

has enabled him to improve on the text very much by making the right choice among earlier suggestions and adding emendations and conjectures of his own; but there remain of course a fair amount of cruxes and asterisks.

*H. Thesleff*

*Pindari Carmina cum fragmentis. Pars I: Epinicia. Post Brunonem Snell edidit Hervicus Maehler. Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. BSB B.G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, Leipzig 1984. XI, 192 S. M 24.—.*

This volume is a reprint of the 4th edition of the Epinicia part of Snell's Pindar (1964, the 1st edition 1953), with a few Addenda et Corrigenda attached (p. 191–192). It is good to have Maehler's competent confirmation of the reliability of this classical edition.

*H. Thesleff*

*Simon Goldhill: Language, sexuality, narrative: the Oresteia. Cambridge University Press, 1984. X, 315 p. £ 30.00.*

The astounding richness of the Oresteia and the deep relevance of its themes even to our age are reflected in the number of books and articles – often of great interest and good quality – that have been inspired by the trilogy of Aeschylus over the last few years. Broadly speaking, we can categorize them into two groups: those concentrating to the aspect of stagecraft and performance, and those investigating the text, the way the language works. Both aspects, with their many varieties and intertwinings, are essential to our quest of understanding the Oresteia. Simon Goldhill undoubtedly belongs to the second group – although he would, I think, be the first to protest against the ascribing of labels. In his Introduction, he describes his work as a departure, apparently from the usual paths well trodden by classical scholars. In spite of the fact that he has been inspired by his wide reading in fields outside classical studies (if one takes those studies in a narrow sense), for instance modern literary theory, semiotics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, I do not see his work as a revolution in the sphere of classical studies. The best interpreters of Aeschylus among the classicists have often reached results of equal (or even superior) broadness of vision.

This is, however, an interesting, stimulating and intelligent book. Its central idea (nowhere clearly formulated, but echoing and reverberating everywhere – which, by the way, is typical of the method of presentation of the author) is the realization of the importance of language and word in the Greek culture – not only in its political functions in the service of the state and the law but in its function as a vehicle for power and domination in human relations and as a ritual force. Not in vain does the author emphasize such expressions as e.g. Cho. 720-1 στομάτων. . . ἰσχύον (p. 169). The author offers

ample evidence for the importance of the concept of language and word in this trilogy. However, curiously, he does not link this fact with the fact that the *Oresteia* is drama, not narrative (in the Aristotelian sense). It is not simply a text, it is a dialogue, and much of the discussed material rises from this simple basis. Are not "heuristic gaps between signifier and signified" (e.g. p. 68) typical of any conflict between the speakers in Greek tragedy?

The antagonism of the author towards a visual interpretation of drama, the stagecraft movement of recent times (expressed very clearly e.g. pp. 203f., 257f.) leads him sometimes to overemphasize the interplay of words between the different parts of the trilogy. It has been convincingly shown in many studies of Aeschylean language in the last decades that the themes and images of his plays do not emerge in their fullness when we first meet them, but develop and reveal their meaning and interrelations in the course of the play. It is, of course, possible – even acceptable – to interpret the text of the drama from the point of view of a modern reader and scholar, well versed in the development of the plot and language of the dramatic whole. But – so far at least I agree with the stagecraft school – we should keep in mind that the text was created for performance in the theatre, where the audience could understand the text only to the extent that they followed it. This second aspect is not brought forward in Goldhill's presentation, and it affects his interpretation of the basic movements of the story. I take as an example the beacon scene of the *Agamemnon* (258ff.), the interpretation of which (pp. 33ff.) is referred to several times later in the work as a confirmation of other interpretations. The author argues that "the opposition between judging from appearances (*φάσμα* – itself often opposed to reality as 'illusion'), which the chorus impute to Clytemnestra, and judging by *φρονηῖν*, by which Clytemnestra rebukes the chorus, as the basis for acceptable proof, becomes important particularly because of its significance in the debate about paternity. For the role of the mother in procreation is the perceived, visible function. . . whereas. . . the role of the father in procreation is a culturally assumed and culturally defined status, that which is *conceived* rather than *perceived*". – "The function of proof by mere vision is what the chorus impute to Clytemnestra, as a female, and what she rejects by her repetition of *φρονός/φρένας*, the male principle of proof." (p. 37). This is said on the basis of the debate 264–277, where there is no hint of connecting visual proof with women in the chorus' speech, in fact no mention of real visual proof at all (*ὀνειρώων φάσματ'* 274 cannot be connected with real visual "showing") – and how could there be, when the chorus as yet do not know anything of the signal seen by the watchman? As to this signal, the author sees Clytemnestra's beacon speeches (281ff., 320ff.) as manipulation of language, manipulation of the beacon-chain and the signification of the beacon-chain (pp. 39, 42). It is true that she cannot 'in fact' know what she is describing in the second speech, and it is true that the signification of the beacon message (in the first speech) comes from contextualization, a code, but it is not true that "Clytemnestra's narration relates merely the visible connection between Troy and the palace, because there is no message in language to relate" (p. 39). The code makes the visible connection a real proof – it is not merely somebody signalling something in Troy, it is Agamemnon giving the agreed sign of victory, and even if the chorus had never heard of such an

arrangement – which is a detail which is not considered in the drama – they clearly accept Clytemnestra's visual proof. To me it is certainly not in keeping with the author's line of thought to interpret ll. 317–19 as an expression of the chorus' unwillingness to accept this visible proof and their willingness to pass it off as female nonsense.

There is, then, scope for different opinions. There is also a very lively and convincing picture (if I venture to use such a visual term – but I am, after all, female) of the difficulty of grasping the total meaning of Aeschylus' language, of "the hovering over the abyss of meaning" (p. 203). The difficulties of Aeschylus' language are not made easier by the difficulties of Goldhill's mode of presentation. He has deliberately left his book as a description of a process of close reading; he does not theorize, categorize, or explain. Fortunately, the actual "reading", that is, the largest part of the book, is written in a much more lucid way than the introduction, which baffles the reader with parentheses, question marks, inverted commas, heaped quotations and promises that reasons will become clearer later on.

Reading this rich book, which is described as "provocative" in the cover text, I was mainly provoked by the lack of consideration for the reader who wishes to get some idea of the book before reading it. This is made difficult, in addition to the introduction, by the "Contents" surpassing Aeschylus in obscurity with its "Sees, seems, semes: signs and sight". Referring to the book after reading it is also made difficult. The book lacks instructive indices – even an *index locorum* would be useful, although the text itself runs in a sort of line-by-line commentary. The general index we do have does not contain much more than selected references to modern authors. However, the author does at least give a very full and instructive bibliography of wide-ranging interest.

*Maarit Kaimio*

*Vittorio Hösle: Die Vollendung der Tragödie im Spätwerk des Sophokles. Ästhetisch-historische Bemerkungen zur Struktur der attischen Tragödie. Problematika 105. Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1984. 181 S. DM 38,-.*

Das vorliegende Buch sucht eine neue Wertung und einen neuen Zugang zur griechischen Tragödie zu schaffen aus der Sicht der Philosophie des Idealismus wie er von Platon begründet und in neuerer Zeit von Hegel weitergeführt worden ist. So ist es keine Arbeit der kritisch-historischen Methode, obwohl der Verf. an vielen Stellen zeigt, daß er mit ihr und ihren bisherigen Ergebnissen vertraut ist. Wie der Untertitel der Arbeit schon erkennen läßt (ästhetisch-historische Bemerkungen), geht es dem Verf. nicht zuletzt aufgrund seines philosophischen Interpretationsansatzes um die Frage nach dem sprachlichen Kunstwerk im Sinne eines ästhetischen Phänomens. Ausgehend von Hegels Gattungstheorie und seiner Theorie des Tragischen (Kapitel 2 und 3) gelangt der Verf. dann zu einer Gegenüberstellung von 'objektiver' und 'subjektiver' Kunst, wobei er diese Unterscheidung an der Ilias und der Odyssee exemplifiziert: Die Ilias bedeutet für ihn 'objektive' Kunst insofern die handelnden Personen keinen subjektiven Handlungs-