

## FAMILY TIES: SIGNIFICANT PATRONYMS IN EURIPIDES' *ANDROMACHE*

### I. INTRODUCTION

Critical discussion of *Andromache* has almost invariably focused on the question of unity. As everyone who has ever read a critical account of the play knows, the action falls into three parts: the plot against Andromache by Hermione and her father, foiled by Peleus; Hermione's subsequent panicky flight with Orestes; and Neoptolemos' murder at Orestes' instigation. The play appears not to possess 'unity of action' in the strict Aristotelian sense: there is, for instance, no tight causal connection between the plot against Andromache and Orestes' plot against Neoptolemos. Troubled by this, critics have made a variety of attempts to find unity of another sort: unity of 'theme'.<sup>1</sup> Each has asked, 'What is *Andromache* about?', taking the question in an absolute sense; and has assumed that one must search for a single answer.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, from the variety of answers that have been given, *Andromache* becomes a problematic play when the question is asked in these terms.<sup>3</sup> It may be more fruitful to approach the question of theme less absolutely: to explore the ways in which certain overall themes and authorial interests may be involved in the texture of the play, without insisting that any of these forms the *raison d'être* of the action. If, freed from looking for an idea that will be *the* unifying theme of the play, we look instead

<sup>1</sup> See P. T. Stevens (ed., comm.), *Euripides: Andromache* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 5–15. Stevens refers, among others, to H. Erbse ('Euripides' *Andromache*', *Hermes* 94 [1966], 276–97), who regards the character of Andromache as the unifying idea of the play, and H. D. F. Kitto (*Greek Tragedy*, 3rd edition, London, 1961), pp. 228–34, who views the play as centred round anti-Sparta propaganda. Stevens himself agrees with K. M. Aldrich (*The 'Andromache' of Euripides*, University of Nebraska Studies, N.S. 25, 1961) that the 'real theme' of the play is the Trojan War (p. 13).

<sup>2</sup> Cp. D. Kovacs, *The 'Andromache' of Euripides: an interpretation* (Chicago, 1980), who describes as a central task: 'the correct identification of the whole to which the parts contribute, what the play is really "about"' (p. 1), and refers to 'the duty of accounting for everything in [Euripides'] plays on a single hypothesis' (p. 4).

<sup>3</sup> It has been ably argued by Malcolm Heath that it is as erroneous to search in *Andromache* for this sort of overall unifying theme as it is to demand of the play a strict unity of action as this is usually understood (*The Poetics of Greek Tragedy* [London, 1987], pp. 93–5, 98–9, 102–3). In *Unity in Greek Poetics* (Oxford, 1989), Heath develops and refines this viewpoint: he argues that Greek literature as a whole is based rather on a 'centrifugal' aesthetic, admitting and frequently encouraging diversity of material in the fulfilment of the aims of a particular genre, than on the 'centripetal' aesthetic that modern thinking has often tended to expect. Other recent critics have also, in different ways, drawn attention to overall patterns in particular classical texts in terms of the diversity these can compass, rather than assuming that works of classical literature are or should be absolutely focused on a single coherent idea (be it theme, character or story). Cf., for example, R. Hunter in the introduction to his translation of the *Argonautica* (Oxford, 1991), pp. xxviii–xxix; G. Hutchinson, 'Propertius and the Unity of the Book', *JRS* 74 (1984), 99–106, esp. pp. 105–6. It is not my purpose here to engage with this larger issue; provided that one is neither straining the text in the search for unifying ideas nor judging a text on the presence or absence of these, I think it legitimate to look at such overall patterns as do seem to be present. Even within a 'centrifugal aesthetic', there is no reason why an author should not have chosen to create links between his diverse elements by the use of common thematic ideas (Heath's argument, in fact, allows for this—op. cit., p. 155).

at the way certain issues are explored in the context of the play's various elements, we may find that Euripides has set up links and patterns relevant to those issues between and among the diverse characters and actions of *Andromache*, which help to bind the play together. What I wish to consider here is Euripides' treatment of an issue that seems to lie at the heart of each of the play's actions: the question of family relationships. In particular, I wish to examine the way Euripides highlights and explores this issue through a pattern that links together all the sections of the play: the pattern of patronymic reference.

## II. PATRONYMICS IN EURIPIDES' *ANDROMACHE*: A SIGNIFICANT USAGE?

At the outset I should begin with a definition of terms. Unless otherwise stated, when talking about patronymics I am referring to the full form *παῖς* (or variant) + genitive of parent's name,<sup>4</sup> rather than the special Greek patronymic forms in *-ίδης*. Broadly speaking, the former seems to be a more emphatic form of patronymic reference, and therefore perhaps a more likely vehicle for carrying particular significance of the kind I shall be suggesting. Secondly, for the sake of conciseness, I use the term patronymic rather loosely, to cover 'mētronymic reference', and also at times the parallel reference to a character in terms of their relationship to their spouse. This last is a more tenuous use of the term 'patronymic', but, as will be argued later, 'wife of Hector' as a title for Andromache is used in *Andromache* to underline themes of kinship in much the same way as the strict patronymics (or metronymics) are; this is my justification for classifying the title under the same heading.<sup>5</sup>

There is a quite definite pattern of patronymic reference in Euripides' *Andromache*. Neoptolemos is referred to by patronymic thirteen times, by name just once. Orestes' patronymic occurs six times, as compared to three instances of the name; Andromache is referred to four times as 'wife of Hector', three times by name; Hermione is given a patronymic four times, as against the eight occasions where she is referred to by name.<sup>6</sup> In the first three cases, clearly, use of the patronymic outweighs use of the name—quite considerably so, in Neoptolemos' and Orestes' case. Even for Hermione, there is a far from negligible occurrence of the usage. Overall for these four characters, patronymics outnumber names by almost two-to-one (27 compared to

<sup>4</sup> Or, occasionally, *παῖς* (or variant) + adjective formed from parent's name—cp. *Andromache* 1169–70.

<sup>5</sup> This is not to deny that there is a distinction between referring to characters as 'son or daughter of X' and as 'wife of X'. Among other considerations, it is at least possible that the 'wife' component in 'wife of X' has its own, general and social, significance, defining a woman in relation to her menfolk. Cp. Megara, 'wife of Heracles' at *Herakles* 68, 140, 704; Evadne, 'wife of Capaneus' at *Supplikes* 1039, Phaedra, 'wife of Theseus' at *Hippolytos* 777. But individual considerations may, none the less, be seen as colouring this usage. In a case such as Megara's there is more individual point to a title drawing attention to the marriage-bond than simply an indication that this is a married dependent woman. Megara's peril stems from her being, in particular, *Herakles'* wife; note that Amphitryon, likewise, is referred to as 'father of Herakles' twice in the early stage of the play (140, 447). It may also, for instance, be significant that while Clytemnestra is fairly frequently referred to as 'daughter of Tyndareus' (or of Leda), nowhere in extant Euripides is she referred to or addressed as 'wife of Agamemnon'—in *Iphigenia at Aulis*, this omission may be especially pointed, e.g. in the first address of the old man at 856, or in Achilles' greeting at his second entrance, 1344.

<sup>6</sup> Neoptolemos: patronymic: 21, 25, 125, 268, 881–2, 971, 993–4, 1069, 1119, 1149–50, 1163, 1169–70, 1239; name: 14. Orestes: patronymic: 884, 892, 1034, 1061, 1090, 1115; name: 885, 1109, 1242. Andromache: 'patronymic': 4, 656, 908, 960; name: 5, 806, 1243. Hermione: patronymic: 145, 486–7, 897, 1049; name: 29, 86, 114, 122, 519, 804, 889, 1192.

15). The proportionate frequency of this patronymic reference is striking; so, too, is the frequency with which it occurs in contexts that imply significance—where there seems to be an intention to relate or to compare the character concerned to their father, mother or spouse.

There appears to have been very little recognition of this pattern of ‘significant patronymics’ in *Andromache*. Stevens, noticing that Neoptolemos’ name is used only once, remarks that ‘periphrases reminding us of his lineage are sometimes dramatically effective’.<sup>7</sup> This, however, is all he has to say on the matter; and there is no reference to the significance of the usage with the other characters. Not even Kovacs, who asserts, ‘the whole play... deals throughout with the themes of children and heirs, heredity and training’,<sup>8</sup> pays any attention to the significance of the patronymic references and the background nexus of ideas they help to create.

In part, this comparative neglect may stem from the perceived conventionality of patronymic reference within Greek society and literature generally. Yet the fact that being addressed as son (or daughter) of so-and-so was a common convention does not of itself preclude the possibility that the appellation *can* carry particular significance. *Ἀτρείδης*, for example, as a title for Agamemnon is so ubiquitous in Homer’s *Iliad* as to seem much of the time almost as conventional as a modern surname. Yet ‘son of Atreus’, given Atreus’ personal career, clearly has the potential for sinister overtones: when, as at *Ajax* 1293–4, the connotations of such a parentage have been spelled out, it seems reasonable to suppose that uses of the patronymic may be sinister or ironic—some such effect is surely at work in Odysseus’ ‘entrance line’ at 1318–19: *τηλόθεν γὰρ ἡσθόμην | βοὴν Ἀτρείδων τῶδ’ ἐπ’ ἀλκίμῳ νεκρῷ*.<sup>9</sup> One should perhaps also note that the most obvious conventional use of patronymics is in formal introduction and address—that is, in the first or second person. But in *Andromache*, of the 27 uses of patronymics for the four characters listed above, only one is a second-person address (Hermione to Orestes at 892) and only two are first-person ‘introductions’ (Andromache at 4, Orestes at 884; in both cases the patronymic is used alongside the name, which is the full formal formula of introduction). Third person patronymic reference, though far from unusual, is less obviously conventional, especially when not used as a first reference to a character by the speaker.

A second barrier to the recognition of patronymics as ‘significant’ lies in the consideration that the choice of a patronymic rather than a name often depends on metrical utility. One can see this most clearly in the case of Neoptolemos—whose name, as Webster puts it, ‘fits uneasily into iambics’.<sup>10</sup> *Νέοπτολέμος*,<sup>11</sup> with its two consecutive short syllables following one long, fits dactylic (epic) hexameter neatly enough; even with the relative metrical freedom allowed for proper names,<sup>12</sup> however, the double-short combination provides much more of a problem in iambic trimeter, a difficulty exacerbated by the name’s unusually large number of strict syllables,

<sup>7</sup> Stevens, ad. v. 14 (op. cit., p. 90).

<sup>8</sup> Kovacs, op. cit. (n. 2), p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Cp. also 1348–9: *ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ: οὐ γὰρ θανόντι καὶ προσεμβήναί σε χρή;/ ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ: μὴ χαῖρ’, Ἀτρείδη, κέρδεσιν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς*.

<sup>10</sup> T. B. L. Webster (ed.), *Sophocles: Philoctetes* (Cambridge, 1970), p. 66.

<sup>11</sup> The name may be scanned as five syllables: *Νέοπτολέμος*, or as four with synizesis in the first: *Νέοπτολέμος*; the last syllable may be either long or short depending on what follows and on the case in which the name is employed. In Homer’s two uses of the name (*Iliad* 19.327, *Odyssey* 11.506), it is scanned as five syllables; in the five occurrences of the name in tragedy, it is scanned as five syllables only once (*Orestes* 1655).

<sup>12</sup> See E. B. Ceadel, *Resolved Feet in the trimeters of Euripides and the Chronology of the Lost plays*, *CQ* 35 (1941), 66–89, esp. pp. 68–9; W. N. Goodwin, *A Greek Grammar* (London, 1894), pp. 357–8.

usually requiring the first two to be contracted. Ἀχιλλέως παῖς<sup>13</sup> is potentially much more flexible for the purposes of scansion, especially as the two parts of the patronymic can be separated in the line (as in *Andromache* 993–4, 1163). This fact accounts to some degree for the preponderance of patronymics in references to Neoptolemos: 14 times in *Philoctetes* as opposed to two mentions by name; four times in *Hecuba* (no use of name); four times in *Troades* (one use of name).<sup>14</sup>

Yet, as with the argument for conventionality, the fact that a patronymic serves a technical purpose in this way need not prevent it from also being employed for a particular effect. In all four plays where Neoptolemos' patronymic is used, for instance, the fact that he is Achilles' son has strong significance. In *Hecuba*, Neoptolemos' rôle is to sacrifice Polyxena at the demand of his father's shade. In *Philoctetes* his heroic lineage and heritage are crucial both to his character and to the thematic oppositions set up between him and the other Greeks.<sup>15</sup> It is worth pausing over the case of *Philoctetes*, which stands comparison to *Andromache* in the high proportion of patronymics used as compared to names. Among the three central characters, Neoptolemos, Philoctetes and Odysseus, there are thirty patronymic references and twenty-eight uses of names; there is in addition a high proportion of references to 'off-stage' characters by patronymics—nineteen uses of the designation 'Atreidae' for Agamemnon and Menelaos, for example, as compared to only one use of their separate names. Odysseus' name occurs three times as often as the patronymic (twenty against seven); but Neoptolemos has fourteen patronymics, two uses of the name; Philoctetes, nine patronymics, six occurrences of the name.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Or παῖς Ἀχιλλέως; the two terms can occur in either order, and in *Andromache* do so in roughly equal proportions. Sometimes, too, the ending of Ἀχιλλέως is scanned as one long syllable, again by synizesis: *And.* 25 and 1069.

<sup>14</sup> Occurrence of title 'son of Achilles': *Philoctetes*: 4, 50, 57, 240–41, 260, 364, 542, 582, 940, 1066, 1220–21, 1237, 1298, 1433; *Hecuba*: 24, 224, 523, 528; *Troades*: 273, 575, 659, 1124.

<sup>15</sup> It may be instructive to note, by contrast, that in the one-off reference to Neoptolemos at the end of *Orestes*, where the fact of his parentage has little relevance to the play, it is the name which is used.

It is also interesting to compare and contrast Seneca's approach in alluding to Pyrrhus/Neoptolemos' 'significant parentage' in his *Troades*, where Pyrrhus' rôle as Achilles' son is again important. Seneca most commonly refers to Pyrrhus by name (Pyrrhus, the usual Roman name for Neoptolemos, is of course metrically far more tractable). On two occasions, however (46, 976), he does choose to introduce a variant. In both cases use of the title 'son of Achilles' could have been dramatically effective: the first occurs in *Hecuba*'s account of the murder of Priam, the second in Helen's announcement to *Andromache* of whose captive she is to be. Seneca, however, chooses to use a variant which draws attention to Pyrrhus' parentage more indirectly: 'Aeacidae' (46) refers to the family descent of both Achilles and his son; 'Scyrius iuvenis' (976) is a reminder of the circumstances of Pyrrhus' engendering. This 'indirect' allusion contrasts with the closely parallel passages in Euripides, where the patronymic is used: Polydorus' words at *Hecuba* 23–4:

αὐτός τε βωμῷ πρὸς θεοδμήτῳ πίτνει  
σφαγεῖς Ἀχιλλέως παιδὸς ἐκ μαιφόνου

cp.

vidi execrandum regiae caedis nefas  
ipsasque ad ars maius admissum scelus  
Aeacidae <ab> armis, cum ferox [...] alto  
nefandum vulnere ferrum abdidit;

(Seneca, *Troades* 44–8);

Talthybius' words to *Hecuba* at *Troades* 273:

καὶ τήνδ' [Ἀνδρομάχην] Ἀχιλλέως ἔλαβε παῖς ἐξάϊρετον

cp.

Te sorte prima Scyrius iuvenis tulit (Seneca, *Troades* 976).

<sup>16</sup> There is a distinction between the usages of *Philoctetes* and *Andromache* in that the potentially more conventional second person use of the patronymic is considerably more common in the Sophoclean play. Ten of Neoptolemos' patronymics occur in this context of

Of course, both Neoptolemos and Philoctetes are metrically difficult names, and it would be rash to deny that this factor influences the frequency with which their patronymics are used. At the same time, in *Philoctetes* the theme of descent and parentage is crucial to the presentation, development and dilemma of the character of Neoptolemos, around which much of the play turns: as Philoctetes says to him when Odysseus has beaten a retreat after Neoptolemos' return of the bow (1310–12):

τὴν φύσιν δ' ἔδειξας, ὦ τέκνον,  
ἐξ ἧς ἐβλαστες, οὐχὶ Σισύφου πατρός,  
ἀλλ' ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως.

And use of the patronymic Ἀχιλλέως παῖς (or variant) is surely allied to this central idea. Interestingly, there is a lapse of its use for 360 lines at the centre of the play, as Neoptolemos' deception of Philoctetes moves towards its climax (582–940). In 940 Philoctetes uses the title in bitter irony as a stinging reproach to the young warrior;<sup>17</sup> in 1066, as a last desperate appeal to Neoptolemos to show his generosity of character.<sup>18</sup> Then again use of the title lapses, until 1220–21 as Neoptolemos re-enters to put right his earlier deception. While 'son of Poias' for Philoctetes and 'son of Laertes' for Odysseus are less obviously significant as titles,<sup>19</sup> the significance here may lie not so much in the particular title as in the theme of patronymic reference itself. Use of this device relates Philoctetes, for instance, to the society and family from which he has been so long cut off, making this man who lives wild still the noble son of a noble man.<sup>20</sup>

'address', eight of these as the 'first address' of a speech or rejoinder. Six of Philoctetes' patronymics occur as an address, all but one of them as a 'first address'. To some extent, however, this difference may be due to the more continuous presence of these two characters on stage; one may note that all but one of the patronymics used for Odysseus, whose stage presence is less continuous than with the other two characters, occur in the third person. It is worth remarking, nonetheless, that whereas we might expect patronymic reference in *Andromache* to be less common than in *Philoctetes*, as there is not so great a scope for its formal use in address, this is not the case.

<sup>17</sup> οἱ ἔργ' ὁ παῖς μ' ἔδρασεν οὐξ Ἀχιλλέως.  
<sup>18</sup> ὦ σπέρμ' Ἀχιλλέως, οὐδὲ σοῦ φωνῆς ἐτι / γενήσομαι προσφθεγκτός, ἀλλ' οὕτως ἄπει;  
(1066–7).

<sup>19</sup> There is, however, an interesting possibility that there was some degree of mythological confusion between Philoctetes and his father. In the version of the legend given in Sophocles' play, Philoctetes received Heracles' bow as recompense for his service in lighting the latter's funeral pyre. There was, though, apparently an alternative version, given in Apollodorus 2.7.7, in which it was Poias who rendered Heracles this service, and subsequently handed the bow down to his son. There seems at present to be no way of determining from what sources Apollodorus takes this variant legend and how early it is. There is a fragment of a 5th-century vase which shows 'Heracles on the pyre and a man running off with the bow who is *presumably* [my italics] Philoctetes' (Webster, op. cit. [n. 10], p. 5); but as the name of this figure does not seem to have been preserved it *could* equally well be Poias. If both versions were known to Sophocles and his audience, such a confusion of rôles implies a close identification of father with son, in both friendship and service to Heracles, which could lend added point to the title 'son of Poias'.

As for Odysseus, since there are references in the play to his being the offspring of Sisyphus (417, 1311), the title 'son of Laertes' may well obliquely refer to Odysseus' *doubtful* paternity. The Sisyphus variant involved a relationship between Anticleia and Sisyphus, resulting in the birth of Odysseus, prior to the former's marriage to Laertes—a story glanced at in 417 of Sophocles' play. Cp. W. B. Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 103, 261 and, for a view of Odysseus' ancestry through Laertes as simply 'undistinguished', p. 12. Compare also the five patronymics used for Odysseus in Sophocles' *Ajax* (another play in which ideas of descent are important): son of Sisyphus once (190), son of Laertes four times (1, 101, 380, 1393), including an occurrence in the very first line of the play as we are introduced to Odysseus scouting around in a characteristic, non-traditionally-heroic image of stealth.

<sup>20</sup> There are powerful references to Philoctetes' desire to rejoin his father (e.g. at 492–9, 1210–12); and at the end there is confirmation that this will happen (1430).

In *Philoctetes* then, the fact that metrical utility undoubtedly plays a part in the preponderance of patronymics over names does not prevent those patronymics, individually and collectively, from carrying special significance in terms of the ideas of the play. In *Andromache*, which likewise has a high concentration of patronymic reference to many of its central characters, it seems reasonable to ask whether these patronymics may not be significant in a similar way. As we have seen, the consideration that factors such as convention and metre may influence a writer's choice to use patronymics should not deter us from exploring the effects created by both individual occurrences and the overall pattern.

### III. *ANDROMACHE* AND THE THEME OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

We may, then, turn to consideration of what the significance of the patronymics used in *Andromache* may be. First of all, it seems best to consider the context within which they are used, by exploring Euripides' general treatment in the play of the issues of family relationships. Questions of good wives and bad wives, good parents and bad parents, even worthy and unworthy children; of obligations and loyalties, attachment to and separation from home—all are intimately bound up with the various actions and subjects of the play. In fact some critics<sup>21</sup> see the question of the different groups and different varieties of kinship ties as the central subject of the play. While there is much truth in this, I should like to argue, in the second stage of this study, that bound up in Euripides' treatment of kinship ties are questions of the tensions that operate within such ties, or between different ties and the various groups they involve, and of the tension that can be brought to bear on these ties, relationships and obligations by external contingencies. As will emerge, I believe that in *Andromache* Euripides explores the volatile relationship between kinship ties and the individuality of certain characters and their circumstances. I would further propose that his use of patronymic reference is employed to highlight the tensions generated by that volatility.

#### *Hermione, Menelaos and the house of Neoptolemos*

The most obvious tensions arising out of the kinship structures in *Andromache* are those surrounding Neoptolemos' marriage to Hermione. The strain imposed on the marriage-ties between these two by the further stresses of childlessness, Hermione's particular temper, and the presence of another woman in the household is patent. But there are other sorts of tension conditioned by the nature of the family ties themselves.

The contracting of ties with Hermione, and thus with the house of Menelaos (and Helen), is a cause of conflict on several levels. In the first place, the marriage itself appears to have complicated Neoptolemos' position with respect to his ties to his own family. We learn in 619–21 that Neoptolemos entered on this new relationship against the advice and wishes of his grandfather Peleus. Thus even from the outset, blood-ties and marriage ties were in conflict. And the new tie becomes increasingly problematic as events move on, for the father-in-law Menelaos now feels he has some stake and say in Neoptolemos' household (374–5):

δούλων δ' ἐκείνων τῶν ἐμῶν ἄρχειν χρεῶν  
καὶ τῶν ἐκείνου τοὺς ἐμούς, ἡμᾶς τε πρὸς.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. D. Kovacs, op. cit. (n. 2), p. 75. See also the analysis of the play's terminology of *philia* by E. M. Craik, in Craik (ed.), *Marriage and Property* (Aberdeen, 1984), pp. 24–6.

He bases this right on the proper operation of ties between φίλοι (376–7):

φίλων γὰρ οὐδὲν ἴδιον, οἷτινες φίλοι  
ὀρθῶς πεφύκασ', ἀλλὰ κοινὰ χρήματα.

The household of Peleus is disrupted by this when Menelaos reckons he has the right to take summary action with his son-in-law's slave Andromache. The whole clash between Menelaos and Peleus is a dramatic embodiment of this disruption of the operation of one house by ties contracted with another. Peleus contends that Andromache is none of Menelaos' business (581–2). The ensuing exchange turns on this issue as the bone of contention: Peleus trying to insist on the independence of his family's interests, Menelaos maintaining the identity of his own interests with Neoptolemos' (583–5):

*MEN:* εἰλὸν νιν αἰχμάλωτον ἐκ Τροίας ἐγώ.

*ΠΗΛ:* οὐμὸς δέ γ' αὐτὴν ἔλαβε παῖς παιδὸς γέρας.

*MEN:* οὐκοῦν ἐκείνου τὰμὰ τάκεινόν τ' ἐμά;

In fact throughout this confrontation Menelaos bases such persuasive strategy as he has on a rhetorical attempt to undermine the link between Andromache and the house of Peleus and to reinforce the link between the latter and *his* house and daughter. There is no community, he argues, between Andromache's family and Peleus'—quite the contrary (649–56); in acting against Andromache, Menelaos is upholding Neoptolemos' interests as well as Hermione's (661–2). Menelaos being Menelaos, his arguments are unlikely to be intended to carry any great conviction. But in his reply to Menelaos' assertion of 585 (above), Peleus does not actually contest the *principle* of 'what's mine is his, what's his is mine': 586: δρᾶν εὖ, κακῶς δ' οὐ, μηδ' ἀποκτείνειν βίᾳ. It seems to be conceded that marriage-ties do imply some such mandate for involvement in the affairs of another house as Menelaos claims. What Peleus does object to is the abuse of that privilege. The point, here as throughout the play, seems to be that the implications of marriage-based kinship ties become problematic when such ties are contracted with the wrong sort of people—people who will exploit the privileges and obligations of their links with another family to serve selfish, morally dubious or downright malicious ends. The problem is rooted in the character of Menelaos (and of his daughter), but the kinship tie presents the opportunity for this to *be* a problem for the house of Peleus.

Hermione as a wife is a problem partly because she is Menelaos' daughter. And here another dimension to the problems inherent in kinship ties opens up. The ties between parent and child involve ties of commitment and inherited character which can themselves be sources of conflict and tension. Menelaos' commitment to his daughter, and their shared attitude that any action is justified in defence of her marriage-interests, is at the heart of the crisis that develops in the first part of the play. It is Menelaos' arrival on the scene to act with his daughter and make her hatred effective that finally drives Andromache to seek sanctuary (41–4). Though Menelaos is the active party, insistently the two are spoken of as acting in consort against Andromache, very often with some reference to their relationship: so for example in 39–40:

βούλεται δέ με κτανεῖν,  
πατήρ τε θυγατρὶ Μενέλεως συνδρά τάδε

and 62–3:

δεινὰ γὰρ βουλευέται  
Μενέλαος εἰς σέ παῖς θ'...<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Compare also 316–18, 517–19.

Likewise, when both Andromache and Peleus counter-attack in their clashes with Menelaos, they direct their defiance at 'you and your daughter'.<sup>23</sup> Hermione's relationship with her father (and vice versa) is seen as the driving force that links them as partners in a bad cause, implicating the father in his daughter's futile jealousy and malice, the daughter in her father's egoistic ruthlessness.

At yet another level, being Menelaos' daughter has an inflammatory effect on Hermione's *own* thinking. Hermione herself, on her first entrance, bases her right to speak and do as she likes on her relationship with her father (152–3):

*Μενέλαος ἡμῖν ταῦτα δωρεῖται πατήρ  
πολλοῖς σὺν ἔδνοις, ὥστ' ἔλευθεροστομεῖν.*

She asserts her superiority over Andromache by stressing her status as the daughter of a wealthy prince. Hermione's pride in her independent family wealth, however, affects not just her attitude towards Andromache, but also her relations with her husband. Indeed in Andromache's account, Hermione's insistent and insolent family pride is crucial to the tension within her marriage (209–12):

*σὺ δ' ἦν τι κνισθῆς, ἡ Λάκαινα μὲν πόλις  
μέγ' ἐστί, τὴν δὲ Σκύρον οὐδαμοῦ τίθης·  
πλουτεῖς δ' ἐν οὐ πλουτοῦσι· Μενέλεως δέ σοι  
μεΐζων Ἀχιλλέως. ταῦτά τοί σ' ἔχθει πόσις.*

In its influence on her attitude to herself, her husband and her husband's slave, Hermione's relationship with her father is thus a source of further problems and conflicts. There is, too, another influence from her family background, even more prejudicial to Hermione's ability to be a good wife. The inheritance of her mother Helen is bluntly put forward by Peleus as a reason why marriage with Hermione was bad news from the start: he advised Neoptolemos (620–23):

*μήτε δώμασιν λαβεῖν  
κακῆς γυναικὸς πῶλον· ἐκφέρουσι γὰρ  
μητρῷ· ὀνειδῇ. τοῦτο καὶ σκοπεῖτέ μοι,  
μνηστήρες, ἐσθλῆς θυγατέρ' ἐκ μητρὸς λαβεῖν.*

Andromache likewise considers Hermione's relationship to Helen to have much to do with her conjugal shortcomings (229–31):

*μὴ τὴν τεκοῦσαν τῇ φιλανδρίᾳ, γύναι,  
ζήτει παρελθεῖν· τῶν κακῶν γὰρ μητέρων  
φεύγειν τρόπους χρὴ τέκν', <ὅς>οις ἔνεστι νοῦς.*

The precise nature of Helen's legacy to Hermione is left vague. Although, like her mother, Hermione ends up leaving her husband to go away with another man, the conflict within her marriage in the first part of the play stems not from too slack but from too tight a hold on the marriage-tie.<sup>24</sup> But the impact of the looser connection is clear: Helen was a bad wife, Hermione her daughter has inherited the problem. So we see family ties affecting the action of the play with respect to Hermione on three levels: in the clash between Menelaos and Peleus, in the plots against Andromache and her son, in the germinal cause of both of these, the unhappiness of Hermione's marriage.

<sup>23</sup> ὡς ἀθώπευτόν γέ σε/ γλώσσης ἀφήσω τῆς ἐμῆς καὶ παῖδα σὴν (459–60), ὅς κλαίοντά σε/ καὶ τὴν ἐν οἴκοις σὴν καταστήσει κόρην (634–5), εἰ μὴ φθερῇ τῇσδ' ὡς τάχιστ' ἀπὸ στέγης/ καὶ παῖς ἄτεκνος (708–9).

<sup>24</sup> The comparison in Andromache's rebuke of 229–31 appears to rely on a double-edged use of *φιλανδρία*: excessive love of one man, wifely jealousy; excessive love of men, promiscuousness.



*Orestes*

The second mainspring of the plot in *Andromache* is the conflict between Neoptolemos and Orestes. This conflict, like the conflicts surrounding the former's marriage with Hermione, turns on tensions arising out of various aspects of kinship ties. In the first place, the conflict is sparked off by Neoptolemos' 'interfering' in ties that had been established between Orestes and Hermione. These were marriage ties—Hermione was Orestes' betrothed wife (966–9); but the 'marriage-tie' was also reinforced by close ties of blood, Orestes and Hermione being 'double cousins'. Their kinship is highlighted by Euripides in their encounter,<sup>25</sup> and its importance to Orestes' marriage-prospects is stressed (974–6):

ὥς φίλων μὲν ἂν  
γῆμαιμι· ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν, ἔκτοθεν δ' οὐ ῥαδίως,  
φεύγων ἀπ' οἴκων...

Thus there is a strong sense in Orestes' speech (though he is biased, of course) of Neoptolemos having usurped the rightful prerogative of a relationship founded not only on claims of betrothal but also on claims of blood.

Also contributing to the conflict between Orestes and Neoptolemos, however, are the implications of Orestes' other family ties, with his parents. Orestes' fortunes and, there is a strong suggestion, his personality have been irretrievably distorted by the story of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and by the way he himself became entangled in it—an aspect of the case highlighted by the Chorus in their last ode (1028–35):

βέβακε δ' Ἀτρείδας ἀλόχου παλάμαις,  
αὐτά τ' ἐναλλάξασα φόνον θανάτῳ  
πρὸς τέκνων ἀπηύρα  
θεοῦ. θεοῦ νιν κέλευμ' ἐπεστράφη  
μαντόσυνον, ὅτε νιν Ἀργόθεν πορευθεῖς  
Ἀγαγμενόσιος κέλωρ, ἀδύτων ἐπιβὰς  
κτεάνων, ματρός φονεὺς...

From his parents' experience Orestes has inherited the burden of matricide: and this fuels the fire of conflict with Neoptolemos. It was the grounds for Neoptolemos' contemptuous rejection of Orestes' plea that his promised bride be returned to him (977–8):

ὁ δ' ἦν ὕβριστῆς εἷς τ' ἐμῆς μητρὸς φόνον  
τάς θ' αἵματωπούς θεὰς ὀνειδίζων ἐμοί.

The bitterness with which Orestes harks back to this when outlining his vengeful intentions suggests a direct connection in Euripides' portrayal between Orestes' matricide and his second murder, at the level of a nature now inextricably harnessed to crime, as well as at the level of motive (999–1001):

ὁ μητροφόντης δ', ἦν δορυξένων ἐμῶν  
μεινῶσιν ὄρκοι Πυθικὴν ἀνὰ χθόνα,  
δείξει γαμεῖν σφε μηδέν' ὧν ἐχρῆν ἐμέ.

*Neoptolemos and Achilles*

One needs to notice in all this that there are ways in which Neoptolemos is actively involved in the stirring up of the conflict with Orestes that leads him to his own death. And in this, Neoptolemos' own family relationships play a crucial part: primarily, his

<sup>25</sup> 887–8: δοκεῖ μοι ξυγγενοῦς μαθεῖν πέρι γυναικός; 921: ἀλλ' ἄντομαί σε Δία καλοῦσ' ὁμόγγιον.

relationship with his father Achilles. With Neoptolemos, the theme of descent as a volatile force receives its fullest development. The theme is, furthermore, concerned in all the critical actions and attitudes of Neoptolemos in the play. At a very basic level, his prowess as a warrior is presented, particularly in the messenger speech but also in earlier references (e.g. 341–3), as an inheritance from his father Achilles. The account of his glittering courage and prowess as he meets his end involves several allusions to his father.<sup>26</sup> It was, too, in part at least that prowess—his indispensability to the Greek army, well-known from legend and mirroring that of his father—that won Neoptolemos Menelaos' promise of Hermione's hand (969–70). In the second place, the pride and arrogance with which Neoptolemos is said to have treated Orestes are recognisably Achillean characteristics—perhaps particularly when we remember that they are directed towards a son of Agamemnon, conflict between the sons of these two fathers mirroring a tradition with a famous literary pedigree. Orestes' use of *'Αχιλλέως... γόνος* in 971, leading up to his account of his supplication of and rebuff by Neoptolemos, probably carries a bitter reflection on the pride of this prince with the heroic lineage. *'Αχιλλέως... παῖδ'* certainly does so when, a few lines later, Orestes connects the title directly to a reference to Neoptolemos' arrogant treatment of him (993–4):

τὸν δ' *'Αχιλλέως*  
μηδὲν φοβηθῆς παῖδ', ὅσ' εἰς ἔμ' ὕβρισε.

Thus it seems fair to say that in this play the image of Achilles in his son is presented as an equivocal legacy.

There is a final aspect to the train of events leading to Neoptolemos' demise, to which his relationship with Achilles is still more fundamental. This is the 'conflict' between Neoptolemos and Apollo. As a factor in the tragedy this is flirted with by Euripides in a tantalizing, elusive way—how far does it make Neoptolemos a culpable rather than wholly innocent victim? can Orestes and his cohorts really be ministers of Apollo's 'justice'? But in the responses of Peleus and the messenger to Neoptolemos' death this conflict is clearly identified as a cause of the catastrophe (1162–5, 1194–6). Consider the messenger's use of the title 'son of Achilles' in relating Neoptolemos' death to his quarrel with Apollo (1162–5):

ὁ τῶν δικαίων πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις κριτής,  
δίκας δίδοντα παῖδ' ἔδρασ' *'Αχιλλέως*.  
ἐμνημόνευσε δ'...  
παλαιὰ νείκη

The messenger's criticism is directed at Apollo, not Neoptolemos; but *παῖδ'...* *'Αχιλλέως* reminds us that the basis of this conflict was Neoptolemos' relationship—and commitment—to his father. Every one of the references to his clash with Apollo stresses the paternal relationship as the motive for Neoptolemos' challenge to the god, from across the board of characters: Andromache: *ἦ ποτ' εἰς Πυθῶ μολῶν ἤτησε Φοῖβον πατρός οὐ κτείνει δίκην* (52–3); Orestes: *πικρῶς δὲ πατρός φόνιον αἰτήσῃ δίκην ἀνακτα Φοῖβον* (1002–3); Peleus: *μηδ' ἐπὶ τοξοσύνα φονίῳ πατρός αἶμα τὸ διογενές ποτε Φοῖβου βροτὸς εἰς θεὸν ἀνάψαι* (1194–6); Neoptolemos himself, in the messenger's account: *ἤτησα γὰρ πατρός ποτ' αὐτὸν αἵματος δοῦναι δίκην* (1107–8). Furthermore, the pride indicated by the challenge

<sup>26</sup> E.g. the *Τρωικὸν πῆδημα* of 1139, referring to a legend about Achilles' leap on first landing at Troy (see Stevens, ad loc.).

issued to a god *may*, again, be taken as a characteristic trait passed down from father to son. In all of these ways, Neoptolemos' relationship to Achilles is inextricably bound up with the processes that lead to his end.

#### IV. SIGNIFICANT PATRONYMICS IN *ANDROMACHE*

In the case of Neoptolemos in particular, we begin to see that among the various sorts of tension arising out of or caused by family relationships in this play, the tensions inherent in descent, the second generation's implication in the character and experience of their parents, hold a special place. And here we may turn to our central question, the reinforcement of the theme of family relationships in *Andromache* by an insistent pattern of patronymic reference. The various issues of descent we have identified with regard to Hermione, Orestes and Neoptolemos are, at selected moments, underlined and amplified by this device.

*Hermione*: 'daughter of Menelaos'

Let us take the case of Hermione first. Three times in the play she is directly referred to as 'daughter of Menelaos'. The first reference is from the Chorus in 486-9:

ἔδειξεν ἡ Λάκαινα τοῦ στρατηλάτα  
Μενέλα· διὰ γὰρ πυρὸς ἦλθ' ἐτέρῳ λέχεϊ,  
κτείνει δὲ τὴν τάλαιναν Ἰλιάδα κόραν  
παῖδά τε δύσφρονος ἔριδος ὕπερ.

Now, in the previous episode we have seen Menelaos behaving in ruthless and treacherous fashion in order to get hold of Andromache. Calling Hermione Menelaos' daughter at this point clearly reflects unsympathetically on her, but, more specifically, it underlines the point explored above about the implication of Hermione in her father's actions (notice that the Chorus talks of *her* killing Andromache, 488).

A similar, though distinct, use of the patronymic occurs in the mouth of Peleus at 1049-50, as he hurries on-stage seeking confirmation of the rumour of Hermione's flight: *ὡς δῶματ' ἐκλιποῦσα Μενέλεω κόρη φρούδῃ τὰδ*'. The last time we saw Peleus he had just worsted Menelaos in argument and watched him retreat in not very good order; the last words he spoke implied Menelaos' cowardice (765), and throughout their encounter he had loaded every insult in the book on his antagonist. From this, as well as from our own observations of Menelaos, we can understand *Μενέλεω κόρη* as a slighting title, expressing Peleus' view of the worthlessness of his grandson's wife, perhaps implying that it is typical that the daughter of such a man should have deserted her husband's house. Moreover, the title places Hermione firmly in the camp of the house of Menelaos, and thereby strongly hints that Hermione, though married into the house of Peleus, is no true member of that house, underlining the full implications of the step she has taken in fleeing with Orestes.

Orestes' use of the same title in 897 is unlikely to imply a comparable hostility from the speaker. From his lips *Μενέλεω κόρην* may carry overtones of the kinship between him and Hermione (Menelaos being his uncle), and probably conveys a reaction of ironic surprise to the contrast between Hermione's proud status and her current abject supplication: *ἡ σαφῶς ὁρῶ δόμων ἄνασσαν τήνδε Μενέλεω κόρην*; (896-7). We may remember Hermione's proud association of herself with her father on her first entrance. And if we remember that, given all that we have seen of Menelaos since, we may find a certain poignancy as well as irony in the recollection that Hermione had based her pride in her own worth on her relationship with such a man as her father has proved to be.

*Orestes*: 'son of Agamemnon', 'son of Clytemnestra'

Patronymic (and metronymic) titles are applied more frequently to Orestes: he is five times 'son of Agamemnon', twice 'son of Clytemnestra'. Once, in Hermione's greeting in 891–2, 'son of Agamemnon' seems primarily intended to underline the kinship between Orestes and his cousin: an important part of their relationship as potential husband-and-wife, as we saw earlier, and the natural reference with which Hermione would open an appeal for protection. There *may* be more sinister, though complex, undertones: the first part of Hermione's address: ὦ ναυτίλοισι χείματος λιμὴν φανείς 'Αγαμέμνονος παῖς is quite strongly reminiscent of the last in the series of flattering salutations delivered by Aeschylus' Clytemnestra to Agamemnon himself in the *Agamemnon*: καὶ γῆν φανείσαν ναυτίλοις παρ' ἐλπίδα, κάλλιστον ἡμᾶρ εἰσιδεῖν ἐκ χείματος (900–901). The resemblance might be fortuitous; but especially with this as its context, 'Αγαμέμνονος παῖς does seem to carry dark echoes of the story of Orestes' parents. Given these associations, the line may even foreshadow the fact that, as in *Agamemnon*, the woman's husband is about to be murdered.

It is at least clear, I think, that Orestes' announcement of himself in 884 as 'Αγαμέμνονός τε καὶ Κλυταιμῆστρας τόκος is intended by Euripides as a sinister introduction. One cannot hear Orestes called 'child of Clytemnestra' without remembering that he killed his mother. 'Son of Agamemnon', less directly, might also be used with overtones of the story of the matricide—since it was to fulfil his obligations as Agamemnon's son that Orestes killed his mother. 'Αγαμεμνόνιος κέλωρ at 1034 in the choral passage referred to earlier (1027–35) certainly carries these overtones. Again, the title 'child of Clytemnestra' cannot fail to remind us that Orestes' mother murdered her husband: to be the child of such a woman is not an auspicious heritage. When in 1114–16 the messenger describes the treacherous ambush laid at Orestes' command for Neoptolemos, the title *Κλυταιμῆστρας τόκος* seems chillingly appropriate:

τῷ δὲ ξιφῆρης ἄρ' ὑφειστήκει λόχος  
δάφνη σκιασθείς· ὦν Κλυταιμῆστρας τόκος  
εἷς ἦν ἀπάντων τῶνδε μηχανορράφος.

At the same time, the metronymic also relates to the idea that Orestes' entanglement in his parents' story, as well as his potential inheritance of their character, was what has led him down the road ending in this new crime.

On the two other occasions where Orestes is referred to as his father's son, the implication of the theme of descent seems to lie in a direction we have not so far explored—that of the measuring of the new generation by the standard of the old. In Orestes' case the result is one of ironic, even bitter, contrast. 'Son of Agamemnon' is not necessarily a wholly positive title, especially as Agamemnon's great field of achievement, the Trojan War, is stripped of much of its lustre in this play. But (despite Peleus' comments at 703–4) Agamemnon was at least a king and a mighty warrior who confronted his enemies openly in battle. When the messenger describes Orestes' procedure as he sets about dealing with *his* enemy, his title 'Αγαμέμνονος παῖς is surely in pointed contrast to the meanness of his methods (1090–91):

'Αγαμέμνονος δὲ παῖς διαστείχων πόλιν  
ἐς οὓς ἐκάστω δυσμενεῖς ἤῃδα λόγους.

A similar, though less clearly expressed, comment on Orestes' treacherous behaviour may be implied by the Chorus' use of the title a little earlier (1061–3):

'Αγαμέμνονός νιν παῖς βέβηκ' ἄγων χθονός [...]  
καὶ σὺ γε παιδὸς παιδὶ πορσύνων μῶρον.

It is still possible that in both cases the overtones of Orestes' murderous heritage and past, discussed above as accompanying the title 'son of Agamemnon', are also being brought into play. There is no reason why the two effects should not operate simultaneously. Thus in all directions there is a certain inescapable quality to the influence—and the shadow—of his parents over Orestes' own experience.

*Neoptolemos: 'son of Achilles'*

It is, however, with Neoptolemos himself that the motif of patronymic reference is most fully developed. Neoptolemos is only once referred to by name in the entire play: after his first mention, by Andromache in line 14, his own name is dropped, and by far the most common means of reference to him is as Achilles' son: 13 times throughout the play. Unlike *Μενελέω κόρη, Κλυταιμίστρας τόκος* and *Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖς*, *Ἀχιλλέως παῖς* can be, and is, used in this play to reflect positively on the title's bearer. So it is by the messenger in his account of Neoptolemos' death: as a heroic title, in contrast to the actions of his enemies and the tragic fate that befalls him (1118–19, 1149–50):

οἱ...ὠπλισμένοι  
κεντοῦσ' ἀτευχῇ παῖδ' Ἀχιλλέως λάθρα.  
...ἐνθ' Ἀχιλλέως πῖτνει  
παῖς ὀξυθήκτω πλευρὰ φασγάνῳ τυπείν.

Peleus too, of course, uses the title in the same way in 1069 (*πρὶν παῖδ' Ἀχιλλέως κατθανεῖν ἐχθρῶν ὕπο*). Likewise the Chorus use *τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖον σκύμνον* (1169–70) to mourn Neoptolemos as a fallen hero, as possibly Thetis uses *τόνδ' Ἀχιλλέως γόνον* in 1239; although in both cases a parallel emphasis on Neoptolemos as 'the child of your / our son' is probably implied, stressing the family loss, particularly as Achilles, the son and father, is also dead (cp. Thetis at 1236–8). Even when used by Orestes in 971, *Ἀχιλλέως...γόνος* is probably in part a reference to Neoptolemos' military prowess, following on from Orestes' account of Menelaos' promise: *ὑπέσχεθ' ὕστερον τῷ νῦν σ' ἔχοντι, Τρωάδ' εἰ πέρσοι πόλιν* (969–70); underlining the point raised earlier, that the abilities inherited from his father Achilles were what won Neoptolemos the—in the end disastrous—prize of Hermione's hand. The implication of the title as an index of honesty and straightforwardness of dealing, implied in its use by Peleus in 1069 and the messenger in 1118–19 in drawing a contrast to his enemies, is taken up even by Andromache in 21–3:

ἐνθ' οἶκον ἔσχε τόνδε παῖς Ἀχιλλέως,  
Πηλέα δ' ἀνάσσειν γῆς ἐκ Φαρσαλίας,  
ζώντος γέροντος σκῆπτρον οὐ θέλων λαβεῖν.

Yet in spite of all this, Neoptolemos' heritage as 'a true son of Achilles'<sup>27</sup> is, as we have seen, by no means unambiguously positive. In section III above (p. 364) we considered how other patronymics used of him, at 1163, 971 and 993–4, could carry resonances of the negative side of this heritage.

*Andromache and the son of Achilles*

At this point we should, at long last, bring Andromache into the discussion. The relationship between Andromache and Neoptolemos, unlike all those other relationships discussed so far, does not in itself involve a conflict that affects the course of events, and thus the action of the play. Yet there is a tension in that

<sup>27</sup> Stevens, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 14.

relationship, arising from the kinship ties of each party to it. We can see this most clearly, I think, if we look at one of Andromache's 'indirect' patronymic references to Neoptolemos. Andromache is arguing to Menelaos that Neoptolemos is unlikely to take the death of his son lying down (341–3):

οὐχ ὥδ' ἀνδρὸν αὐτὸν ἡ Τροία καλεῖ·  
ἀλλ' εἰσιν οἱ χρή—Πηλέως γὰρ ἄξια  
πατρός τ' Ἀχιλλέως ἔργα δρῶν φανήσεται.

On the surface, this is a tribute to Neoptolemos' courage and heroic uprightness of dealing, and to the heroic tradition of his house. But coming from Andromache, 'Troy did not call him so lacking in manly courage' is a decidedly double-edged tribute; and the reference to 'deeds worthy of his father Achilles' highlights the equivocal nature of the compliment at a level personal to Andromache. The heroic deeds of Achilles are not, after all, something Andromache can recall with unmixed pleasure or admiration. Yet it is clear from the context that Andromache finds herself in a position in which it is these inherited qualities, this lineage, on which she has to rely.

The tension of this position is highlighted at a number of points in the first stage of the play. The precise personal implications of Andromache's dependent relationship on the house of Achilles are first brought out in her elegiac lament, at 107–8:

καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν μελέας πόσιν Ἔκτορα, τὸν περὶ τείχη  
εἴλκυσε διφρεύων παῖς ἀλίας Θέτιδος.

Andromache mourns her husband, recalling the brutal attendant circumstances of his death. But the desperate irony of the reference to the man responsible as *παῖς ἀλίας Θέτιδος* is unmistakable: in the present moment we see Andromache clinging to Thetis' altar, her only possible sanctuary. Andromache is forced to rely on the protection of a family which has her husband's blood on its hands.

This consideration gives an added, painfully ironic dimension to the title *παῖς Ἀχιλλέως* for Neoptolemos when used in connection with his relationship with Andromache. Indeed, the title is often brought into play at moments when Andromache's new 'family' ties, and her consequent relationship of dependence, with her captor-master are emphasized. For instance, Andromache uses the title when recounting in 24–5 how she has borne a child in slavery, thus strengthening the ties between concubine and master.

κάγῳ δόμοις τοῖσδ' ἄρσεν' ἐντίκτω κόρον,  
πλαθεῖς Ἀχιλλέως παιδί, δεσπότη γ' ἐμῷ.

*Ἀχιλλέως παιδί* is unlikely to be an incidental usage here. Later on, Hermione gives her own commentary on this position, spiteful but essentially correct as to the facts (171–3):

... δύστηνε σύ,  
ἦ παιδί πατρός, ὃς σὸν ὤλεσεν πόσιν,  
τολμᾶς ξυνεύδειν καὶ τέκν' αὐθέντου πάρα  
τίκτειν.

The element of truth—about which Andromache can do nothing—in Hermione's taunt is what gives the remark its biting edge of cruelty. Hermione uses the weapon again to sneer openly at Andromache in her parting-shot at 267–8:

... ἐξαναστήσω σ' ἐγώ  
πρὶν ὧ πέποιθας παιδ' Ἀχιλλέως μολεῖν

you of all people, trusting in Achilles' son! Andromache's simple reply *πέποιθα* ('I do trust him') impresses on us both the reality of the tie between her and Neoptolemos—in the face of its ironies she upholds her reliance on him—and the helplessness of her position—she has no-one else to rely on but the last man on earth she should want to.

That Andromache's acceptance of this reliance is presented as painful and reluctant I think can be maintained from two particularly crucial remarks of hers relating to themes and issues of kinship ties. One is the stark statement of her current condition as the climax to her sufferings in 403: *φονεύσω Ἑκτορος νυμφεύομαι*. This impassioned generalisation—the same as in Hermione's *τέκν' αὐθέντου πάρα τίκτειν*—identifies Neoptolemos all but completely with his father in responsibility for Hector's death. This provides one of the most startling uses of the 'descent' theme as a source of tension, Neoptolemos' ties with Achilles clashing head-on with Andromache's ties with Hector, through the new, unsought tie established between captive and master. The second telling passage comes in Andromache's lament as she is led to death with her son. If Andromache were portrayed as readily accepting Neoptolemos as her natural protector, it seems reasonable to suppose that in this crisis, her wish for help would be directed towards him in that capacity, as her son's is to his absent father in 507–8. But—in what I cannot help feeling is a pointed contrast—Andromache's cry for help goes out not to the master who in realistic terms is her natural protector, but to the husband who has been beyond helping her for some eight years (523–5):

ὦ πόσις πόσις, εἴθε σὰν  
χείρα καὶ δόρυ σύμμαχον  
κτησαίμαν, Πριάμου παῖ.

In Euripides' portrayal, it is her old family ties that have Andromache's commitment and her heart. And it is Andromache's emotional allegiance to those ties beyond death that contributes an element of personal pain to Euripides' portrayal of the inherent tension of the Neoptolemos-Andromache relationship.

*Andromache*: 'wife of Hector'<sup>28</sup>

Precisely because this tension within the relationship between Andromache and Neoptolemos is not an essential motivating force affecting the course of events in the play, Euripides' exploration of this aspect of the case has a privileged position in our assessment of the play's issues. The plot of *Andromache* would work just as well if Andromache were any Trojan captive—or any captive-concubine at all, come to that; but in that case there would be something fundamental lost to the poignancy and richness of the play. Exploration of this tension seems to me to be an effect sustained throughout. Andromache is first introduced—and cast once for all—as, still and after all, Hector's wife: *δάμαρ δοθείσα παιδοποιὸς Ἑκτορι* (4). As such, her old ties—with Troy, with her family, with Hector—are clearly at odds with the house of her master, and above all with Achilles, whose name and memory cast such a strong shadow over Neoptolemos. This is, as we have seen, true from Andromache's own point of view; it is also true from the hostile point of view of her enemies. Hermione and Menelaos are constantly making this point in casting Andromache as an enemy and an outsider,

<sup>28</sup> See earlier remarks (p. 356, above) about the classification of this title alongside the other patronymics.

by race and relationship.<sup>29</sup> Menelaos in 656 uses δάμαρ... "Εκτορος in a way that justifies classifying the title among the patronymics discussed earlier, as a device used to underline the issues and tensions of kinship that run throughout the play (654–6):

τοῦ σοῦ δὲ παιδὸς αἵματος κοινουμένην.  
Πάρις γάρ, ὃς σὸν παῖδ' ἔπεφν' Ἀχιλλέα,  
"Εκτορος ἀδελφὸς ἦν, δάμαρ δ' ἦδ' "Εκτορος.

Hermione and Orestes use τήν... "Εκτορος ξυνευνέτιν (908) and γυναικὸς "Εκτορος (960) in a similar way, not just in contempt of Andromache as the wife of a defeated barbarian but with the implication that Neoptolemos' involvement with this woman goes against the grain—of Greece and of his own family. Menelaos' reasoning in 654–6 is both paltry and spurious; and we are not likely either to have much sympathy with this view of Andromache from Orestes' and Hermione's lips. Yet although the idea of it being outrageous—even wrong—that Neoptolemos should link himself and concern himself with a woman of a hostile barbarian race, the widow of Greece's greatest enemy, comes largely through such unsympathetic mouthpieces, there remains a continuing sense of the uneasiness, the latent strains and tensions, of this relationship contracted between Greek and Trojan, conqueror and defeated captive, between Achilles' son and Hector's widow. Neoptolemos is never, I think, quite free of the shadow of Hector's death and of his father's rôle in it, in the audience's mind. Even at the end, in the messenger's account of his murder which shows him in his most sympathetic light, the shadow still hangs over him. As he falls, Neoptolemos is once more referred to as Ἀχιλλέως... παῖς (1149–50), and in the near context of this reference, we find Homeric echoes of some particularly searing details of Hector's final encounter with Achilles: 1140–41 (the simile of doves fleeing from a hawk—occurring twice in the *Iliad*, but most memorably applied to Hector's flight from Achilles in 22.139–42), and 1152–4 (the multiple wounds inflicted by the mob on the fallen warrior, as by the Greeks in *Iliad* 22.371–5). If it is true that the narrative of Neoptolemos' death subtly recalls to us that of his father's illustrious Trojan victim, then the tension inherent in Neoptolemos' relationship with Andromache, arising from his links with his father and the memory of Hector and his death, would again be a factor to be considered in our response to this climactic scene. And if this idea is thus sustained into the play's conclusion, then the recurring references to Achilles in Peleus' laments and the epiphany of Thetis might also relate to the issue. Thetis' final speech may indeed unite the fortunes of Achilles' Aeacid house and those of the house of Troy (1249–52). But the union—the fact that Hector's widow has borne the child who will assure the succession of Achilles' line, and Achilles' son has fathered the child who will assure the posterity of Troy—is a paradox of some piquancy, and I suspect Euripides meant us to be aware of this.

### CONCLUSION

It may, then, be possible to see one of Euripides' intentions in *Andromache* as the exploration of the complexities of human relationships even within the apparently straightforward, clearly defined structure of ties existing within bloodkin families and between such families by means of marriage. The distinctive concentration of patronymic reference in the play both points to this theme and helps to illuminate and explore it. Interestingly, there is a very closely parallel pattern at work in a play, from another time and culture, whose author may well have drawn on Euripides' play:

<sup>29</sup> E.g. 168–9, 247, 652–6ff.



Jean Racine's *Andromaque*. *Andromaque*, also, deals with the relationships between Andromache, Pyrrhus, Hermione and Orestes; the four characters are, again, referred to by patronymics with notable frequency,<sup>30</sup> often with ironic and allusive effects very similar to those achieved in *Andromache*.<sup>31</sup> Racine's first-hand acquaintance with Euripides' work is well-documented; it is possible that this earlier reader of *Andromache* took a similar view of the impact of the patronymic pattern in the Greek play to that argued here, and adapted that pattern for his own purposes.

In Euripides' *Andromache*, the pattern of patronymic reference creates, in the allusive, often subtle ways we have been considering, a pervasive sense of highly-charged combinations between kinship ties and the individuals involved. The tensions we have been exploring all involve elements of individuality interacting with kinship ties to produce volatile combinations: Menelaos' ruthlessness reacting unpleasantly with his commitment to his daughter; Achilles' exceptional prowess and proud temper operating on the actions and the fate of Neoptolemos, the son who inherits these traits; Orestes' individual and tragic family circumstances forging his fate and character, and crossing paths fatally with the son of Achilles. Perhaps this is true most of all in Andromache's case. The individuality of her circumstances—captive-concubine to the son of a man stained with her husband's blood—generates tension within her relationship with Neoptolemos; so too does the individuality of her reactions—her commitment to Hector long beyond death, her emotional identification of Neoptolemos with his father, her own combination of aversion and painful resignation to her position.

Inherited character and inherited commitment may, then, in particular cases become forces liable to generate tension or create explosions in the relationship structure. I believe that Euripides' insistent use of titles like 'son of Achilles', 'son of Agamemnon', 'wife of Hector' in *Andromache* is designed to set up links, relating to this idea, between the diverse actions of the play. The 'patronymic' motif is used to suggest and explore the latent power of human circumstance and human individuality, in the case of each of the characters involved and in the relationships between them that are the moving forces behind each of the play's crises. With the aid of this pattern of patronymic reference, Euripides' exploration of the volatile combination of individuality operating within, and sometimes arising from, family relationships binds the action of *Andromache* together. It thus stands as at least one unifying force in the play.

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<sup>30</sup> Pyrrhus: five times (146, 150, 310, 630, 662); Andromaque: four times (108, 662, 860, 1320); Oreste twice (178, 274); Hermione: three times (245, 342, 1320); total: fourteen patronymics.

<sup>31</sup> E.g. Pyrrhus' ironic: 'Qui croirait, en effet, qu'une telle entreprise / Du fils d'Agamemnon méritât l'entremise?' (177–8).