other two do not appear at all in the source text as it is rendered today.<sup>28</sup> Sharples and Minter attribute the discrepancies to “an over-hasty compression,”<sup>29</sup> but admit later

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<sup>22</sup> Olson, 433.

<sup>23</sup> Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind,” 146.

<sup>24</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus’ ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 431.

<sup>25</sup> Pelling, “Fun with Fragments,” 184.

<sup>26</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus’ ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 423.

<sup>27</sup> Wilson, “Did Arethas Read Athenaeus?,” 148.

<sup>28</sup> Sharples and Minter, “Theophrastus on Fungi,” 154.

<sup>29</sup> Sharples and Minter, 154.



in the essay that “the variation may be a deliberate and conscious reflection of the particular interests of the Athenaeus passage.”<sup>30</sup> Although Wilson and Sharples and Minter made some initial forays into assessing *Deipnosophistae*’s accuracy, it wasn’t until after Pelling’s 2000 article that these claims coalesced into a point of theoretical significance for Athenaeus studies.

One notable post-Pelling work on the accuracy of *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts is that of Robert J. Gorman and Vanessa B. Gorman in 2007. Gorman and Gorman take as the subject of their study *Deipnosophistae*’s ethnographic account of the residents of Sybaris in southern Italy, who were said to be so dedicated to luxury that they dressed their children in purple and were attended constantly by small Maltese dogs, even in the gymnasium.<sup>31</sup> Gorman and Gorman determine that *Deipnosophistae*’s interpretations of its source materials are sometimes unobjectionable, but “at other times, the view he offers seems inconsistent or even at cross-purposes with the argument of the original.”<sup>32</sup> In Gorman and Gorman’s judgment, the author of *Deipnosophistae* modifies excerpts “in ways inconsistent with a straightforward reading of the original author.”<sup>33</sup> Their analysis of the excerpts from ancient historians finds clear additions original to *Deipnosophistae* inserted where the text claims to be merely quoting its source, seriously compromising modern views of antiquity that rely on *Deipnosophistae* for evidentiary support.<sup>34</sup> Athenaeus’s uncertain position as a witness to ancient learned culture means “it would be imprudent—perhaps even reckless—to attribute the origination of [excerpted information] to one of these historians on the basis of material drawn from the *Deipnosophistae*.”<sup>35</sup> Comparisons of *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts to extant source texts seem to indicate the appropriateness of some misgivings when deriving knowledge of antique culture from the text’s informational content.

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<sup>30</sup> Sharples and Minter, 156.

<sup>31</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XII.518e-f, 12.15-16.

<sup>32</sup> Gorman and Gorman, “The Tryphê of the Sybarites,” 40.

<sup>33</sup> Gorman and Gorman, 40.

<sup>34</sup> Gorman and Gorman, 59.

<sup>35</sup> Gorman and Gorman, 59.

In addition to auditing the state of scholarship on *Deipnosophistae*'s accuracy, Olson's article executes its own fresh comparative analysis of *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts from Homer, Herodotus, and Xenophon. Olson finds conspicuous variation between *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts and the source texts on which they are based.<sup>36</sup> In assaying how these extant texts would appear if they were received only through *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts, Olson cautions that the alterations "go to the heart of the question of what we would think was going on in this passage and what it meant."<sup>37</sup> Olson's comparison of *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts to the full versions today available indicates the presence of "numerous small, generally invisible changes in the text of the fragments, and some of these changes alter the meaning of the quoted passage significantly."<sup>38</sup> Due to the covert quality of the modifications documented by Olson, it is a dubious task not only to reconstruct lost sources from their presence in *Deipnosophistae*, but even to distinguish which excerpts might be more accurate than others.

### **Distorting Excerpts**

*Deipnosophistae* displays a number of subtle processes for the imprecise transmission of its information, with a wide variety of potential animating functions. Even where the text's citational structure clearly indicates that some excerpts should be considered direct quotations, Olson indicates that the quoted passage differs significantly from the version of the source text as it is presently known.<sup>39</sup> McClure writes that *Deipnosophistae*'s innovative use of its quotations "slants their original meanings in significant ways."<sup>40</sup> König notes with regard to *Deipnosophistae* that the practice of creatively modifying excerpts while still attributing them to

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<sup>36</sup> Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," 427.

<sup>37</sup> Olson, 431.

<sup>38</sup> Olson, 447.

<sup>39</sup> Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," 447.

<sup>40</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 167.

an external authority was “a traditional sympotic skill.”<sup>41</sup> McClure attests that, in ancient Greek rhetoric, this practice sometimes traveled under the name of *chreia* and was included as a standard exercise in progymnasmatic training to cultivate students’ discursive flexibility through “alteration, improvisation, and last minute changes of venue and character.”<sup>42</sup> *Deipnosophistae* provides no shortage of explanations accounting for the imprecise transmission of its excerpted information.

The modification of quotations evident in *Deipnosophistae* may be attributed to some extent to the nature of the text’s subject matter. As a compilation of learned culture, *Deipnosophistae* proposes to offer a written record of a body of knowledge circulated in oral and embodied performance. Collard attributes some of the more minor alterations in excerpts “to the commonest cause of misquotation in ancient writers, faulty memory.”<sup>43</sup> The author of the text may himself have misremembered a quotation and didn’t have the time or resources to check its original source, or he may be repeating correctly a quotation told to him by someone else who was misremembering the exact wording. Gracy sees in *Deipnosophistae*’s practice of conveying an excerpt’s general sentiment while dispensing with the exact wording an indication of the social context of the text’s information-presenting function.<sup>44</sup> Those committed to performing their familiarity with learned culture would be expected to adapt an approximation of the quotation to the immediate circumstances calling for its recitation. De Kreij argues with regard to *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts from the poetry of Sappho that *Deipnosophistae*’s variation may be an artifact of the passages’ circulation in oral performance, under which circumstances the verse would change somewhat with each iteration.<sup>45</sup> Collard remarks that, the more familiar a particular

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<sup>41</sup> König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 99.

<sup>42</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 90; McClure, “Subversive Laughter,” 274. McClure uses the same exact phrase in both publications.

<sup>43</sup> Collard, “Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy,” 177.

<sup>44</sup> Gracy, “Nourishing the Mind,” 65.

<sup>45</sup> De Kreij, “Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα,” 60.

quotation is, the more likely it is to achieve frequent circulation in oral performance, and so to be more susceptible to durable misquotation.<sup>46</sup> De Kreij observes *Deipnosophistae* adapting its excerpts to a discursive environment in which ingenious repurposing is valued over precise communicative transmission.<sup>47</sup> This social context of oral performance illustrates some of the selection factors explaining the plasticity of *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts.

Elsewhere, though, the modifications of *Deipnosophistae*'s quotations seem most plausibly attributed to some specific exigence within the text. On at least one occasion, Olson finds *Deipnosophistae* smuggling excerpts from a dubious source under the citational auspices of a more reliable source "to make them appear to offer arguments they do not and to address issues irrelevant to them."<sup>48</sup> The modified quotation does not adapt the source text's approximate meaning for a new context but obscures the original meaning entirely to advance *Deipnosophistae*'s own purposes. Such cases demonstrate that *Deipnosophistae*'s modified quotations may in some places be minor and accidental, but may very well go as far as "deliberate distortion," in Olson's words.<sup>49</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s information presentation does not appear to express an abundance of concern for the transparent, accurate transmission of data, and one approaches its excerpts on those terms at peril.

The placement of *Deipnosophistae*'s inaccurate quotations within the text frequently suggests an artistic purpose for the modification. As Leven argues, the library of learned culture that *Deipnosophistae* purports to condense seems to be the product of the author "creating a historical scenario following an agenda of his own."<sup>50</sup> Jacob notes some points in the text at which this agenda seems to be organizational, as the changes facilitates the excerpts' thematic

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<sup>46</sup> Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 174 and 176.

<sup>47</sup> De Kreij, "Οὐκ ἔστι Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα," 70.

<sup>48</sup> Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," 448.

<sup>49</sup> Olson, 448; Collard, "Athenaeus, the Epitome, Eustathius and Quotations from Tragedy," 173.

<sup>50</sup> Leven, "New Music and its Myths," 36.

arrangement.<sup>51</sup> Elsewhere, the modifications amount to adding what Olson refers to as “a bit of emotional or rhetorical color” so that the excerpt matches the tone of the text’s narrative framework.<sup>52</sup> As a result of such changes, Leven argues, the author projects the agonistic dialogue appropriate to literary symposia onto the sources cited in the imitation library.<sup>53</sup> De Kreij observes *Deipnosophistae* appending witty asides and digressions to a quotation so that it fits the scene of the banquet and the temper of the character reciting it.<sup>54</sup> In one place, the text deliberately misstates a citation for humorous effect, referring to Arcestratus as the poet of Gela—his actual hometown—then appending, “or rather Catagela.”<sup>55</sup> This playful aside recasts the poet from the town of Gela as the poet of *catagela*, meaning “derision,” in reference to Arcestratus’s acerbic wit. Not only does rendering *catagela* for Gela modify the quotation without indicating so, but it also reproduces without citation a joke found in Aristophanes’s comedy *Acharnians*. The tendency in *Deipnosophistae* to modify its quotations and citations indicates that the text might be more properly understood as a mediator of existing discourse, rather than as either an original composer or an unoriginal collector. The text cannot offer a transparent transmission of its source material and, indeed, doesn’t affirm any particular commitment to that activity even where it would be possible.

The detailed investigation of *Deipnosophistae*’s excerpts carried out in multiple scholarly projects over several decades yields the troubling proposition that the text’s quoted passages are as imprecise a transmission of the source material as its paraphrases. It would seem that *Deipnosophistae*, valuable beyond measure as a unique record for countless lost texts of antiquity, communicates not reliable information about its sources but only the opaque surface of

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<sup>51</sup> Jacob, *The Web of Athenaeus*, 98.

<sup>52</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus’ ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 433.

<sup>53</sup> Leven, “New Music and its Myths,” 39.

<sup>54</sup> De Kreij, “Οὐκ ἐστὶ Σαπφοῦς τοῦτο τὸ ᾄσμα,” 66.

<sup>55</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.314f, 7.96.

what Olson considers “substantial, ideologically driven” forms of creative intertextual reuse.<sup>56</sup> The text doesn’t even seem to offer much opportunity for judging the relative accuracy of its excerpts to determine what among them might have informational merit.<sup>57</sup> Olson, summing up *Deipnosophistae*’s status as a vector of information transmission, maintains that “the degree to which [Athenaeus] is reliable is thus a matter of considerable concern,” but that any firm understanding of what in the text—if anything—is accurate “is unlikely ever to be known.”<sup>58</sup> *Deipnosophistae*’s claim to offer a window into an ancient library of learned culture appears to be camouflage, disguising original compositions of creative intertextual reuse according to the selection conditions that would encourage their reproduction by readers interested in authoritative knowledge of Greek antiquity.

### Dissipative Structures

Rather than offering a window into an ancient library of learned culture, *Deipnosophistae* appears instead as a prism, through which its excerpted information and antecedent versions can be perceived but dimly. It may be that *Deipnosophistae*’s lost sources are visible through the text to some degree, but its performances of recursive composition, fragmentary authority, and creative intertext ensure that any light passing through is tinted, refracted, and dispersed. At one point, the text may appear to copy directly from an original source, at another it offers variations on the source material, and still elsewhere it draws on, in McClure’s words, “intermediaries such as glossaries and commentaries,” offering “quotations of quotations” which may themselves have been modified.<sup>59</sup> This interpretation complements the variety of forces known to influence the

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<sup>56</sup> Olson, “Athenaeus’ ‘Fragments’ of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications,” 424. By “ideologically driven,” Olson means that the idea conveyed by an excerpt in *Deipnosophistae* differs from the idea conveyed by that excerpt’s corresponding passage in a source text.

<sup>57</sup> Olson, 425.

<sup>58</sup> Olson, 425.

<sup>59</sup> McClure, *Courtesans at Table*, 37.

circulation of *Deipnosophistae*'s excerpts, from scribal errors and physical decay to what Olson interprets to be "deliberate attempts by Athenaeus to rework his source-texts."<sup>60</sup> These various transformative influences, evident both within the text and in its historical development, seriously compromise the idea that the work can transmit precise information from its lost source texts with much transparency.

Given *Deipnosophistae*'s central focus on information presentation, one might expect excerpt distortion to undermine the text's survival in circulating discourse. The text's abstraction, ambiguity, and internal connectedness may be understood to reflect its rhetorical entropy, which Marder identifies in a text's "tendency to disorder, that is to meaninglessness."<sup>61</sup> According to Marder's definition of rhetorical entropy, high degrees of rhetorical entropy may be perceived in a text's "high degree of freedom" devolved upon readers to interpret meaning from it,<sup>62</sup> a quality on full display in *Deipnosophistae*. A physical system that has decayed into maximum and totally distributed entropy may be said to have achieved thermodynamic equilibrium. To extend the adaptation of a metaphor from physics, figuring entropy as a factor in textual curation recognizes the eventuality of disorder to accumulate in a discursive system, dissolving that system into a state of hermeneutic equilibrium.

This perspective on entropy, that it acts ineluctably to sabotage regular order, derives from a fragmentary—and imprecise—reproduction of the second law of thermodynamics. For instance, Marder attributes to the second law of thermodynamics "the idea of entropy, the tendency of ordered energy to free itself, and thus break apart the system that contains it and dissipate that system into chaos."<sup>63</sup> This formulation of the second law of thermodynamics omits a crucial modifier, specifying that entropy works inexorably to dissolve an *isolated* system.

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<sup>60</sup> Olson, "Athenaeus' 'Fragments' of Non-Fragmentary Prose Authors and Their Implications," 424.

<sup>61</sup> Marder, "Entropy in Rhetoric," 7.

<sup>62</sup> Marder, 4.

<sup>63</sup> Marder, 1.

Disorder tends unremittingly to increase only in a system that does not receive energetic influence from a source beyond itself. *Deipnosophistae*, however, displays the characteristics of an open system, one which is receptive to and makes use of energy generated outside of it. With an external power source, an open system counteracts entropic decay through a continuous renewal of structural order, putting it beyond the operating envelope of the second law of thermodynamics.

It is for this reason that open systems take on their characteristic shape as dissipative structures, which are able to maintain their form in their continuous motion, as long as they remain connected to their energizing influence. In contrast to the equilibrium state associated with total entropic heat death, the movement of a dissipative structure displays a pattern of “stable disequilibrium,” as described by Nobuto Takeuchi, Kunihiko Kaneko, and Paulien Hogeweg.<sup>64</sup> The classic example of a dissipative structure is the whirlpool form produced when an outflow is introduced to a still body of fluid, as in the unplugging of a sink’s drain when it is full of water or in the activation of a *clepsydra*, the water-clock by which ancient Greek and Roman courts allocated time for speech acts. The whirlpool form may be sustained as long as the energy introduced into the system meets or exceeds the amount of dissipating entropy. Living organisms may be described as dissipative structures, in that they are formed only for a short time through a perpetuating self-maintenance powered by external sources of energy through various metabolic processes, like photosynthesis or eating. Texts, too, may be described as dissipative structures,<sup>65</sup> as they rely for their form on donations of hermeneutic energy from their contributors and become lost when they lose the potential for discursive circulation.

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<sup>64</sup> Nobuto Takeuchi, Kunihiko Kaneko, and Paulien Hogeweg, “Evolutionarily Stable Disequilibrium: Endless Dynamics of Evolution in a Stationary Population,” *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 283, no. 1830 (May 2016): 6.

<sup>65</sup> Bonnie Lenore Kyburz, “Meaning Finds a Way: Chaos (Theory) and Composition,” *College English* 66, no. 5 (May 2004): 511; Candelas Gala, “Creative Entropy in Rafael Alberti’s *Sobre los ángeles*,” *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 88, no. 1 (2011): 67; N. Katherine Hayles, *Chaos and Order: Complex Dynamics in Literature and Science* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 76.



### Regenerative Entropy

*Deipnosophistae*, though, makes of its own entropic corruption a reproductive resource for its continued circulation, allowing the text to renew itself through its own tendency to mutate and decay. The text's imperfections, inconsistencies, and uncertainties provide opportunities for collaborative speculation among the text's contributors, encouraging the active engagement of readers. Where the text shows the mark of entropy, it invites readers to comment on or correct the text, stimulating further circulation of and disputation on the text's information, just as Johannes Wietzke infers with regard to Ptolemy's *Syntaxis*.<sup>66</sup> In addition to inviting investigation of the text, *Deipnosophistae*'s entropy incentivizes new inquiries in the same mode as that carried out in the performance of the text, a function that Oikonomopoulou ascribes to the similar text of Plutarch's *Table Talk*.<sup>67</sup> Rather than dissolving the text's orderly formation, *Deipnosophistae*'s entropic influences are precisely what has enabled it to avoid extinction across its changing discursive environments.

This process, whereby a text's entropic features are also attractors for an investment of curating energy, may be called regenerative entropy. Entropy might induce in a text absences and ambiguities, causing difficulties for the text's interpretive clarity. Each hermeneutic uncertainty creates an opportunity for the text to stimulate a reader's critical and creative faculties. Where these uncertainties may be resolved in multiple ways, entropy initiates investigation and disputation, perpetuating the discursive circulation of the text and its information. Should general consensus develop around an uncertainty, in that case, entropy incites contributors to constitute the text in a coherent form. These manifestations of regenerative entropy are evident along

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<sup>66</sup> Johannes Wietzke, "The Public Face of Expertise: Utility, Zeal and Collaboration in Ptolemy's *Syntaxis*," in *Authority and Expertise in Ancient Scientific Culture*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 357.

<sup>67</sup> Oikonomopoulou, "Peripatetic Knowledge in Plutarch's *Table Talk*," 116.

multiple levels of *Deipnosophistae*, including the recursive composition of its textual transmission, the fragmentary authority of its information presentation, and the creative intertext of its narrative framework.

The regenerative entropy of *Deipnosophistae*'s recursive composition is apparent in the imprint of its many contributors over time. The text includes within itself the voices of those who would comment on the text. For instance, a copyist might sometimes introduce their own commentary into the flow of the text, as when explaining that the manuscript from which they are working is illegible.<sup>68</sup> In this case, this commentary replaces the actual unintelligible letters of the text with a second-hand reference to those letters. The Epitomator's statement on the unintelligible passage is simultaneously separated from the text, as it treats that text as an external object to be spoken about, and also integrated into the text, as another participant in the polyphonic prose. The presence of this passage makes the text recursively self-referential, so that *Deipnosophistae* is able to comment on its own incomplete, entropic status and its ongoing composition. Further, it refers back to the unintelligibility of words that do not exist, as only the Epitome itself is extant, with the original source—however unintelligible—now lost entirely. The Epitomator's comment affixes a bandage over a wound in the text, but beneath the bandage, there is no injury and no body to be injured at all, only a void and a reference to what had been.

In addition to *Deipnosophistae*'s recursive composition, the text's fragmentary authority as knowledge-writing performs regenerative entropy. Concerning the presentation of information, Pelling describes *Deipnosophistae* displaying a propensity for "drifting away from a quotation to incorporate extraneous material without making that transition clear."<sup>69</sup> In the middle of discussing one topic, a stray association might divert the text into a fairly lengthy treatment of

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<sup>68</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, II.60f, 2.57. The presence of the copyist's voice is noted in: Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters*, ed. and trans. by S. Douglas Olson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), vol. I: 342.

<sup>69</sup> Pelling, "Fun with Fragments," 176.

another topic. For instance, at one point in the seventh book, the text explains that it will be beginning a list of species of fish.<sup>70</sup> After exactly one entry in this list, the text takes advantage of citing a certain Archestratus to embark upon an explanation of various schools of hedonistic philosophy, of which Archestratus is said to be a major contributor. By immediately diverting from the list it ostensibly compiles, this passage invites its readers to investigate the meaning of a list as a mode of information presentation. The text proposes its reader consider whether a list can fairly contain only one item and to what extent a list can incorporate other information that does not neatly fit the topical heading of the list.

Astoundingly, this digression reintegrates itself into the list with a smooth and artful progression of stages. The discussion of hedonistic philosophy nears its end with a quotation from Apollodorus on the subject of pleasure, then a quotation about Apollodorus, and terminates with a quotation by Apollodorus on fish.<sup>71</sup> The diversion on hedonistic philosophies and the smooth transition back to varieties of fish may have been the product of entropy or art, but the text's fragmentary modes of information presentation nullify the question. This device of topical arrangement, in which the text transitions from one topic to another by means of partial replication, is used throughout *Deipnosophistae*. Each excerpt in a sequence contains elements of the excerpt preceding it and the one following it, so that each quotation is made exigent by what came before and, in turn, stimulates what comes next. This pattern conditions readers to seek out the topical connection between items in a list or quotations in a sequence. Those readers might discover topical connections among bits of information even when this organizational strategy isn't used, or when entropy makes the text uncertain. In this manner, the text's rhetorical processes of information presentation anticipate their own entropic degradation and provide for the text to be restructured in circulating discourse.

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<sup>70</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.278d, 7.7-8.

<sup>71</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, VII.281e, 7.14-15.

Similarly, *Deipnosophistae*'s narrative framework invites opportunities for regenerative entropy in the mode of creative intertext. At one point where entropic decay has left a gap in the text, the prose returns in the middle of the sentence, as one of the dinner guests complains about the copious and impenetrable verbal flow of his fellows.<sup>72</sup> This passage already displays its own sense of irony, as one of the banquet's fictional characters objects to the continuous torrent of words constituting him as a fictional entity. The felicitous corruption of the text doubles this irony, as the text has lost the exigent discursive stream to which the character objects, displaying only his adversarial response. Readers, privy to this unbalanced complaint, have cause to consider what narrative circumstance could possibly have prompted the response and whether the tirade is in proportion to its subject. The entropic corruption of the manuscript in this passage encourages readers to speculate on the irresolvable uncertainty of the lost passage and to imagine the excerpted quotations that might have appeared there.

### **The Beast of Matreas**

Quite early on in the text, *Deipnosophistae* makes reference to a wanderer (*planos*) named Matreas of Alexandria, who was known to recite before a popular audience (*dēmosia*) a parody of Aristotle's *Problems*. The text notes that one particular riddle from this Peripatetic parody was unusually difficult to solve and that "a debate continues until today."<sup>73</sup> This durable mystery comes from Matreas's occasional statement that "he was raising a beast that devoured itself." This dissertation proposes that *Deipnosophistae* itself may be accepted as a potential identity for the beast of Matreas. First, the text devours itself in that it is a book compiled from excerpts from other books, including itself. Second, the text devours itself in that it renews its dissipative structure through its recursive composition by various contributors. Third, the text

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<sup>72</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.22e, 1.41.

<sup>73</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, I.19d, 1.34-35.

devours itself in that it attracts the attention and energy of those contributors by means of its regenerative entropy. Finally, the practices of associative memory and creative intertext performed in *Deipnosophistae*'s text are the sorts of discursive habits that a public speaker like Matreas would be likely to nurture. To illustrate *Deipnosophistae*'s fit as a solution to the riddle of the self-devouring beast, this dissertation will describe how the text synthesizes three theoretical disjunctions that each chart a path through Lanham's "Freshman Objection": Stanley Fish's self-consuming and self-satisfying objects, Roland Barthes's writerly and readerly texts, and Umberto Eco's practical and poetic lists.

Stanley Fish proposes "an opposition of epistemologies" which manifests "in two kinds of reading experiences": the self-consuming and the self-satisfying.<sup>74</sup> A self-consuming artifact "undermines certainty and moves away from clarity, complicating what had at first seemed perfectly simple, raising more problems than it solves" and "by calling attention to the insufficiency of its own procedures, calls into question the sufficiency of the minds it unsettles."<sup>75</sup> Such artifacts earn their title as self-consuming in two ways, as "a reader's existing self is consumed in response to the medicinal purging of dialectics and art is consumed in the process of its working those effects."<sup>76</sup> Self-consuming artifacts perform this dual function by demonstrating "the inadequacy of [their] own forms, which are also the forms of the reader's understanding."<sup>77</sup> By modeling a reader's own advancing insight in the progress of the text, a self-consuming artifact imitates "the reader's experience of the Platonic ladder in which each rung, as it is negotiated, is kicked away."<sup>78</sup> A self-consuming artifact is "the vehicle of its own abandonment," because it facilitates its readers no longer to need the lessons it can offer.<sup>79</sup> A self-consuming

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<sup>74</sup> Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts*, 378.

<sup>75</sup> Fish, 378.

<sup>76</sup> Fish, 3.

<sup>77</sup> Fish, 264.

<sup>78</sup> Fish, 13.

<sup>79</sup> Fish, 3.

artifact seasons its readers such that their understanding of themselves, their world, and the artifact itself is irreversibly changed.

Many of the features of a self-consuming artifact are recognizable in *Deipnosophistae*. Each answer provided by the text raises still more questions about the provenance and interpretation of that bit of information. In its presentations of uncertainty and its performances of creative intertext, *Deipnosophistae* models an active process of investigating and adapting its excerpts. The text's obscure content, complicated structure, and entropic influences promote among its readers "a searching and rigorous scrutiny," though not perhaps along the intensely philosophical track that Fish envisions.<sup>80</sup> Likewise, Fish considers it characteristic of self-consuming artifacts for them "to call attention to what they are *not* doing, and therefore to their ultimate insufficiency before the great problems of the spiritual life."<sup>81</sup> *Deipnosophistae* frequently calls attention to the incompleteness of its compilation and its consequent insufficiency in comparison to the total library of learned culture, which may be considered a great problem of the spiritual life insofar as it evokes the fragility of mortal endeavor. This, in turn, suggests another of *Deipnosophistae*'s points of articulation with the concept of the self-consuming artifact. Self-consuming artifacts "do not survive the moment of speech," but continue to live only in "their effect on the reader-respondent's mind."<sup>82</sup> *Deipnosophistae*'s precarious existence is contingent upon its continued circulation, and so it is susceptible to this feature of the self-consuming artifact in that it survives as long as reader-respondents can comment upon and edit it.

*Deipnosophistae*, though, is also unmistakable as a self-satisfying artifact. A self-satisfying artifact "builds its readers' confidence by building an argument they can follow" and "leads the auditor or reader step-by-step, in a logical and orderly manner, to a point of certainty

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<sup>80</sup> Fish, 1.

<sup>81</sup> Fish, 367.

<sup>82</sup> Fish, 14.

and clarity.”<sup>83</sup> Few would describe *Deipnosophistae* as logical, orderly, or culminating in certainty and clarity, but it enacts its topical progression in a step-by-step way so that readers might comprehend the associative principle around which each section is organized. The text’s informational functionality and its apparent anxiety to substantiate its claims with relevant evidence displays the reader-oriented disposition of a self-satisfying artifact, which quality Fish considers essentially rhetorical.<sup>84</sup> Self-satisfying artifacts “stabilize [readers’] knowledge at its present inadequate level,” meeting and addressing the concerns of some present rhetorical situation without advancing its readers toward a more profound enlightenment.<sup>85</sup> *Deipnosophistae* insists throughout that its humble purpose is to remind its readers of existing knowledge, and to preserve that knowledge—even in its inadequacy—has been a centuries-long task for *Deipnosophistae*’s textual contributors.

Roland Barthes draws a similar distinction as Stanley Fish does with his definitions of writerly and readerly texts. A writerly text enjoins its reader to become “a producer of the text,” a tendency on full display in *Deipnosophistae*’s recursive composition and distributed authorship.<sup>86</sup> Barthes may provoke a wry amusement in the various commentators, editors, scribes, and publishers who have contributed to *Deipnosophistae* when he observes that writerly texts are “perpetually present” and that “to rewrite the writerly text would consist only in disseminating it.”<sup>87</sup> *Deipnosophistae* might be considered the consummate writerly text, had Barthes not defined a readerly text as “what it is no longer possible to write” and “what can be read but not written.”<sup>88</sup> *Deipnosophistae* may be elaborated upon or epitomized but never again written, as the library of learned culture to which it is supposed to refer has been destroyed. The excerpts of which the text

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<sup>83</sup> Fish, 378.

<sup>84</sup> Fish, 1.

<sup>85</sup> Fish, 15.

<sup>86</sup> Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (New York, NY: The Noonday Press), 4.

<sup>87</sup> Barthes, *S/Z*, 5.

<sup>88</sup> Barthes, 4.

is composed have already been selected, they are the only selections that may be chosen, and they have come to stand in for the entire work from which they were selected. To compile alternative excerpts from the library of learned culture—to compose a *Deipnosophistae* that might be otherwise—would be a radical act of speculative fiction in imitation of Athenaeus, but not a writing of *Deipnosophistae*. For that reason, *Deipnosophistae* cannot be comfortably termed either a readerly or a writerly text.

Umberto Eco addresses many of the same concerns as Fish and Barthes when he distinguishes between practical lists and poetic lists. The distinguishing feature of a practical list is its “purely referential function,” in that it names and accounts for a specific set of objects in an external world.<sup>89</sup> Given *Deipnosophistae*’s reputation as a medium for the transmission of information excerpted from other books, the text would seem to be an excellent candidate for consideration as a practical list. Further, *Deipnosophistae* achieves its form through its ability to confer a sense of unity on a set of incongruous objects, a feature of practical lists that Eco terms “contextual pressure.”<sup>90</sup> However, in Eco’s theory, the referential function of practical lists means that they are finite and may not be altered, “in the sense that it would be unethical as well as pointless to include in a museum catalogue a painting that is not kept there.”<sup>91</sup> *Deipnosophistae* bears the marks of having been altered many times over, even in its oldest and most original manuscripts. Moreover, if Eco disapproves of a museum catalogue including reference to a single non-existent painting, so much more might he consider unethical and pointless *Deipnosophistae*’s documentation of an entire absent museum.

Against the practical list, Eco contrasts the poetic list. Eco may, in fact, have had *Deipnosophistae* in mind when he observed, “A restaurant menu is a practical list. But in a book

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<sup>89</sup> Eco, *The Infinity of Lists*, 113.

<sup>90</sup> Eco, 113 and 116.

<sup>91</sup> Eco, 113.



on culinary matters, a list of the diverse menus of the most renowned restaurants would already acquire a poetic value.”<sup>92</sup> The book on culinary matters, with its catalogue of notable menus, accrues the poetic value that its more mundane cousin lacks because it suggests infinity through its open-ended form.<sup>93</sup> By promising to cover the totality of learned culture, *Deipnosophistae* refers to an infinite and open-ended body of knowledge for which it cannot comprehensively account, even in its fifteen books. Moreover, the text’s entropic influences enable it to suggest infinity through its recursive composition, as each gap and absence (including its missing beginning and end) provides an endless well of speculation for commentators and editors. In the lost library of learned culture, *Deipnosophistae*’s readers are “faced with something that is immensely large, or unknown, of which [they] still do not know enough or of which [they] shall never know.”<sup>94</sup> *Deipnosophistae*’s complicated relationship with the original sources to which its list refers lends it qualities that are simultaneously practical and poetic.

*Deipnosophistae* eludes the hermeneutic categories of Fish, Barthes, and Eco due to its status as a dissipative structure in stable disequilibrium. With its form expressed in continuous motion and its component parts oscillating between ordering and disordering functions, *Deipnosophistae* may be perceived in its transit between the poles of Fish’s, Barthes’, and Eco’s hermeneutic categories from at least two directions. It is possible to conceive of *Deipnosophistae* as having initially been a self-satisfying, readerly, practical list of interesting excerpts, which developed under entropic influence into its incomplete state as a self-consuming, writerly, poetic list. One’s conception of *Deipnosophistae* might also begin with its earliest identifiable condition as a self-consuming, writerly, poetic list indicating the lost library of learned culture, which attracted sufficient attention from textual curators that it developed into the self-satisfying,

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<sup>92</sup> Eco, 374.

<sup>93</sup> Eco, 17.

<sup>94</sup> Eco, 49.

readerly, practical list accessible today. Both perspectives on *Deipnosophistae* are plausible, but each is dependent on the text's figuration as an in-progress performance animated by regenerative entropy and circulating among multiple contributors.

*Deipnosophistae*'s function facilitates its form, and its form facilitates its function. It is a text that insists upon its own continuously incomplete status and potentiates its readers to extend its project. In its reproduction of informational bits extracted from prior works, it conveys not inert matter but rather an impression of a continuously lived practice of circulating discourse. In that sense, *Deipnosophistae* is reanimated each time its potential to bear meaning comes to be actualized by a reader's hermeneutic performance. Considering the bird emitted by the Noah's Ark of *Deipnosophistae*, we find it to be both dove and raven, or perhaps neither. It is a missing link, a living fossil. On closer inspection, one begins to notice beneath the gypsum dust the vestigial claw and bony tail of the *Archaeopteryx*. And at that point, should one elect to peer into its toothy beak, there might be found, against all odds, a fresh-plucked olive leaf.

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## VITA

**Adam Cody**

### EDUCATION

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- 2020 PhD The Pennsylvania State University, Communication Arts and Sciences
- 2016 MA The Pennsylvania State University, Communication Arts and Sciences
- 2013 BA Ithaca College, Speech Communication

### APPOINTMENTS

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- 2019-2020 Predoctoral Research Fellow  
The Pennsylvania State University, Center for Humanities and Information
- 2015-2019 Graduate Student Instructor  
The Pennsylvania State University, Communication Arts and Sciences
- 2015-2018 Graduate Research Assistant  
The Pennsylvania State University, Communication Arts and Sciences
- 2014-2015 University Grant Fellow  
The Pennsylvania State University, Communication Arts and Sciences

### PUBLICATIONS

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- 2021 Cody, Adam. "The Porous *Polis*: A Critique of Democracy in Old Comedy." *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*.
- 2017 Cody, Adam W., and Rosa A. Eberly. "Topoi and Tekmēria: Rhetorical Fluidity among Aristotle, Isocrates, and Alcidamas." In *Topologies as Techniques for a Post-Critical Rhetoric*, edited by Lynda Walsh and Casey Boyle. New York, NY and London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017