

publishers have let him down disgracefully by shirking any serious attempt to make his text consistently intelligible.

*University of Nottingham*

ALAN H. SOMMERSTEIN

W. STEINBICHLER: *Die Epigramme des Dichters Straton von Sardes. Ein Beitrag zum griechischen paiderotischen Epigramm*. Pp. 261. Berlin, etc.: Peter Lang, 1998. Paper, DM 31. ISBN: 3-631-329245.

Strato is gradually emerging from obscurity. Several articles in the 1970s and 1980s, and now two editions in the 1990s (the other being that of Rincón, published in 1996), point to increasing scholarly interest both in the Hellenistic erotic epigram and in the institution of Greek paederasty. The latter, of course, is the more difficult to describe and assess. Beginning, in all likelihood, as a ritual means of preparing boys for manhood and initiating them into the psychological ambience of the warrior-citizen, its later history is not easily followed or understood. Changes in its physical practices, from intercrural to anal sex, for example, need further investigation or discussion with the help of anthropology. But any such investigation or discussion needs to be based firmly upon a reliable text and a sophisticated understanding of the language of sex which the relevant literature deploys, whether that language be technical or metaphoric, and this latest edition of Strato's work will go a long way to providing subsequent commentators with the foundation they require.

Steinbichler begins his edition with some brief remarks on Strato's origin and date. W. M. Clarke argued that Strato must be located 'well before the second century AD and probably before the birth of Christ' (*CPh* 79 [1984], 220); Rincón concluded that one cannot be more specific than first century B.C.–first century A.D. S., however, brings us back to the more conventional dating of the second century A.D., and the reign of Hadrian in particular. He then goes on to review the observations of a number of scholars who have discussed Strato so far, and thus proceeds to the body of his work.

Abandoning the order of Strato's epigrams in Books 11 and 12 of *the Anthologia Palatina*, S. presents them according to a variety of themes he quite reasonably discerns in them: age; the transitoriness of love and good looks; the price for love which may be purchased; objects or conditions directly related to the sex act, such as the penis, impotence, or podagra; the golden mean; encounters; the games played by jealousy; and variations on the theme of 'Ganymede'. Inevitably some epigrams will not fit easily into categories, and these appear at the end as 'Varia'. Each section gives the Greek text with apparatus, a German translation, and a largely linguistic commentary, with frequent excursus which compare and contrast the theme of the epigram under discussion with those of other poets such as Meleager, Martial, or Rufinus, or which bear upon an element of Strato's vocabulary.

Reading the epigrams arranged in this thematic fashion leaves one wondering how far they are *jeux d'esprit* between intellectuals, and how far they may be reflectors of a personal or a shared experience. S. is not happy with approaches which try to enter the latter discussion, especially when these make use of Freudian psychology, but to be fair, the task he set himself was to bring readers a reliable version of the text with such comments as might be rooted in linguistic sensitivity and *gesunder Menschenverstand*, and this he has done admirably.

*University of St Andrews*

P. G. MAXWELL-STUART

M. D. USHER (ed.): *Homerocontones Eudociae Augustae* (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana). Pp. xii + 115. Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1999. Cased. ISBN: 3-519-01318-5.

U.'s title is also a mission statement. The conviction that he has identified the work of the Empress Eudocia (died 460) underpins his studies, 'Prolegomenon to the Homeric Centos', *AJPh* 118 (1997), 305–21 and *Homeric Stitchings* (Lanham, 1998: see *CR* 50 [2000], 275f.), which now culminate in an edition. This Teubner supersedes Ludwig's (1897) and shares with