

narrative rejected there does set in motion later colonizations of space.

Overall, this is an innovative approach to a complex poem. Although unlikely to make its readers proponents of spatial theory, the work is considered, informative and does succeed in stimulating the re-reading and possible reappraisal of several parts of the poem.

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SENS (A.) *Asclepiades of Samos: Epigrams and Fragments*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. cxiv + 353. £90. 9780199253197.

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With its admirable combination of philological and literary explanation, Sens' commentary on the epigrams of Asclepiades is to be welcomed as a central contribution to the study of this seminal figure in the early history of Hellenistic epigram. Compared to L.A. Guichard's 2004 commentary (*Asclepiádes de Samos: Epigramas y fragmentos. Estudio introductorio, revisión del texto, traducción y comentario*, Bern, Berlin and Bruxelles) – a thoroughly researched work rich in information, though sometimes rather too detailed – Sens tends to be more succinct and often displays a greater sensibility for literary subtleties. Overall, the two studies complement each other in multiple ways, and one can only wish that the works of other epigrammatists will soon receive similar scholarly treatment (those interested in Asclepiades' poetry should also consult I.S. Nastos, *Asklepiadou tou Samiou Epigrammata*, Heraklion, 2006).

In his introductory chapter, which comprises over a hundred pages, Sens gives an excellent overview over Asclepiades' life and work, the development of erotic epigram, Asclepiades' engagement with the inscriptional tradition and his relation to contemporary authors, followed by a discussion of the poems' language, style, meter and transmission. Of particular interest is Sens' speculation (xxix–xxx) about the provenance of Asclepiades' nickname Sicelidas (*cf.* Theocr. *Id.* 7.40 with Σ Theocr. 7.21b, 40; Hedylus *HE* 1859–61; Meleager *AP* 4.1.45–46), which he connects to the expulsion of the entire Samian population by Athens in 365 BC: if the poet's family spent their years of exile in Sicily (a return to the homeland was not possible until 322 BC), it is conceivable that "someone – perhaps even

Asclepiades himself – coined the nickname Sicelidas in the form of a patronym, "son of a Sicilian", playfully adverting to his upbringing in the Greek West' (xxx). Even if there is no ultimate proof to confirm this hypothesis, it strikes me as a brilliant idea, not least because such a reading gives special point to Theocritus' Σικελίδαν ... τὸν ἐκ Σάμῳ 'as a playfully paradoxical ethnic joke' (xxx).

The commentary proper includes not only the 33 poems which the *Greek Anthology* preserves under the name of Asclepiades, but also 14 epigrams of ambiguous ascription and several fragments. Besides presenting the Greek text together with a critical *apparatus* and translation, each section offers an introductory essay to the epigram under discussion as well as a lemma commentary. Sens is very good at teasing out the poems' literary sophistication, allusiveness and – in various cases – generic hybridity. His way of combining linguistic explanations with astute interpretative insights is, indeed, exemplary. Sens' comments on *XLI (*AP* 7.217) may serve as a case in point: Ἀρχεάνασσαν ἔχω, τὰν ἐκ Κολοφῶνος ἑταίραν, / ἄς καὶ ἐπὶ ρυτίδων ὁ γλυκὺς ἔζειτ' Ἔρωσ. / ἄ νέον ἦβας ἄνθος ἀποδρέψαντες ἔρασταί / πρωτοβόλου, δι' ὅσας ἦλθετε πυρκαϊᾶς ('I have Archeanassa, the courtesan from Colophon; / sweet Eros sits/sat even on her wrinkles. / Ah, lovers who plucked the fresh flower of her youth / when it was first budding – what a pyre you came through!'). Whereas Guichard argues that the poem must be understood as an epitaph and rejects the possibility of an 'erotic' reading, Sens follows Richard Thomas ("Melodious tears:" sepulchral epigram and generic mobility", in M.A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit and G.C. Wakker (eds), *Genre in Hellenistic Poetry*, Groningen, 1998, 205–23) in regarding the epigram as purposefully ambiguous: the subject of ἔχω could either be Archeanassa's tomb or a lover holding the aged hetaira in his arms. A similar ambiguity underlies, Sens notes (283), the elided ἔζειτ': 'In a funerary context, -ετ(ο) is to be understood [...] But Alexandrian poets regularly allow the elision of -αι in verbal endings (*cf.* VIII. 3 n.), and it is also possible to understand ἔζειτ(αι), which facilitates reading the poem as amatory. Even on a funerary reading, the present might suggest the playfully macabre implication that even Archeanassa's dead body is sexually attractive'.

Observations such as these abound, revealing Sens as a great guide in matters of interpretation and making his commentary a pleasure to use. Altogether I have only some minor quibbles.

Considering the overall excellence of his work, Sens' selective method of referencing secondary literature seems rather peculiar. In the case of an author such as Asclepiades, whose poems have not attracted much scholarly attention until recently, it would have been easy and very helpful to provide a bibliographical key for each epigram (as one finds in Guichard). Anyone studying *AP* 5.158, for instance, would surely benefit from knowing that there is an article dedicated to this very epigram by P. Bing ('The writing on the girdle: Asclepiades 4 Gow-Page (*AP* 5.158)', *Bulletin of the Archaeological Society in Alexandria* 46, 2000, 245–48). I also found myself wondering why Sens, in his discussion of *AP* 7.11 (28 G-P), does not point the reader to his own excellent essay 'Asclepiades, Erinna, and the poetics of Labor' (in P. Thibodeau and H. Haskell (eds), *Being There Together: Essays in Honor of Michael C.J. Putnam on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, Afton, 2003, 78–87). Even if ideas presented in Sens' article have been incorporated into his commentary, one misses a reference to this previous publication.

There are more typographical errors than one might have expected, and I was surprised by the occasional omission of individual words in Sens' translations – a strange lapse considering that he highlights the importance of those very words in his lemmata (cf. $\delta\psi\omega\nu\tau\iota$ in I 1, $\chi\epsilon\rho\sigma\acute{\iota}\nu$ in *XXXIV 5 and $\chi\rho\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\epsilon\alpha$ in *XXXVIII 1). These minor flaws, however, do not compromise the overall high quality of his work. There can be no doubt that this book will be a great resource for anyone studying Hellenistic poetry.

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FAIN (G.L.) **Ancient Greek Epigrams: Major Poets in Verse Translation**. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. Pp. x + 252, illus. £13.95. 978-0520265806.

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This book purports to be both a short history of Greek epigram as a genre (25–26), intended for a general reader (1–2), but an unconventional history – one, that contextualizes poems and lets them speak for themselves at the same time. Effectively, however, the title describes the book's content more appropriately. This is an English verse translation of selected epigrams of Anyte,

Leonidas of Tarentum, Asclepiades, Posidippus, Callimachus, Theocritus, Meleager, Philodemus and Lucillius (chapters 2–10), sandwiched with a concise preface to individual authors and some explanatory notes between an 'Introduction to ancient Greek epigrams' and a (very) 'Selected bibliography', list of abbreviations, credits and an index of the first lines. There is no real index or a concordance. As the epigrams are given in a selection, and with consecutive numeration within a chapter, the only way to find out if a certain epigram known from standard editions is included in this anthology or not, is to peruse the explanatory notes for each of the sections. This is the only place where such references are given; those who may want to know if the book includes, say, a translation of Asclepiades Gow-Page I will need to look through the note on single poems one by one (it is – Fain, Asclepiades no. V).

Perhaps this reviewer is not as general as a general reader might be, but this book is bound to attract only a limited interest of scholars and students. If this book is a history of Greek epigram, it is, by all means, a skewed one – the author justifies his choice of the material in the following fashion (25): 'Since there were nine Muses and nine poets in the canon of lyric verse, I have chosen nine poets of epigrams as my exemplars ... poets whom every scholar would place near the top of the list'. Hence, dealing with four centuries of Greek literary epigram (from the Hellenistic to the early Imperial period), almost all the material from the Archaic and Classical periods, as well as the rich material coming from late antiquity, is left out. However, some attention has been paid to early verse-inscriptions with the intention of assessing its influence on practices of Hellenistic and later poets (7–13).

The introductory chapter provides some insight into Greek literary epigram of the Hellenistic period, offers basic information on the Hellenistic period and cursorily discusses the influence of early verse-inscriptions on Hellenistic epigram. A general reader will learn about generic markers of early epigram, epigrammatic voices, appropriation of early motifs and contexts, and the development of erotic epigram in the Hellenistic period. In his passages dedicated to the text of epigrams, the author also explains the principle of the selection: when choosing epigrams for his anthology, the author was guided by his preference for poems 'for which authorship is most clearly indicated' (23), although he shows awareness of difficulties associated with the attributions.