

EMMA NICHOLSON: *Philip V of Macedon in Polybius' Histories: Politics, History, and Fiction*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2023. ISBN 978-0-19-286676-9. 416 pp. GBP 100.

Emma Nicholson's first monograph is a valuable contribution to both the scholarly discussion on Philip V and Polybius' *Histories*. Nicholson states that the volume "aims to contribute to the advancement of the study of Philip V from a historiographical and literary perspective" (p. 2). Indeed, this volume is not a simple biography but a thorough examination of Polybius' narrative style and historiographical methods through his portrayal of Philip V, who is a central figure in the *Histories* and a key to understanding "how and under what kind of polity the Romans in less than fifty-three years succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government" (Polyb. 1.1.5).

In the 20th century, Polybius' work was often seen as the most objective and truthful source for the events of his time and before. However, in the last decades, this straightforward attitude has been reassessed increasingly often by scholars who have started to examine Polybius' work as a complex, creative narrative that was influenced by the historian's political and didactic agendas. In a similar manner, Nicholson's present work also builds on the earlier studies of Brian McGing (e.g., *Polybius' Histories*, New York 2010) and Nikos Mitsios (e.g., *The Shaping of Narrative in Polybius*, Berlin – Boston 2013), among others. Moreover, Nicholson remarks that scholars have often studied Polybius' *Histories* from a Romano-centric perspective, not sufficiently emphasizing the fact that Polybius was a Greek who wrote to a Greek-speaking audience and promoted Greek aristocratic values as the standard of decent Hellenic behaviour, as opposed to barbarism. Indeed, Polybius' Achaean and Megalopolitan perspective, together with his rhetorical strategies, impact his portrayals of the Antigonid kings. Nicholson's study thus further develops the arguments brought forth by Craig B. Champion (*Cultural Politics in Polybius's Histories*, Berkeley 2004) and John Thornton (*Polibio: Il politico e lo storico*, Roma 2020). Nicholson also engages with the numerous earlier studies of the influential Polybian scholar Frank W. Walbank (including the comprehensive biography *Philip V of Macedon*, Cambridge 1940), bringing his pioneering studies into dialogue with the recent developments in the field of study.

Chapter 1, "Constructing Macedon and the World Through an Achaean Perspective", shows how Polybius' Achaean perspective affects his narrative on several levels, including the positive portrayal of Philip V during his early reign. Polybius was very attached to the Achaean league and its leader Aratus of Sicyon, who then became an advisor of Philip V and whose autobiographical *Memoirs* Polybius used as one of his sources. Nicholson shows that Polybius deliberately emphasizes Aratus' role and reduces that of other political agents in forming the alliance between the Achaean League and the Macedonian kingdom. In addition, Polybius' depiction of the

Achaean League “is deliberately constructed throughout his narrative and he will not suffer the more negative interpretations of others to taint the legacy of his own confederation” (p. 58). Nicholson’s considerations of Polybius’ clearly biased approach are accompanied by a careful historical analysis of Achaean-Macedonian relations at the time.

In Chapter 2, “The Darling of the Greeks Turns into a Tyrant”, Nicholson examines Polybius’ account of two events from the king’s early career: the attack on Aetolian Thermum in 218 BC and the Macedonian attempt to seize Messene in 215 BC (Polyb. 5.11.6 and 7.13.7), which, according to Polybius, marked the turn to the worse for Philip. Philip’s moral character changed because, despite the positive influence of Aratus, who was his advisor at the time, he decided to follow the advice of another advisor, Demetrius of Faros. Polybius thus creates the juxtaposition of a ‘good’ and an ‘evil’ advisor for narrative purposes, and deliberately disregards the influence of other advisors and Philip’s political, financial, and strategic reasons for his violent actions in Thermum and Messene. Indeed, Polybius chose to highlight Philip’s change of character rather than policy in order to deflect blame away from Aratus and the Achaean League, and to foreshadow the political separation of the Achaean League from Macedon later in 198.

In Chapter 3, “Philip V and His Greek Allies”, Nicholson shows that even though Polybius then constructs Philip as a wicked tyrant, Philip was, in fact, a dedicated ally who supported his allies consistently until his defeat by Rome. To strengthen the negative portrayal of Philip, Polybius downplays the king’s good relations with several of his allies and focuses on the negative relations. As for the defection of Philip’s Greek allies to Rome, this cannot have been wholly dependent on the king’s behaviour, as Polybius seems to suggest: many of the allies defected only at the end of the Second Macedonian War, including the Achaean league in 198, probably in part out of fear of Rome. Nicholson reminds us that Polybius’ selective emphasis does not mean that we should doubt the accuracy of Polybius’ information but, rather, we should be aware of his subtle literary manipulations.

Chapter 4, “Philip and the Romans”, focuses more on the ideological aspects of Polybius’ narrative by suggesting that Polybius tried to persuade his Greek readers that, at this point in history, Rome deserved its dominion over the Greeks because they were the more morally acceptable option compared to Philip, according to the Greek notions of Hellenism and barbarism. Nicholson argues that in Polybius’ narrative the images of Philip and Rome are interdependent, just like those of the Achaean League and Philip. This means that “the joint Roman and Achaean rise in good government and Hellenic characteristics bears a reverse correlation, temporally and narratologically, with the key points of Philip’s life and development in the *Histories*” (p. 184). Polybius attempts to persuade the Greek audience to accept Roman rule with his deliberately negative, even barbaric portrayal of Philip, while presenting the Romans as a more ‘Hellenic’ power. This chapter also permits Nicholson to analyse narratological aspects of Polybius’ work in more detail.

Chapter 5, “A Tragic King”, turns to the examination of Polybius’ use of a tragic mode in the description of the last years of Philip’s reign, from the literary perspective. Here, Nicholson also inquires how the use of a tragic mode relates to Polybius’ methodology and conception of the genre of history. Polybius’ account of Philip’s last years – which also includes Polybius’ controversial explanation of the origin the of Third Macedonian War – has inspired a great number of scholarly publications, and Nicholson makes a valuable contribution to this discussion. Until Arthur Eckstein’s *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius* (Berkeley CA 1995), scholars tended to regard Polybius as a purely pragmatic and even “Machiavellian” historian who did not have a distinct moral and didactic mission. Frank W. Walbank, for instance, criticized Polybius’ use of tragic mode and wrote that it made Polybius’ account of the last years of Philip ‘one of the least satisfying of his whole work’ because it did not adhere to “the requirements of scientific History” (“ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΣ ΤΡΑΓΩΙΔΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ: A Polybian Experiment”, *JHS* 58:1 [1938] 67). Nicholson argues that Polybius carefully uses dramatic language and structuring throughout his work whenever it could help his didactic purpose, and therefore Polybius’ account of Philip’s last years is consistent with the overall portrayal and his wider narrative scheme. Also, within the wider Hellenistic intellectual tradition, there was nothing unusual about using such literary features in historiography. Indeed, Nicholson argues that “[t]he peculiar tragic and emotional quality of the last years of Philip’s life would not therefore have compromised its worth in the eyes of the historian or of his original ancient audience. In fact, it may very well have had the opposite effect as it came to present a moment of importance” (p. 253).

Chapter 6, “Woven History, Woven Lives”, then scrutinizes Polybius’ use of a biographical means of presenting key individuals, and what kind of challenges this poses inside the historiographical genre. This chapter also ends the book aptly by taking a last look at Polybius’ whole portrayal of Philip V and comparing it to the portrayals of other important kings and Hannibal within the *Histories*. These comparisons show that Philip’s portrayal was part of a wider discourse on the universal decline of kingship in the *Histories*, and they further consolidate Nicholson’s arguments on a more general level.

In conclusion, this work argues – in my view successfully – that Polybius deliberately crafted a negative image of Philip V in order to convey a certain didactic and political message to his readers. Indeed, for Polybius, the portrayal of Philip served as a warning moral lesson and as a justification for Roman rule over the Greeks. Polybius’ manipulation of his narrative does not, however, mean that Philip’s portrait is completely historically inaccurate: it means that we need to be aware that Polybius chose to overemphasize and simplify certain aspects and minimize others. Nicholson’s analysis of the *Histories* is admirably thorough and careful, and the author is not afraid of pointing out Polybius’ bias and errors when it is warranted. This work demonstrates how important it is to read and understand the *Histories* as a whole – especially because of its fragmentary state – before analysing Polybius’

descriptions of single events in the lives of his chosen characters. Nicholson's work is also an excellent example of how a literary perspective on ancient historiography can complement historical research in a meaningful way. The author's knowledge of, and discussion about, the relevant scholarly literature in all languages is impressive, and there are no apparent errors or shortcomings. This volume is a fundamental contribution to Polybian studies. The book will also be essential to anyone researching Philip V and ancient Macedon, or the ancient historiography of this era in general.

Jasmin Lukkari
University of Helsinki

PHILIPP ROELLI: *Latin as the Language of Science and Learning*. Lingua Academica 7. De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2021. ISBN 978-3-11-074575-7; ISBN (e-book) 978-3-11-074583-2. XIII, 646 pp. EUR 89.95.

As is well known, Latin has a rich past with different linguistic and historical phases and various areas of special terminologies. Thus, the lifespan of Latin is, indeed, *longue durée*. Philipp Roelli's *Latin as the Language of Science and Learning* is a general treatise about the origins of Latin as a scientific language, and the stages of its development and change in this context. Latin, after all, has long been thought of as "a language of science" (see p. 3–8 and 13–27). Roelli traces Latin's scientific association through such words as *scientia formalis*, *scientia naturalis*, *ars*, *scientia*, *historia* and *philosophia* and the different branches of science that were formed in the past. In German we have *Wissenschaft*, in Russian наука (*naúka*), and in Modern Greek επιστήμη (*epistēmē*), all relating to branches of science. In English and French, the word *science* has a narrower extension (see p. 22).

Roelli's aim is to afford "a broad overview of the topic [in question], investigating the rôle of the Latin language as a vehicle for science and learning over much of the time of its existence" (p. 1). This extensive book is divided into three thematic parts, "Semantics of the term 'science'", "Diachronic panorama of Latin science and learning", and "Changes in the language of science", and it offers a wide viewpoint of development of scientific Latin by means of Roelli's multi-method approach.

In the introduction, Roelli offers the rationale and aims for his study, describes its contents and explains why Latin is a 'language of science'. He also covers what problems are related to the concept of science and how scientific languages are connected with technical languages (*Fachsprachen*). The first part is about the semantics of the concept of science and other relevant concepts in different languages, the nature of science and the scientific thought style (*Denkstil*). This