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MOTIF INDEX

C. O. PAVESE: *I temi e i motivi della lirica corale ellenica. Introduzione, analisi e indice semantematici, Alcmane Simonide Pindaro Bacchilide*. Pp. 427. Pisa: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 1997. Paper. ISBN: 88-8147-081-0.

This book, the culmination of a long-standing research project, incorporates and elaborates upon work already published. The kind of research it represents reached its high water mark thirty years ago. In the wake of Bundy's radical re-reading of Pindar, a number of studies, including Pavese's, sought to provide the generic 'grammar' of lyric poetry which he desired. They have had no progeny, and P. is (p. 13) unsurprisingly disappointed at the lack of interest.

The ambitious work seeks to offer a complete analysis of archaic choral lyric in terms of recurrent themes and motifs, the former being large semantic blocks (such as myth), the latter smaller units expressing and combining ideas to form themes. A prefatory history of the project is followed by an account of the classification and the performance of lyric poetry, not in itself new but partly necessary to justify some of the methodological choices. P. then provides a detailed account of his methodology and definitions, and catalogues of the themes and motifs, each of which receives a shorthand mark, usually an abbreviation in a few letters of a Latin term. The rest of the book consists in turn of complete texts of Pindaric and Bakkhylidean odes annotated according to this system (pp. 127–230), indices of themes and motifs (pp. 231–372), with the Greek examples listed against each, texts of the (more substantial) fragments of Alkman, Simonides, Pindar, and Bakkhylides (pp. 375–83), and indices of themes and motifs (pp. 385ff.), again with the Greek examples listed. The approach throughout is explicitly inspired by post-Parry mid-twentieth-century research into formulaic composition in Homer. P. finds a single system unifying choral lyric, a system too rich (p. 91) to be the work of one mind and therefore the product of tradition.

It should be noted that, though he presents his system as a comprehensive analysis of the material, P. explicitly refuses (p. 53) to argue that this represents the total interpretation of the poetry. He sees it as a foundation for informed study. Even so, I have strong reservations, starting with definition. Thus the themes of the victory ode are: *Laus* (= socio-ethical praise of the patron), *Victoria*, *Catalogus* (of victories), *Augurium*, *Praes*, *Praeparatio*, *Praeteritio*, *Gnomica*, and *Mythus*. Whether each of these is a theme in quite the same way (in terms of scale, importance, frequency) is debatable. This sub-division of the more traditional 'praise-gnome-myth' classification creates an uncomfortable overlap between theme and motif.

The quantitative approach P. settles upon for the definition of motif as an idea

which is repeated at least twice (pp. 71–2) is considerably more problematic. Thus, late song, *dil(atio)*, is a motif because it occurs twice (pp. 99, 285; *O.* 1.80–1 is an erroneous third example), though it is difficult to see why a tradition would need so specific a motif; the same is true of *aen(igma)* p. 98, which anyway qualifies on the basis of a dubious example in Alkman (p. 393). However, the minimum is applied unevenly, since there are motifs represented by a single instance, e.g. *d(escriptio) de(dicationis)* pp. 99, 282, *elig(ere)* ‘choice’ pp. 99, 289, and *con(sulere)* ‘advise’ pp. 99, 280. The classification of words and phrases within the system is also problematic, since the desire to encompass everything can lump together disparate materials. Thus *d(olor)* ‘grief’ pp. 99, 281 piles together examples which have minimal resemblance to each other.

More significant, however, at the level both of definition and of classification, is the scale of the motif. P.’s units are far smaller than those which most scholars would recognize. It is this small scale which allows him to present the whole of choral lyric in terms of his system. Thus, for example, god and hero are motifs. So, for example, is *et(iam)* (‘even’ a certain type of person can experience/act in a certain way). Reduced to this scale, of necessity everything is generic; yet defined in this way, the choral lyric motif differs little, if at all, from those of any literary genre, or area of life. Some of his motifs are recognizable as *significant* recurrent elements only in combination. Thus *ca(lamitas)* (of the patron) is meaningful only in connection with *ev(entus)* ‘success’, with which it is normally combined, and this combination is itself an example of the vicissitude motif, *va(ria vita)*.

The emphasis on tradition, though not without substance, is overdone, since it obscures the dynamics of genre, which consist not of the poets’ manipulation of a finite set of motifs, but of individual styles created out of shared expectations through recurrent negotiation between poets and audiences in an environment of emulation and rivalry. It is no accident that all the examples of *lo(ngius)* ‘it would take too long’ come from Pindar (p. 322), who accentuated for his own poetic purposes the stylizing tendency of Greek choral lyric.

To return to my opening metaphor, the waters of this kind of genre study have long since receded, leaving the book beached; it is unlikely nowadays to find a sympathetic readership. It is, however, on merit, not on fashion, that scholarship should be judged. Scholarly this work certainly is, and the relentless labour underpinning it is everywhere visible. Read with a sceptical eye on the allocation of passages to motif headings, on the motif-status of some of the material, and with a recognition that some of his motifs need to be combined to be informative, the book can be of use as a second port for anyone in search of parallels/generic raw material (*TLG* being the first); but it can safely be used only by those who already know their lyric. Consultation will be considerably less frequent for the omnipresent meta-language of symbols devised by P.; it has not been found helpful and few if any will bother to master it.

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ANDROMACHE RESTORED

W. ALLAN: *The Andromache and Euripidean Tragedy*. Pp. xii + 310. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Cased, £40. ISBN: 0-19-815297-3.

William Allan’s study is a lucid, composed, and scholarly development of the central