OEDIPUS AND ERICHTHONIUS: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PARADIGMATIC AND SYNTAGMATIC ORDER

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T HE TERM "STRUCTURALISM" covers a surprisingly wide variety of approaches and analytic models. Only to the uninformed can it be reduced to the work of a single school, or of a single man. When it is so reduced, that man is Claude Lévi-Strauss. Not without reason, for perhaps no one has done more to bring structuralism to the attention of the scholarly world, and even to popular audiences. But the method, now so widely diversified, was derived from linguistics, and when we return to that starting-point, it becomes clear that, in a certain sense later to be qualified, Lévi-Strauss has taken only half the method to the analysis of narrative. In the present essay I should like to return to these linguistic roots of structural narrative analysis to explicate what is unquestionably its most important aspect: the distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic order, for it is basically only one of these that Lévi-Strauss employs, that is, analysis of paradigmatic order. I shall then try to present a concrete example of myth analyzed the other way, that is, syntagmatically, cautioning the reader — especially the classicist — to expect no more than a tentative, introductory, exploratory essay.

The opposition between paradigm and syntagm is basic to modern structural linguistics.[1] Indeed, to insist that "linguistic units have no validity independently of their paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations with other units"[2] has been called the defining characteristic of structural linguistics. Both paradigm and syntagm are presupposed in any product, conscious or unconscious, of systematic thought. A linguistic unit sustains a paradigmatic relationship with all other units that could be conceivably substituted for it in the same context. It sustains a syntagmatic relationship with all other units that occur with it and constitute its context, that is, units that may precede, follow, include it, or be included within it. Paradigms constitute a substitutional set. In linguistic activity, elements are selected from such sets and combined in a restricted linear context in which their interrelationship is syntagmatic. Paradigms are united in a virtual set *in absentia*; by

85

definition, they never occur together. Syntagms are united *in praesentia*; they occur together in an actual series or chain.[3] In the following schema, each vertical column represents a paradigmatic set:

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                    ◄─────────────────────►  Syntagmatic relation
                    ▲
                    │   a      b      c
   Paradigmatic     │   a'     b'     c'
   relation         │   a''    b''    c''    etc.
                    ▼        etc.
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A language event occurs when one unit is selected from each of these vertical columns to form a syntagmatic chain (e.g.: abc, ab'c'', a''b'c', a''b''c'', etc.). This abstract description can be clarified by some examples. At the phonological level in English,[4] because it can occur in the context /-et/, the expression element /b/ stands in paradigmatic relationship with /g/, /j/, /l/, /m/, /n/, etc., and in syntagmatic relationship with /e/ and /t/. Schematically:

/b/
/g/
/j/
/l/ /-et/
/m/
/n/
/p/
etc.

At the word level, consider the context *the ... of a dog*. The word *bark* belongs to a paradigmatic set containing such other words as *tail, paw, head, habits, fur, gait*, etc.; it has syntagmatic relations with *the, of, a,* and *dog*. Schematically:

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              | tail   |
              | paw    |
              | head   |
        the   | habits | of a dog
              | fur    |
              | gait   |
                etc.
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These examples are taken from speech, but paradigm and syntagm are no less operative in other signifying systems or types of communica-

tion. One such nonlinguistic signifying system is the selection, preparation, and consumption of food.[5] The rules for the actual juxtaposition, both sequential and spatial, of food-units in the meal are syntagmatic; the sets of permissible servings at various stages in the meal are paradigmatic. One such paradigmatic set in this system would be, for example, that of appetizers, comprising such possible choices as soup, hors d'oeuvres, fruit, fruit juice, etc. The relation of any one of these to the entrée and the dessert (themselves paradigmatic, substitutional sets) is syntagmatic. In what might be called the "garment system,"[6] a paradigm would be a "set of pieces, parts or details which cannot be worn at the same time on the same part of the body, and whose variation corresponds to a change in the meaning of the clothing."[7] A syntagmatic relationship results from "juxtaposition in the same type of dress of different elements: skirt, blouse, jacket."[8] The combinatory rules here are often as restrictive as those of grammar: it would be "ungrammatical" to wear a silk top hat with gingham.

The essence of the syntagm is association by *juxtaposition*, whether temporal or spatial. The essence of the paradigm is association by any sensed *similarity* (as, for example, in language: grammatical likeness, semantic affiliation, or mere phonetic similarity [rhyme]). If I say "ball" and you respond "bat," or "game," or "chain," or "socket," you have made a syntagmatic association; if you respond "sphere," or "testicle," or "cube," or "fall," you have made a paradigmatic association. And if you compulsively make only one of these kinds of association and cannot effect the other, you are afflicted with one of the two distinct types of aphasia.[9] Indeed, one might even characterize scholars as paradigmatic or syntagmatic, depending on whether they delight more in cataloguing and classifying or in syllogistic reasoning and narrative!

A final general observation to be made is that syntagmatic relationships are not necessarily *sequential*. That is to say, some elements of a structure may be identified or defined by their relative positions in sequence, but not all. "Sequence," M. A. K. Halliday says, "is at a lower degree of abstraction than order and is one possible formal exponent of it."[10] In language, for example, word-sequence in the sentence is in some cases more restrictive (as in English), in other cases less so (as in Greek and Latin). In the food-system, or so-called "culinary code" most familiar in Western culture, the syntagmatic relation between entrée and dessert is rigidly sequential; that between the elements

within the entrée — "joint" (flesh), "staple" (cereal), and "adjunct" (vegetable) — is not sequential. It is obvious how large a role sequence plays in the syntagms at the phonological level in most languages (e.g.: "eat" as opposed to "tea," and "lie" as opposed to "isle"), and how small a role it plays in the syntagms of the garment-system.

Returning now to the subject of mythic narrative analysis, we see that Lévi-Strauss describes patterns which allegedly underlie the text as it is given, and that these patterns are usually reducible to an *a priori* principle of binary opposition. These patterns have little at all in common with the *sequential* structure. Rather the basic narrative units or "mythemes" are extracted from the chronological (or "diachronic") order as it stands and are re-grouped according to their logical, conceptual, or, as he puts it, "synchronic" interrelations.[11] This type of organization has been called paradigmatic, borrowing from the notion of paradigm in linguistics.[12] But long before Lévi-Strauss applied himself to the study of narrative, the Russian formalist, Vladimir Propp published a study of Russian folktales (1928)[13] in which a distinctly different type of analysis — still structural — was emphasized. In this type, the structure or formal organization of a text is described without diverging from the linear, chronological sequence of basic narrative units or mythemes. Thus if a tale is constituted out of a series of events A to Z, the structure of the tale is delineated in terms of this same sequence. Borrowing from the notion of syntax in linguistic analysis, this type has been called syntagmatic structural analysis. These two types of analysis, as Alan Dundes points out, possess contrasting characteristics, appealing to quite different scholarly predispositions: "Generally speaking, the syntagmatic approach tends to be both empirical and inductive, and its resultant analyses can be replicated. In contrast, paradigmatic analyses are speculative and deductive, and they are not as easily replicated."[14]

Now there is a clear correspondence between Lévi-Strauss' exclusively paradigmatic analysis of narrative and the subject matter to which he addresses himself. In the Amerindian narratives which appear in *Mythologiques*,[15] chronology and genealogy are for the most part negligible or non-existent, both within each tale, and in the relation of tale to tale. They positively invite paradigmatic analysis, and promise little yield to syntagmatic analysis. By contrast, in Greek (and for that matter Judaeo-Christian) myth, genealogical preoccupations are prominent, together with rigid temporal priority and posteriority, and irreversible

time. More important, prophecy, than which there is probably no more critical element in Greek myth, establishes irreversible sequential and causal continuity — teleology — *as an element of structure.*[16] By contrast, in all 813 of the Amerindian tales studied by Lévi-Strauss, there is not a single prophecy!

Lévi-Strauss has been criticized by Edmund Leach[17] and Paul Ricoeur[18] for so obstinately resisting the analysis of Greek and Judaeo-Christian myths following his use of the Oedipus myth as a methodological model. In response, he has argued that in the Greek and Judaeo-Christian materials intellectual operations (e.g., that of Biblical compilers and redactors) have worked in conflict with the randomized non-intellectual operations of the ancient structures, thus making them undecipherable. There is, of course, more to it than that. His Rousseauvian prejudice in favor of the primitive, of "cold" cultures defined by equilibrium more than by change and history, his corresponding disavowal of "hot" or historically-defined cultures, especially Western culture, and of the very notions of history and progress — all this suggests a disavowal of the syntagmatic as such, especially of the sequentially syntagmatic. The closing pages of *L'Homme nu (Mythologiques IV.)* declare that myth and the study of myth represent a liberation from the enslavement of time. Be that as it may, it remains to be proved that chronological sequence — one form of syntagmatic structure — is insignificant in the analysis of Greek (and Judaeo-Christian) myth.

In what follows, I propose to demonstrate how the message which, through exclusively paradigmatic analysis, Lévi-Strauss discovers underlying the manifest content of the Oedipus myth is found in the *syntagmatic* structure of another myth — that of Erichthonius, a message which in this latter form lies a good deal closer to consciousness, and to the manifest content of the narrative. Before examining the Erichthonius myth, we should review in its essentials Lévi-Strauss' interpretation of the Oedipus myth, always bearing in mind, of course, that he intended[19] it as a methodological model rather than as a conclusive and preferable alternative to other interpretations. His four-column skeletal scheme has been reproduced and explained with sufficient frequency to justify concise summary here. All but eleven basic units have been extracted from the chronological chain of the narrative and arranged in columns according to their generic similarities: *over-valuation of kinship* in column I, *under-valuation of kinship* in column II, *denial of man's*

90   *John Peradotto*

autochthonous origin in column III, and *assertion of man's autochthonous origin* in column IV.[20]

I	II	III	IV
Cadmus seeks lost sister Europa.			
		Cadmus kills the dragon.	
	Spartoi kill one another.		
	Oedipus kills Laius.	Oedipus kills the Sphinx.	Labdacus = "lame."
Oedipus marries mother Jocasta.			Laius = "left-sided."
	Eteocles kills Polyneices.		Oedipus = "swollen-foot."
Antigone buries Polyneices.			

Logically, column IV is the opposite of column III just as column II is the opposite of column I:

$$I : II :: III : IV$$

Lévi-Strauss sees this as an attempt to overcome a cultural dilemma: experience shows that man is the product of bisexual union; but the primal pair would inevitably be related as brother and sister, making all their offspring incestuous products. To escape such an unacceptable conclusion, autochthony — birth from *one* — is posited, but at the cost of experience. "The myth," to quote Lévi-Strauss,[21]
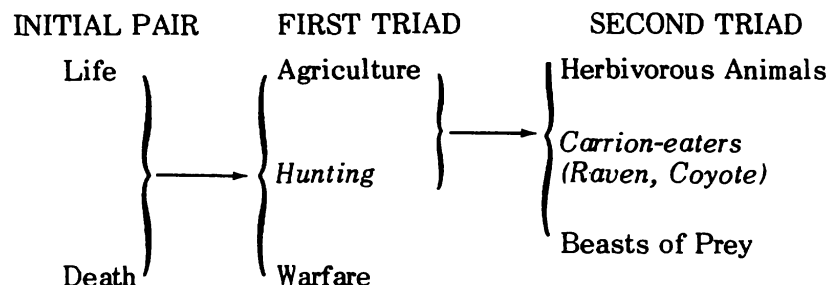
> has to do with the inability for a culture which holds the belief that mankind is autochthonous, to find a satisfactory transition between this theory and the knowledge that human beings are actually born from the union of man and woman. Although the problem obviously cannot be solved, the Oedipus myth provides a kind of logical tool which relates the original problem — born from one or born from two? — to the derivative problem — born from different or born from same?

And further:

> The inability to connect two kinds of relationships is overcome (or rather replaced) by the assertion that the

contradictory relationships are identical inasmuch as they are both self-contradictory in a similar way.
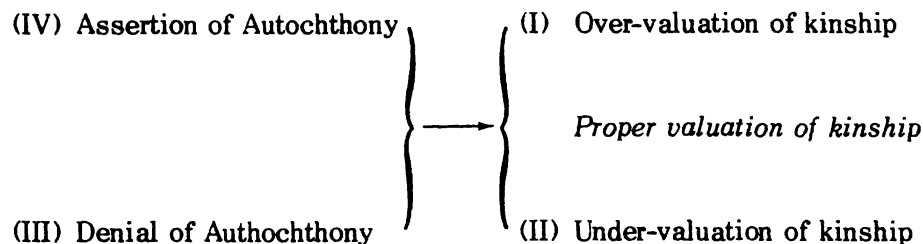
Parenthetically, what continues to scandalize me about this early explanation is that Lévi-Strauss failed to articulate a latent characteristic of his Oedipus model, a characteristic which would give it increased analytical elegance. And this is all the more strange in that he adverts explicitly to this characteristic in describing the Pueblo trickster-myths in the very same essay. This characteristic is the tendency to replace two unmediatable oppositions by two equivalent or analogous terms which admit a third one as a mediator.[22] Lévi-Strauss sees this process at work in the tendency of North American myth to assign the trickster's mediating role to either coyote or raven. He schematizes the structure of such tales as follows:

INITIAL PAIR	FIRST TRIAD	SECOND TRIAD
Life	Agriculture	Herbivorous Animals
Death	Hunting	*Carrion-eaters (Raven, Coyote)*
	Warfare	Beasts of Prey

The movement from two unmediatable opposites (as above, Life and Death) to analogous opposites permitting mediation (Agriculture and Warfare) is the process called *transformation*, whose product is a four-part homology: Life : Agriculture :: Death : Warfare. Hunting represents a preliminary mediation inasmuch as it is like agriculture in being life-sustaining food-gathering, and like warfare in that it involves killing. Dissatisfaction with the fact that hunting still involves killing engenders another transformation, the goal of which is a new pair of opposites analogous to agriculture and hunting, and capable of mediating them: Agriculture : Herbivorous Animals :: Hunting : Predatory Animals. The new opposites admit carrion-eaters as mediation, in that, like predators, they eat dead animals, but like herbivores, do not kill them.

Now, so far as I know, no one has pointed out that this mode of mythic problem-solving is precisely what we have in the four-term homology of Lévi-Strauss' Oedipus model: columns III and IV are related to one another as *contradictories* (without possible mediation); but

columns I and II are logical *contraries* between which mediation (i.e., *proper* valuation of kinship) is possible:

(IV) Assertion of Autochthony   (I) Over-valuation of kinship

Proper valuation of kinship

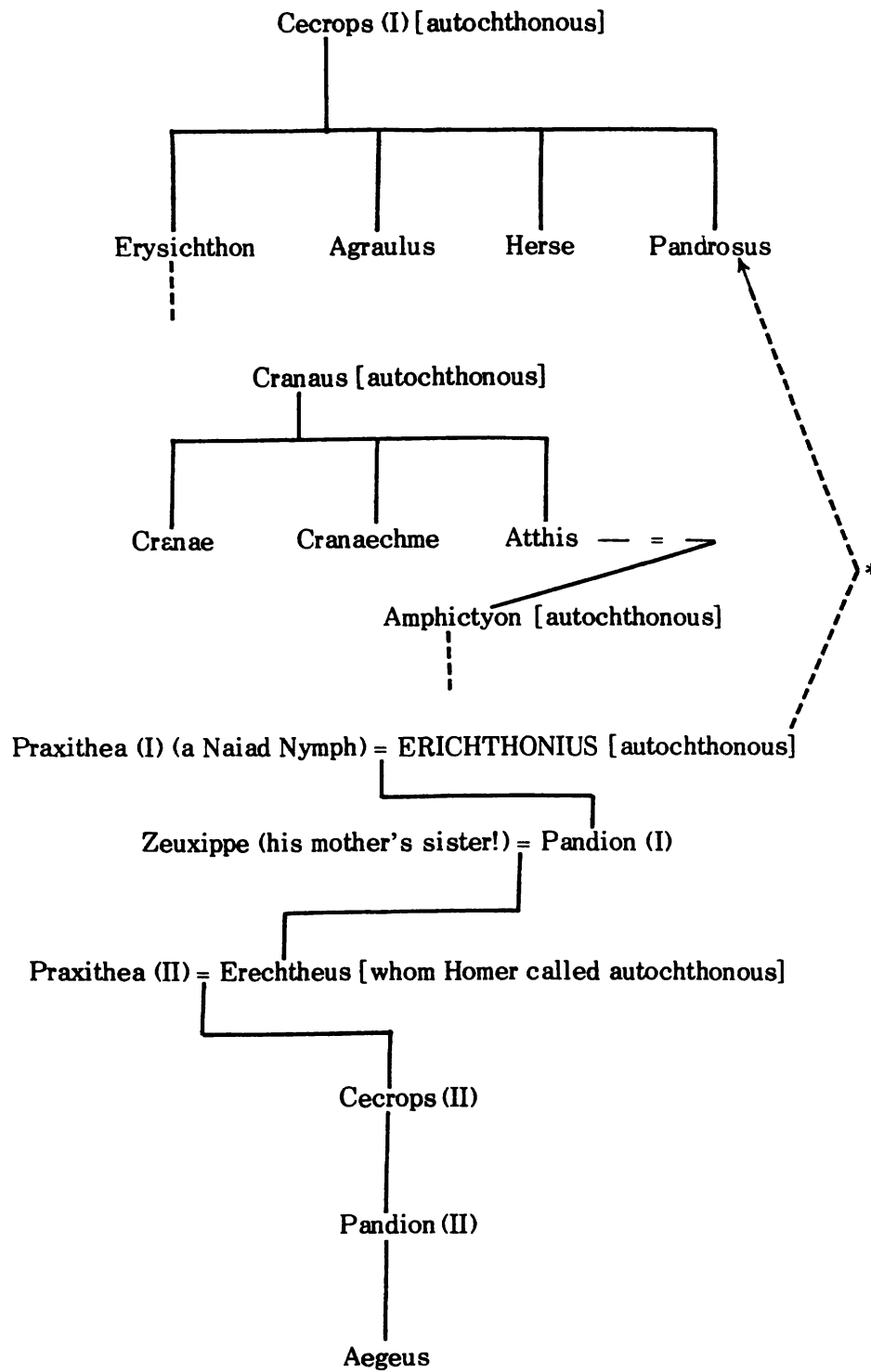(III) Denial of Authochthony   (II) Under-valuation of kinship

Thus, the problem of autochthony vs. bisexual union (columns III and IV) is resolved by making it equivalent to the potentially mediatable opposition between under-valuation and over-valuation of kinship relations (columns I and II). Of course, from the standpoint of strict Aristotelian logic, this kind of resolution amounts to a fallacy: equating contradictories with contraries.[23]

Returning to the main line of our argument, it is important to observe, as Lévi-Strauss himself emphasizes, that in the Oedipus myth the initial problem — assertion vs. denial of autochthony — is not fully conscious on the surface of the narrative. But when we turn to the myth of Erichthonius and the beginnings of the Athenian people, we are from the outset *consciously* concerned with origins and the problem of autochthony. The inevitably discontinuous and unreproductive character of autochthony is evident in the manifest content of the genealogy[24] (see p. 93): three false starts — Cecrops, Cranaus, Amphictyon — each (necessarily) autochthonous, the whole series showing progressively diminished reproductivity: from Cecrops, with three daughters and a son who dies young and without issue, to Cranaus, with three daughters and no sons, to his rebellious son-in-law Amphictyon, who is expelled altogether without issue. He is expelled by Erichthonius, with whom begins an uninterrupted line of continuity down to "historical" times. What makes Erichthonius different from his unsuccessful autochthonous predecessors? The answer lies in the story of his birth — one of the most often repeated and best attested myths in the corpus — here presented in version of Apollodorus (3.14.6):

Some say that this Erichthonius was a son of Hephaestus and Atthis, daughter of Cranaus, and some that he was a son of Hephaestus and Athena, as follows: Athena came to Hephaestus wishing to have some armor fashioned. Hephaes-

Cecrops (I) [autochthonous]

Erysichthon   Agraulus   Herse   Pandrosus

Cranaus [autochthonous]

Cranae   Cranaechme   Atthis — = —>

Amphictyon [autochthonous]

)*

Praxithea (I) (a Naiad Nymph) = ERICHTHONIUS [autochthonous]

Zeuxippe (his mother's sister!) = Pandion (I)

Praxithea (II) = Erechtheus [whom Homer called autochthonous]

Cecrops (II)

Pandion (II)

Aegeus

(* Athena entrusts the infant Erichthonius to Pandrosus.)

tus, who had been abandoned by Aphrodite, fell into a sudden passion for Athena, and began to pursue her; but she fled. When with a great deal of effort he closed on her (he was lame, remember), he made an attempt at intercourse. But she was chaste and a virgin, and would not submit. He ejaculated on her thigh. In disgust, she wiped the semen away with wool and threw it on the ground. She fled away, and as the semen fell into the earth, Erichthonius was born. Him Athena raised unknown to the other gods, wishing to make him immortal. And having put him in a chest, she committed it to Pandrosus, daughter of Cecrops, forbidding her to open it. But the sisters of Pandrosus opened the chest in their curiosity, and beheld a snake coiled about the infant. As some would have it, they were killed by the snake; others say that Athena's anger drove them insane, and they threw themselves from the Acropolis. Erichthonius was raised by Athena herself in the sacred precinct. He expelled Amphictyon, became king of Athens, set up the wooden image of Athena on the Acropolis, instituted the Panathenaeic festival, and married Praxithea, a Naiad nymph, by whom he had a son Pandion.

What more could one ask for in a contradiction-mediating figure? Erichthonius not only resolves the old autochthony contradiction by being at one and the same time autochthonous *and* product of a bisexual transaction, he also permits his Athenian heirs to claim that they are offspring of Earth, of Hephaestus, whose cult was so strong among them, and even of Athena, and this without any damage to her virginity. Beyond what immediately meets the eye, there is a measure of elegant logical "overkill" bound on making the solution really air-tight: Hephaestus bears the telltale lameness of the autochthonous, but more important for our original dilemma, he is born from *one*, as Athena is born from *one*,[25] in the one case, male from unaided female, in the other, female from unaided male, and it is out of their explicit *difference*, their remaining apart *(eris)* that *Eri*-chthonius is paradoxically born. The cleansing wool *(erion)* is there to dramatize the original disjunction *(eris)* all the more.[26]

I would further suggest that the detail wherein Athena entrusts the infant Erichthonius to Pandrosus, daughter of Cecrops, could be a

device for bridging the prior discontinuities, for establishing continuity with the chronologically prior but otherwise unproductive Cecrops, bypassing the wholly irredeemable Cranaus and Amphictyon. The variant that makes Erichthonius son of Hephaestus and Atthis, daughter of Cranaus, seems a similar, though weaker attempt to establish continuity with the chronologically prior family of Cranaus, just as another variant, the marriage of Cranaus' daughter Atthis to Amphictyon seems like an attempt (obviously unsuccessful) to fill the vertical gap in filiation with a horizontal affinal relation.

There is another noteworthy observation on the syntagmatic order here, although it is not evident in the selective genealogical table on page 93: there is progressive *increase* in reproductivity after Erichthonius answering to the progressive decline in reproductivity from Cecrops through Amphictyon: Erichthonius has *one* son; that son, Pandion I, has *two* sons [+ two daughters]; his heir to the throne, Erechtheus, has *three* sons [+ four daughters]; the second Cecrops momentarily reverses the trend with *one* son, but that one, Pandion II, has *four* sons, which brings us down to Aegeus, where the problem of reproductivity re-asserts itself, but that is another story.

This sequence obviously cries out for further analysis, especially concerning the function of wives and daughters, the repetition of proper names in successive generations, the astounding, unparalleled marriage of Pandion I to his mother's sister, but the main point has been made: what Lévi-Strauss extracts with much difficulty from the Oedipus myth by the use of aprioristic and deductive categories is easily visible in the syntagmatic structure of the Attic myth, is more available to consciousness, and is replicated with far less "subjective" selectivity among the manifest narrative units. In the study of Greek mythic materials, clearly neither paradigmatic nor syntagmatic analysis must be neglected.

However, it would be intellectually hazardous not to scrutinize more closely Lévi-Strauss' dismissal of syntagmatic order. In Saussure, there is not only a clear bias for the paradigmatic relationship, but the first steps toward the logical reduction of syntagmatic to paradigmatic order are taken, a reduction on which Jacques Derrida is considered to have put the finishing touches. The syntagmatic dimension reduces to the paradigmatic in the sense that a given syntagmatic chain has significance only in terms of its *absent*, alternative substitutes, just

as in the case of paradigms. In other words, the interrelation of units within a syntagmatic series or chain is able to signify because it differs from other possible series or chains, with which the series actually used forms a substitutional or paradigmatic set.[27] Consider the following example:

$$\text{He saw Fido} \left| \begin{array}{l} \text{hunting a dog} \\ \text{a hunting dog} \\ \text{a dog hunting} \end{array} \right|$$

That the arrangement of "a hunting dog" conveys the syntagmatic relation of *attribution* depends on the potential sequential re-arrangement of those words to convey different syntagmatic relations (e.g., *predication* in "a dog hunting"); all of these potential re-arrangements constitute a substitutional paradigmatic set.

Lévi-Strauss' relative disinterest in syntagmatic (or "diachronic") order, therefore, already has its precedent in linguistic theory. His procedure is analogous to the study of a linguistic system. "In both cases," as Jonathan Culler[28] puts it, "one compares syntagmatic sequences in order to construct paradigmatic classes and examines those classes so as to determine the pertinent oppositions between members of each paradigm." In *Le Cru et le cuit (Mythologiques I)* Lévi-Strauss argues that a single syntagmatic chain is meaningless from the analyst's point of view; there are but two procedures for overcoming the difficulty:[29]

> One consists in dividing the syntagmatic sequence into superposable segments, and in proving that they constitute variations on one and the same theme [*his procedure in the Oedipus essay*]. The other procedure, which is complementary to the first, consists in superposing a syntagmatic sequence in its totality — in other words, a complete myth — on other myths or segments of myths. It follows, then, that on both occasions we are replacing a syntagmatic sequence by a paradigmatic sequence.... Two syntagmatic sequences, or fragments of the same sequence, which, considered in isolation, contain no definite meaning, acquire a meaning simply from the fact that they are polar opposites.

It has become fashionable to discount Lévi-Strauss' Oedipus essay, or at least to point out the presumed embarrassing discrepancy between the method advocated and employed there and the one found in *Mythologiques*. In point of fact, the early essay proves to be the only method applicable to a kind of narrative, like Greek and Judaeo-Christian, which Lévi-Strauss would call debased myth — something closer to the novel than to "genuine" myth of the Amerindian variety, a kind described in the following terms in *L'Origine des manières de table:*[30]

> [Their] structural content is dispersed. For the vigorous transformations of genuine myths we now find feeble ones substituted.... The sociological, astronomical and anatomical codes whose functioning we hitherto observed out in the open now pass beneath the surface; and the structure sinks into seriality. This degradation begins when oppositions turn into mere reduplications: episodes succeeding each other in time, but all formed in the same pattern. It is complete when reduplication itself takes the place of structure. The form of a form, reduplication receives the dying breath of structure itself. Having nothing more, or so little, left to say, myth now survives by repeating itself.

The Oedipus myth is just such a product in Lévi-Strauss' calculation. For that reason, he insisted on extracting bundles of identical units — repeated units, and ranging them against one another in a four-term homology. However, *transformation*, that methodological concept so critical to *Mythologiques*, does not figure in the Oedipus analysis, for none appear in the debased myth that this narrative typifies. In fact, his explication of the Pueblo trickster myths in the very same essay with the Oedipus interpretation proceeds almost as if the methodological ground-rules at the outset of the essay had been utterly abandoned. "The Structural Study of Myth" turns out to be anything but a methodological model which just happens to use the Oedipus myth because everyone knows it; rather, the material restricts the method. Whatever Lévi-Strauss' original intentions may have been, the essay appears to apply only to the study of "debased," time-bound, serialized myth, the narrative of what Lévi-Strauss would call "hot" cultures. His scholarship, curiously enough, turns out to be as "synchronic" as the relations he purports to discover in his Amerindian data. The Oedipus interpreta-

tion, which at first sight seems so ill-suited as an introduction to the method employed in *Mythologiques*, is perfectly consonant with his observations on "debased" myth published thirteen years later in *L'Origine des manières de table*. In a sense, the local discrepancy forces us to view his work, as he himself views Amerindian myth, simultaneously as a whole, "synchronically."

My own reading of the Erichthonius story, at first sight syntagmatic, is reducible to a paradigmatic relation. It implies other possible sequential orders against which the Erichthonius sequence — with diminishing procreativity and absolute discontinuity between "generations" up to Erichthonius, and continuity and increasing procreativity after him — forces upon us the limitations of any theory of autochthony. Taking the other approach advocated by Lévi-Strauss, i.e., that of dividing the syntagmatic chain into segments shown to constitute variations on a single theme, forces us to range the birth of Erichthonius against the cases of Cecrops, Cranaus, and Amphictyon, which constitute a single paradigmatic set, and to abstract its distinction from them as the solution to the original problem. Is this a case of "debased" myth? Its narrative situations are not cases of simple repetition. Rather, it is repetition with a significant enough difference to draw attention to itself. Furthermore, although the syntagmatic chain is reducible to a paradigmatic relationship, the meaning of the myth still lies on the syntagmatic level, not in the logical relationship between the actual and the potential sequences. The meaning is validated by its absent alternatives, by its *difference* from them. Sequence, or, more abstractly, syntagmatic order still proves to be critically important in the analysis of at least a certain kind of myth.

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NOTES

[1] These appear to be the most generally accepted terms for the concepts under discussion. See John Lyons, *Introduction to Theoretical Linguistics* (Cambridge 1968) 70-81, 428-429. But different terminology will be encountered in certain key authors. Ferdinand de Saussure: *"association"* and *"syntagm"* (*Cours de linguistique générale*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye [1916; rpt. Paris 1960] 170 ff.); Hjelmslev: *"correlations"* and *"relations"*

(*Prolegomena to a Theory of Language,* trans. F. J. Whitefield [Madison, Wis. 1961] 38-39, 65-66); Jakobson: *"similarities"* and *"contiguities"* (or as processes, *"selection"* and *"combination"*), but more often, especially in his extension of the opposition to nonlinguistic languages, *"metaphor"* and *"metonym"* ("Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances" in R. Jakobson and M. Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* [The Hague 1956] 55-82); A. Martinet: *"oppositions"* and *"contrasts"* (*Elements of General Linguistics,* trans. Elizabeth Palmer [Chicago 1964] 36); Roland Barthes: *"system"* and *"syntagm"* (*Elements of Semiology* [printed together with *Writing Degree Zero*] trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith [Boston 1970] 58-88). Most of the present discussion of paradigm and syntagm is reproduced from my "*Odyssey* 8.564-571: Verisimilitude, Narrative Analysis, and Bricolage," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 15.5 (1974) 803-832, esp. 818-821.

2 John Lyons (above, note 1) 74-75.

3 Saussure (above, note 1) 17: "Le rapport syntagmatique est *in praesentia:* il repose sur deux ou plusieurs termes également présents dans une série effective. Au contraire le rapport associatif unit des termes *in absentia* dans une série mnémonique virtuelle."

4 This example is taken from Lyons (above, note 1) 73-74.

5 See Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked,* trans. J. and D. Weightman (New York 1969), or, for a simpler introduction to the so-called "culinary Triangle," *Partisan Review* 33 (1966) 586-595; Michael A. K. Halliday, "Categories of the Theory of Grammar," *Word: Journal of the Linguistic Circle of New York* 17 (1961) 241-291, but esp. 277-280; Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," *Daedalus* (Winter 1972) 61-81.

6 See Roland Barthes, *Système de la mode* (Paris 1967).

7 Barthes (above, note 1) 63.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language" (above, note 1).

10 Halliday (above, note 5) 254-255. See also Lyons (above, note 1) 76-78. On sequence in narrative, see Gérard Genette, *Figures III* (Paris 1972) 77-121.

11 See his "Structural Study of Myth" in *Structural Anthropology,* trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (Garden City, N.Y. 1967; orig. 1963) 202-228. This is a considerably revised version of the essay which first appeared under the same title in Thomas A. Sebeok (ed.), *Myth: a Symposium* ("Bibliographical and Special Series of the American Folklore Society," vol. 5; Bloomington 1955).

The terms "synchronic" and "diachronic" have been preserved in my analysis for the convenience of those wishing to refer back to Lévi-Strauss' essay, even though linguists familiar with these terms in Saussure will be troubled by their misguided application in Lévi-Strauss' usage. See further Turner's essay in the present volume (section II.D.2).

12 For a brief general discussion of the two types of narrative analysis, paradigmatic and syntagmatic, see Alan Dundes' introduction to the second edition of Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale,* trans. Laurence Scott

("Bibliographical and Special Series of the American Folklore Society," vol. 10; Austin and London 1968) xi-xvii.

[13] See note 12, above.

[14] Dundes (above, note 12) xii.

[15] *Mythologiques I: Le Cru et le cuit* (Paris 1964), translated by J. and D. Weightman, *The Raw and the Cooked* (New York 1969); *Mythologiques II: Du Miel aux cendres* (Paris 1966), translated by J. and D. Weightman, *From Honey to Ashes* (New York 1971); *Mythologiques III: L'Origine des manières de table* (Paris 1968); *Mythologiques IV: L'Homme nu* (Paris 1972). We must, of course, rely on Lévi-Strauss' versions of these tales. It must, however, be questioned whether and to what extent he or his secondary sources have underplayed whatever temporal elements there may be in them.

[16] For a description of the type of analysis which might be brought to bear on prophecy-tales, see my "*Odyssey* 8.564-571: Verisimilitude, Narrative Analysis, and Bricolage" (above, note 1).

[17] "The Legitimacy of Solomon: Some Structural Aspects of Old Testament History," *European Journal of Sociology* 7 (1966), reprinted in Michael Lane (ed.), *Structuralism: a Reader* (London 1970) 248-292, and in Edmund Leach, *Genesis as Myth and Other Essays* (New York 1970).

[18] "Structure et herméneutique," *Esprit* (November 1963) 596-628, reprinted in the author's *Le Conflit des interprétations* (Paris 1969) 31-63, translated in *The Conflict of Interpretations*, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston 1974).

[19] But how closely the result coincided with his stated intentions we shall shortly have cause to question.

[20] Lévi-Strauss argues that the killing of monsters (column III) by men argues to the denial of man's autochthonous origin as follows: "The dragon is a chthonian being which has to be killed in order that mankind be born from the Earth; the Sphinx is a monster unwilling to permit men to live. The last unit reproduces the first one, which has to do with the autochthonous origin of mankind. Since the monsters are overcome by men, we may thus say that the common feature of the third column is *denial of the autochthonous origin of man*." As for column IV, where all the names suggest difficulty in walking straight or standing upright, he says, "In mythology it is a universal characteristic of men born from the Earth that at the moment they emerge from the depths they either cannot walk or they walk clumsily" (p. 212).

[21] "Structural Analysis of Myth" (above, note 11) 212.

[22] "Structural Analysis of Myth" (above, note 11) 221.

[23] There are many other detailed criticisms which might be leveled at the content of Lévi-Strauss' essay. See Turner in the present volume (section II.B).

[24] The genealogy is constructed out of the version by Apollodorus 3.14.6. For other sources of the myth, see Frazer's Loeb *Apollodorus*, vol. 2, pp. 90-95, and B. Powell, *Athenian Mythology: Erichthonius and the Daughters of Cecrops* (Chicago 1977, orig. 1906).

[25] In telling the story of Erichthonius, Nonnus, *Dioynsiaca* 13.175, refers to Athena by the curious expression παρθένος αὐτολόχευτος.

[26] The etymological element is evident in most of the sources (see Frazer [above, note 24] 91), sometimes quite explicitly, as in the following account by Hyginus (*Fab.* 166):

> Neptunus, quod Minervae erat infestus, instigavit Vulcanum Minervam petere in conjugium, qua re impetrata in thalamum cum venisset, Minerva monitu Jovis virginitatem suam armis defendit, interque luctandum ex semine ejus quod in terram decidit natus est puer qui inferiorem partem draconis habuit; quem Erichthonium ideo nominaverunt quod ἔρις Graece certatio dicitur, χθών autem terra dicitur.

[27] On Saussure's bias for the paradigmatic, see Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language* (Princeton 1972) 36-39, esp. 38: "The syntagmatic dimension ... looks like a primary phenomenon only when we examine its individual units separately; then they seem to be organized successively in time according to some mode of temporal perception. In reality, however, we never perceive them separately: the 'verb' is always felt to be part of a larger unity, which is the syntagma itself, and which now, since it is no longer a series of units but rather a unity of its own, is reabsorbed into as- sociative [=paradigmatic] thought and understood through its resemblance to other syntagmata."

[28] *Structural Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London 1975) 44.

[29] P. 307 of the English translation.

[30] *L'Origine des manières de table* (above, note 15) 105: Jameson's translation (above, note 27) 72.