

BOOK REVIEW

Macrobii Ambrosii Theodosii Saturnalia. Recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit ROBERT A. KASTER. Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. lvi + 540. Hardcover, £50.00/\$99.00. ISBN 978-0-19-957119-2.

This new critical edition of *Saturnalia* is the last milestone of a long research itinerary that Robert Kaster has devoted to Macrobius. The OCT text has been prepared for by his *Studies on the Text of Macrobius' Saturnalia* (Oxford, 2010; hereafter *STMS*), an important book containing a new survey of the manuscripts with some improvements of the results obtained by Marinone (second UTET edition of 1977) and Willis (third Teubner edition of 1994); moreover, Kaster has also published an edition with English translation of the Macrobian major work in 2011 for the Loeb Classical Library. This OCT book aims to become a reference work and surely shows the great competence and cleverness of the editor. The *Preface* (V–XLVI), written in English instead of Latin according to the new (but lamentable) tradition of Oxford Classical Texts, gives a short summary of Kaster's studies concerning Macrobian manuscripts, building a *stemma codicum* for each family (α and β) and integrating them into a general stemma at page XXVI.¹ In the preface I would call attention to the importance of the rich repository of Greek errors in manuscripts (XXXI–XLV), a very useful dossier for the comprehension of scribal culture and of diffusion of Greek knowledge in Western Europe.

After the preface and the list of quoted editions, we find a Bibliography; although useful, Kaster should nonetheless have maintained some references already included in Marinone's rich bibliography.²

¹ In the *stemma* there are some minor mistakes: in the section concerning family $\beta 1$ the subarchetype ς printed at page XVIII disappears; a π that should be placed over V has been inserted in the wrong position; in family $\beta 2$ there is no more trace of a subarchetype δ ; clearly, the choice to do a one page layout of the stemma was not the best, in view of its complex architecture.

² The bibliography lacks both some textual (e.g., G. Lögdberg, *In Macrobii Saturnalia adnotationes* (diss. Uppsala, 1936)) and exegetical (e.g. all Marinone's articles and books excepting the UTET edition) contributions.

Let us pass to the text. Kaster shows a decisive improvement in comparison with Willis: his edition is based on a better evaluation of manuscripts and on a more careful consideration both of the former editions and of the *loci similes*; in particular, this apparatus—very valuable if we consider the typology of Macrobian work—achieves the goal of combining rich information with simplicity, and gives information that could greatly help future Macrobian commentators: see, for instance, 3.9.4 on Servius' reference on the name *Luam*, where Kaster notes that he accepts the conjecture *Luae* of Preller instead of *Lunae* given by the manuscripts; or at 3.14.12, where Kaster underlines a misunderstanding in Macrobius, who confuses Quintus Roscius with Roscius Otho; or at 3.16.13, where the Macrobian *duos pontes* are explained as “Aemilium et Fabricium, *LTUR* iii. 106-7, iuxta os Cloacae Maximae.”

To understand Kaster's ideas of editing Macrobius, it is necessary to read the OCT edition side by side with his *STMS*, where he explains in a convincing way the results of his research. From a methodological point of view he chooses correctly to preserve Macrobian quotations of former authors, even if corrupted, avoiding the mistake of standardizing the text. In the critical apparatus Kaster offers about 290 differences from Willis and many agreements with Marinone (exactly as listed in *STMS* 29 n. 1), but continues to re-evaluate the text of *Saturnalia*: Mario De Nonno has carefully discussed many *loci* in a review that appeared in *BMCR* 2012.11.05 and, in general, I agree with him on their correctness and validity; here I briefly discuss only some other examples. At 1.11.7 Kaster accepts Madvig's *quos ius tuos vocat* instead of *quos ius tuum vocas*, but I think that it is difficult to connect the verb *vocare* with *ius* because *vocare* is more suitable to a person, and so I prefer Marinone 1977's *quos iure tuos vocas* (in *Nota critica*); at 2.2.17 Kaster and Marinone show an appreciable difference in dealing with iambic verses, attested both by Gellian and Macrobian manuscripts: Kaster prefers Gellian readings against Marinone, but, at least in one situation, I think that *vi transilire nititur* of Havet (*Manuel de critique verbale appliquée aux textes latins* (Paris, 1911) 140), accepted by Marinone, is syntactically better than *ut transiliret nititur*. At 2.4.12, Marinone's solution with ellipsis, *carbunculum ... habeas*, is better than *carbunculum †habeas†* printed by Kaster and surely preferable to *Hadriae* given by Willis, a trace of the attempts to find a geographical location of every name in the sequence of this Augustan epistolary fragment; at 5.15.12, I think with Marinone that it is not necessary to integrate <*comitem Aeneae quem miserat Ida*> as Jan did, because the text is coherent without any quotation; at the same

time, the form *rursus* of the manuscripts is weaker than the correction *Nisus* of editors.

Nonetheless, in spite of my different evaluations of many points of the text, Kaster's edition makes a great contribution to the exegesis of the Macrobian text. The only real drawback of this work—already highlighted by De Nonno—consists in the copious misprints, that require the book to be used with care. If the publisher were to bring out a corrected edition, it would allow the effective use of this rich and important tool of research that Kaster's deep competence has put at the disposal of the scholarly community.³

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³ To the list of mistakes I would add *Mallium* instead of *L. Mallium* in 2.2.10; *Cassium* instead of *C. Cassium* in 2.3.13.