

N. G. WILSON (ed.), *Herodotus Historiae, Libri I-IV*, Oxford Classical Texts, Oxford: OUP, 2015, xiii+471 pp., £40,00, ISBN 978-0-19-956070-7.

N. G. WILSON (ed.), *Herodotus Historiae, Libri V-IX*, Oxford Classical Texts, Oxford: OUP, 2015, vi+440 pp., £40,00, ISBN 978-0-19-956071-4.

Also reviewed:

N. G. WILSON, *Herodotea. Studies on the Text of Herodotus*, Oxford: OUP, 2015, xxvi+202 pp., £50, ISBN 978-0-19-967286-8.

In this new edition of Herodotus' *Historiae*, Nigel Wilson has revised the (original) Oxford Classical Text as edited by the Danish scholar Carolus Hude, which was first published in 1906, revised in 1920, and last revised in 1927. In the current edition, Wilson incorporates much of the valuable work on the text that has been conducted since Hude's edition, in particular that of J. Enoch Powell and Paul Maas. Apart from their conjectures, he also has taken into account new readings from over 80 papyri. In addition, clarity in the *apparatus criticus* has been improved by the collation of two previously neglected medieval manuscripts, which belong to the so-called Roman family. The *apparatus criticus* is straightforward and, compared with previous editions (especially H. B. Rosén's *Herodoti Historiae*, in the Teubner's edition, Leipzig, 2 vols. 1987–1997 (series: Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana)), it appears both significantly reduced (in accordance with the OCT-series' aim) but as yet amply sufficient. The choice to remove, in text and *apparatus*, certain errors one way or another related to orthographic details is remarkable. Regarding the latter issue, Wilson rightfully assumes that "... in matters of dialect the manuscripts are unreliable and do not enable us to restore with confidence the forms preferred by the author" (volume 1, p. vi), who himself seems to have been uncertain at times as regards whether to prefer an Ionic or an Attic form. An elaborate volume, sc. *Herodotea*, elucidating many of Wilson's choices, has been published simultaneously: anyone wishing to investigate the text in greater detail should consult it. I applaud this new edition, which deserves to remain the standard edition for many years to come (even though it is not flawless or complete: a *stemma codicum* is manifestly absent even though, as Wilson states "[t]he stemmatic relations ... are not entirely clear" (volume 1, p. ix);<sup>1</sup> the criteria to opt for a particular reading in the *apparatus* moreover sometimes remain shrouded in the mist, as we shall discuss further on).

<sup>1</sup> The main relations however are clear. The archetype of the Herodotus' tradition had two lines of descent, a fact that has been widely acknowledged and accepted, even by Wilson (*Herodotea* pp. xiii–xviii): the Florentine family (with MS A, according to Wilson, as the best MS for the entire text) and the Roman family (respectively Wilson's A-family and his d-family; in Hude respectively **a** and **d**).

For many decades, many ancient historians and classicists working with Herodotus' *Historiae* relied on the edition prepared by Carolus Hude that, in spite of its faults (e.g. in the presentation of some Persian names, like Artaphrenes for both the satrap of Ionia and his son instead of the correct Artaphernes, as well as several minor errors in the *apparatus*), provided a solid base for them. It had, however, become obsolete, if only because no readings were incorporated of the many Herodotus-fragments on papyrus which have been published since the last update of the Hude edition. These papyrus fragments not merely offer new readings but occasionally also provide us with interesting alternatives. The OCT-board's decision to seek for a new edition was, therefore, a necessary step to keep the series' reputation in place. The task to provide for the new edition was entrusted to Nigel Wilson, who –considering all– has executed his task admirably.

In my view, the main asset of this new edition is that it includes readings of the eighty-odd fragments of Herodotus found on Egyptian papyri known so far (in Rosén's Teubner-edition some conjectures from papyri were incorporated, but derived from a much smaller number of them), even incorporating some hitherto unpublished ones from Oxyrhynchus, as he, e.g. does for Hdt. 2.79.1, 8.112.1, and 8.130.2. Apart from that, Wilson also adopted, sometimes even unpublished, conjectures by other scholars<sup>2</sup> as well as provided some new conjectures himself. In combination, they offer a wide range of alternatives to choose from for many passages of Herodotus' text. Wilson guides the reader through all (or at least most) of these options in *Herodotea*, especially elucidating such passages that require special attention, if only because they have caused contention in the past. *Herodotea* thereby offers Wilson's audience a window to watch the artisan practising his trade. Sometimes it relates to trivial matters, like the number of Eualcidas' victories (*Herodotea*, p. 107 *ad* Hdt. 5.102.3), sometimes it really touches problems posed by the text itself (and, obviously, its constituting MSS as well), like in the case of Hdt. 3.14.10. In that paragraph, a particular problem concerns the word ὥς and its implications in the phrase καὶ ταῦτα ὥς κτλ.: Wilson discusses the various options (*Herodotea*, p. 49) before offering the possible solution we also encounter in the *apparatus* (volume 1, p. 246 *ad* line 228). Wilson also shares his doubts with the reader, as his excellent discussion on Hdt. 2.37.5 shows (*Herodotea*, p. 28): here are no clear-cut conclusions available, only puzzles.

A novelty, in my view, is the use of the double asterisk to mark, *inter alia*, beginning and end of passages that may have been afterthoughts of Herodotus

<sup>2</sup> Many of them made by Paul Maas (some of them probably suggested to Maas by his friend Enoch Powell), as Wilson acknowledges: N. G. Wilson, 'Maasiana on Herodotus', *ZPE* 179(2011), pp. 57-70 at 57. In this paper, Wilson informs us that he acquired from the widow of the late George Forrest Maas's copy of Hude's Herodotus edition, amply provided with marginal notes by Maas.

(cf. volume 1, viii). Some of these passages are not really integrated in the context, like, e.g., in Hdt. 5.9.3 (volume 2, p. 442 lines 81-83) and, perhaps, can be deleted. Others concern duplications: in Hdt. 5.69.2 (volume 2, p. 474 lines 933-935), to be deleted according to Powell, we find again the division by Cleisthenes of the Athenians into ten *phylae*, instead of the previous four, that Herodotus already mentioned before in Hdt. 5.66.2 (cf. volume 2, p. 472 lines 877-880), be it in slightly adapted form. Wilson consistently opts to not delete most of such phrases “if the sole objection raised has been that the passage in question would have been intelligible without them” (volume 1, vii). Wilson’s option is based upon the fact that Herodotus composed his text “to be read aloud to a large public audience or to smaller private groups” (ibidem). Therefore, “a certain amount of repetition or redundancy of style is required” (ibidem). Though admitting “that some interpolations have found their way into the text” (ibidem), Wilson believes their number is far less than has been assumed previously and he therefore chooses to treat the text conservatively.

The double asterisks also appear at passages that have provoked discussion. An excellent example for this I find Hdt. 6.98.3. Wilson explains in *Herodotea* (p. 117) why he constituted the text as he did: it is a brief but comprehensive account of the background for his choice. Wilson also discusses conjectures suggested by colleagues in *Herodotea*: as an example I may refer to p. 120, where he discusses an interpolation possibly suggested by Enoch Powell and duly recorded by Maas. It concerns a much-discussed passage, a eulogy on the Alcmaeonids in general and Callias in particular (in relation with the so-called shield incident after the Battle of Marathon), regarding Hdt. 6.121 (line 1550) – 123 (line 1568). Involving omissions in MS A, potential interpolations, and a scholium, the constitution of these chapters is a delicate mix of uncertainties. Wilson’s final conclusion is that he prefers “to speak of an ‘alternative version not yet integrated in the text’”. Even if not all solutions so achieved are wholly convincing, I believe that to present the struggles any editor of a text faces in this manner should be (or become) the standard procedure. It also means that, in fact, no diligent user of the edition can leave *Herodotea* apart.

As regards the *apparatus*, a word of criticism seems to be in place for Wilson’s treatment of the MS tradition. I already noted above that a clear *stemma codicum* (or at least as clear as evidence permits) is absent. Worse is that it *appears* [my emphasis, JPS] that Wilson does not (always) clearly distinguish between MS A, according to Wilson dating to the tenth century,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Contrary to what Maria Luzzatto has claimed regarding MS A, viz. that folio’s 1-34 were a late thirteenth century facsimile added to the MS, Wilson is adamant that MS A forms a unity, in its entirety written by two scribes in the early tenth century (*Herodotea*, p. xiv-xv and note 11). For the first book of Herodotus the issue certainly matters (Wilson believes ‘A’ to be “certainly ... superior to the others” for Book 1: *Herodotea*, xv). To accept Luzzatto’s view

and the MSS of the A-family, i.e. MS B and MS C. In spite of the fact that MSS B and C are independent of –even though related to– MS A, they only rarely figure in the *apparatus*: it could raise the question whether ‘A’ in the *apparatus* does, in fact, always solely refer to MS A or also to the A-family. Even though Wilson states “that only a few readings of B and C need to be reported” (*Herodotea*, p. xvi), it is unclear (even consulting *Herodotea*) where in the *apparatus*, in his view, this necessity comes to the fore. The problem is, moreover, enhanced by Wilson’s pronounced appreciation for ‘A’ as the best manuscript for Herodotus’ text (see above, note 1). The case is further complicated because –as the Teubner edition by Rosén makes clear– several readings of the d-family are also found in MS C: nevertheless, this concordance does not show in Wilson’s *apparatus*. Not even absence of “the need to be reported” suffices to explain this omission. In this case, I believe therefore, Hude’s option to define what Wilson refers to as the A-family as ‘a’ is much more preferable, if only for clarity’s sake. As it is, Wilson sometimes also seems to be too reluctant to point out the corruption that appears to be a common denominator for MSS of the Roman (or d)-family, of which MS T only rarely appears in the *apparatus*.

Though notably the *apparatus* therefore appears to be not at all flawless (as discussed) and could be well-served with an update when, in due time, a revision is asked for, this new Herodotus edition for the OCT certainly should, nevertheless, be highly commended, also because of the reasons already discussed. In spite of omissions, it generally is a meticulously executed edition, moreover one offered for an affordable price-tag (the Teubner edition, though with a more elaborate apparatus, is in textual approach less comprehensive, in my view, and more expensive). If a revised edition is ever considered, the publisher also might contemplate to address the pagination. The text proper in volume 1 ends with page 436: it is followed by a –very convenient– *index nominum* for volume 1, paginated as pp. 437–471; the text proper in volume 2 next starts with p. 439. Surely, there could have been found some clever way to avoid the same page number occurring twice? An additional feature I prefer in Wilson’s edition (over the one by Hude) is Wilson’s consecutive numbering of the lines per book instead of Hude’s numbering of lines per page. As regards the text itself: obviously, sometimes Wilson prefers readings the reviewer would (probably) have not opted for: an example is Wilson’s choice to read in Hdt. 5.101.3 (line 1489) πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τὸ Τιμῶλον καλεόμενον (as, indeed, Hude did) instead of the reviewer’s preference πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τὸν Τιμῶλον καλεόμενον: Wilson opts

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could mean one concedes that the text of MS A (for Book 1) may have been ‘contaminated’ by undisclosed conjectures (e.g. made by Joannes Tzetzes). Also see R. Cantore, ‘I *Marginalia* dei primi trentaquattro fogli del Laur. plut. 70. 3 (A) di Erodoto’, *BollClass*(3) 33(2012), 3–32. Raffaella Cantore, not referred to by Wilson, believes whether or not these folios are a facsimile remains an open question.

to follow here three MSS of which he admits that they “rarius citantur” (see *ad* Sigla); I prefer the reading found both in ‘A’ and ‘d’: see volume 2, 496 *ad* line 1489 (Hude remains silent on the alternative option!). Since both options are grammatically sound, the choice here probably depends rather on personal preferences than on grammar. However, as Wilson is the editor and his option is sound, I really cannot complain (if only because the *apparatus* does function here as it should). The same conclusion is valid for the care taken by editor and publishers for both volumes constituting this edition and the, *de facto*, accompanying volume of the *Herodotea*. The combination of edition and *Herodotea* I find exemplary. Exemplary is also the typography (apart, perhaps, from the font size, which could have been two points greater for enhanced user comfort), which –as far as I have been able to check– is flawless. In conclusion, this edition is a real asset for the Oxford Classical Texts series.

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