
Apparently it never rains but it pours. Until not long ago Strato of Sardis was just one of many poets in the Greek Anthology, and whoever was interested in his epigrams would read him either in Beckby’s *Anthologia Graeca* or in the Budé edition by Aubreton. The climate has changed and in quick succession three modern editions with commentary have been published, all of them with merits and limitations of their own: in chronological order, González Rincón (1996), Steinbichler (1998) and Floridi (2007).1) As the book under review, the edition by Floridi (henceforth F.), provides a more extensive and strictly philological commentary than the other two, it will probably be favoured by most classicists, and rightly so. Still, I would recommend classical scholars to count their blessings and use the other two as well, especially González Rincón, whose lucid and penetrating comments have received less attention than they deserve.

Let me begin by saying that this is a marvelous edition, and the editor deserves our unreserved admiration for her philological acumen and sensitive treatment of Strato’s poetry. The following criticisms are certainly not meant to diminish the value of F.’s edition, but to further the debate on Strato and his epigrams.

The book under review is divided into three parts: introduction (pp. 1-55), text and Italian translation (pp. 57-115), and commentary (pp. 117-429). Her edition consists of 105 epigrams. 94 of these derive from the homoerotic section in Cephalas: nos. *AP* 12.1-11, 13, 15-6 and 21 (= 1-15 F.), 12.175-209 (= 16-50 F.), 12.210-5 (= 52-7 F.), 12.216-35 (= 59-75 F.), 12.236-41 (= 77-82 F.), 12.242-55 and 258 (= 84-98 F.). The remaining eleven epigrams derive from the bacchic and satirical epigrams in Cephalas (*AP* 11.19, 21-2, 117 and 225 = 99, 83, 100, 101, 51 F.), the *Appendix Planudea* (*APl*. 213 = 102 F.) and the so-called *Sylloge Parision*, on which see below (nos. 58, 76, 103-5 F.). These 105 epigrams consist of 460 verses, and these 460 verses are commented upon in 313 pages, which means that, on average, each page deals with one and a half verse. This is perhaps a bit excessive.

In the introduction F. treats the following four subjects: (I) date of Strato, (II) form, language, style, genre, (III) metrics, and (IV) manuscript tradition. F.’s treatment of the generic characteristics of Strato’s epigrams (no. II) is excellent: she proves beyond any doubt the generic affinities between Strato and the satirical

'Diogenianic' authors. Her discussion of the metrical peculiarities of Strato (no. III) is not bad either. As for the date (part I of her introduction), she prefers to err on the safe side rather than follow Alan Cameron and go for a Hadrianic date on the basis of AP 11.117.2) She points out similarities between Martialis and the Priapea, on the one hand, and Strato on the other, and she assumes that it is the Greek author who is influencing the Romans, and not vice versa. But seeing that Strato AP 12.208 (49 F.) clearly imitates Ovid, Tristia 1.1.1-2 (as pointed out by K. Gutzwiller in the preface to F.'s edition, p. xiii), how certain can we be that it is Martialis who is borrowing from Strato, and not the other way around? If Strato could read and understand Ovid, why should we not accept the idea that Strato read Martialis as well? Why this urge to deny any originality on the part of the Romans and to always assume that they are the ones imitating, whereas the Greeks reside on their Olympian heights?

Unfortunately, the description of the manuscripts (part IV of the introduction) leaves much to be desired. It starts with the Palatine manuscript and its apographs, then turns to Planudes and the syllogae minores, and finally discusses modern ideas on the genesis of AP 12. In my view, it is unacceptable that an editor first discusses early modern apographs and only then medieval manuscripts, because this blurs the fundamental difference between what constitutes a manuscript reading and what a conjecture or an emendation. Tracing back the origin of an emendation is a laudable effort, although it hardly ever leads to concrete results (and all the ascriptions to Saumaise, Bouhier, Scaliger, Sylburg, and tutti quanti, therefore, should be taken with a pinch of salt). But the basis of any edition should be the manuscript tradition.3)

As the Sylloge Parisina (S) is the most important collection of pederastic epigrams after book AP 12, it is of crucial importance to any edition of Strato and deserves more attention than F. is willing to devote to it. The main problem with S is that it does not offer names: so it is anyone’s guess to whom the eleven epigrams not found in AP 12 should be attributed. According to Alan Cameron, five of these epigrams may have been written by Strato, two by Meleager and two by others, whereas the remaining two epigrams are not homoerotic, but heteroerotic. F. has incorporated in her edition only the five epigrams that, according to Cameron, could possibly be attributed to Strato: these are numbers 58, 76, 103-5 F. She rightly rejects the ascription of 105 F. to Strato, accepts the ascription of 58 and 76 F. (although these two epigrams are so mediocre that they could have been