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Abstract

ORESTES AND REDEMPTION IN TWO DIFFERENT AGES

by

Kevin Lantry

In the attempt to ascertain man's changes in world view, the Orestes stories of the Greek tragedians were compared with the Orestes stories of six 20th-century playwrights. The Orestes plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides were contrasted with the similar plays of Hofmannstahl, Jeffers, O'Neill, Giraudoux, Eliot, and Sartre. The Greek tragedians appear to terminate Orestes' retribution for inherited evil and a just crime by an actual, total, restorative redemption, divinely instigated. The 20th-century playwrights portray only the potential termination of Orestes' retribution in a distant future, by means of a salvation that is self-instigated, costly, and completely non-restorative. This change is due, in part, to the disparity of the causes of justice and self-interest in the 20th century, while they were complementary in the 5th century B. C. More importantly, this change is due to the disappearance of the Greeks' benevolent, transcendent deities

in the 20th century, while the spirit of retribution holds sway. Redemption is no longer bestowed by gods who can restore the past, man must save himself in the future.

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

Graduate School

ORESTES AND REDEMPTION IN TWO DIFFERENT AGES

by

Kevin Lantry

A Manuscript Submitted by Kevin Lantry
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in English

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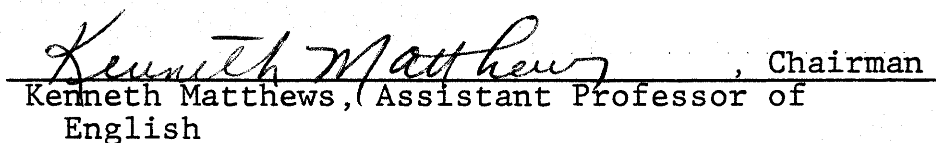
Each person whose signature appears below certifies that this manuscript in his/her opinion is adequate, in scope and quality, in lieu of a thesis for the degree Master of Arts.



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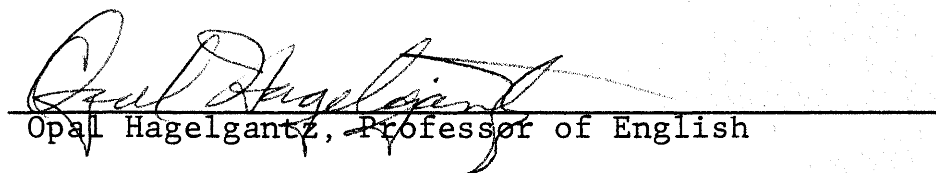

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During the first half of this century, the Orestes-Electra story received dramatic attention unequaled since the Greek tragedians. In _The Theatre in Our Times_ John Gassner noted, "Whenever a playwright has had particularly strong designs on fame, he exhumes the Electra theme of classic antiquity and makes something more or less of it."[1]

Perhaps the first world war and the signs of the second re-awakened man's awareness to the problem of evil. Maybe the loss of religious faith magnified the need for redemption, since it was no longer available in the hereafter. But for whatever reason, the first part of the 20th century seemed obsessed with the Orestes-Electra story. As the 20th century and its playwrights came of age, this story, with its issue of inherited evil and a just crime being punished and/or redeemed, seemed to provide a proving ground on which the modern consciousness could test its footing. The 20th century faced a universe that no longer had a heaven full of transcendent deities, a history that no longer could be stopped and restored, and a humanity that no longer believed in a redemption which could reinstate the past as if evil had never occurred. The Orestes-Electra legend, despite having retained its basic form for nearly 25 centuries, was ripe for metamorphosis. Instead of ending Orestes' retribution with a divinely bestowed, restoratively complete redemption as the Greeks had done, the 20th-century

playwrights left Orestes to work out his own salvation--a salvation to be made in the future rather than a redemption to be restored from the past. Though this salvation was less certain and less complete, it more realistically corresponded to the 20th-century world view and thus represented a courageous attempt to hang on to the viable remainder of the Greek tragedians' redemption.

Orestes, whether he was of the 5th century B. C. or the 20th century A. D., inherited a long ancestry of evil. The gods had been against his family ever since Orestes' great-great grandfather, Tantalus, had arrogantly and maliciously fed them his son. Orestes' grandfather, Atreus, had inherited and propagated the curse when he revenged his wife's affair with his brother Thyestes by deceptively feeding Thyestes' children to him at a banquet. Orestes' proud father, Agamemnon, continued the evil tradition, sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia in hopes of manipulating Artemis into giving him favorable winds on his campaign to Troy. In revenge, Orestes' mother, Clytemnestra, and her lover, Aegisthus (a surviving son of Thyestes) murdered Agamemnon upon his victorious return from Troy. Now Orestes faced the haunting decision of whether to betray his father or kill his mother. Though the murder of his father had not been without reason, it could not go unavenged. Knowing the inevitable consequences of matricide, Orestes ultimately

decided to exact vengeance, and just as he had anticipated, after killing his mother and Aegisthus, the penalty descended upon him: Orestes was driven from his rightful palace by the merciless Erinyes. But whether this retribution was short or long, whether it ended in redemption or did not end at all, depends on whether the story was told in the 5th or 20th century. In the 5th century, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides redeemed Orestes after a finite period of retribution, restoring him to his rightful throne and to happiness ever after.

Although Aeschylus had habitually visited the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation, his _Oresteia_ marks a striking divergence from his earlier attitudes regarding the relations of gods and men.[2] In contrast to the ending in _Seven Against Thebes_ where the chorus sang of the Erinyes' triumph--"the Goddess, unlike all other Gods, who compasses destruction of the house, utterly unforgetting, prophet of ill"[3]--the _Oresteia_ draws to a close with the Erinyes singing of a quite different triumph: "Gods of the younger generation, you have ridden down the laws of the elder time, torn them out of my hands."[4]

Rather than leaving Orestes to be forever tortured by the merciless Erinyes, whose crude, primeval vengeance cared nothing about motives or innocence but only about the natural law where "blood calls for blood,"[5] the younger

Olympian gods intervened behind a thin veil of Athenian democratic justice, and released Orestes from punishment. Not only was he redeemed from retribution for the matricide Apollo forced him to commit, but the entire family curse was annulled, and the daughter of Zeus "restored a house entire" (Eum., l. 751). Moreover, the world was righted on a cosmic scale: Athene changed the Erinyes into the Eumenides, making the exactors of justice benevolent rather than vindictive.

Orestes and the house of Atreus end up every bit as well in Sophocles' account of the story, Electra, but the happy ending is much less dramatic. Since the matricide of Sophocles' Orestes bears the approval of both Apollo and the Erinyes, Orestes, as the agent of pure justice rather than the executioner of just evil, faces no retribution and needs no redemption. Furthermore, the play bears little impression of brooding, genetic evil, growing from generation to generation. Evil seems restricted primarily to Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, with the chorus articulating the theme, "It is not long till sin brings sorrow."[6] The familial expiation that the chorus attributes to Orestes' act--"O house of Atreus, through how many sufferings hast thou come forth at last in freedom" (El., ll. 1508-1509)--is brought about without difficulty. Sophocles ends the story with complete redemption for the house of Atreus without ever

subjecting Orestes to retribution.

Euripides' three plays dealing with the Orestes story mark a return to the problem of retribution, though they still manage to end with redemption.[7] The suspicion that "some God is visiting ancestral sin on the house" (IT, l. 998) haunts each play from the past, while in the present, Orestes faces or has faced the problem that Apollo "said to kill my mother, whom I must not kill" (El., l. 973). This dichotomy of "right and wrong confounded in a single act" (Or., l. 193) means that the Erinyes and retribution inevitably follow the matricide. But even though Euripides' gods are not honored with the pious awe that Aeschylus' deities receive, they ultimately redeem Orestes and the house of Atreus by their characteristic deux ex machina, and Euripides' doubting characters end with the conclusion that "by all signs, the Gods are on our side" (IT, l. 1011). Euripides consistently terminates the retribution, and though not as simple as Aeschylus', his redemption is every bit as complete.

In Electra, which was probably written first,[8] the matricide is followed by a theophany of the Dioscuri, who prophesy that after "the dreadful beast-faced goddesses of destiny" would pursue Orestes "through maddened wandering" (El., ll. 1252-1253), he would be acquitted at a murder in Athens. Orestes would thereby be freed from the Erinyes,

Electra would proceed to marry his best friend, and he would resume his role as ruler of a new city. But according to Euripides' next account, Iphigenia at Tauris, the Athenian atonement prophesied in Electra had not terminated the Erinyes' tortures. In order to further expiate himself and his family, Orestes was commanded by Apollo to steal the statue of Artemis from the temple at Tauris and bring it back to the land of Attica. While in Tauris, Orestes found his sister Iphigenia, whom the gods had rescued from the altar on which Agamemnon had supposedly sacrificed her many years before. Though their escape with the statue almost fails, divine intervention gets them safely back to Argos. In this way, Euripides does Aeschylus' redemption one better, for not only does he redeem Orestes from the Erinyes and restore him to his throne, but rather than merely expiating the house of Atreus, he restores it completely by bringing Iphigenia back from virtual death.

Euripides' last Orestes play, Orestes, deals with the period between the two preceding plays. Orestes, who suffers periodic attacks of insanity (i.e. the Erinyes), has been judged guilty of matricide by the assembly of Argos and sentenced to death. After he unsuccessfully attempts to save his and Electra's lives through persuasion, coercion, and arson, Apollo intervenes with the command and prophecy that Orestes must be exiled for a year, after which he will

be acquitted in Athens, and then will return to Argos as king. Even though the gods are forced to by-pass the democratic justice they had instigated in Aeschylus' Oresteia because the twelve serene jurors have been replaced by a howling mob, the gods manage to completely redeem Orestes and the house of Atreus, leaving them to live happily ever after. Despite Euripides' less than optimistic world view, he still seems willing to risk his dramatic unity to maintain an even more fundamental world view--the notion of a complete restorative redemption, divinely ordained.

The story of Orestes, as told by the Greek tragedians, can thus be seen as one of expiation and redemption. Though Sophocles redeems the house of Atreus by simplistically avoiding the problem of retribution, the other two tragedians bring off their happy endings by re-shuffling the entire pantheon. Rather than leaving the Erinyes to wield their sword of vengeance forever, Aeschylus' Oresteia marks the point at which the younger Olympian gods executed their coup d'etat on the older Titanian regime, substituting complete redemption for what would have been Orestes' destiny of retribution. And even though Euripides' plays imply that the Olympians may have degenerated or perhaps not have completely overthrown the Erinyes, Euripides' gods still manage to control a chaotic and unkindly universe long enough to bring about a redemption equal to that of

Aeschylus. To this extent, these Greek tragedians produced a world where retribution for a just crime and a family's inherited evil could be completely reversed and the innocent parties could be redeemed and restored to a condition which would have been rightfully theirs if the crime and familial curse had never occurred.

During the 25 centuries that have ensued, it is evident that the tragedians' model of redemption, with the assistance of Christianity, has had time to solidify into myth. But perhaps as early as Shakespeare's Hamlet and certainly by the time of Voltaire's Oreste,[9] man's faith in the world view and mythos of complete restorative redemption was waning. During the first half of the 20th century, at least six major playwrights challenged the tragedians' notions of complete redemption with another interpretation of the Orestes story.

In 1904, Hugo Hofmannstahl published his rendition of the Orestes story, Electra. Hofmannstahl's play adheres rather closely to Sophocles' version except for a significant alteration in the ending. While in Sophocles, a concluding choral song proclaiming redemption for the house of Atreus comes immediately after the murder of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, Hofmannstahl follows the murders with Electra collapsing rigid and lifeless from a dance of triumph, as Orestes, who had gone into the house to execute the

murderers of Agamemnon, responds to his younger sister Chrysothemis' impassioned calls with the stage direction, "Silence." So ends the play. The meaning of the ending has little ambiguity, for throughout the play the house symbolized the family's millstone of inherited evil. During one scene Chrysothemis had begged Electra to "help us get away from this house, set us free," and then a bit later, "Oh, take me away! I die in this house!"[10] But Electra's sense of justice compelled her to avenge the evil committed against the house, thereby destroying what was left of the family by means of the same deed which, in Sophocles story, had saved the family.

The major portion of Robinson Jeffers' dramatic poem _The Tower Beyond Tragedy_, 1925, corresponds roughly to the first two plays in Aeschylus' _Oresteia_, except for another deviation in the ending. Though the matricide in Jeffers' poem was "openly commanded" by "a God in his temple,"[11] no gods appear at the end to offer a restorative redemption. Rather, after killing his mother, Orestes leaves the palace as "the madness of the house perches on him" (p. 70). During the night Orestes experiences a vision in which he sees all humanity fatally entangled in an incestuous inward turning. He decides, like Cassandra, to "cut humanity out of my being, that is the wound that festers in me" (p. 54). So he returns to the palace, abdicates his throne, declines

the incestuous offers of his sister, and rather than "waste inward upon humanity" (p. 80), he walks off in the light of dawn toward the mountains and into the pleroma of pantheistic mysticism.

In spite of Jeffers' Orestes escaping the madness of inherited evil, he does not expiate the house of Atreus or his sister, who after his departure re-enters the ancient house, presumably to hang herself. Jeffers' Orestes leaves his fellow men to cure the disease of being human on their own, for he has his own redemption to tend to. The redemption that Orestes achieves is complete, in spite of being in the opposite direction of a reparation of the past. Orestes is entirely free from any retribution for the matricide, for things past "have no power, they have become nothing at all" (p. 80). Redemption, rather than being a return to what would have been if evil had not occurred, is an annihilation of the entire past, including one's humanity. What is left after that is, in the words of Orestes to the unenlightened Electra, "out of the order of your mind" (p. 81).

The first two plays of Eugene O'Neill's trilogy _Mourning Becomes Electra_, 1931, follow Aeschylus' _Oresteia_ despite their being recast in puritan New England at the close of the Civil War. However, in the third play, O'Neill has Orin and Lavinia, the Orestes and Electra figures, unsuccessfully attempting to escape from the guilt

of their mother's death by traveling to the South Sea Islands. Ultimately they return home, whereupon Orin writes out the family's story of iniquity, after which he escapes guilt through suicide. Lavinia responds to her guilt by locking herself and Orin's manuscript forever in the Mannon mansion, which has appeared throughout the plays as a whited sepulcher. Thus expiation and redemption, either for just crimes or inherited evil, do not occur in any form in O'Neill's Orestes story. O'Neill's naturalism produces nothing but the austere, unremitting retribution of pure justice. In the words of Orin, just before he commits suicide, "The only love I can know now is the love of guilt for guilt which breeds more guilt--until you get so deep at the bottom of hell there is no lower you can sink and you rest there in peace!"[12]

Jean Giraudoux's account of the Orestes story, Electra, published in 1937, bears most resemblance to Euripides' Electra, again with the exception of a typically 20th-century alteration of the ending. In the midst of a Corinthian invasion, Orestes and Electra idealistically exact justice, killing the able statesman Aegisthus along with Clytemnestra. In this way they sacrifice the entire city, along with their throne and future, rather than maintain a nation by ignoring the sins of the past. The play ends with the furies, who have assumed the shape of Electra,

driving Orestes away toward insanity and ultimate suicide, while Electra and some beggars watch as dawn breaks over the smoldering corpse of the city. Redemption does not occur for Orestes, the house of Atreus, or even the city of Argos. And yet, "when the city is in flames, when all is lost, when the innocent are killing each other,"[13] the guilty can be seen dying in the morning light, and the phenomena of expiation and dawn occur. Giraudoux's redemption, what little there is of it, is like Jeffers', in that it does not restore a lost ideal state in the past, yet different, in that redemption results from a retributive annihilation of the past, not a denial of the past. But what actually comes about as a result of this redemptive expiation is not revealed.

T. S. Eliot's The Family Reunion, 1939, marks a novel divergence from the traditional Orestes story as told by the Greek tragedians. Lord Harry Monchensey, the Orestes figure, has spent the past eight years wandering the world in an attempt to come to grips with his guilt for having pushed (or at least wanting to push) his wife overboard to her death. On the night in which the play occurs, Harry returns to his childhood home, Wishwood, still struggling with his burden of guilt. While there he discovers that his father, also for purposes of self-preservation, had attempted to rid himself of his wife too. Though he knows his immediate

departure will kill his aged mother, who wants to control his life as she had his father's, this information helps him decide to follow the Eumenides and accept his destiny as expiator of his and his father's murderous, though just, intentions regarding their wives. The play ends with Harry's mother dying of a heart attack when he leaves, while his aunt and cousin proclaim Harry's pilgrimage to be for his "own redemption and that of the departed."[14]

Although Harry leaves his home with both the Eumenides and the potential for additional guilt from the death of his mother, the Eumenides, as their name suggests, are agents of redemption as well as retribution. Harry's family, with the possible exception of his aunt and cousin, are likely to continue to bear their inheritance of evil as they cry, "We have lost our way in the dark" (p. 121), but Harry is on a journey toward expiation of both his just crime and his inherited evil. In this way, Eliot's redemption is more like that of Jeffers and Giraudoux than the Greek tragedians. In spite of telling his family "Goodbye, until we meet again" (p. 117), Harry knows that he will never return to his inherited position as Master of Wishwood "because everything is irrevocable, because the past is irremediable, because the future can only be built upon the real past" (p. 60). Eliot's redemption has absolutely nothing to do with restoring an ideal or "wish-would" past. Yet unlike Jeffers,

Eliot's expiation does not come through denying the "unredeemable past" (p. 87), but rather through retribution caused by accepting the reality of the past. But the extent to which Eliot's Orestes achieves redemption remains amorphous. At best, Harry simply answered the question, "Where does one go from a world of insanity? Somewhere on the other side of despair" (p. 111).

Jean-Paul Sartre's play The Flies, 1943, re-tells the part of the Orestes story covered in Aeschylus' The Libation Bearers. After observing the citizens of his fly-infested Argos groveling in penitence for a crime they had not committed, Orestes kills Aegisthus and Clytemnestra so as to free his people. Immediately, swarms of flies, "the goddesses of remorse," descend upon him and Electra, forcing them to seek shelter at Apollo's shrine. In the morning, Zeus, God of the flies and death, who bears some resemblance to the Jehovah of the Old Testament, tries to force Orestes to repent. But Orestes, knowing that he is completely free and under no obligation to repent for an act he does not regard as a crime, tells Zeus, "I shall not return under your law; I am doomed to have no other law but mine."[15] Electra, unfortunately, lacks this sense of freedom; rather than face the furies, she rushes into Zeus' arms crying, "I will give up my whole life to atonement. I repent, Zeus. I bitterly repent" (p. 124). The play ends with Orestes

telling the angry mob of citizens demanding his death, "Try to reshape your lives. All here is new, all must begin again" (p. 127). With that he leads the flies and shrieking furies away from the town forever.

Despite Argos' being freed from the flies and Zeus' admitting that Orestes had announced his decline, Orestes expiates Argos, but leaves it unredeemed. Zeus is still in Argos; Electra, the remainder of the house of Atreus, has capitulated to remorse for her just crime and inherited evil; and the citizens exhibit nothing more than an urge to kill their savior. Orestes' chances of redemption seem only a little better. Though to him "a new life is beginning, a strange life" (p. 127), he bears all the sins and remorse of Argos as his own, and he knows that he will be "alone until I die" (p. 125). Nevertheless, in existential terms, Orestes' acceptance of this painful reality is the only redemption available, and he embraces it knowingly and heroically. Thus Sartre ends the play with hope. The past is clearly not to be redeemed, but in the opposite direction, the future is left for men to do "What they choose. They're free; and human life," just as in Eliot, "begins on the far side of despair" (p. 123).

The 20th century has thus found that the myth of complete restorative redemption no longer corresponds with our notions of reality. Redemption, if there is such a thing,

is not to be found by a return to the past. Though the future effects of inherited evil can ultimately be negated, the past cannot be altered so as to make the present and future as if evil had not happened. The 20th-century Orestes never returns to rule Argos, and the house of Atreus is never salvaged. In fact, Orestes has nothing to return to, for either the remaining members of the house of Atreus still bear the inherited evil as in Hofmannstahl, Jeffers, O'Neill, and Eliot, or the domain of Argos will no longer profit from his rule as in Giraudoux and Sartre.

A by-product of this non-restorative nature of 20th-century redemption is that since the redemption, if there is to be one, must occur in the unchartable future, it does not manifest itself in the play. Although Orestes' redemption in the Greek tragedies is also not materially actualized on stage, its reality is always guaranteed by the prophecies of the transcendent deities. Moreover, since the tragedians' redemption is a return to an existing situation, known from the past, it does not need to be portrayed to be realized. By contrast, the 20th-century redemptions are in an unknown, not-yet-existing future, and nothing verifies that they will ever come about. In the plays of Hofmannstahl and O'Neill the redemption of Orestes and Electra is unlikely and probably non-existent; according to Giraudoux and Sartre, Argos' redemption is merely potential; redemption for the

Orestes of Eliot and Sartre at best lies at the end of a quest that is just beginning; even Jeffers' Orestes, who claims his redemption has already begun, cannot terminate his wasting inward on humanity until he walks off the stage and out of the play. To this extent, the 20th-century Orestes stories end with a lack of completeness and resolution. Orestes is left in limbo. Rather than tying everything down with a cyclic redemption, the world of the 20th century is made of a looser, unfinished fabric; instead of ending with a return to what is known, they close with a beginning that is yet unknown.

A second difference that the 20th-century Orestes stories exhibit compared to their Greek predecessors is that redemption, if it does occur, costs more and is self-instigated. Even though the Orestes of the tragedians had his bout with the Erinyes, retribution was always for a finite period of time, after which forgiveness by divine fiat would restore Orestes to his ideal state having lost nothing except a year or so of suffering. In contrast, all of the 20th-century Orestes face some form of retribution for the entirety of their known future, or until death does them apart. And even if they are to achieve redemption in the unknown future beyond the play, it will be by the sweat of their brow, not by a gift of the gods.

This is in part due to a demographic change in the

deities between the 5th century B. C. and the 20th century A. D. The world of the 5th-century Orestes was populated by both the punishing Erinyes and the more benevolent Olympians, with the Olympians having the upper hand. Orestes, rather than being blindly punished for having shed kindred blood, is forgiven on the basis of his nobly disinterested motives for committing the crime. But the world of the 20th-century Orestes is reversed. In each of the 20th-century plays, the spirit of punishment has the upper hand, bodily manifesting itself in all of the stories except those of Hofmannstahl and O'Neill. Furthermore, the transcendent Olympian gods are absent in the plays of Hofmannstahl, O'Neill and Eliot; they are passive in the plays of Jeffers and Giraudoux; and they are diabolically perverse in Sartre's play. Regardless of Orestes' motives for the matricide, whether they be Orin's Oedipal jealousy, Harry's self-preservation, Orestes' sense of justice in Sartre and Giraudoux, or his obedience to the gods in Hofmannstahl and Jeffers, he faces the same maximum penalty of retribution. The Erinyes, who could care less about motives or innocence are again wielding their authority, and punishment falls on both the just and the unjust. No longer are the Olympian gods in a position to hand out edicts of atonement based on good intentions; redemption, if it is to had, comes at the end of long pilgrimages, after climbing

the tower beyond time, and by "reshaping your lives."

The world of the 20th century is different in yet another way which further contributed to the modern Orestes' redemption costing him more than it did his ancient counterpart. According to the 5th-century model of reality, the cause of justice was identical to that which was personally beneficial to Orestes. It was necessary to kill Aegisthus and Clytemnestra to regain the power and wealth of the house of Atreus. In addition, at the moment of decision, Orestes faced punishment from the gods whether he did or did not kill his mother. Therefore, the execution of justice threatened no additional suffering and promised definite gain. On the other hand, in the 20th-century stories, that which is personally beneficial is at odds with the cause of justice. In every case, Orestes or Electra is forced to choose between avenging and expiating the house of Atreus, or doing that which would provide more personal benefit. Rather than gaining his kingdom by following the dictates of justice, Orestes always loses it. At the moment of decision, Orestes realizes that while obeying justice offers no benefits, ignoring justice does. Thus modern justice no longer offers the best of both worlds, and the process of choosing between the two is what makes Orestes' redemption more costly than it would have been 25 centuries earlier.

In these ways, the 20th-century plays, which have

re-molded the Greek tragedians' Orestes story into models more compatible with modern consciousness, portray a more costly, self-instigated, and non-restorative redemption. The Greek tragedians' perfectly happy ending is now too consoling to console. From the perspective of 20th-century playwrights, matricide represents a severing of man's most fundamental link with the past. No longer can there be a reassuring return to prenatal innocence; man can no longer be born again. Whether this has always been the nature of reality, or whether it is because the 20th century has nothing that transcends nature's reality, is the difference between whether the modern playwrights should be praised for their realism or damned for their pessimism. But in the last analysis, the ultimate difference is that 25 centuries ago redemption was indisputably certain, it was an annulment of past evil and a return to past perfection, and it was a gift passively received from the gods. In contrast, the nature and extent of modern man's salvation is not certain. All that is known is that our retribution will not be cut short, the past's irreparable evil must be faced, and if salvation is to occur, it will be actively brought about only in the future by those of us who will save ourselves.

Endnotes

[1]John Gassner, The Theatre in Our Times (New York: Crown Publishers, 1960), p. 257.

[2]Svend Ranulf, The Jealousy of the Gods and Criminal Law at Athens (London: Williams & Norgate, 1933), I, p. 126.

[3]Aeschylus, Seven Against Thebes, trans. David Grene in The Complete Greek Tragedies, ed. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), ll. 720-723.

[4]Aeschylus, The Eumenides, in Oresteia, trans. Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), ll. 778-779. All subsequent references to this play will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

[5]N. G. L. Hammond, "Personal Freedom and Its Limitations in the Oresteia," in Aeschylus: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Marsh H. McCall, Jr. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 94.

[6]Sophocles, Electra, in The Tragedies of Sophocles, trans. Richard C. Jebb (Cambridge: University Press, 1917), l. 1063. All subsequent references to this play will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

[7]These three plays are: Electra, trans. Emily Vermeule; Iphigenia in Tauris, trans. Witter Bynner; and Orestes, trans. William Arrowsmith, in The Complete Greek Tragedies, III, IV.

All subsequent references to these plays will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

[8]Richmond Lattimore, "Introduction to Iphigenia at Tauris," in The Complete Greek Tragedies, III, p. 341.

[9]It should nevertheless be noted that Goethe's Iphigenia in Tauris gives proof of the tenacity of the story. Goethe's play is certainly one of the landmarks of the myth of restorative redemption.

[10]Hugo von Hofmannstahl, Electra, trans. Alfred Schwarz, in Three Plays (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966), pp. 113, 115.

[11]Robinson Jeffers, The Tower Beyond Tragedy, in Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems (New York: Random House, 1925), p. 65. All subsequent references to this play will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

[12]Eugene O'Neill, Mourning Becomes Electra, in The Plays of Eugene O'Neill (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 160.

[13]Jean Giraudoux, Electra, in Three Plays, trans. Phyllis La Farge with Peter H. Judd (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964), p. 247.

[14]T. S. Eliot, The Family Reunion, in Collected Plays (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), p. 122. All subsequent references to this play will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

[15]Jean-Paul Sartre, _The Flies_ in _No Exit and Three Other Plays_, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), p. 122. All subsequent references to this play will be taken from this edition and cited in the text.

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