

THE HOUSE OF ATREUS: A MODEL FOR THE
ANALYSIS OF DESCENT IN GREEK TRAGEDY

by

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis certain dramas of the fifth-century Athenians are examined from an anthropological point of view. The thesis maintains that the improper devolution of a patrilineal system of descent sets up the action in these dramas, and that the logic of descent--and the changing populations of the members connected by descent--propels it. The analysis of diseased descent should therefore describe the action of the dramas and enrich our understanding of it, as well as providing a solid and demonstrable set of variables for the drawing of contrasts and similarities.

The dramas concerned are those that deal in a primary way with the "House of Atreus," or, more properly, with the line of males--together with their sisters and daughters--tracing back to Pelops and to Tantalus.

Members of this House are first identified in a general way, that is in the context of the House as an entity throughout its successive generations. This identification is established for the House in Homer, in E.E. Barthell (a secondary source), in various classical sources, and then in the dramas themselves. Each source is treated as an isolate, and interpolations are assiduously avoided.

Once this general identification of membership is made, the reciprocal relationship between any two persons within the House may be established. These relationships are given in terms of certain

variables of descent: generation and blood relationship (lineality, collaterality, affinity or "undescendance").


Once the actors have been identified, their improper actions--called "events"--are noted without breaking the context of the narrative sequence. The event requires a very careful definition, just as does descent.

These two features (descent and event) are then combined to form an economic series of notations known as a "model." The description of the actual actors or event may then be removed or brought back without a loss of sense or reference. The action in the dramas in terms of the violation of descent is then presented in a most concise form.

Even so straightforward a procedure requires an inordinate amount of care in setting out attitudes, approaches and methods. This care is duly taken before the analysis itself begins. So much scholarly attention--of highly various quality--has been paid to the dramas that such care is called for to give this thesis rigour and to make it distinct. Even more care is required to make it reproducible, a characteristic highly valued in anthropology.

The results of this thesis are of varying success. Paradoxically, the two features of descent--generation and blood relationship--show different sensitivity to patterning: generation is perfectly patterned, while blood relationships are not. Both are essential parts of the definition of descent, yet it becomes clear that each has a qualitatively different nature: generation is itself a pattern, while a blood relationship is a state.

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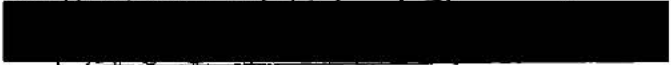

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE DATA

Thirty-three dramas of the fifth-century Athenians remain with us in reasonably complete form. Of these thirty-three, seven have been attributed to Aeschylus, seven to Sophocles, and the remaining nineteen to Euripides. Although these dramas were known to have been presented in trilogies, only one full trilogy, *The Oresteia* of Aeschylus, remains.

The best-known figure in Greek drama, indeed in all of Greek myth and legend, is undoubtedly Oedipus: "if ever a myth was given symbolic meaning it is the Oedipus tale" (Lessa, in Dundes, ed. 1965:115). Yet of these thirty-three dramas, only four deal in any way with Oedipus. These dramas are Sophocles' "Theban Trilogy" (*Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Antigone*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*) and Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*.

A far more widely represented figure in drama is Agamemnon: ten dramas directly involve him or his lineal kin, and he or his lineals have a less important part in three more (see p. 46). The dramas that deal for the most part with Agamemnon are Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, Euripides' *Orestes*, *Electra*, *Helen*, *Andromache*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and Sophocles' *Electra*.

There would appear to be an imbalance here between the cumulative emphasis that the dramas place upon the House of Atreus (the descent group to which Agamemnon belongs) and the twentieth-century preoccupation

with the figure of Oedipus-the-individual. I do not propose that there should be a direct correspondence between the sum of lines twenty-five centuries old and the significance placed upon them twenty-five centuries later. Also, not all of these ancient lines now exist: Aeschylus, for example, is known to have written a drama about Oedipus. It would also be well to bear in mind that, while the House of Atreus is not well known as an entity, the Trojan War is resoundingly well known. Members of the House took a very large part in the Trojan War, and so are well known, if not as a unit, at least as individuals.

There may therefore be plain and justifiable reasons for the existence of this imbalance. However, solid as the reasons for the imbalance may be, there remains a question of whether or not it is acceptable. This thesis is dedicated to the idea that it is not. Despite the accidents of survival and in spite of the patent changes in taste and in the perception of meaning over twenty-five centuries, the fact that the House of Atreus is the most widely represented in the dramas cannot be gainsaid.

The focal point for the revivification of the House of Atreus is the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus. The reasons for beginning here are of both methodological and personal character. As to method: first of all, *The Oresteia* is unique, not only because it exists intact as a trilogy, but also because it was conceived as a single narrative, with each of the dramas integrated with the others. This integration was notable in its own time, since other trilogies consisted of dramas related by theme, if they were related at all. *The Oresteia* is therefore larger in conception than the other dramas which deal with the House of Atreus, and these

other dramas are more or less each other's equal through the logistics of stage production. *The Oresteia*, accordingly, is marked for the seminal place in this work. Add to this the fact that *The Oresteia* was the first drama about the House to be written, or at least to have come down to us, and its claim to priority of treatment is well founded.

There are also personal reasons for beginning with *The Oresteia*. Foremost among these is the fact that the patterns of action which are the subject of the present thesis were first noticed within *The Oresteia*. The awareness of these patterns came about because of a concurrent study of Greek tragedy and symbolic anthropology. The catalysts of this awareness were Louis Macneish's introduction to his translation of *Agamemnon* (1936) and Terence Turner's paper (1969) on Oedipus (see pp. 35-39). Another personal reason for beginning with *The Oresteia* resides in the character of Aeschylus himself. I am attracted by his assurance, which I take to be a reflection of a vital and confident society.¹ Lattimore (in Grene and Lattimore, eds. 1967:1) has conjectured that Aeschylus' life fell between 513 B.C. and 455 B.C. Aeschylus therefore witnessed the defeats of the Persian invaders in 490 and 480, but was spared the horrifying years (431-404 B.C.) of the Peloponnesian War. Euripides, on the other hand, lived through almost the entirety of the war. Perhaps accordingly, his dramas reflect a social falling-apart, which Lattimore (in Grene and Lattimore, eds. 1968:106) described as:

. . . tragedy of total turbulence, deriving its real power from the exposure of the aching disparity between the ideal and the real.

Were the other dramas to be compared to *The Oresteia* as if to a standard, this kind of difference between the dramatists and their times would

have a methodological implication, for *The Oresteia* would again be supported as the starting point, being written with a sense of surety rather than with a sense of disintegration.

Fullness, priority (both chronologically and analytically), and stability are therefore the reasons that *The Oresteia* is treated first. But before this treatment can begin, certain problems in dealing with these data must be identified and dealt with. These problems will arise no matter what the subject for analysis, for they adhere both to the data themselves and to current academic thought. In order to accentuate their pervasiveness, these problems are treated before even the aims and procedure of the present work.

PROBLEMS WITH THE DATA

Introduction

Any analysis of Greek drama must come to terms with certain problems. Some of these problems adhere to the dramas in a specific way and others are of a larger and more basic nature, matters of intellectual orientation. To discuss every imaginable difficulty--perhaps even to be aware of every difficulty--would enervate any work, including the present one. Perhaps fortunately, only two problems possess such a potency with regard to the present study that must be identified and set apart at the onset. These problems, although only two in number, are multi-faceted. They involve *time*, in both a chronological and a perceptual sense, and *variation*, purposefully called "contrareity" here.

Questions about time have become increasingly significant in anthropological analyses of myth and legend, and they obtain as strongly in an analysis of drama. Greek drama involves itself in mythological and legendary matters, but its first audience was neither mythological nor legendary; in terms of its current audience, however, this first audience has attained nearly legendary proportions. Besides this, the very nature of drama is capable of modes of temporality that do not exist in more earth-bound genres of myth, legend, and folktale--predicated as they are on simple, sequential narrative.

Problems with contrareity are apparently as practical as problems of time are theoretical, but this in no way mitigates their importance. Contrareity takes on two aspects of the present work. The first aspect involves the analysts: they appear empirically to be unable to accept variation or "inconsistency" in the sources. The second aspect involves the sources themselves: they present extremely divergent Houses of Atreus and equally divergent actions by the members of the House. Ways of reconciling these two aspects of contrareity have been posited for the most part by the humanities. All of them are unsatisfactory, although no perfect reconciliation is possible in a study with a comparative nature like the present one.

Time and contrareity are therefore perceived as the most serious questions to be addressed in an anthropological analysis of Greek drama. This address begins with a discussion of time, first in its universal aspect and then in the aspect which has special applicability to drama. Following this is a discussion of contrareity. Contrareity is considered to be of three major types. These types correspond to the level at which

one attempts to analyse the material.

Time

*The Single Voice that
Speaks to Many Times*

I have never been satisfied with the destiny of the gods and legendary figures of the Creece of Homer and Aeschylus. No analysis of a single drama or of an entire epic cycle has convinced me of its wholeness or allowed me to feel that the subject had met an equal at last. To my mind, this inequity has come into being because of mixture and reaction between a time-defying quality that is immanent in all myth and legend and a schism in Western academic thought. The way that this continuity and discontinuity interacts may be put simply:

- (1) Fifth-century Greek drama is written by and written for fifth-century Greeks; however, some parts of the dramas possess a meaningfulness for Western man.
- (2) Twentieth-century academic thought makes a distinction between the "social sciences" and the "humanities"; the one is predisposed to identify, in drama, the *Greekness* of it, while the other is predisposed to identify its *trans-cultural* elements.

The title of this section is, of course, a metaphor: drama, a voice that has a message to tell. This bodily metaphor may be carried further by considering those who read the dramas as hearers, or ears. Across time these ears cannot be expected to hear with the same understanding as those to whom the voice first spoke, but at least both ears should be hearing simultaneously. This simultaneity does not occur in

our own era: instead, the left and the right ear hear differently, and-- to further elaborate the metaphor--pass on sound to their respective halves of the brain. What is lost is the voice.

The time-defying nature of myth and legend, and of drama, has been given close scrutiny by anthropologists. Drama, first of all, deals with the past. In this case the past is a Mycenaean one (c.1300-1100 B.C.). However, this past obviously had meaning for the dramatists centuries afterward. In 458 B.C.--the probable date of the presentation of *The Oresteia* (Lattimore, in Grene and Lattimore, eds. 1967:1)--and in the present year, and in any time between or to come, the original Mycenaean myth or legend can continue to carry meaning. A vital point in the present thesis is that, while *a meaning* may come to each successive generation, these generations will, by all odds, not perceive *the original meaning*.

Of course, the apprehension of meaning presupposes a means of apprehension. Unless there is some point of contact between the works of one people and the understanding of another the myths and dramas of the one can convey nothing to the other except, perhaps, perplexity or a sense of weirdness. Or, what is worse, they convey not understanding but the desire to understand in terms alien to that of the original. Between the fifth-century Greeks and ourselves there are many points of contact, but at all points there is not comparability. This has led to incomplete understanding of the myths and legends of the Greeks under a serene illusion of transculturality. This illusion is most readily seen, not in the social sciences, but in the arts:

Myself: What do you think of that? This isn't some family in the mythic drama of Greece that I'm telling you about; it is a family of the twentieth century, and a Canadian family at that ...

Doctor: Mythic pattern is common enough in contemporary life. But of course few people know the myths, and fewer still can see a pattern under a mass of detail (Robertson Davies 1972:265).

The wilful lack of careful listening to the voice can be included in the metaphor as ears that are muffled.

When anthropologists deal with the time-defying nature of myth and legend they are generally concerned with a single culture separated by time, not with two different societies even more distant chronologically. Even so, certain of their statements can bear examination here. This is because the defiance of time with respect to a single culture can be compared to the defiance of time between two cultures for empirical reasons: Greek drama is read and performed today. The discussion may be begun with Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963:209), whose statements about time elegantly summarize the idea of its defiance:

On the one hand, a myth always refers to events alleged to have taken place long ago. But what gives myth its operational value is that the specific pattern described is timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as the future.²

Since he is speaking about a single culture, Lévi-Strauss may justifiably say that a myth explains the past. However, this is not so when a myth has been transferred across cultures. The quotation from Robertson Davies, quoted above, shows that this transference can lead to a projection backwards of contemporary notions; in other words, the past becomes the present. Of course, the equation of past and present in Davies' passage is made in psychological terms, not historical ones. In these

terms all human minds are equivalent, but under different circumstances. In discussing the differences between Western and non-Western concepts of time, Edmund Leach (1961:125) identifies two natural human observations about temporal processes: (a) certain phenomena of nature repeat themselves, and (b) life-change is irreversible. Although he is speaking to a slightly different question, this statement of Leach's can be seen to correspond exactly to that of Lévi-Strauss: the time in which a myth is set, the "long-ago," is irreversible, in that the actors in it and the actions that they performed cannot be repeated, while on the other hand, the kinds of actors that there were and the kinds of actions that were performed *can* be repeated.

The idea that time, and mythic time in drama especially, is both synchronous and irreversible (that is, discontinuous and discrete) and diachronous (continuous and of a pattern) can be seen to be reflected in the dichotomy noted in Western academic thought. Humanists adhere to the idea of reversibility by concerning themselves with trans-culturality, while social scientists adhere to irreversibility by dealing with the culture of the dramatists as a discrete entity.

It is not possible in the present thesis to combine in equal measure the reversible and irreversible facets of fifth-century Greek drama; in terms of the metaphor, both ears cannot be receptive. This is due in part to the necessary restraint involved in a work of this type, and in part to the qualifications of the author. However, this restriction has certain benefit: Greek drama has long been firmly the subject of the humanities, as have the Greeks themselves (and to a lesser extent, the Romans), and the reversible side of it has been examined virtually

to exhaustion. By looking at Greek drama as if it is irreversible, and at the Greeks as Greeks--not Westerners displaced by eighty generations--a new understanding of it, and them, may result.

*The Single Voice that
Speaks of Many Times*

Edmund Leach's interest in distinguishing between reversible and irreversible time was to distinguish, accordingly, between Western notions of time, and the notions held among most other peoples. For Westerners, time is irreversible, or linear. For others, time is highly reversible: it may stop or accelerate at various tempos, past time may be metonymically relived, and there are varying degrees to its lambency. This kind of reversibility has special applicability to drama, and fully distinguishes drama from other forms of "storytelling" such as myth, legend, and folktale. Myth, legend, and folktale are all alike in that each has a linear, sequential narrative structure. Drama may have narrative structure as well, but it is less of a structural restriction. The narrative structure of a drama consists of the actions that occur onstage (or are described as occurring onstage). Here drama is a voice that speaks of a single time. Certain other actions do not occur onstage for the simple reason that they have already taken place: they are the past. If these actions in the past are considered to rise to the action onstage then the dramatists will have the actors allude to them. Thus the drama is a voice that speaks of many times. The treatment of past actions varies in the dramas under analysis here. In some of them (e.g., *Orestes*) the pertinent past actions are enumerated in their relative order early in the dramas. In others (e.g., *Andromache*,

Electra) these past actions are not presented together, but are embedded throughout the text. In the first case it appears that there is an attempt to transfer to drama the linear narrative structure of myth or legend; in the other, the narrative sequence is restricted to the stage action alone, and past action is freed from lineality. In other words, drama is capable of making time reversible.

The conclusion that a drama may cause time to be either reversible or irreversible carries with it a corollary question. Can the sequence of events in dramas which make use of different modes of time be legitimately compared? It is not possible to make irreversible time reversible because there is no way of knowing how the dramatists would have done it. On the other hand, it is a simple matter to transform reversible time into irreversible, linear time. All that needs to be done is to rearrange the past actions cited in the drama into their relative, "historical" sequence. In reversing time the dramatists made use of a common body of knowledge. But the use to which they put it was completely personal; therefore, dramatic time may be "de-reversed" successfully, but it cannot be reversed in any authentic way by others.

Another question raised by the dramatists' adoption of reversible time is the reason for that adoption. The answer seems apparent: by freeing the past from its relative chronology, the dramatist is free to emphasize the relationship between specific past action and specific present action in a way that is preferable to reiterating the past as history. The dramatist is also free to discard established relationships between events and to establish new ones.

The idea of establishing new relationships rather than confirming old ones may be expanded through an examination of two complementary terms borrowed from linguistics and of much currency in the other social sciences. Linguistically, a *syntagmatic* relationship is one of replacement (i.e., what term may be substituted for another), and a *paradigmatic* relationship is one of interaction where terms do not replace each other. The dramatist who reverses time is patently setting up a paradigmatic relationship for he is asserting that there is a unifying feature between two actions. The dramatist who maintains irreversible time is, by analogy, setting up syntagmatic relationships, for the actions that occur on stage are replacing those actions that happened in the past, whether these two kinds of actions are causally related or not.

By way of resolving the two questions raised above about the reversing of time in drama--its comparability to unreversed time, and its very reason for being--a brief examination of other works concerned with narrative sequence is in order. This examination consists of a discussion of a purely syntagmatic work (Propp 1968), a purely paradigmatic work (Lévi-Strauss 1963), and a work that represents an attempt to synthesize these two extremes (Turner 1969). This kind of synthesis embodies the resolution of the questions noted above.

According to Dundes in his introduction to Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1968:xii), a syntagmatic analysis is one that establishes "the linear sequential structure [or] latent or manifest content" of a myth, legend, or folktale. A paradigmatic analysis, through observation of the patterns of organization in the subject, uncovers "the schematic structure [or] more important latent content." Dundes' use of the two

terms is meant to be an analogy to the linguistic sense for them: replacement is indeed manifest, while interaction is latent, in that it is not described by a single term but rather by the connection between two terms. Dundes describes Propp's work as syntagmatic, and this is clearly so. Propp demonstrated how Russian "fairy-tales" have a common structure. In this structure, a sequence of "functions" (i.e., actions abstracted from the actors who perform them) is unalterable. Permutations do not occur. Further than this, these functions are constant in nature and limited in number (1968:21-24). The principle behind Propp's work is manifestly replacement rather than interaction for he is not interested in how functions are connected but in how sequences of functions are mutually exclusive. Dundes raises the question of what may be done with such an analysis in order to relate it to its social system, since it is sterile in the whole sense of relationship, even among its own variables.

A paradigmatic analysis, on the other hand, is predicated upon the relationships between variables, and these relationships may in turn be applied to the social system. Claude Lévi-Strauss' attempt to apply a paradigmatic analysis to discover latent content is attested in his work on the Oedipus legend (1963:213-217; see also pp. 13-14, below). Simply put, Lévi-Strauss arranged his rather threadbare version of the legend along two axes. The horizontal axis is that of the narrative sequence; supposedly, in order to "tell" the legend one reads from left to right, descending from row to row, thereby keeping the chronological order intact. The columnar, or vertical, axis ostensibly consists of the constituents of the legend which share a "common feature." The "under-

standing" of the legend, Lévi-Strauss claims, is involved in the identification of this common feature, to the disregard of "one half of the diachronic dimension," which is no less than the narrative sequence, the horizontal axis.

Lévi-Strauss' analysis is clearly a paradigmatic one, just as Propp's is clearly syntagmatic. By way of integrating these two polarized forms of analysis, Terence Turner has undertaken an analysis of the attractive Oedipus legend. In a direct criticism of the work of Lévi-Strauss discussed above, Turner (1969:26-32) takes Lévi-Strauss to task for two basic flaws: first that the elements in his vertical axes are not discrete or equatable, and more important, that his virtual disregard of the horizontal axis "leaves no room for the patterning of the narrative sequence." Vladimir Propp's concern was totally with these patterns, but in a particularistic, rather than comparative way. What Turner is saying is that a legend, or any genre that deals with chronological actions, contains both syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships, and that an understanding can be attained only through an analysis of both. Turner's own analysis of the Oedipus legend may be dealt with briefly here (1969:36-61; see also pp. 36-39, below). A series of relationships are given in their relative chronological order, beginning with the two generations senior to Oedipus. Each episode is shown figuratively, and the "common feature" of each episode is that in every case the action embodies improper mediation of relationships between two classes of people: "kin" and "non-kin." The final episode is put forth as "a resolution [that] represents a synthesis of all the action of the narrative," that is from the first episode to the last. Turner's analysis

can readily be seen to incorporate both the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic. In Dundes' terms, it deals with "manifest content" by retaining the narrative sequence while it also uncovers the "latent content" through the identification of the unifying feature of the episodes.

Returning to the questions that prompted this discussion of kinds of analysis: are reversed and irreversed time comparable, and is there a reason for the reversal of time? The discussion has shown, first of all, that there are procedures of analysis (i.e., Turner's) that are capable of dealing with both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships together. This indicates that a comparison of dramas with reversed and irreversed time is possible. There is also the fact that the reversal of time, while it may suspend relative chronology, need not rearrange it permanently: an audience will not carry away the drama's reversals of time as fact. Finally, there is the desirability, in any analysis, of methodological consistency. Dramas with reversed time may be translated into dramas of irreversible time, while the converse is not possible. In order to analyse the dramas in as similar a way as possible, it is necessary to adopt the only accessible temporal mode: irreversibility. In the terms of the metaphor of the drama as "voice," the dramas are treated in the present work as voices which speak of a single time--past and present in relative chronological order.

The entire question of the reversibility of time has been dealt with here in order to express a personal concern of the author. This concern arose out of an intense study of the dramas, and its presence was not discerned from the very onset of the analysis. Current well-fixed notions about the subjective lineal character of time obscured the

possibility of non-linear time being apprehendable in the dramas. It is expected that readers of the present thesis will experience the same difficulty to the extent that they wonder whether the question needs raising at all. In order to remain faithful to the dramas, it appeared necessary to discuss the question here.

Contrareity

Introduction

I have noted that the study of the Greek materials is affected by a feature presented by all powerful ancient or alien works: it speaks to two times with a single voice. The problem of ethnocentricity is therefore always present among its students. Complicating this is a special feature of drama. Drama is relatively free from the narrational rules that bind myth, legend, and folktale.

The second important difficulty presented by the Greek materials, and one that has most often undergone "remedy," is that of *contrareity*. Contrareity is simply the presence of disturbing features within the data. These disturbances are those which confound the analyst at the various levels of analysis; descriptively, within a single work, and comparatively, among works related by subject or across the entire literature. Responses have been made to contrareity at each of these levels, and although each has separate treatment here they are not to be considered as being independent. They represent ways of thinking about data, and a response at any one level may be modified and applied to another.

The kind of contrareity most in effect in this thesis is the second one (among works related in subject). This is naturally so by the way in which the data were selected, since each of the dramas share from among a delimited number of actors and actions. For this reason it is discussed first, although it obviously occupies the middle place within the range of contrareity. Contrareity at this level is called *variation* here, the word being well-suited to express divergence from a single centre of attention.

At the least inclusive level (the single work), the word for contrareity is *arbitrariness*. Many passages in any drama do not make immediate sense to the reader. While arbitrariness is meant to apply to all of them, it is also meant to have special applicability to the concern of this thesis: descent. Variation and arbitrariness have met with parallel treatments from the students of the Greek materials, and for this reason they may appear to have a closer relationship to each other than either has to the most inclusive form of contrareity.

Recurrences (across an entire literature) are those situations in which a personage or some special kind of action re-emerges from one work into another in a way that is not clear to the student. Since this thesis is confined to a single line of descent over a limited number of generations, and since it is not much concerned with the ubiquitous gods and their attributes, recurrences as such are chiefly of theoretical concern. Recurrences are dealt with here because they represent a range along the continuum of perceived contrareity. An examination of attempts to deal with this range is very instructive in the way that it serves as a warning against the poorest kinds of synthesis.

Now that the kinds of contrareity have been identified, each kind may be treated separately. Where it is applicable, the bearing that the responses may have to the approach in this thesis is set out. This significance towards methodology is amplified in the discussion of the method itself which is presented below (pp. 49-65).

Variation

That any version of a myth or legend remained immutable at any one time throughout the Greek lands, or that a myth or legend did not change with time, cannot be accepted empirically. Perhaps only the works of Homer, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, were widespread enough to constitute some kind of canon; but, as is shown in Chapter II, departures from Homer were numerous. Legends, and the connections of the living to legendary figures, appear to have been manipulable for reasons, noted by J. B. Bury (n.d., orig. 1913:71), of politics or personal or social prestige. Later, Bury (p. 74) amplifies these reasons with an example:

But for most Greeks, connexions with Hellen were manufactured. It was to Aeolus that most descents were traced. He had seven sons and five daughters³ and it was not difficult to work out more or less plausible connexions.

The descent of the legendary figures themselves seems also to have been susceptible to the formation of new linkages and all other kinds of innovations. An example of this, found in a drama that is a subject of this thesis, is the descent of Odysseus. In *Iphigenia in Aulis*, Euripides calls Odysseus "the son of Sisyphus" (ll. 524, 1362). There was never much question that the father of Odysseus was Laertes. The filiation here may have been nothing more than the naming of the most

illustrious of Odysseus' forefathers. But in *The Iliad* (2.173), Laertes is called the "seed of Zeus" and Barthell (1971:268) shows Laertes to be the son of Arceisius, the son of Zeus. Furthermore, Sisyphus' ancestry shows no connection to Zeus or to any members of Odysseus' more usual lineage (Barthell 1971:71); Sisyphus is, in fact, another of the sons of Aeolus. Barthell cites the "paucity of detail" (1971:267) about the parents of Laertes regarding the emergence of the variant in which Sisyphus, not Laertes, was Odysseus' father. The two were alike in craftiness, if the parallel needs to be taken further, and this is most probably Euripides' motive for adopting an obvious variant.

These facts and these examples go far toward explaining why variants did exist, but they cannot tell how to deal with them. Given, say, two divergent accounts of the descent of an individual or of the sequence of events in a story, how may the divergences be resolved? The first response, apparently, is to accept one of the accounts as the more authentic or the more valuable, and to dismiss the other as discordant or a distraction; this response is the customary one of the innumerable anthologists, among others, and is called here simply *selection*.

Inclusion is just the reverse; in its case the two accounts are arranged side-by-side, with or without the act of evaluation. A third response, more appropriate to one who is attempting some kind of literary or creative use of some part of the accounts, is the act of *reconciliation*, in which the differences are shown in some way not to be real differences at all. These three kinds of response to variation are general enough to permit the description of all of the treatments that the Greek materials have received from social scientists, classicists, and creative

authors alike.

The proper place to begin is with selection, since it is the act of selection that has been by far the most common response to variation, and the one that most affected the study of the Greek materials. The anthologists are left aside, since they are well known in the extreme, and their work constitutes most of what the general reader will know. It is sufficient to say that even Terence Turner, whose work is accepted here as the most nearly integrative of all, chose (1969:36) to work with that kind of Oedipus that was presented by the anthologizer Rose (1929). The anthologist is not the only one to select the variant that suits him best; among others to do so is E. E. Barthell (1971:4), whose work on descent forms the core of Chapter II:

With reference to blood relationships, the difficult hurdle of contrareity has been attempted by adopting the story which appears to be best known.⁴

This act of selection, even when justified in footnotes, may streamline study, but it may also obscure or totally hide facts and patterns that may be of vital significance to a student with a different orientation. Peter Levi (1971:4), for example, may make the student of genealogy wonder just what were the names that were left out of his translation of Pausanias because they were "tediously long" or "otiose." Perhaps loss is not among the culpable qualities of the act of inclusion, given that this act is carried out consistently and thoroughly; in my experience, however, this is seldom the case, and one may argue that the variants that are included are, in fact, selected:

However other writers of this tale, and other books, treat events differently. . . . Thus . . . (Kinsella 1969:103).

Barthell was a compiler and an editor and Kinsella was a translator, which of course means that he was in some ways an editor too, as he himself attests when he (Kinsella 1969:255) says that his translation was "tidied up a bit and completed from other sources." So perhaps these non-integrative responses to variation are acceptable in these contexts; even so, they merely resolve the problem of variation without resolving the variation itself. The reconciliatory act is aimed at the resolution of variation, not the problem of it. It is called "reconciliation" here, and not "integration," because in all of its manifestations, of which I am aware, the resolution of variation calls for violence upon one or another of the sources:

If one believes Homer, Sisyphus was the wisest and most prudent of mortals. According to another tradition, he was disposed to practise the profession of highwayman. I see no contradiction in this (Camus 1955:88).

Camus was as unaware of as many of the features of such ancient works necessary to a full understanding as are most other literary figures. These features, to name but a few, include social and political history, systems of descent, comparative mythology, and so on. This is not to deny the value of such reworkings of older works, for it is the value of such works that they transpose old ideas onto new times without the accountability of the scholars, and restore from their "shells of forms" (Campbell 1968:7) both ancient actors and their actions. Camus, unlike a scholar, is not responsible for "apprehending the Greekness" (see p. 6) of, say, Sisyphus.

. . . the age-old conflict between the desire to understand the world by simplifying it and to convey its richness in qualitative differences (Jolly 1972:277).

It is plain to see upon which side of the "conflict" the three responses to variation have fallen. Selection and reconciliation are both attempts at *simplification* and inclusion is an attempt at *enrichment*. The link between the two contesting sides is this: they both treat their sources as insufficient, and whether they cleave them or combine them, they change them.

The present thesis is perceived as an attempt to integrate the dramatic Houses of Atreus, and at the same time to recognize fully the variation between them; accordingly it is a mixture of amplification and simplification. This mixing is not impossible, as the responses outlined above might seem to indicate. It is made possible by transferring the standardization necessary to the integrative act away from the sources and onto the method of analysis; the standardization is within the model and the stages of analysis that lead up to it (see pp. 49-65), and not upon the dramas. In this way the range of variation becomes visible of its own account, and may be dealt with systematically as a meaningful phenomenon. This is in keeping with an attitude of respect for the dramatists and their "adequacy" as innovators, and in agreement with Lévi-Strauss (1963:218)--with whom I concur--that "every version belongs to the myth."⁴

Arbitrariness

The least inclusive level of contrareity is that of arbitrariness. Arbitrariness is perceived within a singular work of any genre, but it is of most interest here as it pertains to drama. It should be made plain that any feature of drama is seldom actually arbitrary. The

arbitrariness named here is that which is perceived by the analyst, particularly because of an ethnocentric lack of awareness about Greek kinship-reckoning and descent.

In speaking of myth in general, Turner (1969:28) has referred to the "apparent arbitrariness of structure and . . . richness of apparently trivial concrete detail" that for many people characterize both myth and legend. Lévi-Strauss (1963:208) has amplified this remark by stating that, impressionistically, "almost anything is likely to happen." I would have it that in myth in general, and in fifth-century Athenian drama in particular, *nothing unlikely is likely to happen*, and that a great deal of what may appear to be arbitrary or gratuitous can be revealed to be integral, and can be understood through an anthropological perspective.

Towards strengthening the value of this point of view, two examples are taken from dramas which do not concern the House of Atreus: Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *Alcestis*. These examples share a common theme and, besides this, their inclusion enriches the work. This done, the three responses to contrareity seen to have been applied to variation--selection, inclusion, and reconciliation--are then reviewed with respect to arbitrariness. These three responses have been applied to both kinds of contrareity, as has been stated.

E. E. Barthell (1971:3) was mildly surprised--astonishingly--that many "odd happenings" in Greek myth and legend could be made comprehensible in a context of kinship and descent. Acts that had seemed to be singular or inscrutable (i.e., arbitrary) could be seen to be expressions of a pattern that crossed the generations, once the connections between

these generations had been made. What, then, of the following statement made by Antigone (ll. 905-912):

Had I children or their father dead,
I'd let them moulder. I should not have chosen
in such a case to cross the state's decree.
What is the law that lies behind these words?
One husband gone, I might have found another,
or a child from a new man in first child's place,
but with my parents hid away in death,
no brother, ever, could spring up for me.

Antigone is a sympathetic, if stiff-willed, figure, yet here she is saying something decidedly "odd."⁵ Descent charts can provide little to explain the statement, for the explanation of it resides with kinship. Antigone is speaking of her patrilineage, in which she is a member with her brother, but in which no husband nor any child she may bear (except through incest) can have any part. To an anthropologist--attuned to Greekness--this affirmation of patriliney is straightforward, while the humanist, for the most part, and by training, less aware of such things, must consider it something of an enigma.

In reference to the *Oresteia*, particularly to the *Eumenides*, Bachofen (orig. 1926; 1967:158) put a question to the line of Greek descent that he could have answered with a consideration of the passage given above:

Orestes kills his mother in order to avenge his father.
Which of the two weighs heavier in the balance, father
or mother? Which of the two stands closer to the child?

Father and brother "weigh heavier" and husband and mother are "less close"; the first are members of one's own patrilineage and the others are not members, thus behavior towards these types of people can be expected to be different according to Antigone's "law." Just how the

dramatists express these differences varies, as the present work shows.

The idea of the patrilineage also sheds light on a passage in Euripides' *Alcestis*. In *Alcestis* the king Admetus must die unless another will take his place. His father refuses to do so, but his wife is willing. Euripides has his characters speak in terms of shame about the father, Pheres, who was of a full age, for dooming his own patrilineage by allowing his only son to die when he had no hope of fathering another (ll. 293-294). Alcestis--the wife--even states that, had she decided to live, the husband that she took would then take over even Admetus' patrimony (ll. 284-286), and that this could happen is clearly shown within Chapter II.

Summarizing the two examples: Antigone behaves as a man of her own patrilineage should have (were there any), and Alcestis behaves as a man of her husband's patrilineage should have. The examples of Antigone and Alcestis may serve to show how a fundamental concept from one discipline may assist in integrating passages that may appear arbitrary according to the concepts of another. Following are examples of the kinds of things that have been perceived as arbitrary, and how this arbitrariness has been dealt with; to repeat, these examples are classed in a way that is parallel to the classification of responses to variation.

The example of selection is chosen from the works of a creative artist, and the same strengths and weaknesses adhere to his work as do those to the work of Camus (see p. 21):

In this tragedy, it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus, reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I could, and trying to approach the unities (Lord Byron, Preface to *Sardanapulus*, orig. 1821).

Lord Byron simply adopts those parts of his sources that suit him, just as E. E. Barthell adopted the version that satisfied his values; "unities" and unified, or canonical legend, are only a single step apart. Naturally, the user of any source may practise selection upon both levels simultaneously by leaving out or adding to the distressing parts of the original source that he has settled upon using in the case of the more popular anthologists this is most patently a rule.

Even less integrative than selection is *inclusion*; however, the act of inclusion keeps at least part of the difficulties within the sight of the reviewer. The following is taken from the accounts of a traveller-historian of the second century A.D., himself a Greek. Were it within the range of the present thesis, the lineages noted could be traced and the causes of the difficulty resolved:

But even supposing that they were a harmonious couple, I should not have included all of their descendants in a single list, as their generations did not always coincide: cousin with cousin, for example, or cousin's children with cousin's children, and so on through their remoter descendants. So I shall go through both families separately, without mixing them (Pausanias, *Guide to Greece*, III, l. 9).

The *reconciliation* of apparently disjointed or unconnected passages is less plain to see on the level of the single work than on the level of variation between different sources on the same subject. Where it is seen, and where the single source has not been augmented with others, a great deal of violence occurs:

We need then to create a notation more abstract than the Hellenikan in order to consider his statements undistracted by his way of making them (Broadbent 1968:31).

Few serious students of the Greek material do not have knowledge of more

than the single work in question; however, when the emphasis is upon a single work, intrapolations and other attempts at reconciliation such as Broadbent's often seem to be arbitrary themselves, and amount to a kind of hariolation.⁶

In summary, the bearing that these responses to arbitrariness have upon this thesis is that, primarily, the dramatists must be taken strictly at their words and be supposed to have had a coherent purpose for every statement they have their actors make and every action that they perform. The examples of *Antigone* and *Alcestis* illustrate how passages that do not fit the framework of the analyst may nevertheless be understood from another point of view. The point to be taken here is basically the same as that for the responses to variation: difficulties as well as differences must be acknowledged and allowed to stand until they may be integrated in a satisfying way.

Recurrence

This form of contrareity is the least serious with respect to the present thesis. This is because of the nature of the thesis itself: it is concerned for the most part with a single genre--drama--as it was manifest over a relatively short period of time. Further, it is also based only upon those members of the one genre that are closely allied in subject. Were the subject of this work the House of Atreus rather than the House of Atreus in Fifth-Century Athenian Drama, then the recurrence of the members of that House in poetry, in legend, and indeed in all their manifestations from their portrayal on pottery to their treatment in contemporary literature, would be at issue. Even so, the

question of recurrence calls for treatment here because it completes the range of contrareity that I have perceived others to noted within the Greek material in particular. It may also be that this range is approximately that for other corpora as well.

The responses to recurrence do not parallel those to variation and arbitrariness because of the nature of the data. Indeed, there seems to be a single response that consists in varying measure of these others--selection, inclusion, reconciliation--in nearly all of the range of emphasis conceivable. First of all, any attempt to deal with recurrence is selective with respect to the totality of the literature concerned, and inclusive with respect to the chosen subject. The reconciliatory aspect of such work is manifest by its very undertaking, provided that the work is meant to be more than a simple catalogue.

In G. S. Kirk's *Myth: Its Meaning and Function* (1970), there is a fine example of a response to recurrence from the thematic rather than the particular point of view. Kirk attempts to distil the nature of those kinds of actions which he sees occurring over and over again within the Greek material. His work is therefore dissimilar to the present work insofar as the latter represents an attempt to integrate the actions of a select group of people.

Kirk isolates twenty-four of what he calls the "commonest themes in Greek (mainly heroic) myths." From among these twenty-four, eight themes are of special interest here because they are purported to deal with "tensions and disputes within the family." These eight are given here in full, with Kirk's numbering intact:

9. Displacement of parents or elders
10. Killing, or attempting to kill, one's own child
11. Revenge by killing or seducing a man's wife or murdering his children
12. Sons avenge mother
13. Disputes within the family
14. Deceitful wife
15. Deceitful daughter
16. Incestuous relationships.

These themes may be seen to be selected, first of all, from among all of those possible to express familial discord. Secondly, the sum of these themes represents the supposed inclusion of all of the elements that comprise the greater part of the action in Greek myth. The reconciliation of these themes follows their enumeration; Kirk (1970:194) reveals that, although the group of eight themes indicated above may seem to form a powerful bloc, they are in fact a reflection of a "broad response to a continuing human characteristic" rather than of especially tense social structures or of social change. The family is, in fact, dismissed as a potential source of dramatic situations, and if this were not amazing enough, the Greek family finds itself described as "looser and less heavily schematized" than that of a "highly organized" tribe (Kirk 1970:194).

An entire chapter of the present work could be devoted to a refutation of all points, whether theoretical or particular, presented by Kirk; however, since Kirk's work is meant to stand only as one example of a response to a kind of contrareity, such a reaction is unwarranted. Insofar as Kirk represents much of the folly into which attempts to deal with recurrence may fall, a few words on general points are in order.

To begin, his selection of themes does not bear scrutiny. For example, his thirteenth theme virtually subsumes the other seven, and

his eleventh theme is the reciprocal--from the point of view of the victimized husband--of the fourteenth. In short, if we consider each theme as a variable, then these variables are not independent. What is more, an examination of the rest of the themes from the full list shows that they too may in some cases be either the result or the reflection of family tension. "The founding of a city" (#17), for example, is often the result of rivalry between two or more royal sons, both of whom cannot or will not accede to a single throne. The brothers Pelias and Neleus are one example. In other cases not cities but ruling lineages are founded as a result of many brothers and a single throne: Peleus and Telemon are one example, and Pittheus and Alcathous, brothers of Thyestes and Atreus, are another. Brothers, and the strife between them, do not appear among Kirk's themes. In Chapter II, such strife is shown to be vital.

It is unfair to suppose that Kirk imagined his list of themes to be totally inclusive, or that any list of themes could include all cases. Such completeness could only come about through such flexible "cover-terms" as the thirteenth theme, or through enormously lengthy, almost descriptive lists like the taxonomies that folklorists at one time amassed with a cross-cultural perspective, and which were correspondingly unwieldy and sterile. Kirk's list, though, is poorly selected because its themes are not independent and not inclusive enough for the purpose claimed. Further, his selection and the resultant incompleteness are witness to an almost total ethnocentricity with respect to the Greek family. It appears to consist of the nuclear family only, with the result that many actions between members of related descent groups are

typified as non-familial. The description of Greek social structure as "loose" and "unschematized" is a virtual statement of a projection of Western thinking, and wishful thinking besides.

Kirk's shortcomings illustrate several points. The first involves the danger of stultifying ethnocentricity; this danger was dealt with in a wider context in another section (p. 6). The second is that of the immense difficulty in integrating so vastly rich a corpus as the Greek materials, and the advisability of approaching it with a reasonably sharp-focused purpose. The third point, and perhaps the one with the most bearing on the present work, is an article of faith: the necessity to approach the dramatists *through the dramas themselves*, and through the statements made in them. Such a procedure amounts to the working through the particular towards the general (with, of course, an initial theoretical framework), and as such keeps better faith with the sources than the reverse, which has been seen in Kirk.

Certain summarizing remarks are in order here. While these remarks are made in the context of responses to recurrence, they apply as well to the responses to the other kinds of contrareity. Anyone who hopes to add to the value of any great work of art must be in some way equal to the task, unless he wishes to diminish that work by the association. Faced with the richness of their sources, both humanists and social scientists often appear to over-simplify or to over-particularize, choosing the extreme poles of response that Jolly was quoted (see p. 21, above) as defining. Results of such work amount to literary haruspication, in which the disembowelled work of art quickly begins to decompose, whether the entrails are examined for their own sake only or

are taken as analogies for some other phenomena. Unless academic work amounts to no more than such metaphorical haruspication, the reaction to such work must be something like the one that follows:

"You'll see there," continued Pantagruel, "how the Pythagoreans conclude from their names and numbers that Patroclus ought to have been slain by Hector, Hector by Achilles, Achilles by Paris, and Paris by Philoctetes. My mind is set in an utter whirl when I think of Pythagoras' amazing discovery" (Rabelais, *Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Bk. 4, Ch. 37).

One of the ways to enhance the dramas of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, rather than restating them or parts of them like some Pythagorus, is to permit them to speak for themselves, despite the contrareity one may perceive in them, and then to integrate the features of them that are felt to be pertinent. The present thesis is designed with the previous faulty responses to contrareity in mind.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The Aims of Research

In my opening remarks I stated that one impulse toward the conception of this thesis was the desire to adjust an imbalance which exists between the contemporary estimation of the House of Atreus and of the figure of Oedipus. Oedipus has received much more attention than the House of Atreus, out of all proportion to their respective merits. As one indication of this merit, I cited the comparative attention that was accorded by the Greeks themselves to the House of Atreus.

In the second section of the present work, I outlined certain problems that are always present when dealing with the Greek material.

Within these problems lie the reasons for the modern eclipse of the House of Atreus. First of all, the House of Atreus, fully considered, is a sizable aggregation of lineages; each member of the House has important collateral kin and important ties of affinity with other lineages that may have no other connection to the House (except, perhaps, through an immortal). In other words, the House of Atreus represents a system of reckoning of kinship and descent that is very unlike our own. Whether this different system has no "applicability to [our] thought and experience" (Tolkien 1954:7), or whether the effort has not been made to realize and to understand the difference, the result has been a general diminishing of the academic importance of the House of Atreus. The figure of Oedipus, on the other hand, has often been treated either as an individual or else as a member of the familiar nuclear family. This is possible because of the singular anomaly of Oedipus' life, in which he is impelled to be singled out at every moment and in each of his actions. Oedipus' isolation, or at least what we perceive to be his isolation, appears to have an applicability to modern experience. Ethnocentricity, then (as discussed previously), has something to do with the ascendancy of Oedipus:

Since the House of Atreus is a complex system of connections--lineal, collateral, and affinal--and since the accounts of the House in the Greek sources vary a great deal, there is little wonder that it may be dealt with less elegantly than can the figure of Oedipus. This variation among the sources, or contrareity, appears to have inhibited the attempt to deal with so large a group as the House of Atreus.

Both of these problems may be overcome. Ethnocentricity may be minimized in at least one of its more important aspects through the close examination of descent. Descent has an obviously major presence in such a "dynastic" saga as that of the House of Atreus. Contrareity may be controlled by assiduously limiting the sources for primary research, and by allowing the statements made in the sources to stand by themselves. Provided that these sources are of intrinsic value--and Greek dramas assuredly are--and that the criteria for limiting the sources follow natural boundaries, then the statements made in them are also of intrinsic value and are of a comparable type. It is also possible to move outward from a well-defined base to incorporate material beyond the set limits.

The statements made to this point apply to an orientation towards the material rather than to particular aims. There are, in fact, three aims which the present work is designed to fulfil. These aims may be listed simply in order to make them plain:

- (1) To analyse the patterns of action within the dramas that deal with the House of Atreus in terms of certain variables of descent: generation, lineality/collaterality, and affinity;
- (2) To establish the range of variation within these patterns for the significance of this variation alone; and
- (3) To blend a social-scientific approach (Turner 1969) with an approach from the humanities (Macneish 1936).

The first two points listed above are dealt with in detail in the following section of the present chapter. The final point is discussed

at length here, for within the "blend" lie the reasons for the selection of descent as the means for bringing new understanding to the material, and for the selection of the specific variables of descent.

Louis Macneish's seminal work (1936:7-8) is not a scholarly work at all, but consists of a very short preface to his translation of *The Agamemnon* of Aeschylus. In this preface, Macneish describes the patterns of events in much the same way as I would (without, however, the necessary abstraction of the actors into their positions in a system of descent), and analyses the events in a similar way: beginning with the static relationships between actors ("The Family Tree"), and moving to the actions which these actors perform ("The Chain of Crimes"). Many of Macneish's statements in prose are either too entirely arguable or are based upon too different a plane of analysis to be entertained here; however, one of his statements--that the small part of the House of Atreus with which he deals is a unit ("the same blood runs in all")--is very remarkable considering his academic orientation, and his graphic representation of the actions in the drama is of great interest. This representation is given in full here, and has been altered only in that his division of the "Chain of Crimes" into time relative to the *Agamemnon* has been deleted, since the present work considers the *Oresteia* as a unit. The "Chain" is as follows:

- (1) Thyestes seduces Atreus' wife.
- (2) Atreus kills Thyestes' young children and gives him them as meat.
- (3) Helen forsakes her husband and goes to Troy with Paris.
- (4) Agamemnon, to promote the Trojan War, sacrifices his daughter Iphigeneia.

(5) Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra murder Agamemnon.

(6) Orestes kills Aegisthus and his mother Clytaemnestra.

One of the noticeable features of this list is that the names of women--who are in an affinal relationship to the House of Atreus--are given together with the names of male members of the House (and the daughter of one of them, Iphigeneia). The links of the chain are therefore of unequal mettle with respect to the principle of patriliney. Her children are, of course, of the "same blood" as that of any woman, but she is not necessarily of the same blood as her husband or her husband's patrilineal kin.

Related to this lack of differentiation between affines and lineals or consanguines is the attribution, in the list, of the culpability for crimes. In (1) a man performs the seduction; in (3) a woman does, or at least assists; in (5) a woman and a man--without the mention of any seduction--commit the crime together. Accordingly, the different quality of a crime between two members of the House and between a member and an affine are not distinguished; as well, members of the House are sometimes the perpetrators and sometimes the victims of crime. Again, while most crimes are put in the context of the House or the mother/child relationship, one is not: Helen's crime, (3), is gratuitous in that her partner appears to have no connection with the House of Atreus, while she, Helen, is an affine.

In summary, Macneish's "variables" (i.e., his links in the "chain of crime") are not comparable, since they are not made up of the same kinds of elements.

Further than this, the chain is clearly missing certain links.

Among these is the disinheritance of the children of Agamemnon, a fact explicitly mentioned in every drama, including the *Oresteia*, that deals with them. Another link, the raising of an entire generation of kinsmen on behalf of an affine, is subsumed under another crime [(4)].⁷

There are reasons, then, to compare the list of crimes by Macneish to the list of themes by Kirk (see pp. 28-31) as being both inadequately selected and non-inclusive as well, with the reservation that Macneish's is essentially a descriptive work rather than an attempt at explanation. As a description, Macneish's work has virtues that outweigh the kinds of faults discussed above. The first virtue is its economy of statement, or elegance. More particularly, these virtues include, (a) the idea that the House of Atreus is a unit, (b) the notion that the crimes are interrelated, and (c) the suggestion that there is a pattern to the crimes.

KINSHIP

G E N E R A T I O N	Kin: first ascending generation	Non-kin: senior generation
	Kin: first descending generation	Non-kin: junior generation

FIGURE 1. Method of describing kinship and generation involved in an event (after Turner 1969).

In Turner's work on Oedipus (1969:26-80) there is no confusion about the difference between affines and lineals or collaterals, although these variables are not treated as distinct units of analysis. The two operative variables in Turner's analysis are generation and kinship (or its opposite, non-kinship). Turner's use of these variables can be adapted and given here (see Figure 1). These quarters are relative to one another rather than to an "ego."

Individuals and classes of individuals may be placed in the appropriate relationship with one another by assigning each to the proper quarter of this figure. A new figure and a new set of relationships may then be set up for every succeeding "episode," and these episodes, taken together, constitute a narrative sequence. Turner's work is like Macneish's in that both attempt to incorporate narrative (the episodes amounting to much the same as the "chain of crimes"), with the improvement that is provided by Turner's use of clearly-defined variables as analytical units. An explanation is possible for Turner, rather than a simple description, however elegant.

There are, however, certain inadequacies in the procedure set out by Turner. Some of these inadequacies adhere to the procedure itself, and some are brought about by the difference between his data and that of the present thesis. For the sake of clarity, these shortcomings may be listed here:

- (1) Units of analysis based on generation and "kinship" only are gross units which will, more often than not, group together such different types of relatives as husband and wife (as "kin" to their children).

- (2) Such units are best suited for the analysis of the individual rather than of the group, since with a group of lineals and collaterals (some of whom marry) the membership within each "quartet" will constantly change with respect to one another.
- (3) The use of "episodes," while preserving much of the narrative sequence, is best suited for work upon a standard version of a legend--which Turner (1969:36) did use--and is too coarse to include certain kinds of interaction ("non-recognition," etc.), while permitting actions of different natures to be compared.

The basic drawback to Turner's work is that its design deals with an individual in a very limited context of kinship. The present thesis is designed to deal with a group of related individuals in the context of the group in which they belong. The variables that sufficed for Turner--generation and kinship or non-kinship--are too insensitive to properly differentiate the members of such a group. *Generation* is a constant of descent, in fact, a requisite of descent, and as such may be adopted in the same way as it was used by Turner (and Macneish) with the provision that its scale be increased manyfold beyond Turner's two and Macneish's three.

Kinship and non-kinship, however, must be broken down into their constituent elements. In the first place, one must be extremely careful when assigning any two ancient Greek figures to the category of non-kin; most of these figures can be related by blood in some way through one of the immortals or a link may be attested in some other sources than the one(s) of which one is aware. For the most part, non-kinship is a

non-category in which may be placed little else but autochthons such as Oedipus' Sphinx. Of course, non-kinship may have a meaning when dealing with a very small group of interacting figures, but in such a case it is better to rephrase non-kinship in terms of kinship-to-a-lesser-degree.

The operative constituents of kinship within the present thesis are as follows. *Affinity*, first of all, must be distinguished from lineality and collaterality; the term designates the in-law relationship with respect to any patrilineally defined House into which a woman may marry. For example: Clytaemnestra, the mother of Orestes and Electra, has a consanguineal (roughly, blood) relationship with her son and daughter, but not a lineal one; both Electra and Orestes are members of the House while Clytaemnestra is strictly speaking a member of the House of her father. Neither Macneish nor Turner make the distinction between consanguineality and true patrilineal kinship, and even if they did not wish to, also remove their work from a professed dynastic focus and onto the individual.

The term kinship is also too coarse to distinguish between two kinds of relationship within a patrilineal House: *lineality* and *collaterality*. Orestes, for example, is a lineal relation to his father and his father's father, but not to his father's brother or to the father's brother's daughter whom he marries. These last are collaterals: descendants through the male line of one's own ancestor. In the context of dynastic rivalry (see Chapter II), collaterality has a great deal of significance; often, for example, collaterals such as Aegisthus and Agamemnon may make competing claims for a throne. As well as this, collaterality is ostensibly a less close relationship than lineality,

and thus, while the damage that strife between collaterals may do to a patrilineal House is obviously horrific, it is less heavily weighted with horror than crimes between lineals.

The distinctions that can be made between all of the actors within the House of Atreus in terms of generation, affinity, and lineality/collaterality are sensitive enough to differentiate each of the actors and to define classes of crimes between them. The varying degrees and intensities of these variables may be simply accommodated with a numeral to reflect such respective values.

In outlining the aims of the present research, I began the discussion with a statement of orientation, and followed with a concise enumeration of particular aims. There were three of these aims, the last of which was expanded upon. This aim presented the two sets of work--one from the humanities and one from the social sciences--that appeared to have the most to offer to the present work. Much was found to require modification in these two sources, and these modifications were dealt with at length.

It remains to re-emphasize the virtues that have been noted in these two sources in a general way; these virtues are: from Macneish, the idea that the House of Atreus must be considered as a unit; from Turner, the sharpening of the roles of actors within a system of descent; and from both, the idea that the narrative sequence contains meaning as much or more than static incidents.

The Expanded System of Descent

The primary virtues noted in the works of Macneish and Turner are, respectively, the treatment of the descent group as a unit, and the use

of variables of descent in the analysis of the interaction of the members of the group. In both of these works, however, the circumscription is severe. Macneish considers only the members of the House of Atreus who appear in Aeschylus' trilogy, and Turner, only those members of Oedipus' lineage who have a part in a single version of the legend. The present work is on a scale larger than either of these since it deals with more than one work by more than a single author. The applicability of Turner's and Macneish's research is therefore suspect. What is more, the present work does not represent an exhaustive account of even the House of Atreus. The whole of the Greek material is at least as large again as the present work is larger than the other two.

An examination of this other Greek material is in order in light of comments already made about the perils of too sharply limiting one's sources. The inclusion here of the results of such an analysis is therefore justifiable on this methodological ground, although the subject of the analysis is of a different nature than the dramas, and so may not strictly be compared to them.

The examination of this other material is desirable because it provides a provisional point of reference with which to compare the differences between the dramas. This kind of comparison is a declared aim of this thesis (see p. 34, above). When it is investigated with respect to the House of Atreus, this other material can provide an expanded system of descent that may approximate the range of knowledge--either current or conceivable--from which the dramatists selected when creating their dramas. However, this system cannot be considered so fixed a point that it can be used to measure dramatic innovation.

The outline of the approach to this other material may be given briefly here. To begin, the works of Homer (*The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*) are examined for any reference to the House of Atreus. Such references are of special value because they can be accepted as the minimal common background of the dramatists.

Certain other sources are also examined. Among these, the most useful is a secondary source: E. E. Barthell's *Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Greece* (1971). Despite its clumsy presentation of descent, the work provides an excellent source for the observation of linkages of descent, and its inclusive character spares a great deal of time for analysis. This main source is augmented primarily by the works of Pausanias, Apollodorus, and Strabo. These other sources provide the most information when tracing the descendants of the House (i.e., the descendants of Orestes) beyond the time of the Trojan War, since Barthell seldom describes this period.

These sources are analyzed with respect to the four variables of descent described in the previous section. There are many new relationships to be considered in the contexts of all four variables. These new relationships become evident after the "deepening" (adding to generations) and "widening" (adding to collaterals) of the House of Atreus. As well as this, affinal connections of members of the expanded House are considered as they relate to other Houses. All of these Houses are defined as patrilineal stem lineages originating with the pairing of immortals or of immortal with a legendary figure.

The broadening of the House described in the previous paragraph is roughly analogous to Macneish's description of the "Family Tree" and

constitutes the initial step in analysis (i.e., descent) in the present work. Comparisons between the dramas and the composite system of descent are most valid at this stage because the occupancy of a position is at issue rather than the performance of actions. These positions are static and so they can be considered to compose static systems.

After establishing the occupancy of positions, both Macneish and I proceed to describe the actions of the occupants. The names for these actions are, respectively, the "chain of crimes" and "events." In the case of the expanded system of descent there is no harmonious narrative flow, and no truly authentic harmony to be created out of the diversity of the sources that make it up. A unified treatment cannot be achieved. Such a treatment is also in violation of the idea of faithfulness to the sources, since it entails an inappropriate reconciliatory response to contrareity on the level of works related by subject (see section on *Variation*, above).

The actions to be observed in the expanded system do not have to be abandoned, however, because they do not have to be treated in the same way as crimes and events. Instead of dealing with each action as a discrete phenomenon--involving specific actors at a specific time--these actions can be grouped together using criteria of descent similar to those that define events. Patterns of action may be described in this way, rather than a particular series of actions. This patterning enables some comparison to a sequence of events without permitting an illusion that *pattern* and *sequence* are the same sort of thing.

These patterns of action are not only informative with respect to events. By the way that these patterns are defined, they also bear some

relation to the model-making procedure that is applied in the present work. These models are basically the abstraction of the sequence of events into a sequence of relationships in which the agent and patient are redefined in their context of descent. The patterns noted in the expanded system also abstract the actors into their position on a system of descent with the only qualification being that they cannot be placed in anything but a roughly relative sequence.

The scope of the present work is wider than the scope of the two works that inspired it. Because of this, many inadequacies in the smaller works have to be recognized and overcome. Although the dramas that deal with the House of Atreus comprise a sizable and discrete subject for analysis, they are related in genre and in topic, they do not represent the largest focus that can be applied to the House. The largest focus is the one that includes all of the statements about the House in any literary form at all. While adopting such a focus at its fullest extent is impossibly complex, certain restrictions enable at least a great part of these statements to be drawn together. Once this is done, these statements provide a third level of analysis, one larger than that of the present work, and one that serves as a point from which to examine the present work for the kinds of inadequacies noted within the works smaller than it. The largest possible range of data about the House of Atreus is therefore present for the House of Atreus: the single drama or legend (Macneish and Turner), and the total of the Greek material. The existence of this range is so valuable from a methodological standpoint that the attempt to define its largest limit is worth the hazards and the difficulties of its definition.

*The Relative Sequence of the Dramas
and the Order of Presentation*

It is not essential to establish a strict chronology of the dramas since they overlap in action and take up various possibilities of plot. As an aid to organization, however, the dramas may be placed in the following order of relative chronology:

Iphigenia in Aulis
(*Ajax*, *The Trojan Women*, *Hecuba*)
Agamemnon
The Libation Bearers, the two *Electras*
Helen
Orestes
Andromache
Iphigenia in Tauris
The Eumenides

Helen is not really within the flow of the saga, but it is inserted in its place because it must occur before *Orestes*, in which Menelaus and Helen have a part. It must also occur after *Agamemnon* since Agamemnon's was the swifter journey home to Argos.

The Eumenides is placed last since it takes place in Athens. In Euripides' *Electra*, *Orestes*, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Orestes is impelled towards Athens by, respectively, the Dioscuri (l. 1342), Apollo (ll. 1645-50), and Athena (ll. 1449-55).

In *Andromache*, Orestes says that he is "on the way to Dodona" (l. 886) which is to the northwest in Epirus. Whether he was going there for absolution (since in this drama he is not sent on to Athens) or to fulfil another stage of his itinerary is not stated. This latter case seems more likely, so I have placed *Andromache* after *Orestes* and

before *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Tauris being much farther away from Argos than Dodona.

This relative chronological order is not, however, the order in which the dramas are dealt with in the present work. There are two reasons for this. The *Oresteia* (*Agamemnon*, *Libation Bearers*, and *Eumenides*) is to be treated first and as a unit. The motives for this have been stated previously (see p. 4). Second, it is desirable to keep the works of each dramatist distinct for ease of comparison between the dramatists, and for ease in perceiving developments in the dramatists' attitudes toward the material--bearing in mind the qualification that the dramas are in relative order with respect to the House of Atreus rather than to the *curricula vitarum* of the dramatists.

With the factors mentioned above given consideration, the order of the dramas is revised as follows:

{ <i>Agamemnon</i> }		— <i>Oresteia</i> — Aeschylus
{ <i>Libation Bearers</i> }		
{ <i>Eumenides</i> }		
<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i>		— Euripides
<i>Electra</i>		
<i>Orestes</i>		
<i>Andromache</i>		
<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>		
<i>Helen</i>		— Sophocles
<i>Electra</i>		

This new order groups the dramatists' work together while retaining as much of the "narrative" sequence as possible. Only *Helen* has been violently reclassified. This is because this drama is a peripheral one both in subject and in tone.

There is no intention to suggest that Euripides' dramas about the House of Atreus represent a kind of undeclared hexology. Erich Fromm (1959:425) has made a more justifiable case with respect to Sophocles' "Theban Trilogy" (*Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Antigone*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*). Fromm claims that while Sophocles did not present these dramas as a trilogy, he must surely have had in mind some "inner coherence of the whole." He supports this idea with the claim that not one of the dramas may be fully understood without reference to the other two. While Euripides' "Argive" dramas are also "coherent" in that the actions in them do not overlap, there is such a spread of time over their creation and such a range in their treatment of the members of the House that any claim here about their overall conception would be insupportable, or at least premature.

A final comment is in order here about the three dramas which appear in brackets in the initial order, but which are absent from the second and final one. These three dramas are alike in that each includes in its cast at least one member of the House of Atreus: in *Ajax* (Sophocles), Agamemnon and Menelaus; in Euripides' *Trojan Women* and *Hecuba*, respectively, Menelaus (and Helen), and Agamemnon alone. None of these dramas are included in the present work because each fails to meet a primary requirement: that the House of Atreus be the primary subject of it.⁸ In each drama the House of Atreus is represented in person by a member or members of the House of Atreus who can in turn represent only a single generation of the House; descent, of course, carries in its definition the need for more than one generation. In *Helen*, too, only one generation is present, but in this case the primary criterion, that

the House of Atreus be foremost, is satisfied.

The Establishment of Descent

The establishment of descent in the dramas is a straightforward matter because descent is simply manifest in the texts. The members of the House of Atreus who are pertinent to the dramatists either play a part in the dramas as actors or are alluded to by those who do have a part to play. Distinctions between these two kinds of presence do not have to be made at this level of analysis because non-actors do not reappear on the next level (i.e., that of events) if their bygone actions have had no effect on present action; or, if the dramatists perceive their actions to have had such an effect, they do reappear and are treated as actors, since their actions live on after them.

The familiar stem chart is adequate to describe descent in each of the dramas since the number of actors is always small. The connections between these actors are not always simple, however, and certain distinguishing conventions must be applied to this kind of figure. While the stem chart is not strictly the device of the humanists, it may be broadly associated with them. This is probably because of the kinds of information in which they are interested. Anthropologists tend to be more concerned with descent itself, and generally require more sophisticated figurative models.⁹ Barthell (1971:212) provides an example of a fairly standard type of humanists' stem chart (Figure 2).

Rhadamanthys
and
Alcmena
(d. Electryon)

FIGURE 2. Representative stem chart.

Such a notation displays a disinterest in marriage patterns. Thus Electryon, whose daughter marries Rhadamanthys, is a gratuitous figure unless one expends the effort of ascertaining his patrilineal context. Another way of presenting the same material is given in Figure 3.

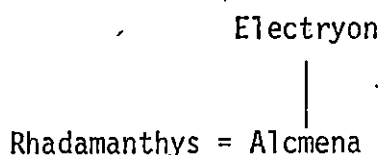


FIGURE 3. Adjustment of stem chart to include marriage pattern.

This notation allows the lineal connections of all three figures to be extended in all directions, while retaining the original context of the marriage.

It can be readily seen that the kind of notation given in Figure 3 can become unwieldy if too many of the potential kinds of connections are drawn. This will be so especially when it is desirable to retain the proper names of the individuals; this is one of the reasons for the increasing stylization, or abandonment, of the stem chart by anthropologists. Yet the humanists' stem charts are grievously faulty in that, while they may present a great deal of information, they also obscure most patterns of relationship. Returning to Barthell (1971:269), the following small extract of the descent of the House of Atreus may be considered (Figure 4). Not only do Barthell's conventions cause two women (Aerope and Cloella, who is not linked to her father) to exist upon adjacent generations at the same time, but they also cause the turmoil of the generations contained in the relationships to be almost lost to view. The situation in Figure 4 may not be presented easily in

an elegant way, but Figure 5 at least keeps the generations distinct.

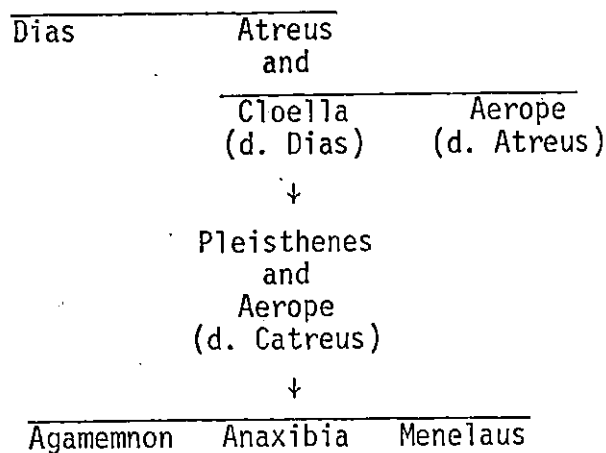


FIGURE 4. Partial descent of the House of Atreus (after Barthell, 1971).

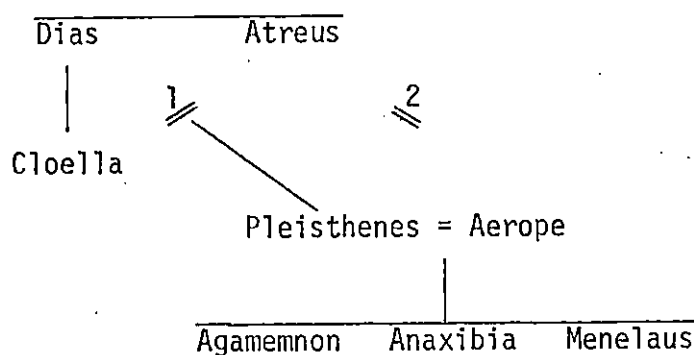


FIGURE 5. Adjustment of figure to separate generations.

The need for certain figurative conventions (such as those for marriage in Figure 5) is dependent upon the kinds of relationships that are of interest to the analyst. The conventions required by the present work are those that allow the distinction of all of the pertinent actors in terms of the four variables of descent under analysis: generation,

affinity, collaterality, and lineality. Each of these distinctions may be shown on a stem chart. Any innovations are noted in the place in which they first occur. This kind of notation makes the significance of the innovation most readily apparent. Therefore, while the idea of describing the system of descent by a figure for each drama is straightforward, the logistics of presenting these systems with economy and clarity are not always simple.

The problems of logistics are of a minor and technical nature compared with problems that arise in the interpretation of the texts; sometimes it is difficult to be sure just what relationships of descent the dramatists mean to supply. Most often this difficulty takes the shape of non-information: instead of a relationship being stated as such, a relationship must be inferred from actions. The problem is to decide whether relationships are not stated because they are common knowledge and need no statement, or whether they are not stated by the dramatists' intent and are not meant to be drawn. Decisions must be made in such cases in order that descent may be established.

A lengthy example of such a question is valuable here because it allows the problem to be seen clearly, and provides a place in which to demonstrate the kinds of considerations that go towards reaching a resolution. The case in point is the relationship between Strophius and Pylades. Conventional accounts (Pausanias, II 29.4; Barthell 1971:258, 269) would have these two as father and son, their respective wife and mother being Anaxibia, sister of Agamemnon. By such an account Pylades is a patrilateral cross-cousin of the children of Agamemnon: Electra--whom he is generally considered to have married--and Orestes. Figure 6

summarizes this account.

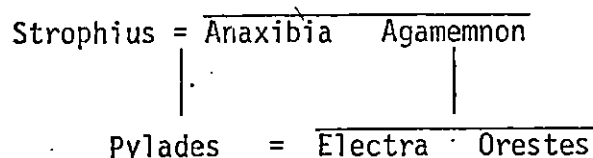


FIGURE 6. A conventional account of the relationship of Strophius and Pylades.

In some cases the dramatists support this general outline. In Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*, for example, Pylades and Orestes are "brothers in everything but birth" (l. 498). Iphigenia and Orestes call Pylades "Atreus' grandson," "cousin," and "Strophius' son" (ll. 916-918). Here the conventional relationships are set out in full.

In Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, however, Strophius and Pylades are nowhere described as father and son. They are, however, described in similar terms. Orestes calls Pylades "hereditary friend and companion-in-arms to my house" (*Libation Bearers*, l. 562), and Strophius is described as Agamemnon's "companion-in-arms and faithful friend" (*Agamemnon*, l. 880). As well as this, both Strophius and Pylades are described as Phocians, and Strophius looks after Orestes in his exile.

Such indirect evidence seems by its weight to be sufficient to conclude that Aeschylus simply does not make a well-known relationship explicit. It would therefore be justified to indicate, for the *Oresteia*, that Strophius and Pylades are father and son. However, to do so may first of all raise the question of contrareity: can the drawing of this relationship be construed as a response to contrareity on the level of the single work (see *Arbitrariness*, p. 22)? Secondly, and through the

benefit of foresight--the indication of the father/son relationship obscures a major feature of the difference between the treatment of the House of Atreus by Aeschylus and by Euripides. Aeschylus' focus in the *Oresteia* is decidedly an intralinear one, with a definite inward-turning upon a small group of closely related individuals. Euripides, on the other hand, displays an interlinear emphasis, introducing as many as six lineages, as in *Orestes*, into a single drama. The Aeschylean viewpoint seems to demand that, even if they are patent, relationships other than the most central ones be suppressed or effaced in the concentration upon the core.

The case of Strophius and Pylades is the most difficult and subtle that I have encountered in this analysis, and for this reason as well as others already cited, it has been discussed here at length. The special importance of their relationship resides in the fact that--if it is drawn--it can involve complex relationships with the House of Atreus over two generations. Other vague or debatable relationships in the texts are of comparatively less significance, and they generally involve no more than a single generation. For this reason they can be dealt with in the course of the establishment of descent by far simpler statements.

The Establishment of Events

When the establishment of descent is complete the members of the House of Atreus are motionless. They are poised as if in anticipation of the actions that they are to perform. The establishment of events is the description of these actions. "Actions" and "events" are not strictly synonymous: an event is always an action, but every action is

not an event. The term "event" is refined for use as a description of that kind of action which constitutes a *violation of the proper devolution of descent*. "Descent" has already been refined to imply four of its variables: generation, affinity, collaterality, and lineality.

An event may be compared to one of Macneish's "crimes" and to one of Turner's "episodes" (see pp. 35-39). If each of Macneish's crimes are phrased in patrilineal terms they satisfy the definition of events. If Turner's episodes are taken to be parallel to the systems of descent in the present work, then the actions that constitute these episodes--the "improper mediation" of the relationship in the episode--also satisfy the definition. However, the variables of descent that are violated by both a crime and an improper mediation are not the same as those whose violation constitutes an event; the difference between variables has been amply discussed (see *Events*).

An event may also be compared in some ways to the "overrating" and "underrating" of blood relations that form two of the four columns¹⁰ of Lévi-Strauss' work on Oedipus (1963:213-217); this work has already been mentioned in the present work (see pp. 13-14). The figure in which Lévi-Strauss presents his columns may be reproduced here (Figure 7). This figure is divested of its supposed diachronic dimension (i.e., its rows) which is not at issue here.

The first and third entries on the "overrated" column can hardly be called events since they both consist of *proper*--if extreme--behavior towards lineals. The second entry--marriage between son and mother--is in fact the complement of the corresponding entry on the second column--murder of father by son--and so may be subsumed under it. Therefore, the

Blood Relations	
1. Cadmos seeks daughter Europa, ravished by Zeus	1. The Spartoi kill one another
2. Oedipus marries his mother, Jocasta	2. Oedipus kills his father, Laios
3. Antigone buries her brother, Polyneices, despite prohibition	3. Eteocles kills his brother, Polyneices

FIGURE 7. The over- and underrating of blood relationships in the legend of Oedipus (after Lévi-Strauss, 1963).

notion of "overrating" blood relations, at least as it is expressed by Lévi-Strauss, may be dismissed from a discussion of events. The "underrating" of blood relations is closer by its very definition to the idea of an event.

The first and third entries on the "underrated" column consist of murder of brother by brother (if the Spartoi may be considered brothers). The second entry is the murder of a father by a son. These entries are exact equivalents of events. All of the other entries cannot be compared to events because they do not involve agents and patients related by one of the pertinent variables of descent, because they do not involve improper behavior, or because they do not involve any action at all.

The first two features noted above as disqualifying certain of Lévi-Strauss' entries as events present little hazard to the present work. This is due to the way that both the existence of a link through descent and the attestation of improper behavior are contained in the

very definition of an event. However, the third disqualifying feature, the lack of action, is a constant source of difficulty. This situation is due to the pervasive effect of events upon subsequent behavior in drama, and the problem that can occur in distinguishing cause from effect. In the present work, the cause is an event, and the effect is termed a *condition*. A condition is essentially a state of being rather than an alteration of a state of being, or event.

The subtle distinction between an event and a condition may be best illustrated by example. Because this distinction is of the utmost importance to the present work, since it involves the way that the units of analysis are devised, these examples are given at length. The examples given are: (1) the lack of recognition between lineals; (2) childlessness; and (3) inverted sexual behavior.

Aegisthus, in the dramas that involve him, banishes or removes from their inheritance the children of Agamemnon. This action is an event because it is performed at a specific time by a certain agent upon a certain related patient. It involves a change in state for both agent and patient and it represents the violation of two variables of descent: generation and collaterality. The children are separated. Later, they meet and do not recognize one another.¹¹ This lack of recognition is obviously inappropriate behavior for lineals. It is not in itself a violation of descent. Lack of recognition is the effect of an event, banishment, and is therefore a condition.

The second example of a condition is that of childlessness. Childlessness may be thought of as a violation of descent because it represents an obstacle to the succession of generations. In the dramas that

deal with the House of Atreus there are two childless women. One is Electra; in Sophocles' *Electra* (l. 188) she calls herself "wasted in childlessness." In this case, Electra is childless because of a proscription upon her marriage by the fearful Aegisthus; thus, the childlessness is the effect of an actual event: disinheritance. In Euripides' *Electra*, the same fearful Aegisthus marries off Electra to a man far below her station in order to ensure unsuitable claimants for the throne. Again, the chastity that becomes unavoidable to Electra is the result of an event. The other childless woman is Hermione the daughter of Menelaus, who, in *Andromache*, is barren. Hermione blames her barrenness upon the witchery of her husband's concubine, Andromache, whom Menelaus slanders as a "spawner" (l. 663). Yet Euripides makes it clear that the reason for Hermione's barrenness is the duplicity of her father, who so violated the proper behavior towards his lineals that he forsook a promise to allow Orestes to marry Hermione (ll. 966-981). Here, again, childlessness is not an event but the effect of an event, and therefore a condition.¹²

The inversion of sexual behavior is the most obvious effect of an event. The example of Antigone (see pp. 23-24) shows a woman forced to take over the duties of a man by previous events. Lévi-Strauss confused this compulsion with the overrating of blood relationships. Within the House of Atreus, the "execrable Aegisthus" (Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, 21.57) is often cited for womanly behavior (*Agamemnon*, ll. 1625, 1643; *Libation Bearers*, ll. 304-305), and Clytaemnestra for behavior more befitting a man (among the many: *Agamemnon*, ll. 231, 260, 1400, 1452, 1661; *Libation Bearers*, ll. 889). By its very nature, the presence of

inappropriate sexual behavior will not allow the proper interaction between people related by descent. However, like the lack of recognition and childlessness, this kind of behavior did not exist before a certain event had taken place to change the expected or natural flow of proper descent.

The distinction between events and conditions can be hard to make, as the previous examples show, because both involve improper behavior in the context of the system of descent. Even so, the distinctions must be made so that the units of analysis--in this case, events--are comparable, and that the narrative sequence may be maintained. Conditions may become manifest at a particular time in a drama, but they may also exist long before and far after their manifestation; because of this, their inclusion among the chronologically discrete events in an analysis will cause total disruption or distortion of the narrative sequence. In drama, conditions are ideal for display due to the visual nature of the genre, while events--which predicate conditions--are difficult to show and are soon over. These considerations justify the time required to clearly distinguish the two kinds of phenomena.¹³

The discussion of events that followed the initial statement about the broad outlines of what is meant by that term allows the formulation in a fuller form here of some strict criteria. The criteria for analyzing an action as an event are:

- (1) that there be an agent and a patient;
- (2) that the agent and patient be related by at least one of the four pertinent variables of descent;
- (3) that the action be an improper one in the context of descent; and

- (4) that the action be temporally discrete (rather than the manifestation of a continuing state).

Little more needs to be said in this introductory section after the criteria for an event has been established, since actions satisfying these criteria are manifest in the texts of the dramas. It remains to be noted that, at this level of analysis, the pertinent members of the House of Atreus retain their personal names. The abstraction of the personal name into the corresponding position within the system of descent is deferred to the next level of analysis, which results in the formulation of models.

The Establishment of Models

The first level of analysis (*descent*) establishes the members of the House of Atreus in the relationships attested in the dramas. The second level of analysis (*events*) provides a description of the sequence of sharply-defined actions that are performed by the members of the House. The third level of analysis consists of an integration of the two previous levels through the establishment of *models*. For each of the dramas, the model is in essence the notation of *events* in terms of the four pertinent variables of descent; those variables which obtain for any event are identified through the work on *descent*. The plainest expression of this succession of levels of analysis is a series of questions which--divested of several niceties of definition--may be given as: (1) who are the actors? (2) what are the actions they perform? and (3) what is the pattern of these actions? These patterns of action are the primary units of analysis in the present work. They are expressed

in their final form as models, but the models by themselves constitute data only, and cannot answer this third question on a comparative level. The synthesis of patterns of action as they occur throughout the dramas is presented in the final chapter of this work (Chapter IV). This chapter is designed to address the third question fully. However, statements about the patterns of action that are attested in each particular drama may be reserved for the model-making stage in the treatment of each drama.

The models, taken together, are units of analysis. They are in turn made up of smaller units. These smaller units consist of the dyadic interaction between agent and patient (see definition of event, p. 59). The exact nature of the relationship between agent and patient is drawn from the context of the entire House of Atreus. Certain examples of this kind of dyad are in order here, as in other places, so that their conception is plain and so that their treatment can be given at length. One action in the *Oresteia* that satisfies the criteria of an event can be put as follows:

Aegisthus banishes Orestes

From the work on descent in the *Oresteia*, it is known that Aegisthus and Orestes are collaterals, since their fathers were brothers. Collaterality is therefore the one of the three mutually exclusive variables of descent that can be in force in a dyadic relationship. It can also be determined that the two are of adjacent generations, Aegisthus' being the senior. Generation, it will be recalled, is the fourth pertinent variable of descent. Replacing proper names with relationships produces the following rephrasing of "Aegisthus banishes Orestes":

"collaterals; adjacent generations"

This notation is unsatisfactory because it does not distinguish the direction of the violation of descent, while being hardly more economical in statement. Both of these objections may be put aside through the adoption of symbols for the variables. Collaterality simply does or does not obtain, so it may be represented by an immutable symbol. In the present work this symbol is "//". Where senior and junior generations interact, two directions of action are conceivable: upwards and downwards. Members of the same generation may also interact, in which case the generational direction of the action is horizontal, in the metaphoric sense. All three of these directions should be generated from a single symbol. The one adopted here is that of an arrow, which may show upwardness by \uparrow , downwardness by \downarrow , and horizontality by \rightarrow . With these symbols for collaterality and for a cross-generational event with a downward direction in mind, the event "Aegisthus banishes Orestes" may be represented by the following Figure 8.

// \downarrow

FIGURE 8. Symbolic representation of collaterality and event upon a descending generation.

This notation conveys information in a highly economical form, and its manner of expression is well adapted for comparison to other such notations. Other examples such as the one above may be given in order to assure that the procedure is plain and also to introduce the rest of the symbols that are used in the notation of all other events.

A familiar event is the undertaking of the Trojan War. With a patrilineal point of view, this event may be phrased as:

"Menelaus raises his lineal, Agamemnon (as well as many others), to fight against Troy, on behalf of an affine."

The generational direction of this event is clearly horizontal, and the dyadic relationship--between Menelaus and Agamemnon--is that of lineality. Figure 9, incorporating the symbol for lineality (/), expresses these features of interaction and relationship.

/ →

FIGURE 9. Symbolic representation of lineality and intragenerational event.

Were one to insist that Helen, "much admired, and blamed as much" (Goethe, *Faust*, Book 2, Act 3) should be accorded the culpability for the Trojan War, then the symbol for affinity (=)--the third and final mutually exclusive variable of descent--must replace the symbol for lineality; this new statement of the event is shown in Figure 10.

= →

FIGURE 10. Symbolic representation of affinity and intragenerational event.

The three symbols for generational direction and the immutable symbols for collaterality, lineality, and affinity are theoretically all that are necessary for the representation of every event, if descent is indeed the primary mover of the dramas. Certain actors in the events, however, cannot be symbolized in these terms. A symbol for non-kin, like

those of Turner's (see p. 38), is unconscionable, and a class of persons called "non-kinsmen" cannot be recognized, since in most cases an examination of sources will establish a connecting link. Even so, there are certain actors in specific dramas whom the dramatists clearly wish to remove from the context of relationship by descent. Among the most clearly "disrelated" of these are Pylades (see pp. 52-54), Aegisthus, and Achilles--an affine. Such actors absolutely require notation in the models and a cover term to identify them. The term chosen to signify them is that of *un-descendants*, a non-grammatical construction meant to imply the innovative intent of the dramatists--which may vary from conventional accounts--and to distinguish these persons from non-kin. The symbol to denote them is #.

An example of undescent is Achilles' relationship to the House of Atreus in Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Some other accounts of Achilles show an affinal relationship between Achilles' House and the House of Atreus (see Chapter II). In *Iphigenia in Aulis* no such relationships are attested, but Achilles' involvement in events is concerned with a spurious chance to become an affine through the offer of Iphigenia as a wife. Is Achilles, then, to be noted as an affine (=), or as an undescendant (#), since the marriage never occurs?

The attempt to answer this question involves an address to a problem that is larger than simple undescent. This problem is concerned with the sequence of events in certain dramas. Events in the *Oresteia*, for example, allow the metaphor of the "chain" of crimes because each event is distinct and discrete in time. In other dramas, certain events directly affect more than one category of person, and the effects of a

single event may become manifest at more than one point throughout the narrative. Achilles is the patient of such an event in *Iphigenia in Aulis*. In *Iphigenia in Aulis*, Agamemnon is compelled to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia. To this end, he deceives his wife and daughter in the belief that a marriage to Achilles has been arranged. He has not consulted Achilles. Agamemnon maintains his deceit at various times (Achilles: ll. 95-105, 840-850; Clytaemnestra: ll. 686-740; Iphigenia: ll. 640-685), and the victims become apprised of his deception more or less simultaneously. If the deceit of Agamemnon is treated as a single tripartite event, it can be presented in the form noted in Figure 11.

$$\begin{array}{c} = \rightarrow \\ / \downarrow \\ \# \rightarrow \quad \text{or} \quad = \rightarrow \end{array}$$

FIGURE 11. Representation of a tripartite event.

In the present work Agamemnon's deception, while it affects three different kinds of persons, is considered as a single event. Its special feature is that it consists of a single act by a single agent which has a simultaneous effect, which may not be felt at the same moment, by three types of patient.

The bearing that this tripartite event has upon the classification of Achilles is this: if Achilles is considered to be in an affinal relationship to the House of Atreus (=), then Agamemnon's deception involves only two categories of persons, since Clytaemnestra is also in that relationship to the House. Euripides' emphasis in *Iphigenia in Aulis* is upon the frantic nature of Agamemnon's attempts to deflect away his

compulsion. To this end he even tries to deceive his brother, Menelaus (II. 107-160, 302-375). This event (i.e., /→) complements the range of his deception. The breadth of Agamemnon's deception, his improper behavior, is therefore so extensive that there appears to be justification for the inclusion of Achilles--in the absence of statements to the contrary--in the model of an undescendant.

So far in this section a model has been defined as a series of units that consist of events abstracted into two features of descent: the relationship between agent and patient, and the generational direction of the crime. It is notable that under this definition the exact nature of the crime itself--banishment, deceit, murder--is not recorded. Are these units, then, comparable, since they vary so much in their degree of impropriety? The use of non-comparable units was especially deplored with respect to the works of Kirk (see pp. 28-30) and Macneish (pp. 35-37). The answer to this resides in the fact that the comparison between events is not made at the level of events themselves, but rather at the level of the models; models represent patterns of phenomena, rather than a phenomenon. To this may be added the reply that, if the proper devolution of descent is desirable to the members of the descent group, then all violations of proper descent are equally destructive since each one will assist or precipitate the dissolution of the group.

CHAPTER II

THE EXPANDED SYSTEM OF DESCENT

THE HOUSE OF ATREUS IN HOMER

. . . as for Homer, you might almost say that every city with its inhabitants claimed him as her son.¹⁴

The works of Homer, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, have been described in Chapter I as the minimal common background of the dramatists with respect to knowledge about the House of Atreus. The Homeric account of the House is in fact minimal. It deals with a very limited number of generations, and shows such a lineal bias that relationships with collaterals are open to doubt. The bareness of the House in Homer may be due in large part to the need for economy in works of such scale as his; as well as this, the desire for narrative flow can be expected to have been such that genealogical diversions may have been minimized.

Where Homer draws a relationship between the members of the House of Atreus, these relationships remain constants throughout the dramas. The son of Pelops was Atreus, and Atreus' sons were Agamemnon and Menelaus. The wife of Agamemnon was Clytaemnestra, and their children were Orestes, Chrysothemis, Laodice (Electra), and Iphianassa (Iphigenia); Agamemnon also took the prophetess Cassandra as a prize from Troy

(*Iliad* 9.141-148; *Odyssey*, Book XI). The wife of Menelaus was Helen, and their only child was a daughter, Hermione; a son, Megapenthes, was born to Menelaus by a "slave girl" (*Odyssey*, Book IV) and was apparently raised respectably.

These relationships do not change in the dramas. They form the immutable core of the House of Atreus. Homer, however, is not explicit about the relationship between Atreus and Thyestes--and hence about the relationship between Agamemnon and Aegisthus--and here the dramas show a great deal of variation. There is no indication that Atreus and Thyestes were the brothers that most accounts would make them, and there is no mention of the violations of descent that these two were often held to have perpetrated on one another. In fact, the evidence in Homer is to the contrary. In the following lines from the *Iliad* (2.100-108) the tone is reminiscent of Aeschylus' description of the smooth succession to the office of the Pythia (*Eumenides*, ll. 1-20), and to Euripides' account of the serene propriety of the passage of generations of Achilles' ancestors (*Iphigenia in Aulis*, ll. 697-711):

Powerful Agamemnon
stood up holding the scepter Hephaistos had
wrought him carefully.
Hephaistos gave it to Zeus the king, the son
of Kronos,
and Zeus in turn gave it to the courier Argeiphontes,
and lord Hermes gave it to Pelops, driver of horses,
and Pelops again gave it to Atreus, shepherd of
the people.
Atreus dying left it to Thyestes of the rich flocks,
and Thyestes left it in turn to Agamemnon to carry
and be lord of many islands and over all Argos.

The sense in this passage appears to be that Thyestes received and passed on the office surrounding the scepter in an orderly and legitimate way. Perhaps it may be inferred that he acted as a kind of regent for

Agamemnon, Atreus' death (the only one mentioned) being untimely. It may even be inferred that Thyestes and Atreus were taken to be brothers.

There is no doubt about the relationship between Thyestes and Aegisthus: they are father and son. In the *Odyssey* they are put in this relationship, as the rulers of "Land's End of Argos" (Book IV). From this account the line of rulers through Thyestes may perhaps have been subordinate to a "king of kings" of all Argos. At any rate, Thyestes' possession of supreme rule was temporary and was not passed on legitimately to Aegisthus, he took it. If Thyestes and Atreus were brothers ruling side by side, it would seem that the children of these men, as patrilineal parallel cousins, would know one another. Yet in the *Odyssey* (Book IV), Menelaus calls Aegisthus a "stranger [who] killed in cold blood." It cannot be claimed with certainty, then that Homer considered Thyestes and Atreus to be brothers and Aegisthus and Agamemnon, accordingly, to be cousins. However the weight of the evidence seems to be that a tentative connection of this kind may be made. As with the case of Pylades and Orestes, mentioned previously, it appears that lineal connections are being emphasized even to the diminishment of collateral ones.

The preceding summary of Homer's treatment of the House of Atreus may be organized into the figure following (Figure 12).

Two conventions for the representation of relationships are introduced in Figure 12. The usage here is followed throughout the present work. These new conventions are as follows: ≠ "illegitimate marriage or seduction," and — — — — "relationship--in this case brotherhood --is not explicit, but evidence for it is present in the texts."

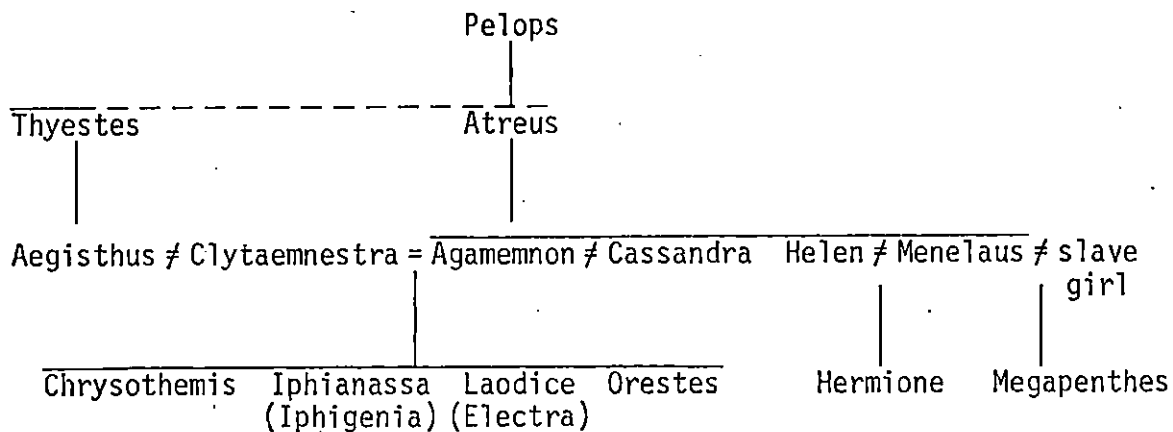


FIGURE 12. The House of Atreus in Homer (*Iliad* and *Odyssey*).

Although departures from Homer are not numerous with respect to descent in the House of Atreus, the same may not be said about events. To begin, there is the lack of evidence for the hostilities between Atreus and Thyestes. As well as this, there is no mention of the sacrifice of Iphigenia. An even more divergent construction of events occurs with respect to the attribution of culpability for certain crimes: the waging of the Trojan War, the murder of Agamemnon, and the murder of Aegisthus.

In the *Odyssey* (Book IV), the murder of Aegisthus (and Clytaemnestra) is represented as hardly a criminal act at all. Menelaus relates he was told the following, in Egypt, with respect to the bloodied Aegisthus:

You may take him
alive there still--or else meanwhile Orestes
will have dispatched him. You'll attend the feast.

Clearly, the "dispatching" of Aegisthus is taken as a justifiable act--almost a sporting event--that will follow axiomatically after the crime that the victim himself committed. Of Clytaemnestra there is no mention,

although it is for her murder that all subsequent accounts attribute the tormenting of Orestes.

The justification that the sons of Atreus had for the waging of the war against Troy is also explicit in Homer. The blame for the war is everywhere Helen's, even she takes this blame upon herself (*Odyssey*, Book IV). So, as with the murder of Aegisthus, the going-to-war was a legitimate assertion of rights. The "rightness" of the war is not always accepted by later Greek writers. Euripides, among the dramatists, credits, in *Helen*, the variant that Helen never went to Troy and that the Greeks at Troy knew it. In *Andromache* (ll. 590-631), he has Peleus say to Menelaus that the war was not justified ("For such a slut you raised the Greek divisions ...?"), and that the death of Achilles is therefore on his head. Later writers, too, discredit the justification of the sons of Atreus. Herodotus (*Histories*, Book VII) appears to echo Peleus' estimation of the seriousness of Helen's departure ("... the rape by a foreign prince of a Spartan woman"). Thucydides (*Peloponessian War*, Book I) suggests that Agamemnon, as the most powerful of the Greek kings, bullied the rest of the Greeks into assisting in the vengeance of a personal wrong ("... fear played a greater part than loyalty in the raising of the expedition to Troy").

Upon the guilt for the murder of Agamemnon, the statements in the *Odyssey*--the *Iliad* not including this event--are divided. Aegisthus is accorded all of the blame in Book IV. But in Book XI the blame for the act begins to fall upon both Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra, or upon Clytaemnestra alone. The shade of Agamemnon, when visited by Odysseus, has the following to say about his death:

It was Aegisthus who planned my death, he
 and my heatless wife ... that whore ...
 There is no being more fell;
 more bestial in such an action.¹⁵

Odysseus responds to these statements with similar words. He puts all of the blame upon Clytaemnestra, cursing Helen in the same breath for the war against Troy:

. . . intrigues of women even from the start.
 Myriads died by Helen's fault, and Clytaemnestra
 plotted against you half the world away.

It would seem that Menelaus and Agamemnon perceive the event in different ways. Menelaus blames Aegisthus, who is a possible collateral. Agamemnon blames his wife, who is an affine. The dramatists therefore have two choices for the perpetrator of the murder of Agamemnon. Both choices are attested in the dramas, and both may be said to be faithful to Homer.

In summary, it can be said that the descent of the House of Atreus as it is represented by Homer provides a core of facts which the dramatists do not alter. Where Homer establishes a relationship, the relationship holds. Where interpretation of a relationship is allowed, the dramatists interpret it. Homer's portrayal of events, however, is bald in comparison to those of the dramatists, and is in some cases inconsistent. The Homeric accounts of guilt for certain crimes shows a decidedly more patrilineal shading--women (affines) being the transgressors--than the accounts of the dramatists, and it is here that the most divergence can be seen to occur.

*THE EXPANDED SYSTEM OF DESCENT:
NON-HOMERIC SOURCES*

Introduction

The purpose for establishing, within certain limits, the range of information in the classical sources about the House of Atreus has been given previously (see p. 41), to approximate the potential store of knowledge in the possession of the dramatists. To this end, the compilatory work of Barthell (1971) has been accepted as satisfactory at least in its broadest outlines. The work in Barthell (1971:267-272) that has specific reference to the House of Atreus is given in the present thesis as Appendix I. However, Barthell's work is not taken completely at face value. There are two reasons for this distrust: first of all, Barthell is manifestly interested in different sorts of information within the texts than I am myself, and secondly, Barthell purposely ends his genealogical effort at no later than the single generation that follows the Trojan War.

Barthell (1971:397-398) divides his bibliography into two sections: "sources" and "digests and commentaries upon the sources." This second type of reference work is disregarded here. Within the first section there are works that have already been investigated (Homer, the dramatists). Other works are not within the present compass of this thesis because they are from Latin originals (Ovid, Seneca, for example), because they are concerned incidentally, if at all, with the House of Atreus (Aristophanes, Herodotus, Thucydides), or because they are rare

or difficult to obtain in translation (e.g., Dictys Cretensis). Among the remainder, the following sources are selected for analysis:

- (1) Hesiod
- (2) The Epic Cycle
- (3) Pindar
- (4) Apollodorus
- (5) Pausanias
- (6) Strabo
- (7) Diodorus Siculus

Hesiod (8th century B.C.), the authors of the Epic Cycle (8th to 6th centuries B.C.), and Pindar (518-438 B.C.) are creative artists. They all flourished before the time of the dramatists, or, in the case of Pindar, early in their time. The others all post-date the dramatists. Apollodorus was a mythographer who flourished in the 1st century B.C., and the remaining three--Pausanias, Strabo, and Diodorus Siculus--were "geographers" or "historians" who lived after the birth of Christ. Together, these seven sources, along with Homer and the dramatists, circumscribe most of the information that now exists about the legendary figures of the Greeks in general, and those of the House of Atreus in particular.

In the present chapter, Barthell (1971) is treated first. This is because his work stands as an initiatory one to the present author, and because his work includes reference to the same sources indicated above. Barthell's House of Atreus is examined for members that do not appear in the dramas or in Homer, or--since his work has a canonical character--for such unexampled relationships as are noted between these members. This procedure is, in effect, the widening and deepening of the House

(see p. 77) and is roughly parallel to the work on *descent* for each of the dramas. New members of the House are enumerated and classed together by their relationship to the House. A figure (Figure 14) is then given to summarize this examination; because there are so many new members, each member is coded by the first three letters of his or her name. This code is first indicated when the members are listed, and is constant throughout the present work whenever the restrictions of a figure call for encoding.

Once the Barthellian House of Atreus is established, Barthell's account in prose is examined. This account (Barthell 1971:267-272) consists of a single narrative, with unacceptable variants disregarded or indicated by means of footnotes. This activity was discussed under the heading of the Selective Response to Contrareity on the Level of Works Related by Subject (i.e., variation). Since this account is given in the form of a narrative, it is treated as a narrative, and is examined in terms of the pattern of *events* that are attested in it.

After this, the other sources indicated above are examined in the order in which they have been given. Since Barthell used each of them in his work, much of the information about the House of Atreus will have been shown already. Even so, so narrow is Barthell's range of interest that much information is still to be gained. For each of the sources, any new statements about descent are noted, and then such statements about events. It is in connection with events that the most new information is to be gained. Where the portrayals of the House of Atreus are extensive they are summarized in a figure. The works of Apollodorus (Figure 16) and of Pausanias (Figure 17) are of this nature. Although

this recurrence of figures may appear repetitious, it nevertheless supplies further versions of the House of Atreus, and also illustrates the source of primary use for Barthell.

There is only one departure from the standard procedure of "descent, then events." This is with respect to the fate of Orestes after the murder of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra. Homer makes no reference to Orestes' end in even the *Odyssey*; the dramatists confine their comments to statements about his itinerary after the murder and his acceptability to the people over whom his father ruled; Barthell stops his account at the Trojan War. The question of the survival of the House of Atreus (in a patrilineal context) is therefore not addressed in any of these sources. In Pausanias and Strabo, however, and slightly in Pindar, there are numerous references to the House beyond the generation of Orestes. Such references are gathered together here under the heading of the *Aeolian Expedition*; this expedition features members of the House as far as three generations beyond Orestes, and constitutes the last detectable reference to any members of the House. The movement of Orestes and his lineal descendants after the death of Aegisthus may be thought of in four gradual stages; these stages are given here to provide a general outline of the Aeolian Expedition:

- (1) Orestes' pursuit by the Eumenides (which ends at Athens).
- (2) Orestes' return: expansion of his territory by conquest.
- (3) Displacement of Orestes' sons by the Dorians, and their resultant expulsion of the Ionians from Achaia.
- (4) Migration of Achaians to Aeolis, in Asia Minor.

Once these seven sources have been examined it is possible to compare the descent of the House of Atreus that is attested in them with the descent presented by Barthell. However, it is not necessary to incorporate the new relationships with those established by Barthell. This is because any new actors or relationships, in order not to be static, must involve an event. The events in Barthell's prose account of the House are given in their relative chronological order in Figure 15. It is possible to insert all the new events in the sources into this figure and still retain relative sequence of all of them. This is done in Figure 19. This figure gives the total range of events in the House of Atreus in all of the sources consulted in the present work, save only the dramas. While this list of events assuredly is not authentic, in that it is never expressed in this form in any original source, it nevertheless serves as the broadest of standards by which to compare the dramatists' versions of events.

The House of Atreus in Barthell (1971)

Descent

Depth. The generational depth of the House of Atreus in Barthell (1971) is shallow for two reasons, first, his investigation ends soon after the end of the Trojan War and second, Barthell does not trace the ancestry of an immortal--in this case Zeus--each time that that immortal involves himself or herself in a mortal genealogy. This is a wise omission, since immortals, being deathless, do not fit within the concept of a generation. They may, in fact, reappear in a genealogy upon widely separate generations. As well as this, it is entirely conceivable

that all of the immortals themselves (and, accordingly, all of the legendary figures to whom they invariably give rise) can be connected through descent. If every figure is related by descent, then descent is not a variable.

These considerations about the place of immortals in mortals' genealogies lead to the exclusion of Zeus as the representative of the first generation of the House of Atreus. Zeus's mate in this instance, Plouto, is herself an immortal, and so she is not the representative either. In the case of other Houses, however, the woman bearing a son by Zeus may be mortal. This is so in the case of Peleus' House, for example, which was begun by the fertility of the union between Zeus and Aegina. Should it have been within the compass of the present work to analyze the Houses that were begun by Zeus, then the women in these unions would in every case have represented the first generations; she would be, in fact, the mutually exclusive founder of every such House.

With the question of Zeus and Plouto aside, the generations of the House of Atreus as they appear in Barthell may be simply described. Following is an enumeration of these generations. The men whose names signify the entire generation are selected to draw the straight patri-lineal line between Tantalus and Orestes, since these are the primary movers of the House, and since it is through Orestes that the generations of the House are lengthened (see p. 79). Whenever the signification of any of these generations is called for in the present work, it will follow the usage noted in Figure 13.

Generation 1:	Tantalus'
Generation 2:	Pelops'
Generation 3:	Atreus'
Generation 4:	Pleisthenes'
Generation 5:	Agamemnon's
Generation 6:	Orestes'
Generation 7:	Tisamenus'

FIGURE 13. The generations of the House of Atreus in Barthell (1971).

No generation but the fourth (Pleisthenes') presents a problem of adjustment. The members of this generation are all the children of Pelops' children, but they cannot be assigned to the fifth generation because they occupy the anomalous structural position of belonging to their parents' generation by reason of marriage to them or producing children by them. In every case the members of the fourth generation give rise to, or relatively predate the members of the fifth generation as well. Perhaps such confusion of the generations is the natural result of the disparity in age between the siblings in a very large (i.e., eighteen) family such as that ascribed to Pelops; uncles may easily be of a similar age to their nieces. Again, the lifespan of legendary figures, while not that of the immortals, is longer than that of ordinary men, and this longevity may act as a leveller of adjacent generations. Despite these plausible assertions, however, it appears that the anomaly of the fourth generation is for the most part the result of the crediting by Barthell of the fathering of Agamemnon, Menelaus, and Anaxibia upon Pleisthenes rather than Atreus.

The depth of the Barthellian House of Atreus is basically the same as that in Homer and in the dramas. Pleisthenes, for example, is put forward by Aeschylus in *Agamemnon* (l. 1581). That Zeus began the House is attested in *Iphigenia in Aulis* (l. 505) and in *Orestes* (l. 5). The other generations are patent.

Width. While the depth of Barthell's House of Atreus is little greater than that of Homer and the dramatists, the width of his House is far larger than theirs. No less than twenty lineals and collaterals of Orestes require identification in order to establish the patterns of relationship by descent and the patterns of events within the House, and to provide all of the pertinent affinal links to the House as a unit.

These new members of the House are introduced here by the generation in which they occur. Their names are italicized the first time they are given, together with a brief description of the significance of each person. As has been noted above, these new members, as well as the members already noted in connection with Homer and the dramatists, are identified (in the figure to follow) by the first three letters of their names. Where there is more than one name with the same initial letters (e.g., there are two Pelops and a Pelopeia), the required distinctions are noted in parenthesis below, after the name of the second member.

Generation 1: Tantalus'. Tantalus is the lone representative of the first generation of the House. He is the only recorded son of any pairing of Zeus and Plouto.

Generation 2: Pelops'. Of the children of Tantalus, only Pelops leaves children. A brother, Broteas, dies childless, and a sister, Niobe, is made childless. Although both of these children of Tantalus are

strictly members of the House, they may be disregarded here. In effect, the House may be described as beginning with Zeus, Tantalus, or Pelops since each is a solitary figure.

Generation 3: Atreus'. All of the new members of the House in this generation are the children of Pelops. *Chrysippus* is an illegitimate son whose murder causes the dispersal of all the other children of Pelops. Among the legitimate sons are *Dias*, whose daughter marries Atreus. *Pittheus* also marries the daughter of a sibling. Pittheus, *Alcathous*, *Cleon*, and *Troezen* all take part in the dispersal, Pittheus and Alcathous gaining a kingship through marriage. As well as this, Alcathous fathers a daughter whose marriage appears to initiate a marital pattern. Among the daughters of Pelops, *Lysidice* is the mother of Pittheus' wife, and *Nicippe* is the connecting link through whom Atreus and Thyestes come to compete for the throne. These eight are therefore added to the two children of Pelops indicated in Homer and the dramas, thus making ten of the eighteen children of Pelops listed by Barthell significant members of the House.

Generation 4: Pleisthenes'. *Cleolla* is the daughter of Dias: she marries Atreus and bears him Pleisthenes. She must be included upon the same generation as her son, since to include her on her father's would be more violent yet. *Pelopeia* (Pea) is the daughter of Thyestes; her situation is like that of Cleolla: she bears a son to a member of Atreus' generation (Aegisthus to her father), but since this son is manifestly of Agamemnon's generation, she cannot be placed there too. *Periboea* is a daughter of Alcathous; she is placed in this generation because of the need to adjust the generations of the House into which

she marries with those of the House of Atreus. The sons of Thyestes before his rape of Pelopeia were *Aglauus*, *Callileon*, *Orchomenus*, and *Tantalus* (Tas). While these sons are alluded to in several of the dramas, they are never named, and their number--as well as their survival--is variously given. For these reasons and for the fact that they are further distinguished in the other sources to be investigated here, they are entered by name here.

Generation 5: Agamemnon's. Only *Anaxibia*, the daughter of Pleisthenes, needs to be added on this generation. She is the connecting link between Agamemnon and Strophius, and Orestes and Pylades. Aegisthus, by virtue of his marriage to Clytaemnestra, and the marriage of his daughter to Agamemnon's son, is included on this generation.

Generation 6: Orestes'. Barthell records the birth of two sons of Agamemnon and Cassandra, his captive: *Pelops* (Pes) and *Teledamus*. *Erigone* is the daughter of Aegisthus by Clytaemnestra; some accounts have her as one wife of Orestes.

Generation 7: Tisamenus'. *Tisamenus* himself, the son of Orestes and Hermione, is the only representative of his generation in Barthell's account.

With the addition of the members indicated above, the width of the House is at its fullest extent for the purposes of attestation of patterns of descent, affinity, and events. Although no affines are included in these additions, every affine may be indicated through one or more of the lineals or collaterals. As yet, however, the expanded House is expressed only by description, and it remains to portray it in a figurative manner like that used for the Homeric House (see p. 70), and for

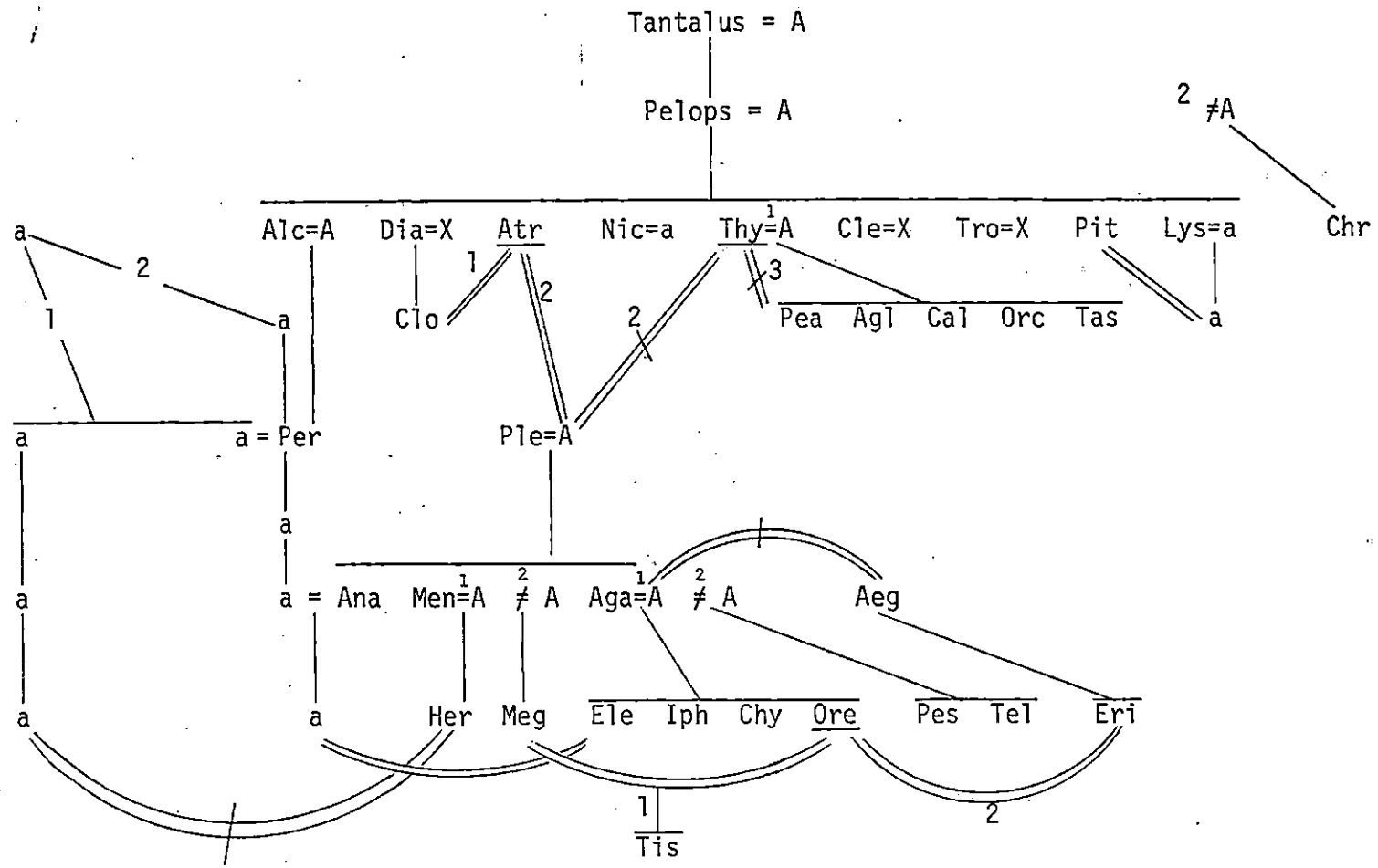


FIGURE 14. The House of Atreus in Bartheil (1971).

each of the dramas.

The conventions that are introduced in Figure 14 are as follows:

- (1) A -- a female who bears children to a member of the House;
- (2) a -- a male who fathers children upon a member of the House;
- (3) 2 -- for example: chronologically, a second marriage or pairing, the member whose second liaison it is being signified by underlining;
- (4) X or x -- an affine who is not named or has no declared intrinsic significance; also a group of the same who belong to the same category.

Events

For reasons stated in the introduction to this section, the Barthellian account of the House of Atreus in prose can be analyzed--not without irony--in a manner similar to that for the dramas. The figure which follows (Figure 15) recounts in their relative order the actions in Barthell's account which satisfy the definition of events. Beside each event is given the symbolic representation of the event. These symbols have been discussed previously with reference to the model-making stage of analysis. The model-making stage of analysis follows that of the identification of events for the dramas, but here the two stages are coalesced. This is not for the sake of economy only. Barthell's account is admittedly an eclectic one, and for this reason it is desirable that his work be treated in a different manner than the dramas, or any other of the primary classical sources. No authentic patterns--authentic, at least, to any Greek--are expected to ensue.

a) Tantalus kills Pelops	/ ↓
b) Pelops tricks Oenemaus	= →
c) Pelops favours Chrysippus	/ ↓
d) Thyestes and Atreus kill Chrysippus	// →
e) Pelops expels his children	/ ↓
f) Thyestes seduces Atreus' wife	/ →
g) Thyestes tricks Atreus out of a throne	/ →
h) Atreus kills Thyestes' sons	// ↓
i) Thyestes rapes his own daughter	/ ↓
j) Aegisthus kills Atreus	// ↑
k) Aegisthus seduces Agamemnon's wife	// →
l) Aegisthus kills Agamemnon	// →
m) Orestes kills Aegisthus	// ↑

FIGURE 15. Events in Barthell's (1971) account of the House of Atreus, together with their models.

Barthell is at a disadvantage to the dramatists in that he is under an obligation to include more of the history of the House than they are, and is less free to conjecture about motives or causality; also, he is not at liberty either to disregard or to innovate for artistic intent. The pattern attested by Figure 15 is predictably uninspired. If anything, the figure shows a general movement away from lineal violations of descent onto collateral violations. This is perhaps the natural result of acceptance of Aegisthus as a collateral. It may also be the result of the inevitable proliferation of a House with as many sons as Pelops'. To Barthell's credit, however, the foremost reason for the pattern noted resides in the figure of Chrysippus. It is the favoritism lavished upon Chrysippus that results in his murder. This

murder causes the dispersal of all of Pelops' children. The disinheri-
 tance caused by the dispersal is not resolved by the logical step of an
 upward-directed reciprocal crime against Pelops. Orestes' murder of
 Aegisthus was a resolution of this type, as would have been Aegisthus'
 murder of Atreus (event j), had Barthell fully credited it. And it is
 ultimately the cause of the vicious competition for new "patrimonies"
 which follow. In fact, event (c) can be seen to be the direct cause of
 all subsequent events (d to m).

Certain other features of Barthell's account of the House of Atreus
 do not satisfy the definition of events but are nevertheless of interest
 in examining the dramas from the viewpoint of descent. Most outstanding
 among these are: (1) mobile kingship, (2) intergenerational marriage,
 and (3) the affinal relations of the House of Atreus with the House of
 Aeacus. The first of these three features satisfies the definition of
 a condition (see p. 57) since it represents the result of an event. The
 other two must be considered as independent phenomena, since they do not
 necessarily involve the violation of descent.

Mobile kingship. Pittheus assumed control of the kingdom of
 Troezen through his sister and the daughter of that sister. Alcathous
 became king of Megara when both sons of the previous king, whose
 daughter Alcathous had married, died. The only son of the king of Argos
 died as well. Because of this death, Thyestes and Atreus could establish
 a claim to the succession, since one of their sisters was the wife of
 the king. And Pelops took up the kingship of Pisa through marriage,
 even though the death of the king was needs-be simultaneous. Two other
 brothers, Cleon and Troezen, left their names with towns, and while the

names of no women are given, they presumably ruled there. The men of the House of Atreus are demonstrably ubiquitous, but generally kings; what is more, they establish claims to kingship often through the female members of the House. This ubiquitousness is well attested in the description of the life of Orestes after the murder of Aegisthus (see pp. 99-102).

Intergenerational marriage. The third generation of the House of Atreus is notable for the number of marriages and pairings between its men and women of the fourth generation (see Figure 14). Four such marriages are noted. Structurally, the four are mutually exclusive; in fact, they are fully complementary, and exhaust the kinds of marriages possible between these two adjacent generations.

Pittheus marries the daughter of one of his sisters; Atreus marries the daughter of one of his brothers. The wife of Pittheus is not a member of the House, being removed the smallest possible distance from it. The wife of Atreus, on the other hand, is a full member of the House, since her relationship to it is through a male.

When Thyestes rapes his own daughter he is, in fact, raping a lineal of his own, and a full member of the House. The child that is born of the rape is accordingly a lineal of each parent separately and together, a confusing condition (in its special usage here) of incest. Atreus' second wife, on the other hand, is in the opposite category to Thyestes' daughter: she is "unrelated." Actually, Atreus' second wife was already an affine in relation to the entire House by virtue of her previous marriage to Atreus' son; however, since affinity is measured by presence or absence, rather than in degree, this distinction need not

be made.

Taken together, these four marriages indicate the full range of intergenerational marriage. It is notable that in the case of Atreus' first wife and Thyestes' daughter, the mother and the child belong to the same House. The children of Alcathous' wife become members of their maternal grandmother's house (the House to which Alcathous belongs), and the children of both of Atreus' second wife's unions belong together in the House of Atreus. This inward-turning of the House of Atreus becomes significant with the examination of Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, which has a very concentrated lineal focus, and in the analysis of the relationship between Orestes and Hermione--who are both members of the House--in regard to Hermione's first marriage to Pyrrhus.

Affinal relations between the House of Atreus and the Aeacus. Four marriages of women of the House of Atreus to descendants in the male line of Aeacus are attested in Barthell's work: Periboea's, Anaxibia's, Hermione's, and Electra's. Barthell himself makes no note of the pattern, but its existence may be confirmed through an examination of his work on Aeacus (Barthell 1971:257-260).

Aeacus was the son of the mortal Aegina and Zeus; Zeus was also, of course, the father of Tantalus. Aegina married a mortal and had sons by him, but these are not at issue here. Aeacus had two wives. With one he fathered Phocus (who met a fate exactly like that of Chrysippus, and with the exact result), who in course of time gave rise to Strophius, Anaxibia's husband, and Pylades, Electra's husband. The other wife bore two sons: Peleus and Telamon. Telamon was the husband of Periboea. Peleus himself did not marry a woman of the House of Atreus, nor did his

son, Achilles: Achilles' son, Pyrrhus (or Neoptolemus), however, did: Hermione.

This apparent pattern may be strengthened and amplified by an examination of Homer and the dramas. In the *Iliad* (l. 181-187), the initial wrath of Achilles is kindled by Agamemnon's demand for his captive, Briseis. Later, Agamemnon has reason to regret his demand; by way of making amends he offers to return Briseis untouched (9.131-134), an admission of the impropriety of his act. He also makes the following offer to Achilles (9. 142-148), that:

he may be my son-in-law; I will honour him with Orestes,
my growing son, who is brought up there in abundant luxury.
Since, as I have three daughters there in my strong-built
castle,

Chrysothemis and Laodike and Iphianassa,
let him lead away the one of these that he likes best, with no
bride-price,

to the house of Peleus, and with the girl I grant him as dowry
many gifts, such as no man ever gave with his daughter.

The unilateral direction of wife-taking between these two Houses is drastically reinforced by the vast recompense that Agamemnon is compelled to offer Achilles. Further evidence for this unilateral pattern of marriage is found in the dramas. In *Iphigenia in Aulis*, Achilles is put forward to Iphigenia and her mother as a future husband, and both readily believe it. In *Andromache*, not even the concubine Andromache comes into the possession of Pyrrhus free of the House of Atreus: Menelaus claims that she was first his (l. 583), and that he passed on his rights to her to Pyrrhus.

The affinal connection of the House of Atreus to the House of Aeacus is far more intense than any other that has been noted. Because of this, any reference to members of the House of Aeacus in the dramas

and the other sources--whose exposition follows--must be given special weight.

The work of Barthell on the House of Atreus has now been analyzed with respect to descent and events, and has been integrated into what may be called a provisional "model." As well as this, certain features brought into focus by his work that do not involve the violation of descent have been identified and discussed. Before the dramas themselves are examined, there remains only an examination of certain of Barthell's sources, for their own sake and to discover the facts about the House of Atreus that he has missed.

Hesiod

Hesiod's most complete and best-known works are concerned with proper living and with mythology rather than with the kinds of legendary figures who make up the House of Atreus. References to the members of the House are found in the fragments of the *Catalogue of Women and Eoiae* (Evelyn-White 1943:155-219); these fragments consist either of actual Hesiodic texts or of scholiasts' quotations and commentaries.

Descent. Pleisthenes is given as the husband of Cleolla (Evelyn-White 1943:203). This marriage is between members of the same generation, unlike that posed by Barthell in which Atreus marries Cleolla. Cleolla is therefore the mother of Agamemnon and his brother and sister, rather than the mother of Pleisthenes, their father. In other places, however, actual Hesiodic text (e.g., Evelyn-White 1943:199) fathers Atreus on the three children; the statements about Pleisthenes were ascribed to Hesiod by the scholiast Tzetzes (1110-1180 A.D.).

Menelaus is accredited with a son by Helen: *Nicostratus* (Nis), her "youngest-born" (Evelyn-White 1943:205). Apollodorus is not certain of Nicostratus' parentage, and to Pausanias, Nicostratus is a bastard.

Events. Hesiod, unlike Homer, knows the story of the sacrifice of Iphigenia. Iphigenia does not die, but becomes Hecate (Evelyn-White 1943:205). Like Homer, Hesiod ascribes the guilt for the Trojan War and for the murder of Agamemnon to women (i.e., affines). The three daughters of Tyndareus (Helen, Timandra, and Clytaemnestra) all desert their husbands for "lesser mates" (Evelyn-White 1943:191); Aegisthus is mentioned in this regard. Tyndareus, who precipitated this faithlessness through a slighting of Aphrodite, is nonetheless an affine to the House of Atreus.

The Epic Cycle

The *Cypria* and the *Returns* (or the *Return of the Atreidae*) deal with the House of Atreus. Like Hesiod's *Catalogue*, These works exist only as fragments in quotations or in commentaries and summaries.

Descent. In the *Cypria*, an unclear passage might be construed to mean that Helen bore three children to Menelaus, among them a son with a significant family name: Pleisthenes (Evelyn-White 1943:501). Also in the *Cypria*, it is noted (Evelyn-White 1943:503) that Agamemnon is credited with four daughters, Iphigenia being distinguished from Iphianassa.

Events. The sacrifice of Iphigenia is noted in the *Cypria*, along with the concomitant deception of Achilles (Evelyn-White 1943:493). In the *Returns*, there is mention of a quarrel between Agamemnon and Mene-

laus; the quarrel may constitute a new event.

Pindar

Only four of the seventeen books known to have been written by Pindar exist today. In the four books that do survive there is no information about descent in the House of Atreus that is unknown to Barthell. Pindar's work, however, is interesting for the interpretation that is put upon events.

Events. Two of Pindar's odes deal directly with the House of Atreus: *Olympian I* contains an account of Tantalus and Pelops, and *Pythian XI* includes comments upon the murder of Agamemnon. In *Olympian I*, Pindar denies that Tantalus killed Pelops and that Pelops' assumption to the throne of Oenomaus involved any improper action. Tantalus, like Prometheus, is punished for a violation of the gods' sumptuary laws (ll. 46-53), and Pelops defeats Oenomaus bloodlessly through the assistance of Poseidon who, like Zeus taking Ganymede, has taken Pelops as a lover (ll. 62-90).

In *Pythian XI*, Orestes is a Spartan rather than an Argive or Mycenaean. Like Homer and Hesiod, Pindar blames the Trojan War upon Helen (l. 33), and the death of Agamemnon--as well as Cassandra--upon Clytaemnestra. Aegisthus appears almost as a supernumerary (l. 36). Pindar muses upon Clytaemnestra's motives (ll. 21-25) in the following words:

. . . pitiless woman. Was it Iphigenia,
Slain at Euripos far from her land
That stung her to uplift
The wrath of her heavy hand?
Or was she broken in to a paramour's bed
And the nightly loves
Turned her mind?

In Euripides' *Electra*, Clytaemnestra and Electra put forward these exact motives (ll. 1011-1096); Clytaemnestra asserts the primacy of the first motive, and Electra that of the second.

Pindar generally puts the generation of Atreus in a poor light. The opposite is the case with respect to all of the generations of the House of Aeacus, as previously noted. Eleven odes are addressed to victorious athletes from the island of Aegina (*Nemean* III-VIII, *Isthmian* IV, V, VIII, *Olympian* VIII, and *Pythian* VIII). Aegina was purportedly settled by Telamon after the dispersal of Aeacus' sons after the murder of Phocus. Pindar details the lineage and exploits of the sons of Aeacus in every ode to an Aeginetan: "I cannot go through the whole tale of Aiakos' sons" (*Nemean* IV, l. 71) is not borne out by the texts. Never once does Pindar indicate that there was any kind of connection between the House of Atreus and the House of Aeacus. Apparently he wishes to keep their characters distinct, for he attributes to them different reasons: the House of Atreus means turbulence, while the House of Aeacus means glory smoothly passed on.

Apollodorus

It is Apollodorus' account of the House of Atreus that Barthell uses most in his compilation. He makes specific reference to the House in two places: *Library* III.133 and *Epitome* 2.1-3, 6.

Descent. Like Pausanias, Apollodorus states that Tantalus, the son of Thyestes, was Clytaemnestra's first husband, and that he had a child by her (*Epitome* 2.16). Nicostratus is tentatively called the legitimate son of Menelaus and Helen, and Menelaus is ascribed yet

another illegitimate son, *Xenodamus*, by a nymph (*Library* III.133).

Figure 16 incorporates Tantalus, Nicostratus, and Xenodamus into the House of Atreus. Only the essential connecting links are indicated, along with Erigone and Iphigenia, who are treated differently by Pausanias and are shown in Figure 17.

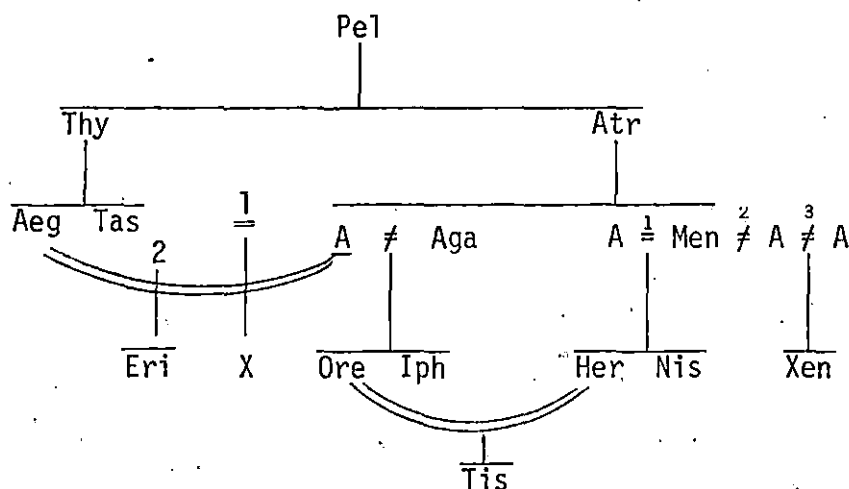


FIGURE 16. Apollodorus' House of Atreus where it complements Barthell's.

Events. Like Pindar, Apollodorus asserts that Tantalus did not kill Pelops, but unlike Pindar, he states that improper actions led to Pelops' victory over Oenomaus (*Epitome* 2.1, 6-9). Agamemnon is guilty of murdering Tantalus, his collateral, as he is in Pausanias and in *Iphigenia in Aulis* (11. 1146-1151). Apollodorus also notes that Aegisthus set his father back up on the throne (see event [j] in the discussion of Barthell, p. 85), and this action implies either the murder or the deposing of Atreus.

Pausanias

Pausanias' references to the House of Atreus do not comprise a unified text, but are scattered throughout his work. Much of the information that is of interest in Pausanias is deferred to the section of the Aeolian Expedition of the present chapter.

Descent. Pausanias concurs with Apollodorus that Tantalus was the first husband of Clytaemnestra, and that he was the son of Thyestes (2.2.24), or of Broteas, the brother of Pelops whom Barthell would have childless. He poses an entirely new relationship within the members of the House: that Iphigenia was not the daughter of Clytaemnestra but the daughter of Helen, born through the rape of Helen by Theseus prior to her marriage. Hesiod and Apollodorus also make mention of this rape. Helen gave Iphigenia to Clytaemnestra to adopt, for the latter at this time was already married (2.22.7). The placing of the mothership of Iphigenia upon Helen rather than Clytaemnestra drastically changes the connotations of the sacrifice of Iphigenia in order to promote the Trojan War. Pausanias also states that Nicostratus was an illegitimate son of Menelaus, as was *Penthilus* (Pen), who was born to Orestes by Erigone (2.18.5).

These relationships introduced by Pausanias are indicated in Figure 17. This figure includes only the essential connecting links of the House, like the figure of descent in Apollodorus. The accounts of Pausanias and Apollodorus are especially comparable in this way. Certain relationships recounted by Pausanias are, however, not indicated on the figure because they cannot be confirmed elsewhere or because they are static in terms of the entire House of Atreus. Thus the two sons of

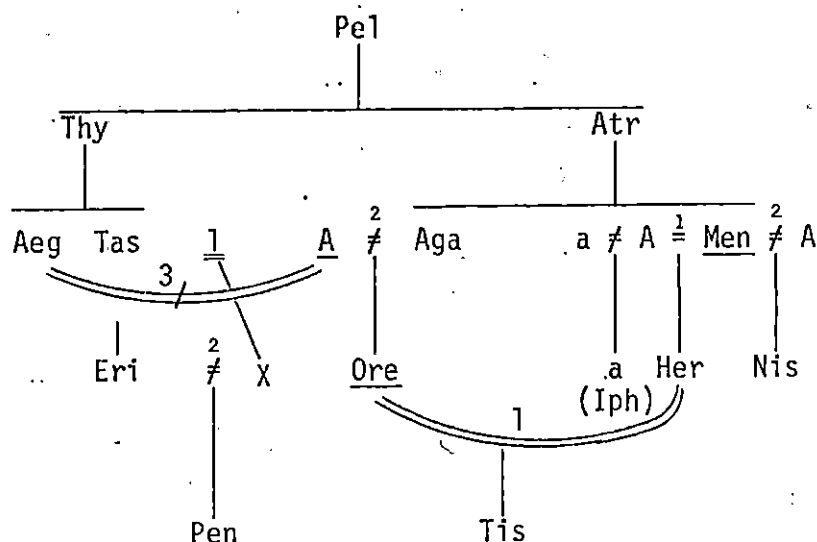


FIGURE 17. Pausanias' House of Atreus where it complements Barthell's.

Troezen, Anaphlystus and Sphettus (2.30.8), and Hyperion, the "son of Agamemnon" (1.43.3), come to nothing. Also, a marriage between Helen and Achilles on the "White Isle" (3.19.11-12) is not indicated, although its presence would support the claim of a pattern to the passage of women from the House of Atreus to the House of Aeacus.

Events. Like Apollodorus, Pausanias includes the murder of Tantalus by Agamemnon. This action would appear to make Agamemnon's subsequent marriage to Clytaemnestra an improper one. Pausanias' conjecture about the order of events in the House of Atreus (2.18.2) is of interest here for the way that it includes the murder of Tantalus:

. . . Thyestes obtained the golden lamb, after he had committed adultery with his brother's wife. Prudence could not restrain Atreus from retaliating: he murdered the children of Thyestes and served up the notorious banquet. Afterwards, I cannot say for certain whether Aegisthus was the aggressor, or whether Agamemnon began the feud by murdering Tantalus the son of Thyestes.

Pausanias also makes reference to the murder by Alcaethous of his son, Callipolis (1.42.7). This reference has been taken up by Barthell (1971: 271) in his prose account of the House of Atreus. Although this action is patently an event it occurs outside of the mainstream of the House: it leaves Alcaethous without a male heir, and has no subsequent effect upon any other member of the House. The only member of the House who is connected through Alcaethous (beyond Alcaethous himself) who is considered here is a daughter, Periboea, who marries into the House of Aeacus, as mentioned earlier. Two sons of Electra by Pylades are named; while these two are not members of the House of Atreus they appear to share certain of its tendencies: they murder the sons of the king of Sparta (3.1.5). The sons of Pylades are members of the House of Aeacus. At one point in *Iphigenia in Tauris* they stand to take over the kingship of Agamemnon: Pylades is unwilling to leave Orestes for fear that people will assume he has designs on the throne through Electra (11. 682-683). Orestes exhorts him to go with the following words:

Pylades,
 Once home again and with your wife, my sister,
 Give me happiness by having a son
 In whom my name shall live, and through your
 children
 Build up once more the house of Agamemnon.
 (11. 695-698)

Strabo

Strabo's information about the House of Atreus, like Pausanias', is concerned for the most part with the generations that follow Orestes. Since he is interested mostly in political geography, his references to the House are highly incidental. He provides no new information upon

descent, and no new events, but his comments about certain established events are of interest.

Events. Aegisthus was the aggressor in the seduction of Clytaemnestra, although the latter was hardly unwilling (1.2.3). Iphigenia was not killed through her sacrifice, but went to Tauris, whence Orestes fetched her (12.2.3, 7). The succession of Pelops to the throne of Oenomaus is not associated with any improper actions (8.3.31), nor is there a mention of the rivalry between Atreus and Thyestes. Barthell (1971:270) notes that Pelops outdid Thyestes--with the complicity of the gods--by predicting the course of the sun, while Strabo would have it that this talent was immanent in Pelops--he was a "seer" (1.2.15).

Diodorus Siculus

The work of Diodorus Siculus attests a disinterest in the House of Atreus that surpasses even Strabo's. Only his mention of two events is of interest here.

Events. The "feast" of Thyestes is mentioned by way of gauging the horror of the actions of a certain Thracian king called Zibelmius (34/35.12.1). As well as this mention of Thyestes, there is a remark about an action of Thyestes' son, Aegisthus, for which I can find no precedent. This action is of such interest that it bears repetition here in full:

Aegialeia, the wife of Diomedes, fell altogether from favour with her husband. And in her hatred she acted unjustly towards her husband and called upon her kinsmen to take vengeance upon him. And they, taking as their helper Aegisthus, who had lately possessed himself of the throne of Mycenae, passed judgement of death upon Diomedes, alleging that, although his father had been a foreigner, he was planning to banish the nobles from the

state and to settle in their place some of his kinsmen from Aetolia. And since this false charge was generally believed, Diomedes became afraid and fled from Argos (7.1.3).

Neither Aegialeia nor Diomedes can be established as relations of Aegisthus. Aegisthus' interference, therefore, does not constitute a violation of descent, but it does entail the disinheritance of the member of a certain lineage. If Aegisthus is separated from the House of Atreus in any of the dramas, then his dispossession of Agamemnon on behalf of Agamemnon's wife is analogous to his dispossession of Diomedes.

The Aeolian Expedition

In the introduction to this chapter, it was stated that the information in these sources concerning the generations of the House of Atreus after that of Orestes' would be consolidated and presented as a unit. The basic reason for this was that Barthell's account of the House did not extend to these generations. As well as this, the accounts of these junior generations are rather at odds with one another, and to present the references to them as they occur in each source obscures their cumulative meaning. The information about these generations is organized not in terms of descent and events, but by phases of movement. Descent will be shown in Figure 18.

The exile of Orestes. Pausanias has the madness of Orestes occur soon after the murder of Aegisthus, in Arcadia (8.34.1-2). Strabo notes him as passing through, and founding, Argos Oresticum, in Macedonia near the border of Illyris and Epirus (7.7.8); he also claims that he made his way to Tauris, and returned (12.2.3, 7). By both accounts, Orestes eventually returns to his homeland.

The return of Orestes. Orestes, with Phocian aid (through Pylades?) takes control of Argos and parts of Arcadia. He perhaps assumed control of Sparta as well, since Nicostratus and Megapenthes were regarded as bastards (Pausanias, 2.18.5). After Menelaus' death, and before Orestes' return, Nicostratus and Megapenthes had exiled Helen and taken over the kingship (Pausanias, 3.19.9); this action may be considered an event in that it amounts to a disinheritance of the absent Orestes. Pausanias describes Orestes as "King of Achaia" (8.5.1), and although both Pausanias (3.11.10) and Strabo (13.1.3) have him dying in Arcadia, Strabo calls him the "first leader" of the Aeolian Expedition. Pindar appears to concur, since he names Orestes in an attempt to colonize the island of Tenedos (*Nemean* XI, ll. 34-35).

The conquest of Old Ionia. The Dorians arrive on the Peloponnese and drive out the sons of Orestes from the kingdom they have inherited. Led by Tisamenos, they drive out the Ionians from the land that then becomes known as Achaia (Strabo, 8.7.1). In the next generation, four sons of Tisamenos--*Daimenes* (Dai), *Sparton* (Spa), *Tellis* (Tes), and *Leontomenes* (Leo)--and *Damasios* (Dam), son of Penthilus (son of Orestes through Erigone) are leading men in Achaia (Pausanias, 7.6.1-2). Another son of Tisamenos, *Cometes* (Com), has crossed over to Aeolis already.

The Aeolian Expedition. The gradual movement to Aeolis accelerates. Strabo places Penthilus in Thrace "sixty years after the Trojan War"; another son of Penthilus, *Archelaus* (Arc), passes into Asia, and Achelaus' son, *Gras* (Gra), takes possession of Aeolis itself as well as the island of Lesbos, opposite (9.2.3-5; 13.1.3). Taking part in this

general movement are three "descendants of Agamemnon"--Cloues, son of Dorus, and Malaus--who cannot be assigned any place in the House of Atreus through any investigations here; for this reason they must needs be disregarded. These events have a different order according to Pausanias: Penthilus himself takes Lesbos, while Gras, son of "Echelas" (i.e., Archelaus) takes the mainland opposite (3.2.1). Penthilus' conquest may not have been a lasting one, however, since Strabo notes (10.1.8) that some of his soldiers later took part in the colonization of Euboea.

In summary, after the death of Agamemnon, the leading members of the House of Atreus become known first as "Achaians" and then as "Aeolians." As Aeolians, they fade out of recorded Greek history.

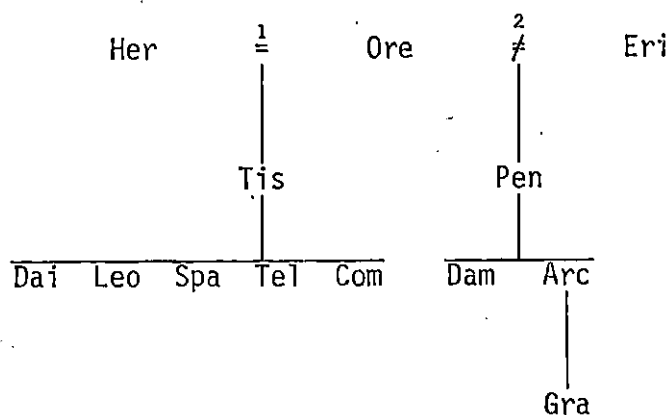


FIGURE 18. The eighth and ninth generations of the House of Atreus.

*Events in the House of Atreus
from all Sources*

Figure 19 represents a composite of all events concerning the House of Atreus in Homer, Barthell (1971), and the sources listed above. As far as possible, all events are in absolute chronological order.

a) Tantalus kills Pelops	/ ↓	
b) Pelops tricks Oenomaus	= →	
c) Pelops favours Chrysippus	/ ↓	
d) Thyestes and Atreus kill Chrysippus	// →	
e) Pelops expels his children	/ ↓	
f) Thyestes seduces Atreus' wife	/ →	
g) Thyestes tricks Atreus out of a throne	/ →	
h) Atreus kills Thyestes' sons	// ↓	
i) Thyestes rapes his own daughter	/ ↓	
j) Aegisthus kills Atreus	// ↑	
k) Agamemnon kills Tantalus	// →	
l) Agamemnon kills daughter; deceives Achilles	/ ↓	= →
m) Aegisthus seduces Agamemnon's wife	// →	
n) Agamemnon and Menelaus have a dispute	/ →	
o) Aegisthus kills Agamemnon; banishes Orestes	// →	// ↓
p) Aegisthus deposes Diomedes	/ →	
q) Orestes kills Aegisthus	// ↑	
r) Orestes kills Pyrrhus	= →	
s) Nicostratus, Megapenthes usurp Sparta	// →	

FIGURE 19. Events in the House of Atreus, from all sources.

CHAPTER III

THE DRAMAS

The Oresteia

The Oresteia is about succession, or, more accurately, about the resolution of disinheritance. The importance of the House of Atreus as a unit is maximal in the first drama in the trilogy. In the second drama the House loses its identity to a few of its members. In the third drama, the House ceases to be important as an entity.

The Agamemnon ends with the death of Agamemnon. In it all of the events within the House prior to this death are enumerated and the initiatory event is named. All of the members of the House are identified: the "two strains of the blood of Tantalus" (ll. 1469), Atreus' and Thyestes'. In *The Agamemnon*, the effective disinheritance is that of Aegisthus, who avenges it (ll. 1218-1225; 1577-1611). However, disinheritance is not restricted to Aegisthus; indeed, disinheritance is a prevailing state. The Trojan War disinherits the young and old of both Greece (ll. 72-82) and Troy (ll. 325-329) alike. The metaphorical disinheritance of the unborn young of a slain hare (ll. 116-120) is counterbalanced by the death of the virginal Iphigenia (ll. 209, 244). A lion destroys the family of the man who fostered him (ll. 715-736). Orestes is sent away, but not yet exiled (ll. 876-880). Even among the gods there is disinheritance, for Zeus disempowers his ancestors (ll. 166-175). All of these instances of disinheritance complement one another, and it

would be difficult to generate or to imagine further examples that do not overlap these.

The Libation Bearers ends with the deaths of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra. In it, the effective disinheritance is that of Orestes (and Electra). Accordingly, the focus of the trilogy sharpens: little mention is made of any previous events in the House beyond the murder of Agamemnon, and no new members of the House are introduced. Orestes and Electra are represented as the final possessors of the seed of Pelops (ll. 502-505), of Atreus (l. 404), and of Agamemnon (ll. 860-861). Aegisthus' qualifications for the possession of the blood of Pelops, stated in *The Agamemnon*, are ignored in *The Libation Bearers*. So shrunken is the House of Atreus that to Electra, Orestes is brother, sister (Iphigenia), father, and mother (ll. 327-342). Only at the very end of *The Libation Bearers* (ll. 1065-1075) is the House put in a generational perspective, by the chorus. The "three storms" of the House--the murders of the sons of Thyestes, of Agamemnon, and of Agamemnon's murderers--are reiterated. This reiteration is set out to contrast with the opening lines of the last drama in the trilogy, *The Eumenides*.

The Eumenides ends with the acquittal of Orestes at Athens. Orestes is the only member of the House of Atreus in the drama, and only the events of Agamemnon's and Clytaemnestra's (and Aegisthus') murders are mentioned. *The Eumenides* opens with a description by the Pythia of the smooth succession to her office (ll. 1-30). This is in starkest contrast to the final words in *The Libation Bearers*. It is not the disinheritance of the members of the House of Atreus that is at issue in *The Eumenides*: it is that of the Eumenides themselves. The Eumenides

state this themselves (ll. 160, 490) with emphasis; in one instance they express their distress an ominous two times (ll. 778-783; 807-812):

Gods of the younger generation, you have ridden down
the laws of the elder time, torn them out of my hands.
I, disinherited, suffering, heavy with anger
shall let loose on the land
the vindictive poison
dripping deadly out of my heart upon the ground.

Athene deflects this vindictiveness by offering the Euménides a place in the new order, which they accept (ll. 916-926). They, in effect, come into an inheritance, just as Orestes does by means of his acquittal (ll. 756-759).

By way of summary, it may be said that *The Agamemnon* is concerned with disinheritance as a general issue, that *The Libation Bearers* is concerned with a specific instance of disinheritance, and that *The Eumenides* represents a resolution of disinheritance.

Descent

The very barest bones of the House of Atreus are presented in *The Oresteia*. Affinal patterns are obliterated through the unrelatedness of Helen and Clytaemnestra, and the inexplicit nature of Strophius' connection to the House. Pelops and Tantalus are mentioned only once (*LB*, l. 502; *Ag*, l. 1469). On Atreus' generation, only Thestes and Atreus are given; on Agamemnon's generation only Agamemnon and Aegisthus--since Menelaus is pointedly left at sea early in *The Agamemnon* (ll. 615-680)--are actors; and on Orestes' generation only Electra and Orestes are actors--Iphigenia being dead and Pylades being unrelated. Pleisthenes (*Ag*, l. 1601) exists only as a name. The emphasis that results is this: on the first two generations, only one representative, on the third two

competitors, on the fourth two other competitors, and on the fifth, only one left.

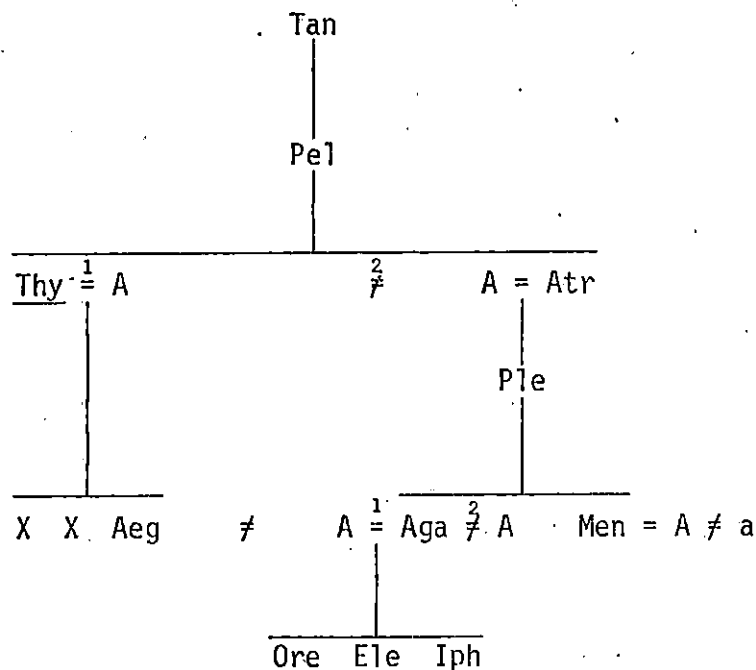


FIGURE 20. The House of Atreus in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*.

a) Thyestes seduces Atreus' wife	/ →	11. 1191-97 1583 f
b) Atreus banishes Thyestes	/ →	
c) Atreus kills Thyestes' sons	// ↓	
d) Atreus exiles Aegisthus	// ↓	
e) Agamemnon raises his generation	// →	225,799-804
f) Agamemnon sacrifices Iphigenia	/ ↓	244,1525-28
g) Aegisthus seduces Agamemnon's wife	// →	1625-28
h) Aegisthus exiles Orestes	// ↓	<i>Lib</i> 130
i) Aegisthus kills Agamemnon	// →	134 f
j) Orestes kills Aegisthus.	// ↓	<i>Lib</i> 870 f

FIGURE 21. *The Oresteia*: events and models.

Iphigenia in Aulis

Iphigenia in Aulis ends with the death of Iphigenia imminent. The drama is concerned with improper marriages. There are three of them: Agamemnon's marriage to Clytaemnestra, Menelaus' to Helen, and Iphigenia's to Achilles. An examination of Chapter II shows that Clytaemnestra's first husband, Tantalus, may be construed as a collateral of Agamemnon, and that a pattern of affinal ties with the House of Atreus and with Achilles' House may be established. In this drama, however, Tantalus is not described as Thyestes' son; Thyestes himself is not mentioned. Achilles' lineage, though it is set out at length, contains no mention of women from the House of Atreus. These "disrelationships" appear to be purposeful with regard to the general unrelatedness attested in the model to be found on page

No events are attributed to the first three generations of the House. Indeed, these generations are characterized as so smoothly devolved that Agamemnon's actions are "unkingly, and unworthy of Atreus" (l. 1452). The events of the House are concentrated around the marriage of Menelaus, and around the delay at Aulis. The demand for the sacrifice of Iphigenia is made gratuitous by the lack of any misbehaviour upon the part of Agamemnon. Over and over again, the cause for the sacrifice of Iphigenia is given as the marriage of Menelaus, or, by extension, the violation of his marriage. Menelaus is constantly derided for considering the expedition to Troy worthwhile (e.g., ll. 390-396, 1169-1170, 1391-1393), and accordingly, he claims the guilt for the death of Iphigenia. Menelaus' own words (ll. 492-494) best summarize

the situation in *Iphigenia in Aulis*:

Pity for the girl in her harsh agony
Swept over me: she would be killed
On account of my marriage.

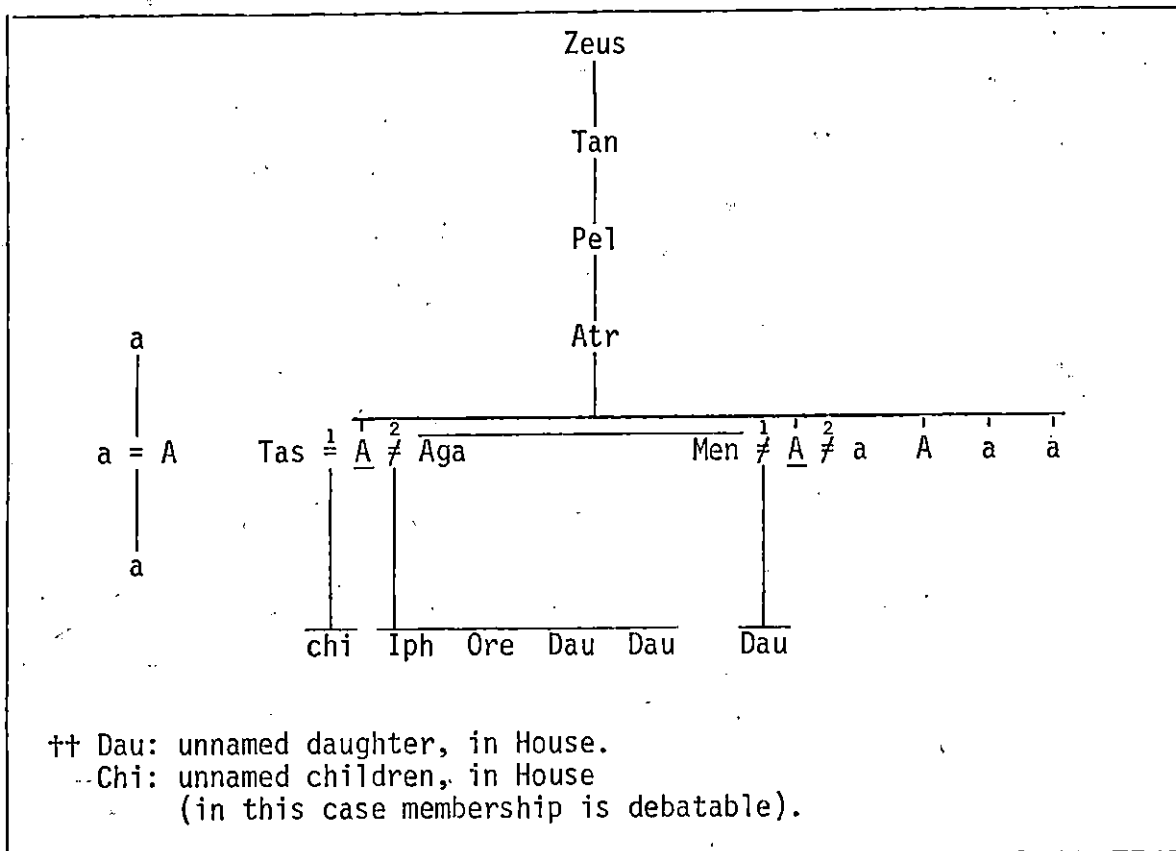


FIGURE 22. *Iphigenia in Aulis*: descent.

a)	Agamemnon: kills Tantalus	# →	l. 1146-
	kills Tantalus' children	# ↓	1164
	marries Tantalus' wife	= →	
b)	Suitors threaten one another	# →	50-54
c)	Menelaus marries Helen	= →	58-70
d)	Menelaus raises army	# →	71-79
e)	Menelaus demands death of Iphigenia	/ ↓	97-98
f)	Agamemnon: deceives Achilles	# →	98-104
	deceives wife	= →	
	deceives Iphigenia	/ ↓	
g)	Agamemnon deceives Menelaus	/ →	107-114
h)	Menelaus breaks seal of Agamemnon	/ →	303-414
i)	Army (i.e., suitors) demand death of Iphigenia	# ↓	511-544

FIGURE 23. *Iphigenia in Aulis*: events and models.

Electra (Euripides)

Electra ends with the deaths of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra, and a prohibition upon their killers, Electra and Orestes: both are exiled from their homeland. The drama is fully about disinheritance, and is splendidly balanced between the male and the female points of view about it. Orestes sees Aegisthus as the principal in crime (e.g., l. 85), and takes the initiative for his murder upon himself. Electra, on the other hand, most bitterly blames Clytaemnestra, and is the instrument of her death: "I will be the one to plan my mother's death" (l. 647). Electra insists on the death of Clytaemnestra even in the face of Orestes' misgivings (ll. 961 ff). Again, it is the threat of children who will take over one's inheritance (e.g., ll. 62, 626) that goads the woman into

action against another woman (see note 15). Even Clytaemnestra asserts that the murder of Iphigenia alone was not enough to make her kill Agamemnon, but that the retrieval of a slave wife from Troy to usurp a part of her position ("two women in a single stall," l. 1030) provided the final incentive.

No crimes upon the generations above that of Atreus are cited. Pelops is not even named. The waging of the Trojan War is consistently described as a glorious and well-justified operation, with Helen fully to blame, until the Dioscuri relieve her of that guilt by virtue of never having gone to Troy (ll. 1281-1283). Even so, it would appear that the Trojan War is not to be considered, in the *Electra*, as associated with any events. Only Clytaemnestra questions the raising of the expedition and the need for Iphigenia's sacrifice. She does so in words that constitute an exact inversion of partilineality, in keeping with her rather manly attributes:

If Menelaus had been raped from home on the sly,
should I have had to kill Orestes so my sister's
husband could be rescued?

Orestes

Orestes ends with the compulsion of Orestes to leave his home for absolution, and with the ascension of Helen among the gods. Although the action in the drama covers a very short period of time, and although none of the events that occur in it are brought to fulfillment, the history of events and descent within the House of Atreus are set out at length. The descent and events of the House are recapitulated three times: by Electra twice (ll. 1-34, 971-1012) and once by the Chorus (ll. 806-844).

As in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, the generations above that of Agamemnon are typified as tranquil: Pelops' was an "ancient, happy house" (l. 972), Tantalus' heritage was "magnificent" (l. 350), and even Atreus' was a "great" and "happy" house (l. 811). This is so in the face of crime upon each of the generations given. Pelops' murder of Myrtilus is even given as the initial event.

The focus of *Orestes* is upon the cowardice of Menelaus' desertion of Orestes. By close questioning, Menelaus learns that all of the citizenry at large, as well as the House's affines, are against Orestes (ll. 425-715). He then declines to help; the foremost reason for this disinclination is the threat from his father-in-law, from whom he gained his throne, to take away that throne: "never set foot in Sparta again" (ll. 533, 626). Menelaus' non-collateral behavior is emphatically contrasted to that of Pylades (e.g., ll. 724-805). Pylades is fully taken out of any context of relationship by descent; Tyndareus, not Strophius, is alleged to have cared for the young Orestes. All subsequent events

are the direct result of Menelaus' desertion.

Again as in *Iphigenia in Aulis* (also see note 15), the male and the female versions of culpability are different. Electra execrates her mother, while Orestes is most concerned with Aegisthus. In order to punish Menelaus, Orestes decides to kill his wife, and Electra adds the idea of killing his daughter. Apparently, Orestes feels that Menelaus is expecting to take over his inheritance (ll. 1146-1147, 1596).

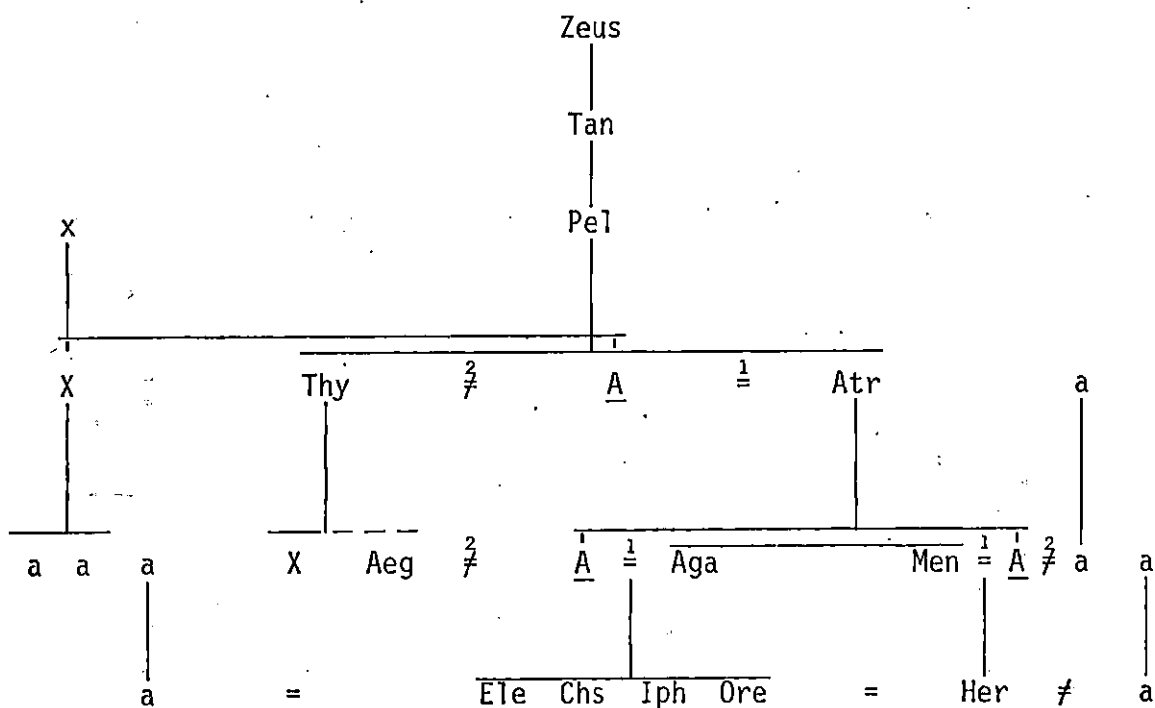


FIGURE 26. *Orestes*: descent.

a)	Pelops kills Myrtilus	# → or = →	944-995, 1548
b)	Thyestes tricks Atreus	/ →	812-819
c)	Atreus "feasts" Thyestes	/ →	15
d)	Menelaus forces war on Agamemnon	/ →	647-650
e)	Iphigenia killed for Menelaus	// ↓	657
f)	Clytaemnestra is adulteress	= →	574-576, 519
g)	Clytaemnestra kills Agamemnon	= →	25-26
h)	Orestes kills Clytaemnestra	= ↑	29-30
i)	Menelaus deserts Orestes	// ↓	425-715
j)	Orestes attempts to harm Menelaus	// ↑	1097 ff
	attempts to kill Helen	= ↑	
	attempts to kill Hermione	// →	

FIGURE 27. *Orestes*: events and models.

Andromache

Andromache ends with the murder of Neoptolemus by Orestes. The drama is about improper marriage. The marriages within and between three Houses--Pelous', Priam's, and Atreus'--are at issue, and the events in the drama could as easily be examined from the viewpoint of any one of them. Basically, only two generations are involved in the action: Agamemnon's and Orestes'. Pelous represents a third generation because of the untimely death of his son, Achilles. None of the first three generations of the House of Atreus are even mentioned in the drama (nor, accordingly, are their crimes), and the initiatory event in the House emerges as the raising of the expedition to Troy.

Improper marriage works against the House of Pelous until the House is represented by a single bastard boy. Hermione is the agent of this

degeneration, just as Menelaus was the primary agent in the destruction of the House of Priam. Peleus' words may stand as well for Priam when he says (l. 1186):

Marriage, O marriage, you ruined this house of mine.

No mention is made of Aegisthus in *Andromache*. Thus the blame for the murder of Agamemnon is put wholly upon Clytaemnestra. This further accentuates the destructiveness of marriage rather than collateral rivalry. In no other drama are affines more conspicuous on the figure of descent, and in no other drama is the analogy between marriage and the political affairs of state made so explicit (e.g., ll. 465-500, 581-586). This kind of analogy is discussed in Chapter IV.

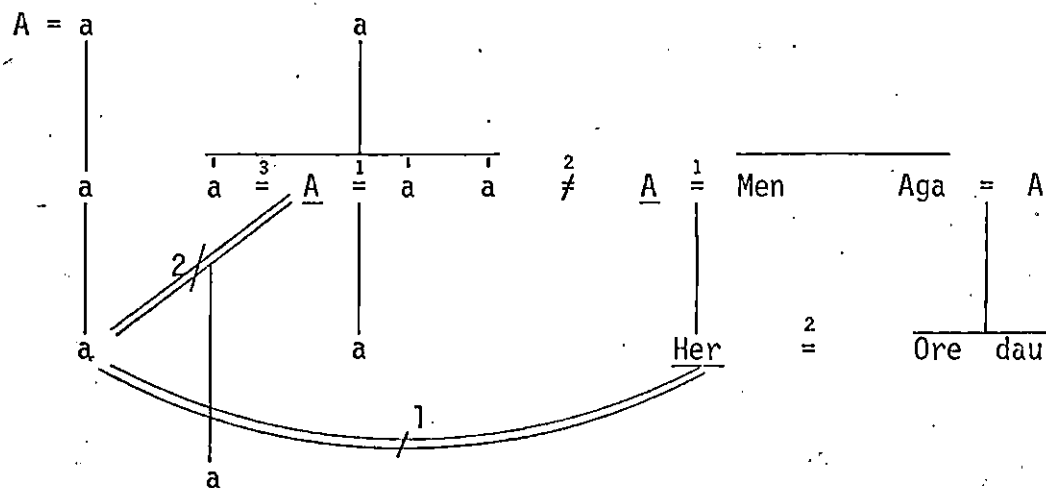


FIGURE 28. *Andromache*: descent.

a) Menelaus raises Greeks	# →	590-618,362
or Agamemnon	/ →	
or Achilles	= →	
b) Menelaus bids death of Iphigenia	// ↓	624-625
or Agamemnon	/ →	
c) Wife kills Agamemnon	= →	1028-1036
d) Orestes kills mother	= ↑	977, etc.
e) Menelaus spurns Orestes	// ↓	966-986
f) Menelaus, Hermione to kill Andromache, son	= →↓	309-318, etc.
g) Menelaus deserts Hermione	/ ↓	729-745,804-865
h) Orestes kills Neoptolemus	= →	993-1008, 1070-1165

FIGURE 29. *Andromache*: events and models.

Iphigenia in Tauris

Iphigenia in Tauris ends with the purification of Orestes, and Orestes' return with Iphigenia to Greece. The drama is concerned with the idea of the acceptance of proper inheritance, against the desire to aggrandize it. The initial event in the House consists of Pelops' treachery which resulted in taking over a new inheritance: "Trouble was won forever . . . when Pelops tricked a car out of the race for a bride" (ll. 192-193). It is the description of a memento of this victory that finally makes Iphigenia recognize her brother (ll. 822-825). The desire to take up a new inheritance--not distinguished from Pelops'--causes the rivalry between Atreus and Thyestés (ll. 811-813, 195-197). Pylades is loath to leave Orestes partly in fear of accusations that, through cowardice, he sought to take over a throne through his wife, Orestes'

sister (ll. 674-686).. All of these instances are involved in the idea of creating a new inheritance for oneself. The most explicit statement of the danger of this kind of augmentation is given by the Chorus (ll. 407-420); part of this statement is reproduced here; it begins with a question about why men would travel far from home (i.e., from their proper inheritance) and follows with surmises and a warning:

Was it to sweep the shores
For riches and to vie in bearing home,
Each to upbuild his house,
The treasures and trophies of the world?
That glittering hope is immemorial
And beckons many men
To their undoing. Ever insatiate
They sail the sea and look to foreign towns
To fill their ships with spoil.
But some men never find prosperity,
For all their voyaging,
While others find it with no voyaging.

This speech includes the Trojan War as an event. It too is an "undoing."

In keeping with the general inward-turning of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the House of Atreus represented in it is very lean. This is in the starkest contrast to the other dramas of Euripides, which are marked with a drawing-together of many strands of descent. The same is true with respect to events. Iphigenia flatly denies the idea that Tantalus killed Pelops (ll. 3860-3888), for example, and no other crimes between Atreus and Thyestes other than the rivalry are attested. Aegisthus is not even mentioned. As well as this, no actions that satisfy the definition of events occur within the drama: *Iphigenia in Tauris* does in fact represent pure condition, the effects of events (e.g., the lack of recognition, Orestes exile, Iphigenia's transportation away). The only event that could conceivably have occurred would have been Iphi-

genia's complicity in the sacrifice of Orestes' even then her guilt would have been only that of association, since she clearly has no part in dealing the death herself (ll. 616-624). So, in summary, *Iphigenia in Tauris* is eventless, while the situation in it is the cause of previous events. Very clearly, the action in it embodies a resolution of the violations of descent in the House of Atreus.

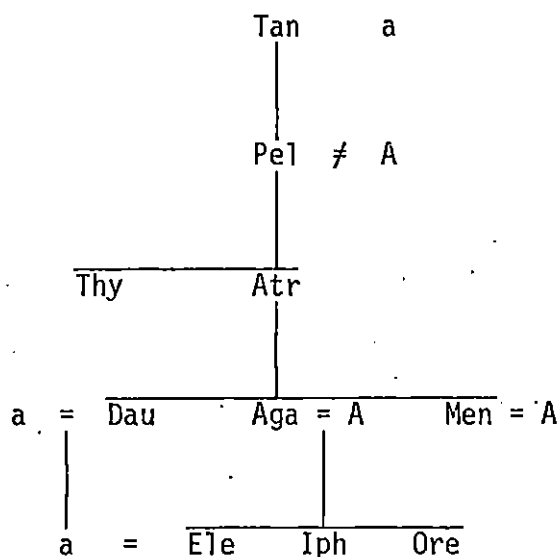


FIGURE 30. *Iphigenia in Tauris*: descent.

a) Pelops' trickery to Oenomaus	= →	1-2,192-193
b) Thyestes and Atreus rivals	/ →	195-198,811-813
c) Trojan War: Helen's fault	= →	358-359,566-567
or Menelaus' fault	/ →	
d) Sacrifice of Iphigenia: Agamemnon's fault	/ ↓	864-866
or Greeks' fault	# ↓	338-339,531-536
(or Artemis' fault)		
e) Wife kills Agamemnon	= →	78-79
f) Orestes kills mother	= ↑	543-560

FIGURE 31. *Iphigenia in Tauris*: events and models.

Electra (Sophocles)

Electra ends with Clytaemnestra dead and the death of Aegisthus imminent. The drama is not single-stranded with respect to descent. The primary descent-based theme is that of disinheritance, but there is a corollary theme of dispute between siblings: between Electra and her sister explicitly, and less demonstrably between Electra and her brother.

The primacy of disinheritance is demonstrated by the fact that disinheritance is the cause of the responses of Orestes and Electra. Orestes' desire is to be "rich from of old, the restorer of my house" (l. 72). The fears of Orestes and Electra are well-founded in regard to permanency, not only because of the strictures of Aegisthus, but also because of the birth of Aegisthus' children (ll. 654-655).

The disputes between Electra and her sister, Chrysothemis, are patent (ll. 341-368, 938-1058, 1070-1074). Electra, bent as she is on vengeance, charges her uncooperative sister with this denial (ll. 364-367) of patrilineality:

Now, when you could
be called the daughter of the best of fathers,
be called your mother's.

The very presence of Chrysothemis as an active member of the House of Atreus gives weight to the dispute of siblings as a theme in *Electra*, since in no other drama is Chrysothemis more than a name.

The dispute between Electra and Orestes is more subtle, and is involved with inaction, or delay, rather than in the eschewing of action. Orestes, for example, does not reveal himself at once to Electra, nor does he accelerate the scene of recognition. These actions could be

assigned to prudence, but his longer delay in Phocis, in exile, has a profound effect upon Electra, as Electra's own words show (ll. 163-166):

I have awaited him always,
sadly, unwearyedly,
till I'm past childbearing,
till I am past marriage;
always to my own ruin.

The denial of Electra's potential as a wife and mother is of advantage, of course, to Aegisthus; Electra is well aware of this (ll. 961-966). However, Aegisthus' true denial of this potential is a plan only, a plan told to Electra by Chrysothemis (ll. 378-386), and it is not fulfilled. On balance, it appears that the responsibility for Electra's childlessness is meant to devolve upon Orestes, rather than upon Aegisthus. Perhaps Chrysothemis has the weight of reason when she ascribes her separation from Electra to the lack of an immediate response to their father's murder (ll. 1021-1022). The disintegration of the lineage and the indecisiveness that follow the murder lead to the strife between siblings.

The initial event in the House of Atreus is stated by the Chorus as "the horsemanship of Pelops" (ll. 502-513). Ironically, Orestes employs the ruse of his death in a chariot race (ll. 680-763) to put aside the fears of his enemies. This race follows a pattern analogous to the pattern of events in the House of Atreus: a proper beginning followed by a single incident which entails all but total turbulence.

No other events are attached to the House until Clytaemnestra makes mention of the death of Iphigenia (ll. 530-531). She denies that either the Greeks at large or Menelaus were to blame and places the total blame upon Agamemnon, "alone of all the Greeks." Electra claims

in response that the death of her sister was not an event at all, but rather a propitiatory act required by the inadvertent affront that Agamemnon offered to the goddess Artemis (ll. 564-577).

In summary, the events in Sophocles' *Electra* are intensely concerned with the events of two generations (i.e., Agamemnon's and Orestes"). More than this, the House of Atreus that takes part in these events is almost purely a lineal one: Aegisthus is to be taken as an outsider, just as Pylades. Only the barest of the bones of the House are at issue.

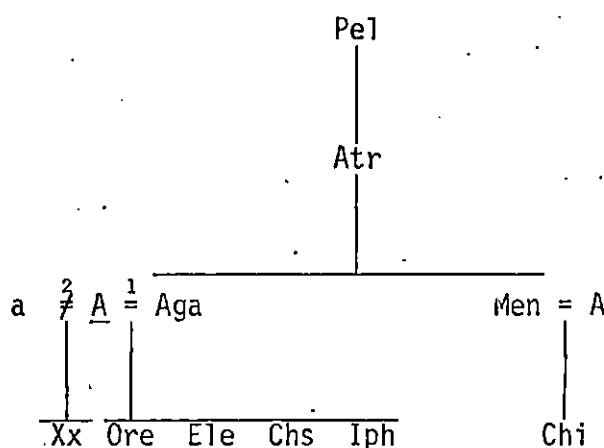


FIGURE 32. *Electra* (Sophocles): descent.

a) Pelops tricks Myrtilus	# →	502-513
b) Agamemnon kills Iphigenia	((/ ↓))	530-551, 564-577
c) Aegisthus seduces Agamemnon's wife	# →	492-494, 561-563, 97, 114
d) Aegisthus	# →	266-274, 956, etc.
Aegisthus and wife	# ⇒	11, 97-98
Wife ... kill Agamemnon	= →	121, 128
e) Orestes disinherited	# ↓	12-14, 159-163, etc.
Electra disinherited	# ↓	183-191, 378-386, etc.
f) Orestes deserts Electra	/ →	1144-1152, 1162, 316-323
g) Chrysothemis deserts Electra	/ →	341-368, 938-1058, etc.
h) Orestes kills Clytaemnestra	= ↑	1405-1428
i) Orestes kills Aegisthus	# ↑	1480 ff

FIGURE 33. *Electra* (Sophocles): events and models.

Helen

Helen ends with the escape of Menelaus and Helen from Egypt. There are no actions in the drama that satisfy the criteria of an event, but unlike *Iphigenia in Tauris*--in which the same situation obtained--the House of Atreus is not discredited with a single previous event. This is not to say that improper behavior does not take place: it does, but it may not be analyzed in terms of the variables under analysis in the present thesis. For this reason, *Helen* is described here wholly through the vehicle of this introduction, along with the standard description of descent.

The House of Atreus is without a stain in the drama. Pelops' chariot race is mentioned, as is the wife of Atreus (ll. 386-389), but

these are not associated with events. The raising of the expedition to Troy is everywhere described as noble in concept and execution, and Menelaus says that he was a leader by demand, "not as a tyrant, not by force" (l. 395). Yet the House of Atreus, beginning with Tantalus, is described as "unfortunate" (l. 855). These misfortunes are due, not to anyone of the House, but to the gods. The story of the judgement of Paris is fully credited, along with the culpability of the three contestants. The blame for the departure of Helen and for the Trojan War is put upon a nucleus of gods. Helen variously says (ll. 670, 674, 40, respectively):

The son of Zeus brought me here . . .

The wife of Zeus destroyed me . . .

Zeus loaded war upon the Hellenic land . . .

The relationships among the gods, and the gods' relationships to mortals are not at issue in the present thesis for reasons already stated. Since the gods are accredited with the inauguration of all of the events in *Helen*, there is therefore no ground upon which to base an analysis of events. However, much that is in the drama is of interest in terms of descent. As well as this, *Helen* represents an end-point for the analysis of Greek drama in terms of variables of descent, for in it these variables--in the context of mortals at least--do not obtain.

Of interest first of all are the repercussions of the departure of Helen. If the personal identity of Helen is allowed to drop away, she may be considered as a "wife," and Menelaus as a "husband." The loss of Helen may then be described as "husband loses wife." In *Helen* this loss affects a great many people of various relationships to the wife.

Substituting the relations that these people have to the wife for the proper names of these people, the following kinds of victims of the loss may be identified; for the sake of clarity, they are enumerated:

- (1) Father: he is shamed (l. 720);
- (2) Brothers: they are shamed, kill themselves (ll. 137-143);
- (3) Mother: she is shamed, kills herself (ll. 133-136, 280);
- (4) Husband: he must wage a war;
- (5) Daughter: she is disgraced and must remain "wedless" (ll. 280, 687-690, 933, 1476-1479);
- (6) Countrymen: they must wage war and die in numbers (e.g., ll. 109, 362-385);
- (7) Foreigners: they too must wage war, and are totally ruined (e.g., ll. 110, 362-385).

Regardless of who is to blame, the loss of an affine can be seen to affect the total range of types of people. Helen is very accurate when she says that she "has no kin" (l. 274), for her loss has lost her; her lineals (father, brothers), two types of affine (the consanguinal, her mother, and the strict affines--members of her husband's lineage--husband and daughter), those who share her ethnic heritage (including, no doubt, more lineals, collaterals, and affines), and those who are strangers.

The next feature of *Helen* which is of interest here is the possible involvement of the House of Aeacus (see pp. 88-90). Among the three deaths at Troy which Menelaus most regrets are two members of the House: Achilles and Aias (ll. 845-850). This, however, does not amount to involvement in the drama, until the figure of Teucer is put in its context of descent. Teucer appears in *Helen* (ll. 68-163) and launches into

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The present work so far can be described as an exposition of the *event*: the impulse for its conception and its definition (Chapter I), and its manifestations in non-dramatic sources (Chapter II), and in the dramas (Chapter III). The culminations of this work are embodied in the figure of events (Figure 19) for the sources other than drama and in the series of figures in the preceding chapter that apply to each drama. Although the model of each event is given together with the event, these figures are still descriptive. They are still connected with the narrative of the legend because they include the identification of agent and patient (i.e., the event) as well as the generational and blood relationship between them (i.e., the model):

----- Aegisthus banishes Orestes // †

It is the foremost purpose of the present chapter to delete the strict chronological aspect of the narrative--"Aegisthus banishes Orestes"--and to examine the righ-hand, essential notation contained in the model--// †.

Before names are forsaken altogether, however, there is one further manifestation of the event in its specific form. This occurs the section, *Events*, which follows. In this section all of the events that occur in the dramas are compiled without duplication into a relative chronological "greater legend" in the same way that Figure 19 was compiled. Models are again included with the events as they were in the earlier figure. The figure that results is in no way more defensibly

authentic or less chimerical than the earlier figure, but its justification is the same. It allows the broadest statements to be made about the limits of the legend of the House of Atreus and, furthermore, it allows the comparison of the two figures. The two figures do, in fact, present divergent lists of events within the House.

In the sections on patterns of generation and blood variables, the specifying event is dropped except as a preliminary aid to organization and explanation. The discreteness of the event is set aside as well, and the models of events are grouped together into larger units called phases which are based upon unities and breakages consistent with the narrative, as well as by the patterns of the models themselves.

The two graphic elements of the models are also treated separately. We first deal with generation and then with the blood variables (lineality, collaterality, affinity, "undescendance"). Generation and blood-connection are of course aspects of the same thing: descent. Both are necessary for a complete and accurate distillation of an event in terms of descent, and so are included in the model; yet each is of a different quality. The model of "Aegisthus banishes Orestes" could have been something like // rather than //↓. Then, instead of the twelve possibilities with two-part notations there would have been twelve single notations varying from / to #. This has been avoided from the start because such single notations harden events into artifacts in which no pattern can be detected. This is due to the different ways in which generation and blood relationship *can be expressed as patterns*. Generational direction is inherent in the very idea of generation. One generation is senior, the same, or junior to another; the direction of

a relationship between generations is therefore upward, horizontal, or downward. In the section on pattern of generations, this "directionality" within each model is readily analyzed at the levels of the phase and of the entire drama. The "direction" of a blood relationship is another matter. No single blood relationship has a direction, but is a state. Compared to one another, however, blood relationships can be assigned a relative order, or degree, depending on their relative closeness to the closest of relationships: lineality. This relative order is lengthily explained and explored in the section about patterns of blood variables. The "direction" of blood relationships there resides in the movement towards nearness or farness of descent as expressed in the phases and over the aggregate of phases which compose the entire drama.

Following the analytical work of these last sections there is the *Summary*. In this summation some general statements are made about the conception and execution of the entire work. A more specific evaluation is then made of the results of the two sections previous; this evaluation includes recommendations to any who might wish to closely pursue such a study as that in the present work. Some final suggestions are made for further research along lines indicated in the present work or amenable to it. The breadth of these suggestions is very large, and it is to be hoped, not overly flattering of the present work.

Events

Figure 19 (p. 102) gathered together the events that occurred in the sources for the "expanded" House of Atreus. The figure was intended

as a summary of the range of events attested, and the events were adjusted into a relative chronological order. No resemblance to any single source was expected, and no pattern of events was anticipated.

Such a figure can now be devised for the dramas. Again, no correspondence to any single drama is expected to result, for the range of a drama is more closely concentrated than in an epic or a work of prose. And again, no pattern is expected to emerge, for I assert that the patterns occur within each drama and not among them.

Although neither authenticity nor pattern can be anticipated, the devising of the new figure is worthwhile. The figure is an aid to the realization of the congruities and diversities of events between the dramatic and non-dramatic Houses of Atreus. The figure, drawn to illustrate events, may also be taken over intact for use in the comparison of models.

Like Figure 19, the new figure describes the actual event by naming the agent and the patient. However, Figure 19 also includes the notation of events in terms of the appropriate variables of descent. At this point, where events are treated separately from models, such notation is premature: this notation is made on the figure that deals with the models. Therefore, this new figure requires only the indication of the presence or absence of particular events. Presence is noted by an asterisk (*), absence by emptiness.

Figure 19 was anonymous: author and source no longer mattered because both had been indicated previously in the same chapter. As well as this, authorship was not itself important, except in the case of Homer, since the aim was to approximate, and only approximate, the range

of information about the House of Atreus from which the dramatists may have drawn. There is no way of reconstructing the exact range: works have been lost to us, for example, and all current knowledge may not have been set down in writing. The intent of Figure 19 was simply to estimate some boundaries. Anonymity is unsatisfactory for the new figure. The source of events are known, as they were known in Figure 19, but here the sources are of the utmost significance, whereas in the previous figure they were not. For this reason events are noted in the new figure according to the dramas in which they occur. The "row" variable--the event--is given in the same way in both figures, but in the new figure the columns are kept rigorously apart.

In summary, the new figure gives events but not models, and gives every source for each event. These are its general departures from Figure 19. The particular conventions of the new figure are these: where a series of events is only broadly indicated (e.g., *b* or *e* in *Iphigenia in Tauris*) the series is indicated together; and where the agent is not consistently identified (e.g., *h*, especially in *Iphigenia in Aulis*; see also pp. 65-66), only the patient is named. Where an event is stated to be false or does not occur, then it is indicated by parenthesis. Finally, it should be noted that the dramas are not given in the same order on the figure as they are in Chapter III. This new order is the one which arises out of the discussion of the figure and is given here in order to be more closely comparable to the figure for the models (see Figure 35).

In their broadest outlines, Figure 35 and Figure 19 are comparable. The expanded series begins with Tantalus' crime; in the dramas this

EVENT	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>	<i>Electra (S)</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra (E)</i>	<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i>	<i>Andromache</i>
a) Pelops tricks Myrtilus or Oenomaus	*	*	*				
b) Thyestes tricks Atreus, seduces wife	*	 		*	**		
c) Atreus kills Thyestes' sons	*		*	*			
d) Atreus banishes Thyestes					*		
e) Atreus banishes Aegisthus					*		
f) Agamemnon kills Tantalus						*	
g) Menelaus raises expedition to Troy	*	*		*		*	*
h) Agamemnon kills Iphigenia	*	*	(*)	*	*	*	*
i) Aegisthus seduces Clytaemnestra	*		*	*	*		
j) Aegisthus exiles Orestes	*		*	*	*		*
k) Aegisthus kills Agamemnon		*	*	*	*		
l) Orestes, Chrysothemis desert Electra			*				
m) Orestes kills Aegisthus	*	*	*	*	*		*
n) Menelaus deserts Orestes	*						
o) Orestes threatens Helen	*						
p) Orestes threatens Hermione	*						
q) Menelaus deserts Orestes							*
r) Hermione threatens Andromache							*
s) Orestes kills Pyrrhus							*

FIGURE 35. Events in the dramas, presence and absence.

crime is cited but not credited. Events end in the expanded series with the usurpers, Megapenthes and Nicostratus; these two are of the same generation as Orestes, whose actions end the dramatic series.

All of the events in both series can be placed within four chronological stages based on the generations of the House of Atreus (see pp. 78-80). Putting aside the question of Tantalus' crime, the first eventful generation is Pelops' (Generation 2): in the expanded series, events *b-e* are within this generation, and in the dramatic series, event *a*. The rivalry between Atreus and Thyestes (Generation 3) encompasses events *f-k* in the expanded series, and *b-f* in the dramas; the respective events *k* and *f* are the same ("Tantalus' murder") and Tantalus is treated as a son of Thyestes. Events which led to or occurred during the Trojan War (Generation 5) comprise the next stage; in the expanded series the events are *l-n*, in the dramas *g-j*. Events which occur after Agamemnon's return (Generation 6) are *o-s* in the expanded series and *k-s* in the dramatic series. This division into generations is not strictly accurate, since, for example, the murder of Agamemnon, though placed on Generation 6, is an act of members of Generation 5, and the murder of Tantalus, placed on Generation 3, is an act of members of Generation 5 as well. Such anomalies are the inevitable result of the attempt to simplify an interconnected narrative into neat divisions of generations. They are tolerated here because the overall value of the divisions is only in their broadest indications.

The differences between the two figures are significant. Again putting aside the crime of Tantalus, the events which occur in the expanded series but not in the dramatic series are:

- c) Pelops favours Chrysippus
- d) Atreus and Thyestes kill Chrysippus
- e) Pelops expels his children

- i) Thyestes rapes his daughter
- j) Aegisthus kills Atreus

- n) Agamemnon and Menelaus dispute
- o) Aegisthus deposes Diomedes
- p) Megapenthes and Nicostratus usurp the throne of Sparta.

The three final events noted above are on the periphery of the House. The brotherly dispute (*n*) can be replaced with the exact same kind of event in the dramas. The judgement against Diomedes and the usurpation of the Spartan throne are well outside of the central line of events within the House. The absence of events concerning Pelops and his children (*c-e*) is, however, of the utmost significance. Pelops' only crime in the dramas consists of improper behaviour towards a class of people whom I have called affines. Crimes between lineals are restricted to the next generation after that of Pelops. The events which amplify the dispute between the two sons of Pelops (*i-j*), and that are missing in the dramas, do only that, amplify. They have no effect on subsequent events and do not alter the *dénouement*. Indeed, if as in event *j*, Atreus is held to have been killed by Aegisthus, then the subsequent murder of Aegisthus has added intensity. Atreus' death would be comparable as a model (*// †*) with Aegisthus' death (*// †*), except that it acted in no way as a resolution.

The events that occur in the dramas but not in the expanded series are entirely Euripidean:

- l) Orestes, Chrysothemis desert Electra
- n) Menelaus deserts Orestes
- o) Orestes threatens Helen
- p) Orestes threatens Hermione
- r) Hermione threatens Andromache and son

The most noticeable feature of these events is that in every case they either do not come about or else are remedied. The desertion of Electra (l) is obliterated by the return of Orestes; the desertion of Orestes is remedied by Orestes' own actions; the death that hangs over Helen, Hermione, and Andromache never comes about.

A consideration of Figure 35 on its own generates a fact of the utmost significance: the initiatory events in the dramas may occur on any of three generations (Generations 3, 4, and 6) of the House of Atreus. This fact is plain only on a figure of events, since a figure of models obliterates the connection to actual generations. The rearrangement of the order of the dramas that was noted prior to the presentation of Figure 35 was predicated by this three-part division of the dramas according to initiatory event. The dramas whose events begin on the same generation are placed together, and the three groups that result are arranged in a relative chronological sequence. The assumption is that an initial event is not gratuitously given and that, just as the dramas may be differentiated by this event, so they may be different (or alike).

On the third generation the initial event is the gaining of both wife and throne by Pelops through trickery. The victim of the trickery is either the father-in-law and succeeded king, Oenomaus, or his faithless charioteer, Myrtilus. Although he bears no strict affinal relationship to Pelops, Myrtilus may be assigned to the affinal category

because he was involved along with Oenomaus in the protection of Pelops' wife from marriage. *Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and Sophocles' *Electra* (and perhaps *Helen*, ll. 386-392) cite Pelops' crime as initiatory. In the present discussion these dramas are identified as "Hippodamian," for Hippodamia was Pelops' ill-gotten wife. The use of the contested affine's name serves to distinguish the single initiatory event from the entire generation: "Pelopian" might have served as well except that it is very like "Pelops'" which is the signification of Generation 3 of the House of Atreus.

The dramas that place the initiatory event of the House of Atreus on the fourth generation are *The Oresteia* and Euripides' *Electra*. In both dramas the event is the seduction of Atreus' wife by his brother, Thyestes. Atreus' wife, or the wife whom Thyestes is said to have seduced, is generally identified as one Aerope (e.g., Barthell, 1971: 269; *Orestes*, l. 17; *Helen*, l. 371). These dramas are accordingly identified as "Aeropean."

Two dramas place the initiatory event upon the sixth generation. In this case, however, the events are not identical. In *Iphigenia in Aulis* it is Agamemnon's murder of Tantalus, and in *Andromache* Menelaus' raising of the Greeks for the Trojan War. The connection between the two events is through women: Agamemnon gains Clytaemnestra to wife, and Menelaus regains his wife, Helen. Clytaemnestra and Helen are generally described as sisters (the daughters of Tyndareus and Leda) or as half-sisters (the one the daughter of Tyndareus and Leda, the other the daughter of Zeus and Leda). Their relationship may be called "Ledan" without qualification, and this name also serves to identify initial

events on the sixth generation. The nature of the name also is in keeping with that used to identify initiatory events on the third and fourth generations, since it is that of a contested affine (or rather, of the mother of contested affines).

To summarize: the initiatory events ascribed to the House of Atreus in the dramas are placed on three generations and are identified by the names Hippodamian, Aeropean, and Ledan. It is well to recall Homer's words (see p.72) about the responsibility of "intrigues of women" for the turbulence of the House. The discussion of these initiatory events, however, shows that the dramatists are not so concerned with the intrigues *of women* as they are about intrigues *for women*. In every drama some male member of the House commits an improper act in order to gain or regain a woman as an affine, or to gain advantage through a woman who is an affine already. The kinds of women are exhausted:

- (1) women who are affines (Aerope);
- (2) women who become affines (Hippodamia, Clytaemnestra);
- (3) women who were affines (Helen).

Recalling the comparison of the figures of the expanded system and of the dramas, the absence, in the dramas, of Tantalus' crime upon Pelops, and the sequence of crimes involving the favouring and murder of Chrysippus and the dispersal of his murderers becomes increasingly significant. Consistently, the dramas pass over lineal crimes as initiatory events and instead consistently take up crimes that involve improper behaviour towards affines.

Patterns of Generation

The pattern of generational direction in the models is immediate and emphatic: there is a shift from cross-generational events towards events that are directed either upwards or downwards. Every drama begins with a crime across a generation--this was noted in the context of actual events in the previous section--and every drama either ends with a non-lateral event or shows a distinct tendency towards such events as the dramatic action proceeds.

Simplistically assuming that this shift in generational direction is a lineal one and that there is a single point of turnover in every drama, it should be possible to demonstrate that the dramas consist of two parts. The first part should consist of lateral (i.e., cross-generational) events and the second part of non-lateral events. In Sophocles' *Electra*, for example, the final four events are non-lateral while four of the first five are lateral. The generational shifting point of *Electra* can therefore be placed at the fifth and sixth events. The one "anomaly" in the first part may be set aside for discussion later. *Electra*, then, appears to fit into the two-part pattern described above.

All of the shifting points of this type in the dramas are demonstrated in Figure 36. The dramas are still grouped together as in Figure 35, with the dramas this time being along the rows rather than the columns in order to emphasize the events. This figure has been composed from the figures given for the models of each drama in Chapter III. The number of anomalies is given in the right-hand column together

with the number of events; both numbers are totalled to the lower right.

Drama	Generational Direction		Anomalies	No. of Events
	Lateral	Non-Lateral		
<i>Orestes</i>	a-g	h-l	3	11
<i>Electra</i> (Sophocles)	a-d	e-h	3	9
<i>Iphigenia in Taurus</i>	a-c	d-f	1	6
<i>The Oresteia</i>	a-e	f-j	4	10
<i>Electra</i> (Euripides)	a-e	f-i	1	9
<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i>	a-h	i-j	2	10
<i>Andromache</i>	a-c	d-h	2	8
TOTALS			16	63

FIGURE 36. Generational shifting points in the models.

Virtually three-quarters of the events show the "proper" generational direction that supports the claim that the dramas may be each divided into two parts. However, the number of anomalous events is still unsatisfactorily high--and nowhere higher than in *The Oresteia*, which is the epitome of all the dramas--and anomalies, furthermore, occur in every drama. There are two ways to deal with these anomalies. The first way is to reject the event itself as spurious or in some way misinterpreted. The second way is to reject the original claim, that there is a two-part division in the models which is a reflection of a single turnover in the generational direction of events.

The rejection of the anomalies has two prospects: either the event is improperly apprehended (by the present author), or else the unavoid-

able inclusion of some standard events in the House of Atreus upsets the desired pattern of generation. The latter prospect can be dismissed out of hand. The dramatists appear to have been free to amplify or subdue (or invent) any event. A comparison of Figures 35 and 19 gives a broad indication of this. Also, the confirmed and reconfirmed acceptance of the dramas as they are written, and the refusal to react as if there were *contrareity*, hold here (see *Contrareity*). Accordingly, the inclusion of event *e*--the murder of Agamemnon--in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, must not be voided even though its exclusion would reduce by one the number of anomalies in the drama.

Returning to the first prospect for rejecting the anomalies--that they have merely been wrongly analyzed--it must be reiterated that so great an amount of rigour went into defining an event and the variables of descent that make up an event (see pp. 49 ff.) that such grounds for rejection do not exist. Rather than rejecting the refractory cases, the entire definition would require revising. Orestes' attempt to kill Hermione (event *k*) in *Orestes*, or his desertion of Electra (*e*) in Euripides' *Electra*, or the unfulfilled attempt on Andromache (*f*) in *Andromache* all fulfil the definition of events even though they are not carried out. They are also lateral crimes in the non-lateral halves of each drama, and are therefore anomalies. In Euripides' *Electra* the death of Iphigenia meets all the requirements of an event, but is a non-lateral crime in the lateral half of a drama. Again, it is an anomaly that cannot be deleted from the model on any procedural ground.

Since neither of the prospects for rejecting the anomalies can be enforced, it is necessary to re-examine the original claim about the

two-part generational pattern in the models. The two-part claim is simply too coarse, even though it arose from a direct observation of the models. Returning to Figure 36 and examining the shifting points noted there reveals that they are pairs consisting of one of two dyads of events:

- (1) the undertaking of the Trojan War and the resultant death of Iphigenia (*Orestes*, both *Electras*, *Andromache*), or
- (2) the aftermath of Agamemnon's murder; that is, Orestes' banishment and revenge (*The Oresteia*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*).

However, at least one-half of each of these dyads is present in every drama except *Iphigenia in Aulis* in which the murder of Agamemnon is in the far future. Furthermore, each of these dyads involves the lateral/non-lateral pattern of generational direction. Thus in every drama, at least one anomalous event is assured. The "two-part" observation was the oversimplification of an attested pattern, and the establishment of shifting points was based on gross quantification of generational directions. The models themselves suggest the proper reaction to the anomalies: divide the dramas into phases consisting of the events of the Trojan War and of events in Greece ending with Orestes' revenge. Where these phases are represented in the dramas they are predicted to show the lateral/non-lateral pattern and, taken together, to attest a pattern of *alternation*. Figure 37 is designed to show these divisions in phases. Like Figure 35, this figure has the dramas on the columnar axis, and events--noted only by the letter that stands for them--along the rows. Unlike Figure 35, however, the new figure groups events together chronologically

Phase	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Electra</i> (S)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Tauris</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra</i> (E)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Aulis</i>	<i>Andro-</i> <i>mache</i>
Pre-Troy	(a)→ (b)→ (c)→	(a)→	(a)→ (b)→	(a)→ (b)→ (c)↓ (d)↓	(a)→ (b)→	(a)→↓	
Trojan War	(d)→ (e)↓	(b)↓	(c)→ (d)↓	(e)→ (f)↓	(c)↓	(b)→ (c)→ (d)→ (e)→ (f)→↓ (g)→ (h)→ (i)↓ (j)↓	(a)→ (b)↓
Vengeance	(f)→ (g)→ (h)↑	(c)→ (d)→ (e)↓ (f)→ (g)→ (h)↑ (i)↑	(e)→ (f)↑	(g)→ (h)↓ (i)→ (j)↓	(d)→ (e)→ (f)↓ (g)↓ (h)↑ (i)↑		(c)→ (d)↓
Post-Vengeance	(i)↓ (j)↑ (k)↑ (l)→						(e)↓ (f)↓ (g)↓ (h)→

FIGURE 37. Division by phases of generational direction.

by phases and is not concerned with aligning the same event together by presence. It is notable also that the "Trojan" and "Vengeance" phases are strictly separated from each other, and also separated from events that occur before or after. Thus two additional phases are generated: a "Pre-Trojan" phase and a "Post-Vengeance" phase. Finally, generational direction only is indicated on the new figure. The nature of the relationship between agent and patient is the subject of the next section of the present chapter.

Figure 37 generates twenty-one dramatic phases, and all twenty-one can be adjusted to the predicted lateral/non-lateral pattern in one of the four following ways: (1) ten conform perfectly to the pattern; (2) three consist of a doubled pattern; (3) six form either the lateral or non-lateral portion of the pattern and may be united with a complementary, adjacent phase; and (4) two reverse the predicted pattern exactly. These four manifestations of the predicted pattern are noted, respectively, as *complete*, *doubled*, *halved*, and *reversed* patterns. Each notation is self-explanatory. In the sections below, these patterns are identified as they obtain to the phases of each drama. The headings of these sections consist of the phases themselves. After this discussion, Figure 38 is presented; this figure is modelled upon its predecessor, with the modification that the notation of particular generational direction is replaced by the appropriate notation of the type of pattern attested.

The Pre-Trojan phase. In *The Oresteia* (→→→) and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (#=>#) these phases are complete. In each of the other dramas this phase is halved. They combine with the succeeding Trojan phase to

fulfil the pattern, and they are by very definition composed solely of lateral events. This phase, then, can be treated as a discrete unit in a pattern of emphatic alternation, as in the two dramas in which it is complete. Or else it can contribute to a more cumulative effect by being fulfilled in the next phase.

The Trojan phase. Four of the Trojan phases in the dramas are complete. In *The Oresteia* the phase is discrete as well because the preceding phase was also complete. In *Andromache* the phase is discrete as well, but there is no preceding phase. While the Trojan phase in *Orestes* and *Iphigenia in Tauris* are also complete in themselves, their preceding phases are halved (i.e., lateral) and so amplify the lateral part of the pattern. In both *Electras* the Trojan phase consists of non-lateral events only, and so these phases are halved since they require the lateral events of the preceding phase to complete the pattern. Finally, in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, this phase is discrete and doubled; the two manifestations of the predicted pattern are embodied in events *b-f* and *g-j*.

Regardless of the kind of pattern noted in the Trojan phase, that phase together with the preceding Pre-Trojan phase comprise a unit that fulfils the pattern of lateral/non-lateral generational direction. Neither phase is dependent on either of the succeeding phases for completion.

The Vengeance phase. This phase is discrete in every drama (except, of course, in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, in which it does not occur). *Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Electra*, and *Andromache* are all complete in this phase. In Sophocles' *Electra* and in *The Oresteia* this phase is

doubled. In *Electra* the pattern-making parts are events *c-d* and *e-h*, and in *The Oresteia* they are *g-h* and *i-j*. Of all of the phases this one is the most discrete, for in every drama in which it occurs it embodies an exact or reduplicated version of the predicted pattern. This is due in large part, undoubtedly, to the fact that it is this phase which is most often the onstage part of the story of the House.

The Post-Vengeance phase. This phase is represented in only two dramas, both of them by Euripides: *Orestes* and *Andromache*. In both cases these phases are reversed, and they are the only ones which are so modified. That is, after the deaths of Aegisthus and/or Clytaemnestra, events are initially non-lateral and wind up lateral. This is the very opposite of the predicted pattern and the pattern attested in all the other phases. It will be remembered that one entire drama of Euripides, *Helen*, proved refractory to the procedures of the present thesis (see pp. 122-125); in the case of *Helen*, a drama which is generally accepted as more like a comedy, the exception tends to support the rule. In the case of the reversal of a predicted and otherwise attested pattern, however, the reversal cannot be so dismissed. There are, in fact, three complementary contributors to this reversal. One may be called anti-climactic, another logistic--a body count--and the last and most persuasive, further patterning of generational direction.

The idea of the anti-climax as a reason for the reversal of the pattern has to do with the fact that the final event of the Vengeance phase--the murder of Agamemnon's surderer--is everywhere else a *resolution* of the kind of crime that constitutes an event. In *Orestes* and *Andromache* this event is not accepted as a resolution, but rather as the

cause of further events. Since the generational direction of this event is unique (†) it follows that the response to it (i.e., the Post-Vengeance phase) should also be unique. In fact, it is.

A second contributor to the reversal of the attested pattern is the sheer diminishment of the House of Atreus. After the death of Aegisthus the senior generation is impoverished in the extreme; in fact, this generation (Generation 5) is represented by a single male: Menelaus. Menelaus is the agent of the initiatory, lateral, events of the last phase; there is no one upon whom to commit a lateral crime. Generation 6 is, on the other hand, not depleted: everyone except Iphigenia is still alive. No representative of Generation 7 yet exists, save perhaps the nebulous children or child of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra. It seems almost inevitable that there will be events involving members of Generation 6 only.

The final contributor to the reversal of the Post-Vengeance phase is more in keeping with the idea of a pattern of generational direction. If the initial non-lateral events of the last phase are considered as halves of the preceding phase, then the final lateral events can be considered as the ultimate resolution of all of the events in both phases. Uniting the phases in this way gives rise to a new, three-part sequence to the pattern of generational direction:

- a) crime on the senior generation;
- b) crime upon the junior generation;
- c) crime on the junior generation.

The dramas which do not have the last phase could insert in place of "crime on the junior generation" the resolution: "crime *upon* the senior generation."

As a summary of this discussion of the kinds of patterns attested in the phases of the dramas, and as an aid in visualizing that discussion, Figure 38 is presented. It is notable only that a firm division has been made on the figure between the first and last two phases. This division has been justified in the discussion above.

Phase	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Electra</i> (S)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Tauris</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra</i> (E)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Aulis</i>	<i>Andro-</i> <i>mache</i>
Pre-Trojan	halved	halved	halved	complete	halved	complete	-----
Trojan	complete	halved	complete	complete	halved	doubled	complete
Vengeance	complete	doubled	complete	doubled	complete	-----	complete
Post-Vengeance	reversed	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	reversed

FIGURE 38. Type of generational pattern, by phases.

This section may be concluded with a brief review of some summarizing statements. The first "empirically" evident observation made, indicated a shift from lateral to non-lateral events. At first it was assumed that this shift was lineal. Enough events were of the predicted generational direction to credit the observation, but too many--called *anomalies*--were not. Accordingly it was inferred that there was alternation rather than a single shift. Shifting itself was a constant. The dramas were then divided into phases of narrative with natural initial and final events. Under these divisions the shift to non-lateral events became even more evident, and the patterning of generational direction

by alternation was conclusively demonstrated. No anomalies were present any longer; even the apparently anomalous reversed phases were shown to be variations of the lateral/non-lateral pattern.

The patterning of generational direction is not only present in every drama, but it is also of a constant nature: a lateral event(s) predicates a non-lateral event(s), and the shift from lateral to non-lateral events can also imply a transference of lateral crime from the senior generation to the junior.

Patterns of Blood Variables

The pattern of generational direction in the models is present *and constant*, but this is not the case with respect to the blood variables of descent. There is pattern in every model, but the pattern is not of one type, and the groups of dramas whose models share a pattern are not completely expected.

The analysis of patterns of blood variables in the models can begin in the same way that the analysis of generational direction was begun: with a simple figure that is concerned with only two elements of the model. This time, however, the two elements are not those which constitute a shifting point in a direction, but, simply, the initial and final elements of the model. The rationale for this is that the final event must represent a consistent and foreseen outcome of the initial event, for the variation in the choice of initial events has been shown. This rationale is transparently coarse, just as the rationale (a quantitative one) for the linear shift in generational direction is coarse; the reason for it is the same in both cases: to outline the reasoning

that leads to the final figure from which the analysis is made.

Figure 39 is patterned after the corresponding Figure 37 of the previous section. The notation of a particular event is explicit in the columns and does not have to be included along with the entries. Other than this, there are no remarkable differences in construction between the two figures.

Drama	Blood Variable	
	Initial	Final
<i>Orestes</i>	Affines	Collaterals
<i>Electra</i> (S)	Affines	Strangers
<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>	Affines	Affines
<i>The Oresteia</i>	Lineals	Collaterals
<i>Electra</i> (E)	Lineals	Affines
<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i>	Strangers	Everyone
<i>Andromache</i>	Everyone	Affines

FIGURE 39. Initial and final blood variables.

One evident feature of Figure 39 is that the significance of the three types of initial events is reflected in it, whereas it was not in the corresponding figure in the previous section. The initial blood variables in the first three dramas are "affines," in the next two, "lineals," and in the last two, "strangers" and "everyone" (a slightly exaggerated term to imply the presence of more than two of the variables). These variables are manifestly the notation in the models of the Hippodamian, Aeropean, and Ledan crimes. In an analysis of generational direction

these categories of initial events do not show up as variables simply because they do not vary; in every case they are lateral (—). Blood variables do vary, however, and Figure 39 demonstrates it accurately, if roughly. For example, Aeropean events can be marked from the others because of the closeness of descent between agent and patient: they are brothers (i.e., lineals). On Figure 39 this lineality shows up, of course, in the initial event. The final events in the Aeropean models are also relatively close by descent as well; had the mother/child relationship been considered as a lineal one in this thesis, instead of an affinal one, this closeness would have been accentuated even more in Euripides' *Electra*. Hippodamian and Ledan models are marked by the farness away by descent of agent and patient. This is completely so--by definition--in the initial event, and in the final events there is a decided tendency towards distance as well. Only in *Orestes* is the relationship between agent and patient as close as collaterality.

Even with these values to recommend it, the new figure is unsatisfactory. First of all, there are two refractory final events--like anomalies--in *Orestes* and *Electra*. Second, and more important, the figure puts aside by far the greater number of events, and because of this coarseness it can only show that some kind of pattern is present, but not what that pattern may be.

The absence of events may be easily remedied by constructing a figure, like Figure 40, that presents them all. Figure 40 is designed to do this. Its structure is basically that of the first figure, but it benefits from the discussion that followed. The halved phases are united, even if one phase so joined is complete in itself; hence, for

Phase	Hippodamian			Aeropean		Ledan	
	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Electra</i> (S)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Tauris</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra</i> (E)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Aulis</i>	<i>Andro-</i> <i>mache</i>
Pre-Troy	(a) = (b) / (c) / (d) / (e) //	(a) = (b) /	(a) = (b) / (c) == (d) /	(a) / (b) / (c) // (d) // (e) // (f) /	(a) / (b) / (c) /	(a) # (b) # (c) = (d) # (e) / (f) #/=	(a) # (b) //
Trojan	(f) = (g) = (h) ==	(c) # (d) #= (e) # (f) / (g) / (h) = (i) #	(e) = (f) =	(g) // (h) // (i) // (j) //	(d) // (e) // (f) // (g) // (h) // (i) =	(j) /#//	(c) = (d) =
Vengeance	(i) // (j) // (k) = (l) //						(e) // (f) = (g) / (h) =

FIGURE 40. Division by phases of blood variables.

example, the Pre-Trojan and Trojan phases of *Orestes* are united even though the Trojan phase consists of a lateral, then non-lateral, event. Doubled phases are separated; the Vengeance phase in *The Oresteia*, for example, is split into events *g-h* and *i-j*.

While this figure does answer the polar representations of Figure 39, it does not supply a ready apprehension of patterns of the blood variables. The closeness by descent of the Aeorean models (*The Oresteia*, Euripides' *Electra*) becomes more apparent; the farness of the blood variables in the two Ledan models becomes more apparent as well. But all of the non-Aeorean models have strong representations of the lineal or collateral relationship between agent and patient. The difficulty is, of course, that Figure 40 is descriptive rather than integrative. Patterns of generational direction become apparent at this stage of analysis because the variables can be reduced to the number of two (lateral and non-lateral) from a total of three (\rightarrow , \downarrow , \uparrow), and still be meaningful. Blood variables cannot be reduced in the same way. Lineals and collaterals could perhaps be collapsed into a single "shared-blood" variable, but affines and strangers could not be so melded: they are too far apart in quality of relationship. Affines, too, "share blood" with one's lineals and collaterals while strangers do not. So, blood variables are left at the ponderous number of four, and patterns are obscured.

The method by which to reduce meaningfully the number of blood variables has been suggested already in the discussion above about the distinction between Aeorean and other models: *the relative closeness of relationship between agent and patient*. Lineals occupy one end of the

range of closeness, or "nearness"--while strangers occupy the other. Between them are collaterals in second place after lineals, followed by affines, who have at least an affiliation to a lineage.¹⁶ This simple range may be restated:

- (1) lineals are nearer than collaterals;
- (2) collaterals are nearer than affines;
- (3) affines are nearer than strangers.

The relative positions of nearness or farness by descent may be maintained together with an absolute notation for the four blood variables in the following way: lineals are "nearest" (with a notational code of, say, *nst*), collaterals are "nearer" (*ner*), affines are "farther" (*fer*), and strangers are "farthest" (*fst*). This notation keeps relative order and absolute reference together, but it also--and partly through the conventions of the English language--appears to manifest the unfounded and discarded division of the four variables into the two close and distant types. Also, while it is an improvement on the simple notation of the models it is still descriptive: it would be a simple matter to reconstruct the models' notations through it. While this reversibility is not a fault in itself, it indicates that the relative notation is not yet abstract enough to make the patterns much more immediate than did the notation for the models.

The means to further abstract the relative nearness or farness of a relationship in descent, while still maintaining the integrity of the event, is to simply note each germane pair of variables in each case in a manner *relative only to each other*. Thus the notation has to have only two terms: "nearer" (*N*) and "farther" (*F*). In the Pre-Troy phase of the *Oresteia*, for example, the initial blood variable is lineality

(/) and the final variable is collaterality (//). Accordingly, the notation for this phase is $N-F$. The directional line (—) here is not to be confused with the arrow of lateral generational direction; the two do not co-occur.

The manifest drawback to this refined relative notation is that a number of the phases--nine out of twenty--have initial and final events that attest the same blood variables. The two-term notation would not have two terms. A sign for this similarity (perhaps a sign for congruity: \cong) is unsatisfactory because it is simply too much of an abstraction, and totally veils the nature of the pattern in the phase, especially in terms of preceding or following phases which may show variation in initial and final events. To overcome this problem with a desirable notation, Figure 41 includes with the two-term notation described above a parenthetical notation of the blood variables concerned. While this inclusion consists of a mixture of the descriptive and the abstract, it nevertheless permits the maximum of authentic information with a minimum of notation. Unlike Figure 40, whose structure it resembles, the new figure which follows is a *working* figure, rather than a more streamlined visualization of the preceding figure.

With nearly half of the phases without notation, Figure 41 is fragmentary at best. The problem remains to note all of the phases without resorting to a descriptive system such as the one that was rejected (*nst*, *fst*, etc.). Before discussing such a new notation, a few words can be spent on the patterns, such as they are, that may be detected in or intrapolated for Figure 41. Predictably, the Hippodamian dramas have like initial phases ($F-N$). A Ledan drama, *Andromache*,

Phase	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Electra</i> (S)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Tauris</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra</i> (E)	<i>Iphigenia</i> <i>in Aulis</i>	<i>Andro-</i> <i>mache</i>
Pre-Troy	(= //) F—N	(= /) F—N	(= /) F—N	(/ //) N—F	(/ /)	(##)	(# /) F—N
Trojan				(// /) F—N		(#, # = 1) F—N	
Vengeance	(= =)	(# #)	(= =)	(// //)	(// =) N—F	(/, // = #) N—F	(= =)
		(/ #) N—F		(// //)			
Post-Vengeance	(// //)						(// =) N—F

FIGURE 41. Relative closeness of initial and final blood variables, by phases.

begins this way as well. The Aegean drama *The Oresteia* reverses this beginning (N—F). The only noted final phases among the Hippodamian dramas is that of *Electra* (F—N), and it reverses the initial phase. Both of the Ledan dramas end this way as well, as does, surprisingly, the Aegean *Electra*. A provisional prediction about the way a fully-noted figure would look, based on the observations above, would group Hippodamian and Ledan dramas together as beginning F—N and ending N—F. The observations would also predict the separation of the Aegean dramas from the other two kinds, by virtue of a reversal of initial and final phase notation. This separation is supported by the very nature of the

three kinds of initial events. Aegean dramas are described as beginning with a single actual event which involves lineals; lineals are the closest of relatives by descent. Hippodamian initial events involve affines, Ledan, strangers. Both of these relationships are far less close than lineality. There is therefore every expectation that this qualitative difference in the blood relationships in initial events will be reflected equally drastically in a figure which is based on this very quality.

In order to fill in the gaps in the notation of phases without causing the number of terms to proliferate, any new terms should be derived from those that are in use already. This may be achieved by further refining the idea of relative closeness by descent. The terms F and N reflect the relationship between two blood variables, one of which occurs in the initial event of a phase, and the other in the final event. Since the unnoted phases attest the same blood variable in both the initial and final events of a phase, some other relationship must be used. This relationship is that between the unnoted phase and *adjacent, noted phases of the same drama*. If the single blood variable is, for example, a nearer one than the N variable in an adjacent phase, then its notation is N . With a maximum of four phases in each drama the complexity of such relationships could become immense: how could one note a central phase of $=$ if the first phase were $// =$ (i.e., $N-F$) and the third phase were $=# (N-F)$? However, an examination of the phases produces no such examples or problems. This perhaps supports the thought that there is an intentional directional pattern to the blood variables. The clearest way to arrive at the completely noted version of Figure 41

is to work through each drama singly--for each drama has at least one unnoted phase--and show the way that decisions about relative orders are reached. This illustration consists of the virtual detachment of the columns of Figure 41, minus the designation of the phases along the rows. Parallel to these columns are the columns whose phases are fully complete by the principles discussed above, and by the particular discussion which follows each parallel pair. These complete columns are combined later as Figure 43.

Figure 42a

<i>Orestes</i> = // (F—N)	<i>Orestes</i>
= =	F—N
// //	F
	N

FIGURE 42 (a-g). Adjustment of relative closeness of initial and final blood variables by phases.

Orestes is very straightforward because it attests only two terms throughout its phases. Any time the farther variable (=) appears it is always farther than the other variable (//). Note that in the second and third phases of *Orestes*, and in all previously unnoted phases which are to be filled in, only a single term is indicated. This indicates that the blood variables in the phases are the same, and also reflects the fact that they are relative to the other phases rather than to their own constituent variables.

Figure 42b

<i>Electra</i> (S)
= / F—N
#
/ # N—F

<i>Electra</i> (S)
F—N
F
N—F

In the third phase of Sophocles' *Electra*, strangers (#) is the F-term. The F-term in the first phase is *affine* (=), which is a somewhat nearer relationship. It is therefore obvious that in relation to the other two phases, the strangers in the middle phase are farther.

Figure 42c

<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
= / F—N
= =

<i>Iphigenia in Tauris</i>
F—N
F

Again, a very straightforward case because of the existence of only two variables. The one that is farther in one phase is also farther in the other. *Iphigenia in Tauris* is like *Orestes* in this regard: it shows lineals and affines while the other shows collaterals and affines. These first three dramas comprise all of those classified as Hippodamian. All of them begin with the phase *F—N*--by definition--and have a second *F* phase. The two that have third phases are different, but they are similar in that a movement back to a closer relationship by descent occurs.

Figure 42d

<i>Oresteia</i>
/ //
N—F
// /
F—N
// //
// //

<i>Oresteia</i>
N—F
F—N
F
F

Since *The Oresteia* attests only two terms as have all the previous dramas, the same principle of relationship is in force. Collaterality is always a less close relationship than lineality, and so in the third and fourth phases the doubled collateral variables are replaced by the F-term.

Figure 42e

<i>Electra</i> (E)
/ /
// =
N—F

<i>Electra</i> (E)
N
N—F

Euripides' *Electra* is the first drama to attest three blood variables. Since there are only two phases in the drama, only one of the variables is repeated, and in this case it is repeated in the same phase. This means that one of the two terms must stand for two different variables. Here the term is the N-term, since the doubled lineality is a closer relationship than either of the other two. *The Oresteia* and this *Electra* comprise the Aeuropean dramas. Their shared features are an initial phase which begins near and a final phase which ends farther away.

Figure 42f

<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i> # #	<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i> F
# /, =, # F—N	F—N
/ //, =, # N—F	N—F

When the relationship is as emphatically a distant one as that between strangers (#), it is a certainty that a doubled # will become the F-term. *Iphigenia in Aulis* is notable because it is the first of the Ledan dramas, and like the other Ledan drama, *Andromache*, has within its initial and final blood variables in its phases, all four of the kinds under study here.

Figure 42g

<i>Andromache</i> # / F—N	<i>Andromache</i> F—N
= =	F
// = N—F	N—F

In the third phase, affinity (=) is the F-term, so it is desirable that it be the F-term in the second phase as well. It is in fact a less close relationship than the two N-terms, lineality (/) and collaterality (//). Naming affinity an F-term in *Andromache* virtually divides the variables of descent into two (lineality and collaterality as near, affinity and strangeness as far). This approach was rejected in this section, but in this case the division was the result of a somewhat

different procedure.

The fully-noted, right-hand columns may now be united. There are three ways that this unification can be brought about. All of them are based on the designation of the rows. The rows may be designated as:

- (1) historical phases, and so maintain the narrative sequence;
- (2) the ordinal position of the phase (i.e., first, second, etc.);
- (3) the relative order of the phase (initial, intermediate, or final).

Relative order of the phases is adopted here because it is in keeping with the principles of the relationship of initial and final position in events, generational direction, and, now, blood variables. Such an order is economical and sensitive to patterns, and assures a full representation of the vital initial and final rows. The use of the ordinal position would have left two dramas (*Iphigenia in Tauris* and Euripides' *Electra*) without entries in the last rows. It is a product of the nature of the House of Atreus that four of the seven dramas consist of three phases. This would give an accidental symmetry to a figure based on ordinal position.

Figure 43 is a unification of the right-hand columns of Figure 42 on the basis of the relative order of the phases. The only feature of this figure which requires comment here is the appearance of but three phases in *The Oresteia*, when there are in fact four. *The Oresteia* is the only drama which has four phases, and the representation of all four would require a row upon which there was only one entry. To avoid this, the third and fourth rows of *The Oresteia* have been united. These are in fact a doubled phase (Vengeance), whose initial and final blood variables are the same (//). These features allow the reduction of the two

phases into one for the sake of economy.

Phase	<i>Orestes</i>	<i>Electra</i> (S)	<i>Iphigenia</i>	<i>Oresteia</i>	<i>Electra</i> (E)	<i>Iphigenia</i>	<i>Andro- mache</i>
Initial	F—N	F—N	F—N	N—F	N	F	F—N
Intermediate	F	F		F—N		F—N	F
Final	N	N—F	F	F	N—F	N—F	N—F

FIGURE 43. Direction of blood variables by phases, complete.

This figure represents the very skeleton of blood variables, yet no clear underlying pattern can be seen. Some features of the blood variables may be noted in the figure. Some of these can be called patterning and some are particular to certain dramas. Dealing with the patterning first, the following observations may be made:

- (1) the first term or only term in an initial phase is the *far* one; and second term is the *near* one (exceptions: the Aeuropean dramas: *The Oresteia*, Euripides' *Electra*);
- (2) the first term or only term in an intermediate phase is again, the *far* one; any second term is, again, the *near* one;
- (3) the first term or only term in a final phase is the *near* one; any second term is the *far* one (exceptions: *The Oresteia* again, and, unpredictably, *Iphigenia in Tauris*).

A composite, hybridized sequence of the direction of blood variables can be constructed out of these features as follows:

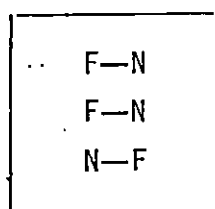


FIGURE 44. An hybrid direction of blood variables, by phase.

Based upon preponderances as it is, and as neglectful as it is of anomalies and absences of entries, it is proper that no drama attests this exact pattern. Of the seven dramas shown in the figure, however, four come very close to it: *Orestes* (F—N, F, N), Sophocles' *Electra*, *Andromache* (F—N, F, N—F), and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (F, F—N, N—F). Each of the other three dramas has at least one phase that matches exactly the corresponding phase of the composite. These similarities may be due to chance, since the number of column terms (four) and row terms (three) is small; they may also be due to the fact that the composite is generated out of attested frequencies and is accordingly dependent upon just what entries occur. Even so, the composite has value as a device for comparison, and as such it can sustain analysis.

The direction of the blood variables in the composite is *inwards* (towards an event involving more closely related agents and patients), *inward* again, and then *outward*. In *The Oresteia*--the most visible anomaly--the pattern is *outward*, *inward*, and then *outward*.

The real difference, then, between *The Oresteia* and the other dramas resides in the initial phase: it is directed inward rather than outward. This is an irony, since *The Oresteia*, as an Aegean drama, begins with a lineal event, whereas all of the others begin with an

affinal or undescended event. The reason for this difference is inherent in the very nature of the final event of the first phase: unless it involves lineals like the first event of the phase, it must by absolute necessity be farther away. As it is, *The Oresteia* attests a direction of blood variables that *alternates*, like the common pattern of generational direction. One representation of this alternation is shown in Figure 45.

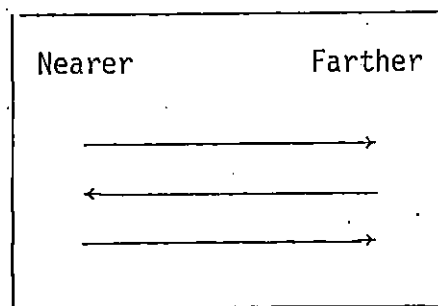


FIGURE 45. Alternating direction of blood variables, by arrows.

This figure, of course, treats the term in a single-term phase as the final one. The composite sequence can be represented by the conventions of Figure 45 as shown in Figure 46.

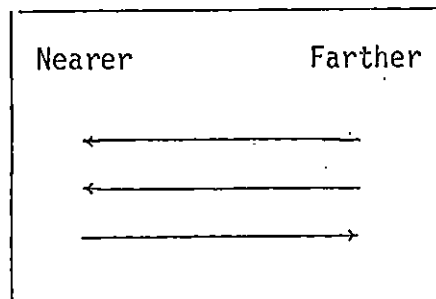


FIGURE 46. Hybrid direction of blood variables, by arrows.

This pattern can be called a *lineal* one, since it changes only once. The

inwardness of the first phase is accentuated and duplicated in the second phase.

Comments upon the strength and authenticity of the patterns of blood variables as analyzed in this section are now best reserved for the summary to follow. Further work upon the data here would augment the growing feeling that such labours are increasingly Procrustean. This is perhaps the proper place to note that the analysis of blood variables here has generated the awareness that affects the detection of any pattern:

*the sooner events involve closely-related agents and patients,
and the more severe and irreversible the nature of these
events, the sooner persons in such close relationships
diminish in number or are eliminated.*

This is simple logistics, but it means that very quickly events *must* move outward, since inwardness is very soon impossible.

Summary

Zeus is the best priest among the gods;
He himself fulfils what he prophesies.

—Archilochos of Paros

Events in the dramatic House of Atreus are now analyzed to the utmost point that the bound of the thesis (and the conscience of the author) will permit. The process of abstraction accelerates on its own momentum until the abstracted object--in this case, the event--becomes unrecognizable. The potency of the event and its descent variables as analytic tools is exhausted, and to analyze them further, as they are

constituted here, crosses the threshold into encipherment. Besides this, the stated aims of the thesis have been met; the patterns of action have been analyzed in terms of variables of descent; variations in these patterns have been noted at various points alongside discussions of the patterns; and the blend of the social sciences and classical studies is embodied in the text itself. But these stated aims are patent. Their achievement was guaranteed by their involvement in the construction of the thesis, and their satisfaction takes the shape of a self-fulfilling prophesy that is within the power of any scholar because of foresight and dynamic hindsight.

Of course, these stated aims are only the uppermost expression of the most basic impulse towards the writing of this thesis. This impulse, or underlying aim can be briefly stated: to apply a rigorous mode of analysis to a great body of creative art so that new understanding may be gained, and in such a way that the mode of analysis may be reproduced and refined by others and the art receive more than appreciation. The success of this thesis depends on whether this underlying aim has been achieved, and the token of this success will be the power of the selected variables of descent--and therefore descent itself--to define and integrate actions and patterns of action in the dramatic House of Atreus. The fulfilment of this aim is a more abstract matter than the enforcement of its means.

The looked-for power of the variables of descent is not of an explanatory nature: I do not propose to create a means for a "Greek-tragedy writing machine" (Roszak 1971:502). At this stage their power is accepted as descriptive and integrative, and their value is as fresh

tools, capable of exact reproduction, and adaptable to various applications. If the procedure that has led up to the analytical sections of this thesis has been rigorous enough, it should now be possible for successors to assume much that I feel could not be assumed before.

The denial of many assumptions about the connections between the legendary figures of Greece, and the repudiation of many approaches to discerning those connections, has caused this thesis to be very long in its unfolding. This lengthiness can be expressed in figurative terms through a metaphor that developed in a discussion of Greek tragedy. Richmond Lattimore, in his introduction to *The Oresteia* (1967:17-20) identifies *entanglement* as a "central motive" of the trilogy. Among the symbols that amplify this entanglement he cites: the curb, the bit, the yoke, the snare. Symbols taken from the natural world include: the coil of the viper, the web of the spider. To the first class of symbols, taken from cultural objects, I would add *the net*. Zeus's net, for example, encircles and brings down Troy (ll. 355-361). But the particular use of the symbol of the net is that as Clytaemnestra's (ll. 1381-1383). Lattimore's assertion about the function of the entangling device carries a warning with it, that the net may not define and distinguish only, but may also bruise and suffocate. The secret is to cast the net properly. The proper cast brings up the entirety of what is desired, that its significance can be determined. If some parts elude the mesh, then the integration of that which remains cannot go forth, but only haruspication. The application of the metaphor to this thesis is obvious. The casting of the net is simply the gathering together of the pertinent data. Better, the casting is itself a putting in motion

of underlying aims, while the net itself consists of the analytic tools that will fulfil those aims. And Lattimore's danger enters when the net is ashore--to continue the metaphor--and analysis begins, because here things can be changed, as Agamemnon was changed in Clytaemnestra's net, and be no longer anything like anything they were before. Any study which attempts to reduce a subject to its constituent elements, and then deal with those elements, faces the increasing risk that the resultant structural figure becomes simply an artifact of analysis itself. The difficulty of reference can cause a very severe dissociation, superbly summarized by John Gardner (1975:239) in *Jason and Medea*:

Old Argus smiled, looked weary, and made a pass with
his hand.

"There are no explanations, only structures," he said.

"A structured clutter of adventures, encounters with
monsters, kings ..."

The least that can be looked for in the present thesis is that the clutter has become structured to such a degree that further work--based on the structuring--is possible. This kind of work depends upon whether this structure can be *reproduced* and *refined*.

The basic unit of study in the formation of the structure--the event--has been closely defined and distinguished from the non-event, or condition. Conditions embody a foremost form of clutter in the study or descent for they are symptoms or effects of events and are more or less autonomous in a narrative sequence. Warned about the clouding nature of conditions, anyone with an interest and a knowledge of descent should be enabled to detect the same events in the same dramas or proper events in other dramas. Systems of descent may vary, but generation and blood variables as components will not. The repetitive and exhaustive treat-

ment of the dramas in this thesis, together with the close definition of the event and the common elements that make up descent, all ensure that the kind of structure presented here is reproducible.

The idea of the refinement of the present structure is subsumed under two subjects to follow. If further work is aimed toward the same field of study--events in Greek drama--then comments upon the success of this study hold immanent suggestions for change and improvement. If the subject of analysis differs from the present one, the idea of refinement can move away from the event itself toward the adaptation of the general structural approach to these other fields. Refinements are then embodied in suggestions for further, wider applications of the present work; these suggestions comprise the final section of the thesis.

Evaluation of Success

As to the success of descent as an integrative tool in the analysis of descent in the House of Atreus, in the first chapter the events and their constituents were identified, in the third chapter they were compiled together, drama by drama, in a series of figures, and, so far, in this last chapter they have been taken apart and treated separately. This is disintegration.

By its very definition, an event is a combination of generation and a blood variable. At first the two were presented separately for the ease of presentation and for the ease of the reader; a double notation is more easily understood than a single one (=/, for example, rather than ≠). Next, these two constituents were found to be qualitatively different as units of analysis. For the idea of generation

embodies the idea of patterned relationship, generations being discrete and constant in their positions. Blood variables represent a relationship only, and then only a relationship between two persons, changeable with respect to others. A key to transform blood variables into patternable variables (i.e., the relative nearness or farness by descent) had to be devised. It was truly fortunate that the two were distinguished at the start. Finally, the result of analysis of generation and blood variables differed radically: generational patterning was shown to be constant throughout the dramas and alike for every drama; blood variables, on the other hand, showed patterns similar to some degree but more particular to groups of two or three dramas. In sum, generation proved to be an entity with three manifestations (upwardness, crossness, downwardness), while blood variables were four separate states, some dependent upon another (lineality and collaterality), some not (collaterality, for example, and affinity).

The reintegration of the constituents of the event is therefore a suspect task, for these constituents are demonstrably unequivalent, even though each is a vital part of the very definition of the event, and a vital element in the idea of descent. But the event cannot be considered an integrative tool unless its components show a degree of *articulation*. To demonstrate how they articulate, it is necessary to return to the point in the present chapter at which events have been analyzed. To return to Lattimore's metaphor of the net, this stage may be equated to the separation of the catch into *subspecies* (dramas concerned with the House of Atreus being the *species*). Three subspecies were determined with the relevant taxonomic feature being the initiatory

event: Hippodamian, Aeropean, and Ledan dramas. Each differed on the actual generation upon which the initial event occurred. The second differed also in the nature of the event, it involved lineals while the other two involved affines (all were alike in being disputes over women). It is reasonable to expect that these subspecies of drama should differ in development and *dénouement*, or at least that the second should differ markedly from the first and third.

If the House of Atreus is thought of as a corporeal entity that exists through time, then the improper devolution of descent shown throughout its generations can be considered as *disease* or discord attacking it. Similarly, the source of the discord may be described as beginning within the body, if it is among lineals, and beginning without, if it is among affines. The successful expulsion of the disease, or the failure to expel it (and so keep it inside the body) represents the fate of the House of Atreus in each of the dramas. The articulation occurs in this way: generation--stated as constant for the dramas--has a cross/ across pattern. When the generation is *across* a phase ends, and a resolution, interim or final, is attained. The *across* event is no less than the point at which the disease is expelled or kept in, depending on the blood variable involved. The notation of relative nearness or far-ness by descent of blood variables (see Figure 43) has this *acrossness* embedded in any second term in a phase, and, from the perspective of the entire drama, in every final phase. Given that generation is constant and may be referred to in this way, it may forego notation and be subsumed with the blood variables.

The three subspecies of drama may now be examined with respect to the articulation they show, and their intra-specific divergencies.

Hippodamian dramas: disease brought within. The three Hippodamian dramas are *Orestes*, Sophocles' *Electra*, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*. In Figure 47 the pattern of their blood variables (and generational pattern, as discussed above) are given as, respectively:

F—N	F	N
F—N	F	N—F
F—N		F

FIGURE 47. Hippodamian dramas: direction of blood variables.

In each case the initial phase shows the fact that an affine is farther away by blood than any member of the House. The notation above, however, is insensitive to the fact that in all three dramas the discord is brought *twice* into the house. This insensitivity is due to the idea of phases being *halved* if there is no cross-generational event. The House's threshold of reaction to discord is, metaphorically, high in these dramas. *Orestes* is distinct among Hippodamian dramas because it shows a failure to expel or subdue the discord within it. In the other dramas the disease is sent outward.

Aeropean dramas: disease from within. *The Oresteia* and Euripides' *Electra* show the distance that results from the lineal initial event (see Figure 48). In both cases the disease is figuratively expelled, even though it involves collaterals in *The Oresteia* and one affinal patient in *Electra*. *Electra*, like *The Oresteia*, would have shown none

<i>The Oresteia</i>	N—F	F—N	F
<i>Electra</i> (E)	N		N—F

FIGURE 48. Aeorean dramas: direction of blood variables.

of the farther blood variables were it not for the decision that at the level of the corporate House the affine of one generation is an affine to all. It must also be recalled here that the attrition of lineals is especially powerful in Aeorean dramas, and that the sending out of discord may be as much an artifact of this attrition as of anything else. In other words, the tendency toward farness shown here is not the expulsion of disease from the House, but its spreading out.

Ledan dramas: discord brought within. Like the Hippodamian dramas, the Ledan dramas show the farness that results from the affinal initial event. *Iphigenia in Aulis* is like *Orestes* in that the disease is kept in, but is different in degree: the disease is also spread in all directions of descent like an epidemic. Again, the notation is insensitive to the fact that the disease is kept in the House in *Iphigenia in Aulis*, for the presence of the farther variables in the final event outweighed the nearer ones in the evaluation of the direction of blood variables.

<i>Iphigenia in Aulis</i>	F	F—N	N—F/N
<i>Andromache</i>	F—N	F	N—F

FIGURE 49. Ledan dramas: direction of blood variables.

These three subspecies of dramas generate two types of response to discord: its expulsion (*Iphigenia in Tauris*, both *Electras*, *Andromache*) or the failure to expel it (*Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*). *The Oresteia*, the type-species for the dramas, is an anomaly, for the notation of the direction of events shows that the discord is expelled while in fact it is kept totally within the House. The obscuring feature is simply the fact that collaterals are farther away than lineals by descent, but are both members of the same House. Only *The Oresteia* displays such a close lineal/collateral emphasis. These responses cross the lines of the subspecies, and allow only one conclusion: that, just as the dramatists were free to choose the initial event, so were they free to bring about the final event, and that these initial and final events are not necessarily dependent upon one another. Indeed, if the two events were dependent, then there would be only one version of the story of the House and dramatic purpose would be ornamental only. It would have to involve the luxurious embellishment of conditions, not events.

This independence of initial and final events raises a vital question about this analysis: when the patterning of generation and blood variables is attested to whatever degree, is this patterning a function of the thought of the literate creative artist or a relic--more or less intact or convoluted--of a formerly more structured legend? Under the light of this question, the lack of emphatic overall patterns of descent can be interpreted as support either way: a lack of pattern because of decay of the original source, or a lack of pattern because of varied artistic aims. The answer to this question is of the utmost importance regarding the ultimate value of descent as an effective

variable in the analysis of Greek drama. However, the author is not in a position to make a judgement upon it, but he has perhaps put enough information forward that at least the question can be identified.

By way of summing up the work on the articulation of blood variables and generation above, Figure 50 is presented. The figure is designed to show how the initial and final phases of the dramas appear to be independent of one another, since initial events must be distinguished from one another by type and final events by nature.

Provenance of Discord	Phase		
	Initial	Final	
		Discord Expelled	Discord Kept In
From Within	N—F, F	F—N, N	N—F, F
From Without	F—N		

FIGURE 50. Standard patterns of variables of descent according to *dénouement* of drama.

Suggestions for Further Research

Over and again this thesis has been described as a preliminary attempt to evaluate much-studied sources in light of new variables and a rigorous approach. These preliminaries now being complete, there remains to suggest some of the avenues of research that have had a founding here. A convenient way to organize these avenues, or options, is simply to examine the title of the thesis, "The House of Atreus: A Model for the Analysis of Descent in Greek Tragedy." The two largest

components recall the two major features of works of art that were noted much earlier in the text as being poorly resolved in many other analytic works: *Greekness* and *trans-cultural elements*.

Greekness, of course, resides in "the House of Atreus" and "tragedy." The House of Atreus has barely begun to be examined here. The foci of this study were the dramas that dealt primarily with the troubles of the House, with a brief survey of the House in other genres for comparison. While this left most names noted and many relationships-by-descent identified, a very great deal had to be left aside. The connections of the gods to one another and to their mortal descendants were expressly excluded. These systems of descent can be extremely interesting in a genealogical sense, for example, since human lines traced to a single god may imply a perceived ethnic identity (and thereby ethnic history), or enduring or transitory political alliance. Or they may, in their improper events, provide parallels to human events: the overthrow of Uranos, for example, or the dispossession of the Eumenides. The gods, being deathless, may confound the idea of generation, but elder/younger relationships could be established among the gods at least. Insurmountable obstacles occur, however, with respect to the concordance of the "age" of the gods and their mortal descendants. And certain anomalies in mortal descent are not unheard of among the gods: lineal and generational "incest," asexual birth, or even autochthony. The ascription of blood relationships among pairs of gods may therefore be as difficult as the assignment of generation.

The relationships of the House of Atreus as it is delineated here to other like-outlined Houses is on a mortal basis, and so there is no

confusion of the ideas of generation and blood relations. The analysis of these relations can readily be translated into the type of model conceived here. Such connections will, of course, be primarily affinal, and an analysis of them can be described as that of marriage patterns. The Houses of Priam and of Peleus have shown emphatic marital links--or at least "woman links"--with the House of Atreus, and any analysis may reveal other closely-tied Houses as well. A model for integrating such complex affinal ties would require a more reflexive notation than the present one. This becomes apparent through a few examples. Consider first the children of Pylades and Electra (Figure 51):

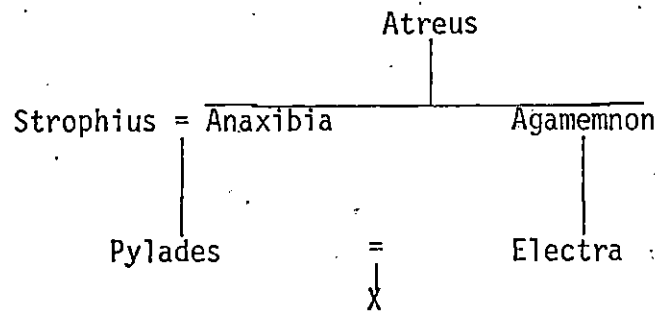


FIGURE 51. The children of Pylades and Electra.

Strophius is a collateral of Peleus through a second wife of Peleus' father (Barthell 1971:258). Both father and grandfather are of the House of Peleus, and both mother and grandmother are of the House of Atreus. The children of Andromache by her various husbands and masters are ranged in different relationships to their fathers' Houses than are the children of Pylades and Electra (Figure 52). Andromache might be an autochthon from the standpoint of the affinal Houses, except that her first and last husbands were full brothers, all her children would be

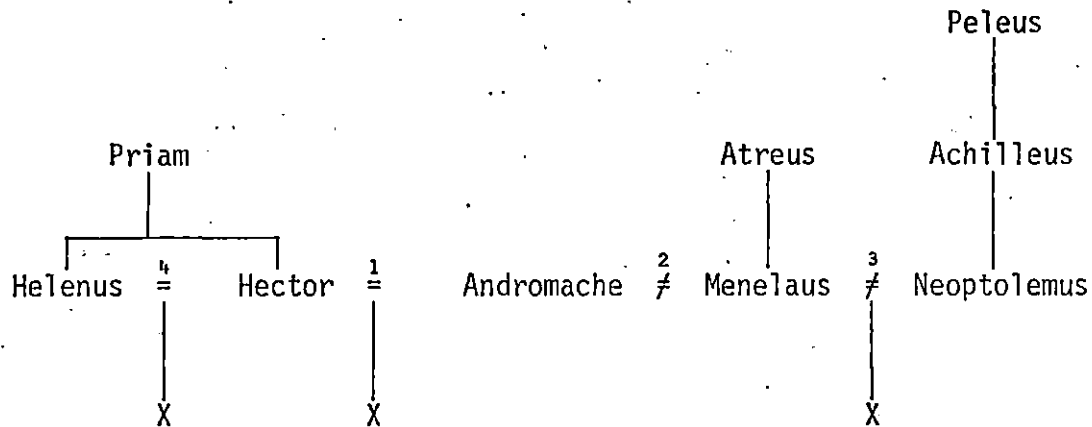


FIGURE 52. The children of Andromache.

denied half of the affinal range, and they would not be connected to each other. Any model of descent designed to tie the Houses together will have to take into account the *amplitude* of such ties for members of every generation, as in the case of the children of Pylades and Electra, and the *kind* of tie, so different for those children and the children of Andromache.

The model as it stands may be applied to other Greek dramas. This application serves as a cross-check of the model and as a test of the power of descent as an idea or theme *in* Greek drama. It is important to note that these other dramas are episodic, or of shallow generational depth, and are not closely related to one another through their principal actors. These are among the criteria that limited this thesis to the House of Atreus. Four dramas are given brief mention here: Euripides' *Medea*, *Alcestis*, and *Hecuba* and Sophocles' *Ajax*. All four are concerned with the improper devolution of descent, and all attest potential or de facto disinheritance of a lineage. In all but *Hecuba* this disinheritance is brought about from within.

Ajax' proposed suicide will disinherit his own son (ll. 510-513). Ajax' father will disinherit his half-brother, Teucer, for his failure to prevent the death (ll. 1004-1020). Both events may be noted as: / \downarrow . Telamon, the father, is Peleus' brother, and his legal wife is Periboea, of the House of Atreus.

Medea has disinherited herself by betraying her father and killing her brother. Jason, in turn, displaces her by taking a new wife, and she displaces him by killing her sons: "sterile were the pains I had in the bearing of you" (l. 1030). The two events in the course of the drama are affinal ones (again, with the wife as an affine to her children): $=\rightarrow$, $=\downarrow$.

Pheres, though ancient and beyond hope of having more children (l. 280), will not give up his life to save that of his sons. It remains for an affine, Alcestis, the son Admetus' wife, to perform this duty of a member of the House. Alcestis' action is the reverse of Medea's; the improper action is that of Pheres: / \downarrow .

The "only surviving child" of Priam and Hecuba is killed by his entrusted guardian for money. Hecuba in turn kills the guardian's sons and blinds the guardian himself, apparently preventing him from having more heirs. Superficially, the events here are between strangers: # $\rightarrow\downarrow$, # $\downarrow\rightarrow$. However, the seeds of these events can be traced all the way back to the rape of Helen by Paris, another son of Hecuba. No doubt, a connection, probably affinal, could be made between Priam and this guardian through a close inspection of their descent.

In these last three dramas by Euripides, affinal women disinherit, "reinherit," and exact vengeance for the disinheritance of their

husbands' lineages. In *Ajax* the men of the lineage are about to disinherit themselves. Even though these dramas all show events, they show too few for the construction of a model. An analysis of all of the Greek dramas using the event as the analytic tool could be fruitful in establishing the kinds and frequencies of events that are shown, and the types of responses and resolutions that occur.

Trans-Cultural Elements

The idea of the translation of information from one form (myth or legend) into another (drama) was implicit in the establishment of the composite list of events (see p. 102), and the comparison of this list to that compiled for the dramas (see p. 128 ff): These myths were Mycenaean and later Greek, and the dramas were wholly Greek. The two were separated at most by eight centuries. It should be informative to examine all non-Greek works that deal with the House of Atreus in a creative way. Such works could include the Roman Seneca's *Thyestes*, Strauss's opera *Electra*, Treece's *Electra*, parts of Goethe's *Faust*, Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris* (after Racine), even Erskine's *Private Life of Helen of Troy*, and perhaps even *Hamlet* (with Hamlet as Orestes, Ophelia as Hermione, Claudius as Aegisthus, and Gertrude as a mild Clytaemnestra). No later work need be excluded because of tone or the competency of its author, for the application of the model to such works will only show the higher degree to which descent is accented in the original dramas.

Away from the House of Atreus, the model can have other applications to sources of drama and legend taken from the ethnographic sources.

Provided that a lineal rule of descent is in effect a great many sagas, dynastic histories, and cautionary tales should be conducive to analysis by some form of the model. In a *societas* society, descent groups are more or less equivalent to political groups. The most immediate manifestation of this fact that comes to mind with respect to this model is the fission of certain African tribal groups along collateral lines, with an attendant attention to genealogical lines of fracture. Such fractures are commonly accompanied by claims of witchcraft: A claim of witchcraft in such a case bears analogy to an event.

There is a final suggestion I can make for further study. Descent may not need ultimately to mean relationships in blood alone. Metaphorically, descent may be equated with civic and state affairs, that is, the relationships between persons may be taken as the relationship between groups of people not necessarily closely associated by blood. This is to be expected in *civitas* type societies, where political groups may cross lines of descent or be to some degree independent of them. Two examples from the dramas of the House of Atreus may be given here. In *Andromache*, the possession of two wives is compared, with its attendant disputes over inheritance, to a committee-run state (l. 465-478). In *The Oresteia*, the inward events of the House are explicitly compared to civil war (ll. 976-987). The analogy is apparent: lineals are members of the political group, affines are members of other such groups.

FOOTNOTES

¹This assurance that I note in Aeschylus is accorded to Sophocles as well as by Werner Jaeger (1939:271, 331):

The unity of the Athenian nation and the Athenian state, overarched, as it were, by the spiritual cosmos of Aeschylean tragedy, and won with such toil in the Persian Wars, prepared the ground for a new national culture transcending all enmities the contrasts between the aristocratic civilization and the life of the common people. The happiness of the generation which on that ground built up the Periclean state and Periclean culture is strangely imaged in the life of Sophocles. . . .

The age of Euripides was characterized by a calculating business-like, profit-and-loss way of looking at everything from the smallest detail of private life to the greatest political problem.

²Another way of looking at the mode of tune in myths was put forward by John Ruskin (1869:31-32) in a rather less anthropological manner than that of Lévi-Strauss:

The first requirement, then, for the right reading of myths, is the understanding of the nature of all true vision by noble persons; namely, that it is founded on constant laws common to all human nature; that it perceives, however darkly, things which are for all ages true; that we can only understand it so far as we have some perception of the same truth; and that its fullness is developed and manifested more and more by the reverberation of it from minds of the same mirror-temper. . . .

³Another example of the flexibility of the connections between legendary and mythological figures is recorded by Pausanias (2.26.3):

Epidaurus, from whom the country got its name, was a son of Pelops, according to the Eleans; but according to the Argives . . . the father of Epidaurus was Argos, the son of Zeus. But the Epidaurians father Epidaurus upon Apollo.

Each of these three peoples were apparently attempting to graft the people of Epidaurus onto their own genealogy. In *Iphigenia in Tauris* (ll. 387-390), Euripides shows that not only descent could be adjusted to suit the notions of a people, but also attributes to suit a people's character:

O Artemis,
 These people, being murderers themselves,
 Are charging Thee with their own wickedness.

⁴The word is taken from Joseph Campbell (1968:6-7). The fuller context is as follows (emphasis mine):

Creative mythology . . . springs not like theology, from the authority of dicta, but from the insights, sentiments, thought, and vision of an *adequate* individual, loyal to his own experience of value. Thus it corrects the authority holding to the *shells of forms* produced and left behind by lives once lived.

⁵The following is more in keeping with our own social system. It is taken from Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1608), Act I, Scene i, ll. 100-103. Here Cordelia, Lear's daughter, is speaking:

Happily, when I shall wed,
 That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry
 Half my love with him, half my care and duty:
 Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
 To love my father all.

⁶Credit for the use of this word in the sense of "academic ventriloquism" is accorded to Denys Page (1972).

⁷The raising of a generation is given the character of Acreme by Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act I, Scene iii. Ulysses describes the disorder of the army (ll. 75-137):

Great Agamemnon,
 This chaos, when degree is suffocate,
 Follows the choking.

⁸One drama that does meet this primary requirement but is not included here is the *Thyestes* of the Roman Seneca. While this drama deals with events that are only mentioned in the extant Greek dramas, and while the type of analysis employed here gives very interesting results, *Thyestes* is too far separated from the other dramas both chronologically and culturally to be put alongside them.

⁹As an example of the confusion that results from attempting to include too much information in a stem chart, I offer the entry of just one person in a chart. (see page following).

Yaroslav I (after Cross & Shebowitz-Wetzor, 1953)

Yaroslav I, The Wise

Gr. Pr. of Kiev 1019-1054
 *978 + 19 - ii - 1054. XI. N.N.;
 2. 1019 Ingigerd, d. of Olaf,
 King of Sweden,
 + 10 - ii - 1050

¹⁰The two other columns--"the autochthonous origin of man" and "the denial of autochthonous origin"--are, of course, also related to descent (or, rather, non-descent). However, this may be held as true only on the level of the column, since Lévi-Strauss' entries within the columns cannot qualify as events. Some entries do not include actors related by descent (Cadmos:Dragon, Oedipus:Sphinx); the others are not actions at all but rather states of existence ("lame," "left-sided," "swollen").

¹¹The recognition scenes forced by Aegisthus are between Electra and Orestes (*Libation Bearers*, ll. 166-230; Euripides' *Electra*, ll. 215-578; and Sophocles' *Electra*, ll. 1098-1229). Other actions related to the Trojan War necessitate recognition scenes between Orestes and Iphigenia (*Iphigenia in Tauris*, ll. 471-830), and between Orestes and Menelaus (*Orestes*, ll. 375-379).

¹²Childlessness may become an event if a parent divests himself of his children. This is so in the case of Medea, who kills her children by Jason. Medea's sardonic remark in Euripides' *Medea* (l. 1031) may be taken to be made from the opposite view from that of Electra and Hermione: "sterile they were, those pains I had in the bearing of you."

¹³The process of defining and identifying events is almost prophetically stated in the unlikely works of Conan Doyle (1930:241):

"The principal difficulty in your case," remarked Holmes in his didactic fashion, "lay in the fact of there being too much evidence. What was vital was overlaid and hidden by what was irrelevant. Of all the facts that were presented to us we had to pick just those which we deemed to be essential, and then piece them together in their order, so as to reconstruct this very remarkable chain of events."

¹⁴Taken from "Of the Origin of Homer and Hesiod, and of Their Contest," in H. G. Evelyn-White, translator (1943:567). The author is unknown. In his introduction, the translator suggests (1943:xli) that it was written "shortly after the death of Hadrian" (c.100 A.D.), and that it was based on the much earlier version of one Alcidamas (c.400 B.C.).

¹⁵Specifically, this action was the attempt by Clytaemnestra to kill Cassandra, Agamemnon's new concubine. Aegisthus was, presumably, responsible for Agamemnon. A similar occurrence is attested in *Andromache*: Menelaus wishes to kill Andromache, and Hermione wants to kill Andromache's son "by a special vote" (ll. 515-518). In both cases the woman wants to destroy the person who embodies the disinheritance of her own children. In Hermione's case it is the son of a fertile concubine. In Clytaemnestra's case it is a concubine, who may bear such sons; Agamemnon is on record (*Iliad*, ll. 111-114) as preferring a concubine to Clytaemnestra.

¹⁶Just as the closeness of blood relationships can be put in a relative order, so can generational direction. If it were a purpose of the present thesis to evaluate the severity of a certain kind of event against that of another towards the *damage to the continuity of a lineage*, then the rank order--most damaging to least damaging--of generational direction would be:

- (1) ↓ because it may imply the extinction of the lineage if the senior generation is beyond childbearing;
- (2) → because it implies the survival of at least one member of that generation; and
- (3) † because it implies the survival of the junior generation.

The rank order of blood variables remains as in the section on patterns of blood variables (p. 147 ff): (1) lineals; (2) collaterals; (3) affines; and (4) strangers. Thus the most severe and damaging event, potentially at least and disregarding all circumstances but those of descent, is /†. The least severe and least damaging event is #†.

GLOSSARY

The purposes of the glossary are to introduce the anthropological terms used in the text to those who are not familiar with them, and to make plain to those who are familiar with them just what the usages are. These terms are also defined the first time they occur in the text.

- Affinity:** a variable of descent (q.v.)
- Blood variables:** a group of variables of descent (q.v.)
- Collaterality:** a variable of descent (q.v.)
- Condition:** a state resulting from an event (q.v.), but not satisfying the definition of an event
- Descent (System of):** the connection by a specified link or series of links of a person or group(s) of people *to an ancestor*; in the dramas under study, kinship adequately includes all of the actors in the dramas, but descent includes their forebears as well--back nine generations to Tantalus, the son of Zeus and Aegina
- Event:** a discrete action which violates the proper devolution of descent within the House of Atreus (for a full definition, see p. 59)
- Generation:** a variable of descent (q.v.)
- House of Atreus:** the name (chosen because it is well-known) for the total number of persons connected to Tantalus, son of Zeus and Aegina, by the direct male line; as noted in the text, the full House consists of nine generations, but in the dramas no more than three or four generations are mentioned and no more than two have actors: the dramatic Houses of Atreus are therefore only segments of the entire House
- Kinship:** a recognized and effective connection--a state--whether by blood or not (but by no other criterion than people themselves) by which people consider themselves related to one another; kinship is commonly thought of as a relationship between living people
- Lineality:** a variable of descent (q.v.)

- Model:** a notation in symbols of the pertinent variables of descent in an event or a sequence of events
- Patriliney:** a type of unilineal descent (q.v.)
- Phase:** a discrete sequence of events within a drama which has both narrative sense and a patterning of variables of descent

Stem charts and conventions: a figurative and economical method of illustrating connections of descent (or kinship). A chart may show as many or as few generations as are required, and may or may not go so far as to include the ancestor. Each chart may be thought of as consisting of three types of relationships:

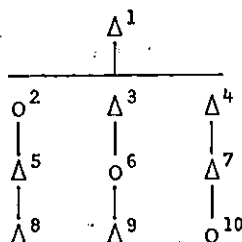
- (1) mating man and woman (noted as = if proper, ≠ if improper, ≐ if a second or temporary union)
- (2) father and child(ren) (noted by a vertical line)
- (3) siblings (noted by a horizontal line)

These three relationships show two generations. The descent group may be deepened and/or broadened by adding, for example, father's father, father's siblings, father's brother's son's children, and so on. In the present work, a member of the House of Atreus is signified on stem charts by the first three letters of his name: AGA is Agamemnon, and ELE is Electra.

Symbols of variables of descent: see separate entries under *variables of descent*

Undescendence: a variable of descent (q.v.)

Unilineal descent (i.e., patriliney): the connection between a person and an ancestor through persons of one sex (in this case, male). An example (with o denoting females, Δ, males):



By the patrilineal rule of descent, 10 is a descendant of 1, but 5, 8, 9 are not, since there are females in their line to him.

In the present work the Greeks are regarded as rigorously patrilineal for the sake of clarity and simpli-

city. This does them little violence. The actual system of descent is in dispute (Gates 1967)

Variables of descent: the different types of connections between persons in terms of their membership in a specified line of descent.

(1) generation: the succession of generations requires no explanation; it need only be noted that there are only three relationships that generations may have to one another: senior or junior, whether adjacent or not, or the same. In the text, the notation of generation in the models is as follows:

- ↓ patient of a junior generation
- ↑ patient of a senior generation
- agent and patient of same generation

(2) blood variables:

- (a) lineality: lineals are those who have the same father; among their lineals are father's father and their own children and son's children, etc. In the text, the notation of lineality is: /
- (b) collaterality: collaterals are sets of lineals each of which can be traced back to different brothers at a certain generation of the descent group. On the stem chart above, 3 and 6 (but not 9), and 4, 7, and 10 comprise two collateral lines. In the text, collaterality is noted as: //
- (c) affinity: affines are those in a marital relationship to the unilineal house; their number includes any wife who is not a member of her husband's descent group, together with all her descent group. In the text, the notation of affinity is: ==
- (d) undescendence: undescendants are those actors in the dramas who are expressly stated as outside of the descent group or any affinal group. Explicit note is required since any legendary Greek could probably be connected to any other with enough genealogical research. In the text, undescendence is noted as: #

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