New Editions of Athenaeus, the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, and IG II² 2318-25

Abstract
I am currently producing full-scale critical editions of Athenaeus' Deipnosophistae (“The Learned Banqueters”); the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite and related texts; and IG II² 2318–25, a set of fragmentary inscriptions recording the history of the dramatic competitions in Athens from the fifth to the second centuries BCE. I am requesting travel funds to allow me to examine and collate the manuscripts of Athenaeus and the Hymns in libraries in Leiden, Paris, Brussels, Madrid, Lausanne, Modena, Florence, Milan, Venice and the monasteries on Mount Athos, and to study the inscriptional material first-hand in the Epigraphic Museum in Athens.

Proposal
My primary academic interest is in ancient Greek literature, especially poetry. Most of my work involves the production of standard critical texts and commentaries. My goal is always to produce foundational work that will not just make available but open up otherwise obscure authors and texts to wider audiences. I am currently involved in three major projects:

• a full-scale critical edition of Athenaeus’ Deipnosophistae (“The Learned Banqueters”)
• a full-scale critical edition, accompanied by a detailed philological and literary commentary on the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite and eight other shorter Homeric Hymns;
• (with Benjamin Millis of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens) a new edition of IG II² 2318–25, a set of fragmentary inscriptions recording the history of the dramatic competitions in Athens from the fifth to the second centuries BCE.

I am requesting travel funds to allow me to examine and collate the manuscripts of Athenaeus and the Hymns in a number of European libraries (listed below), and to study IG II² 2318–25 first-hand in the Epigraphic Museum in Athens.

Present State of Knowledge
(1) Athenaeus of Naucratis lived in Rome around 200 CE and produced what is nominally an account of a series of long dinner parties attended by a collection of quarrelsome polymaths who delight in quoting obscure Greek literature. As C.B. Gulick (the original Loeb translator) observed in 1927, his Learned Banqueters is accordingly “in some respects . . . the most important work of later antiquity” (xv), since it preserves so much that would otherwise be lost. Our most substantial fragments of Athenian Old and Middle Comedy, for example, all come from Athenaeus, as does virtually everything we have of authors as diverse as Pancrates of Rhodes (dactylic hexameter fish-poetry), Philoxenus of Leucas (dithyrambic banquet-catalogues), and Herodicus of Babylon (author of the deliciously nasty Against the Admirer of Socrates). The Learned Banqueters is preserved in three manuscripts: A (which offers a complete version of the text, but lacks Books 1 and 2 and much of Book 3; Venice); and C and E (separate copies of an epitomized version of the text, and the only source for most of the material missing in A; Paris and Modena, respectively). The standard modern critical edition is the 1887–90 Teubner of Georg Kaibel. Unfortunately, because C and E are occasionally difficult to read, Kaibel examined only one of them in the portions of the text also preserved in A. It is accordingly impossible to tell from his apparatus whether plausible
variant readings in one of the Epitome manuscripts (and thus in one of the many fragmentary authors Athenaeus preserves) are to be traced back to the lost copy of the work from which they are both descended—in which case the reading may be genuine—or are merely guesses or errors by the individual copyists.

(2) The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite dates most likely to the 600s BCE, putting it roughly contemporary with Sappho. The poem is an account of an encounter between Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and sex, and the Trojan hero Anchises; their child Aeneas escaped the destruction of Troy and ultimately became the legendary father of the Roman people. At almost 300 lines long, the Hymn is among the most substantial and compelling bits of Greek poetry preserved from the period after Homer (ca. 750–725?) and Hesiod (ca. 700–675?) but before the 5th-century dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.

The first substantial commentary on the text, a revised Oxford dissertation by Andrew Faulkner, was published in 2008. Faulkner’s orientation is largely philological (in a very old-fashioned sense) and ignores the narratological questions at the center of my commentary—how the story of Aeneas and Aphrodite is shaped and told—almost entirely. No substantial commentary exists on the eight shorter Hymns (totaling about 100 lines) that treat other goddesses who appear as characters within the Hymn to Aphrodite (Artemis, Athena, Hera, and Hestia), and that will make up the second half of my volume. The Hymns are preserved in 14 manuscripts, located today in Leiden (M), Brussels (Γ), Paris (Π, A and B), Madrid (T), Modena (E), Florence (L), Milan (D and Q), Venice (V), Rome (P), 1 Lausanne (La), and on Mount Athos (At). Faulkner claims to have “consulted” but not to have collated microfilms of all the manuscripts, although what this means is unclear, and his critical apparatus appears to be derived at least in part from the 1975 Lorenzo Valla edition by Filippo Càssola.

(3) Inscriptiones Graecae II 2318–25 are the fragmentary remains of three major 3rd-century BCE Athenian inscriptive catalogues (generally referred to as the Fasti, the Didascaliae, and the Catalogue of Victors) detailing the history of the dramatic competitions at the City Dionysia and Lenaea festivals. The inscriptions are badly damaged—we have only shattered bits and pieces—but they are the fundamental source for the chronology and development of the competitions, and for the biographies of the individual poets, actors and producers who participated in them. The stones themselves have rarely been examined, and have not been studied comprehensively since the beginning of the last century, when they were published by Johannes Kirchner (the editor of IG II 2). Since then, numerous new fragments of the Fasti and the Catalogue of Victors have been discovered in the excavations in the Athenian Agora, and it has become clear that many of the presuppositions on which Kirchner’s restorations of the Catalogue of Victors and the Didascaliae in particular were based are misguided—and thus that many of his conclusions, both general and specific, are wrong.

Plan of Work:

(1) Over the last five years or so, I have completed an 8-volume Loeb Classical Library edition of Athenaeus. (Volume 6 is in press; Volume 7 will be submitted to the press this fall; Volume 8 will be submitted sometime next year, once indexing is complete.) The
Loeb format does not allow for a critical apparatus, and authors are not expected (or encouraged) to do original manuscript work. I have nonetheless obtained microfilms of A, C and E, and have completed an initial collation of all of A and E, and of about 75% of C; I expect to be done with this phase of the project before the end of 2009. My plan is to produce a complete new critical edition of the text, to replace Kaibel; the Walter De Gruyter Verlag (which controls the Teubner series) has expressed enthusiastic support. Unfortunately, microfilms are only partial substitutes for the manuscripts they reproduce. The photography is often blurry; the masters from which individual copies of the microfilm are made are routinely scratched or damaged; margins (and the notes within them) frequently cannot be seen; marks of erasure disappear, as does red ink in particular; multiple levels of correction and rewriting appear as indecipherable blobs; and the physical structure of the book (how it was bound, and damaged, and rebound—often in the wrong way) is impossible to examine. I thus have a long list of queries of every sort

1 Currently inaccessible, due to renovations in the Vatican library, and therefore not included in my travel plans. That can only be answered by looking at A, C and E themselves; as mine should be the edition of record for the next century or so, it is important that all such details be correct.

I have worked in the manuscript sections of all the libraries in question before, and know that they can sometimes be slow and unaccommodating (or both). I am therefore requesting support for five working days in Venice to consult A (along with the V manuscript of the Hymn to Aphrodite); for four working days in Paris to consult C (along with the P and B manuscripts of the Hymn to Aphrodite); and three working days in Modena to consult E, in the expectation that some of this time will be required to work my way through the library bureaucracy, but also in the confidence that any “extra” time will be put to good use in examining or collating sections of the manuscripts for which I might otherwise have been content to rely solely on the microfilms. The entire multivolume critical edition should be complete within two to three years, depending on my ability to obtain a semester of release time to support full-time work on it.

(2) I currently have a substantial second draft (about 400 double-spaced pages) of a text, introduction and commentary on the Hymn to Aphrodite and the eight related shorter Hymns. The main obstacle to completing the project is the matter of the manuscripts; the question is not just what they say but how they are related, since this determines to some considerable extent which readings ought to be preferred and which rejected. Up to this point, I have largely relied on the apparatus in Càssola and Faulkner—which is patently not good enough. I am in the process of purchasing microfilms of as many of the manuscripts as I can, and I expect eventually to obtain copies of the majority of them. But (as noted above in regard to Athenaeus) that is only the first step in the process of constructing a proper critical apparatus, and I am requesting travel funds to allow me examine the manuscripts themselves. The senior editor of the Texte und Kommentare series has expressed considerable interest in the project and expedited consideration of it if I can offer a firm schedule for completion of the manuscript work. About half the manuscripts I hope to examine for parts (1) and (2) of this proposal are in the Benelux countries, France and Spain, while the other half are in Northern Italy and Switzerland. I therefore propose to combine the projects into two separate mixed trips, in the expectation that the cost of an additional airplane ticket will
be more than offset by reduced travel within Europe and fewer unproductive weekend days.

(3) My interest in IG II 2 2318–25 began with research for Broken Laughter (Oxford, 2007) on the history of Attic comedy. In the course of studying 2318 and 2325 in particular, I discovered both that no one alive today appeared to know how the inscriptions were to be restored, and that many facts taken for granted about them were not facts at all. I therefore joined forces with Benjamin Millis, an epigrapher at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, to produce a new edition of the texts. The project is under contract with Brill; the manuscript is due in October 2010. Ben and I have agreed to share responsibility for all aspects of the edition, including the study of the stones themselves. I am requesting funding to spend two weeks at the American School in Athens, working in the Epigraphical Museum there; all permits are in order. I anticipate renting a room in the School’s residential building and taking at least some of my meals there, and I have reduced my per diem request for Athens accordingly. I will also make a side-trip to Mount Athos to examine the At manuscript of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite.

**Category Justification:**

This application is made under Category 5. Classical Studies is a largely unfunded discipline, and travel money in particular is extremely difficult to obtain from outside sources.