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## ROMANISATION OF GREEK DRAMA: TRAGEDY



ABSTRACT: The palimpsest of Romanisation of Greek Drama was a constant and imperfect negotiation between the playwrights and largely Attic Greek texts often transmitted through the intermediary of non-Attic Greek communities in Italy and quite possibly through new performance of the plays. The playwright faced the task of making the material immediate and understandable to an audience in Rome with its own expectations and within the special circumstances in which the Latin version was commissioned and performed. There are, as well, degrees of Romanisation. The *fabula palliata* would have had a visual, declared connection to Greek culture, while the *fabula togata* would have put on a Greek play in Roman dress, centering the reception more on contemporary Rome. The *fabula praetexta*, drawing on Roman history, had its own set of special circumstances. Imperial drama, for which Seneca is the fullest witness, melded a both Latin and Greek versions of plays to which the poet added his own interpretation of the material. This is no more apparent than in the *Octavia* and *Hercules on Oeta* where the debts are as much to Seneca as to Greek models and traditions. For the greatest utility, this paper organizes material by the broad categories of subject matter, as this should make clear which inheritances of the Greek past most interested Roman audience and the patrons who paid for productions.

### SENATORIAL ROME / ARCHAIC LATIN

BY THE TIME of the first play at Rome, 240 BCE,<sup>1</sup> Euripides and Sophocles had been dead more than 160 years, Aeschylus more than 200

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years. 120 years earlier (360 BCE) the City Dionysia at Athens had been constricted; revivals become as prevalent as new tragedies. Some Greek myths, and the plays engendered by them, such as *Ino* (the murder/suicide of Ino after boiling her son, Melicertes), would have struck a chord with an audience at Rome since Ino was worshipped at Rome as the Mater Matuta and Melicertes as Portunus<sup>2</sup> — Ovid records the foundation of temples in the *Forum Boarium* to Ino and to Portunus (*Fasti* 6.473–568), following the intervention of Hercules (*Fasti* 6.519–536) at that spot and the establishment of a cult of Ino/Mater Matuta and Potrunus, to be worshipped simultaneously in Greek as Leucothea and Palaemon (*Fasti* 6.545–547). Hyginus devotes two sections to Ino. His *Fabula* 2 is the version of the myth found in Ovid, Accius, *Athamas* (189–195 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 432–438 Dangel), and perhaps also Livius Andronicus' *Ino* (*TrRF* fr. 16). *Fabula* 4 cites the version of Euripides by name and is the one found in ps.-Apollodorus 1.80–84. Presumably this is the version followed in Ennius' *Athamas* (*TrRF* fr. 42), whose messenger speech places Ino among the Bacchantes. The quantum entanglement makes it impossible to think of Roman attitudes and observance, including plays, without reference to Greece. Imperial Greek authorities, such as Plutarch, ps.-Apollodorus, Lucian, and Athenaeus, make it clear that it would be a mistake to think of Greek views as static, pre-dating Rome as their successor. Greece's long continuum overlaps with

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as always, to Jane Francis and also to Katerina Philippides, who saved me from many errors. Any that remain are entirely mine. — West is preferred for Aeschylus, Lloyd-Jones and Wilson for Sophocles, Diggle for Euripides, and Zwierlein for Seneca (including spurious *Octavia* and *Hercules on Oeta*). The remains of Old Latin are cited from *Tragicorum Romanorum Fragmenta* (*TrRF*), volume 1 edited by Schauer and volume 2 edited by Manuwald. Volume III of *TrRF* (Schierl) as well as volume IV of *TrRF* (Schultheiss) are anticipated soon but have not appeared so for both I use Ribbeck, 3rd edition supplemented by Schierl on Pacuvius and Dangel on Accius. For matters of interpretation on Pacuvius, Manuwald 2003 has been my guide. Ribbeck, 3rd edition is cited for Roman historical tragedy supplemented by Warmington. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (*TrGF*) are cited from Radt (Aeschylus and Sophocles) and Kannicht (Euripides). Sommerstein (2008) is cited for fragments of Aeschylus only when his numeration differs from Radt (*TrGF* 1985) or his reading differs and has a bearing on a point under discussion. Radt (1999) on the fragments of Sophocles (*TrGF*) is the more recent witness than Lloyd-Jones (1996) who is much more conservative in attributing fragments to specific plays. As Collard and Cropp (2008) adopt the numbering in Kannicht (*TrGF* 2004), I cite Collard and Cropp only when different readings in their text are of importance to a passage under discussion. The same is true for Diggle's (*TrGFS* 1998).

1. On the beginnings of drama at Rome, see Cowan 2015.
2. Livius Andronicus, *Ino* (*TrRF* fr. 16); cp. Sophocles *TrGF Athamas A and B* fr. 1–10 (Lloyd-Jones *Athamas A and B* fr. 1–5), Euripides, *Ino TrGF* fr. 398–422.

Rome's later start. Their literatures race side-by-side for centuries; it is not as simple as passing of the baton.

It is a quirk of survival that we know about performances of tragedies for the centuries before Christ but not the plays themselves and that in the century after Augustus' death we have ten surviving plays but continued scholarly division on performance.<sup>3</sup> Equally inexplicable is that almost all evidence for comic plays at Rome is restricted to the Republic and that two of the most important early heroes for Rome, Aeneas and Hercules, are largely absent from early Roman drama.

Ninety-two tragedies from the Republic are known by title and in fragments. Exactly half are attributed to Accius (45 plus one spurious), followed by Ennius (17), Pacuvius (13), Livius Andronicus (9 plus 1 spurious) and Naevius (7). If in Rome, as Quintilian suggests, genres of poetry were classified by meter and not subject, genres of plays were classified by costume not content, so properly *fabula togata* refers not to the Greekness or Romanness of the subject (a Roman read of the material cannot be doubted) but to costume.<sup>4</sup> Unlike comedy, almost all references to performance of tragedy during the Republic are to reperformance, so the original occasion, with few exceptions, is lost. For example,<sup>5</sup> Augustus famously (or perhaps infamously) had Sophocles' *Ajax* performed upon the death of Marc Antony. All three of the best-known Athenian tragedians are well represented.

## TROJAN CYCLE

### *Preliminary*

The numerous fragments (*TrGF* 696–727c) plus hypothesis of Euripides' *Telephus* guarantees that it was the main source for Accius' *Telephus* (609–633 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 77–101 Dangel). Two fragments of a version of Aeschylus' *Telephus* (*TrGF* 238–239) survive and the title for Sophocles' trilogy is known.<sup>6</sup> Ennius' *Iphigeneia* (*TrRF* fr. 82–88) exchanges a female cho-

3. Since the 1980s, most scholars moved to accept performance. In the last two decades the pendulum is swinging back, with some few exceptions, such as Kohn.

4. The effect would not have been unlike ancient plays in modern dress.

5. Cicero, *Orator* 46. 155.

6. The first and second plays were *Aleadaei* (*TrGF* fr. 77–91) and *Mysoi*, a male chorus of the realm of Telephus (*TrGF* fr. 409–418).

rus for one of soldiers. Varro (*Lingua Latina* 7.82) wrote that Ennius' *Alexander* (*TrRF* fr. 15–22) was based on Euripides' *Alexander* (*TrGF* fr. 41a–62i) whose contents are related in several ancient hypotheses, and is similar to Sophocles, *Alexander* (*TrGF* fr. 91a–100a). Hyginus' *Fabula* 91 summarizes the plot of these plays dealing with Paris' return to Troy, and demonstrating his regal strength. The story in Ennius' *Phoenix* (*TrRF* fr. 109–116) was of a son's lust<sup>7</sup> and a father's refusal of forgiveness (*TrRF* fr. 116). The fragments seem to accord with what is preserved of Euripides' *Phoenix* (*TrGF* fr. 803a–817) but there is no agreement among the ancient testimony about whether Phoenix slept with his father's concubine at his mother's urging or was falsely accused (one of the longest speeches in the *Iliad*<sup>8</sup> alludes to sleeping with his father's mistress),<sup>9</sup> or even whether he was blinded.<sup>10</sup> Ennius' *Telephus* (*TrRF* fr. 125–131) takes place in Argos where Telephus extorts a promise from Agamemnon to have him healed, and follows closely Euripides, *Telephus*<sup>11</sup> ending with his cure by Achilles.

### *Greek Siege of Troy*

Pacuvius' *Protesilaus*, which shares its title with a play by Euripides,<sup>12</sup> is known only from a late reference.<sup>13</sup> Accius' *Nyctegresia* (*Night Action* 482–492 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 127–137 Dangel) must concern the death of Dolon, and not Rhesus, because of lines attributed to Nestor (484 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 129 Dangel) and to Dolon (490 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 136 Dangel). No Greek playwright seems to have chosen this episode from Homer as the subject of a play. That Ennius' *Achilles sive Achilles Aristarchi* (*TrRF* fr. 1–8) had a Greek model is clear from the title. Its plot is the embassy to Achilles, the subject also of Aeschylus, *Myrmidons*.<sup>14</sup> Fragments of Accius, *Achilles* (1–3 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 105–

7. Fr. 306 Warmington: *stultus est qui cupida mente cupiens cupienter cupit* ('he is stupid who, desiring in his mind, desires desirously').

8. *Iliad*, 9. 430–605. At *Iliad* 16.196 Phoenix is rendered childless as punishment.

9. See also Sophocles, *TrGF Dolopians* fr. 174–175 (Lloyd-Jones rejects fr. 175), which is probably the same as *TrGF Phoenix* fr. 718–720 (Lloyd-Jones accepts only fr. 718).

10. For a survey of the different versions of this myth, see Sommerstein on Menander's *Samia* (2013, 257).

11. *TrGF* fr. 696–727c; see also Aeschylus, *TrGF Telephus* 238–239.

12. *TrGF* fr. 646a–657.

13. Manuwald (2003) 25. Far and away the greatest witness of Pacuvius is the lexicographer Nonius.

14. *TrGF Myrmidons* 131–139; also Sommerstein on fr. 132b. On imperial interest in the

107 Dangel) recount the same story. A second play on Achilles by Accius (*Myrmidons* 4–21, *frag. Inc.* 665 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 108–126 Dangel) would appear to start with the embassy to Achilles (4–9 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 108–13 Dangel) and its failure, and perhaps ends with Achilles rejoining battle. At the centre of this action are the new weapons brought to Achilles by Thetis and the nymphs, who constitute the chorus in Aeschylus' *Nereids* (*TrGF* fr. 150–153 + 296).<sup>15</sup> Based on several scenes, one possibility for Accius' play is that a chorus of Myrmidons has been substituted. The contest for the weapons of Achilles and ultimate suicide of Ajax is the focus of several plays. That Ennius' play *Aiæx* (*TrRF* fr. 9–112) ended with the suicide is implicit from the gushing fountain of his blood.<sup>16</sup> Apart from Sophocles' *Ajax*, Roman writers would have had available Aeschylus' *Award of the Arms* (*TrGF* fr. 174–177a). According to Hyginus, *Fabula* 240 (*Last Trojan Married to Helen*), Accius' *Deiphobus* (127–134 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 253–260 Dangel) would seem to have followed events from the discovery of Sinon and the Trojan Horse through to the murder of Deiphobus by Helen at the Fall of Troy. At the death of Achilles, the Greeks sought the assistance of his son on Scyros. Accius' *Neoptolemus* (464–477 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 181–194 Dangel) seems to have been the only play to take this as a subject.

On the Trojan side, Hector's departure to battle in Naevius' *Hector Proficiscens* (*TrRF* fr. 14–15) is without a known Greek model, but the *Ransom of Hector* (*Hectoris Lytra*), so Ennius, was a popular subject. In-between is the death of Hector, which formed probably the last scenes of Accius' *Epinausimache* (*Naval Action* 308–332 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 138–160 Dangel), which took its name from the sea action in Homer at the beginning of Achilles' rage over the death of Patroclus. Ennius' *Hectoris Lytra* (*TrRF* fr. 56–71) told the story from Patroclus' decision to fight through Priam retrieving Hector's corpse. The sons of the Trojan counselor Antenor, who enjoyed the protection of proxeny, that is, reciprocal guest friendship, with Greeks, took an active role in the fighting in Accius, *Antenoridae* (119–126 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 245–252 Dangel).

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homoeroticism of the play, see Harrison 2018, 147–8. Only a single fragment of Livius Andronicus' *Achilles* (*TrRF* fr. 1).

15. *TrGF* 296 = Sommerstein 150a.

16. *tullii efflantes* (fr. 10). This image perhaps has as much to do with depictions in art and Roman water displays as with texts.

*Aftermath*

Ennius' *Aiix* (*TrRF* fr. 9–12) and his *Judgement of Arms* (*TrRF* fr. 56–71), Livius Andronicus' *Aiix Mastigophorus* (*TrRF* 10–11), Pacuvius' *Judgement of Arms* (21–40 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 20–36 Schierl 2006), and Accius (145–163 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 161–180 Dangel) prove the enduring popularity of this myth. Fragments seem to indicate that Pacuvius included the contest for his weapons as part of the funeral games for Achilles. The story of Philoctetes abandoned by the Greeks was also very popular. Sophocles' *Philoctetes* survives intact and the substantial number of fragments (51) of Accius' *Philocteta sive Philocteta Lemnius* (*Philoctetes or Philoctetes on Lemnos* 520–568 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 195–244 Dangel) allow, unusually, for detailed comparison. In addition to Sophocles, there were also treatments by Aeschylus (*TrGF* fr. 249–255) and Euripides (*TrGF* fr. 787–800),<sup>17</sup> both fragmentary. That the three Greek versions were closely similar to one another is proven by the comparison of them by Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 52.

Three lines only of Livius Andronicus' *Equus Troianus* (*TrRF* fr. 14) survive, and only one line from Naevius' play of the same name (*TrRF* fr. 13). Euripides' play on *Epeus*, builder of the Trojan Horse is known from a monument outside Rome,<sup>18</sup> but as a satyr play its connection to any of these tragedies is doubtful.<sup>19</sup>

Ennius' *Hecuba* (*TrRF* fr. 72–81) closely follows the play of Euripides of the same name. Pacuvius' *Iliona* (191–217 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 143–160 Schierl 2006) looks to other (unknown) models in addition to Euripides, since parts of his version differ from both Euripides and Ennius. The single line from Accius' *Hecuba* (481 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 287 Dangel) recalls Euripides, *Hecuba* 584. Accius revisited the events after the fall of Troy in his *Astyanax* (164–188 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 263–286 Dangel). However, because of the similarity of fragments of this play with lines in Seneca's *Troas*, it is likely that the *Astyanax* should be identified with the three surviving lines from Accius' *Troades* (478–480 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 288–290 Dangel). The story, down to details such as Hecuba's concern for Cassandra, looks to Euripides, *Trojan Women*.

17. Augmented by 6 fragmentary hypotheses.

18. Once owned by Cardinal Albani and drawn by Winckelmann when his house guest in 1767; see Ferrari and Ossana (2023) 273 with fig. 168.

19. On the Albanum monument now in the Louvre, see Meccariello (2021).



*Return of the Heroes*

Ennius' *Andromacha aechmalotis* (*TrRF* fr. 23–33) uses the Greek *aechmalotis* in preference to the Latin *captiva*, and has multiple models. The vocative *gnate* and the simile on crushing grapes in a basket would suggest that at least this couplet in Naevius' *Andromache* (*TrRF* fr. 1) was his own invention. The plot lines of Livius Andronicus' *Hermione* (*TrRF* fr. 15) and Pacuvius' *Hermione* (21–40 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 119–142 Schierl 2006) overlap with that of *Andromache* but the immediate source is likely to have been Sophocles' *Hermione* (*TrGF* fr. 202–203). A comparison of Hyginus, *Fabula* 123 with Euripides, *Orestes* show how far the Latin versions moved from the earlier Greek ones. In Ennius' *Telamo* (*TrRF* fr. 117–124), Telamon exiles Teucer blaming him for the suicide of Ajax, the same ground covered in Sophocles' *Teucer* (*TrGF* fr. 576–579b) and also Pacuvius' *Teucer* (312–346 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 231–255 Schierl 2006), which is the version Cicero would have seen (*On Oratory* 1.58.246).<sup>20</sup> There are two possible plots to Accius' *Eurysaces* (333–376 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 325–373 Dangel), which is named after the son of Ajax. Sophocles' *Eurysaces* survives only in a single fragment (*TrGF Eurysaces* fr. 223); there are no summaries in Hyginus and ps.-Apollodorus. One possibility for the play is action surrounding Eurysaces becoming king in Salamis.<sup>21</sup> The probable model for Accius' plot is found in Cicero *Pro Sestio* 56.120 where a performance of this play by Aesop, a leading actor, made continual reference to Cicero's exile. The numerous fragments attributed to the character of Teucer<sup>22</sup> suggest a plot in which Teucer in exile founds the city of Salamis in Cyprus but then returns to the island of Salamis with the (ultimately unsuccessful) intention of overthrowing Eurysaces. The return of Odysseus to Ithaca through to his murder by Telegonus, his son by Circe, in a brawl is the subject of Pacuvius' *Niptra* (*[Foot]-Washing* 244–271 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 190–202 Schierl 2006) combines elements from both Sophocles' *Niptra* (*TrGF* fr. 451a) and *Odysseus Akanthoplex* (*Odysseus [Killed by] Fish Spine* *TrGF* fr. 453–461a).<sup>23</sup>

20. See Schierl (2013); Boyle (2006) 100.

21. So also Lloyd-Jones (pp 96–97) who rejects *TrGF* fr. 223.

22. 333–334 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 335–336 Dangel), 335–336 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 337–338 Dangel), 344–345 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 350–351 Dangel), 346 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 349 Dangel) 351–355 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 340–343 Dangel).

23. Boyle (2006) 89.

## THEBAN CYCLE

Ennius' *Alcmeo* (*TrRF* fr. 12–14), with its matricide and chase by the Furies is the version recounted by Hyginus.<sup>24</sup> The single surviving fragment in Sophocles *Alcmaeon* (*TrGF* fr. 108–110) does not allow comparison and the fragments in Euripides' *Alcmaeon in Psophis* (*TrGF* fr. 65–72) are too short to be of use.<sup>25</sup> Pacuvius' *Pentheus* (*vel Bacchae*) also accords with Hyginus.<sup>26</sup> Ribbeck (pp. 127–28) entertains that it was influenced by Euripides' *Bacchae* and in turn influenced Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3. 511–733. Fragments show that Accius' *Antigona* (135–144 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 576–585 Dangel) used Sophocles' *Antigone* as a model; differences with Sophocles might point to familiarity with Euripides' *Antigone*, too (*TrGF* fr. 157–178). From its title, it is apparent that Accius' *Bacchae* (235–261 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 406–431 Dangel) looked to Euripides for inspiration. The conflict between Eteocles and Polyneices is the basis of Accius' *Phoenissae* (581–601 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 555–575 Dangel). It follows the story line of Euripides' *Phoenissae* adapting freely.

Cicero *Orator* 6.18 is witness that Accius' *Epigoni* (285–306 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 586–607 Dangel)<sup>27</sup> was based on Sophocles, *Epigoni*<sup>28</sup> and not Aeschylus, *Seven Against Thebes*. Accius' play involved lengthy discussions about putting together the second invasion and then the fall of Thebes itself. Accius' *Thebais* (602–603 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 399–400 Dangel) is noteworthy mainly for its title, taken from a city and not the protagonist or chorus. A reference to a fountain of Dirce (602 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 399 Dangel) would assume that the action of the play is late in the history of Thebes, alluding sometimes to earlier events.

## ATHENIAN CYCLE

Lycurgus' *Against Leocrates* 98–101 summarizes in detail Euripides' *Erechtheus* (*TrGF* fr. 349–370). Enough of Euripides' play survives, particularly three long speeches, to establish it as the model for Ennius, *Erechtheus* (*TrRF* fr. 49–51). Parallels with Aeschylus' *Eumenides* leave no doubt that

24. On which see section on Hyginus in volume edited by Stuttard.

25. Euripides' *Alcmaeon in Corinth* (*TrGF* fr. 73a–76) is previous to the action of this play.

26. On the basis of Servius on *Aeneid* 4.469. See also Manuwald (2003) 30–36, 44–49.

27. Taken with *Eriphyle* (307 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 554 Dangel).

28. *TrGF* fr. 185–190; Radt (*TrGF* p. 183) and Lloyd-Jones (pp. 72–73) think this play should be taken together with *Eriphyle* (*TrGF* fr. 201a–201b).



it is the model for Ennius' *Eumenides* (*TrRF* fr. 52–55). Here, as in Ennius' *Erechtheus*, deities have speaking roles more substantive than just delivering prologues. The differences between Livius Andronicus' *Tereus* (*TrRF* fr. 17–20) and Accius' *Tereus* (634–650 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 439–454 Dangel) could argue different models – perhaps Sophocles' *Tereus* (*TrGF* 581–593) and another unknown play.<sup>29</sup>

The single line from Accius' *Minos sive Minotaurus* (463 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 398 Dangel) establishes the setting as Knossos, where Theseus fights against the Minotaur with the help of Ariadne. Of the many Greek plays treating different parts of the myth of Theseus only Euripides' *Theseus*<sup>30</sup> dealt with these events.

#### ARGIVE CYCLE

The story of Pelops and Hippodamia is told in Accius' *Oenomaus* (493–511 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 1–22 Dangel). Enough fragments of Sophocles' *Oenomaus* (*TrGF* fr. 471–477) and Euripides' *Oenomaus* (*TrGF* fr. 571–577) survive to establish them as sources. The last play written by Ennius was *Thyestes* (*TrRF* fr. 132–141), for which possible models were three plays titled *Thyestes*, and *Atreus or the Women of Mycenae* (*TrGF* fr. 140–141), all of which were attributed to Sophocles.<sup>31</sup> Fragments from a *Thyestes* by Euripides also survive (*TrGF* fr. 391–397b). The *Atreus* of Accius (197–234 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 29–68 Dangel) has parallels with both Sophocles and Euripides, while Seneca also brings his own, imperial take on the story (see below). Fragments of Accius' *Pelopidae* (*Sons of Pelops* 512–519 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 69–76 Dangel) are too vague to allow reconstruction. That his *Chrysippus*<sup>32</sup> covered the murder of Chrysippus by his half-brothers, Atreus and Thyestes, makes it less probable that this episode was explored in the *Pelopidae* but there cannot be any certainty.

The myth of Danae, shut up in a tower in the Roman versions by her father, Acrisius, was popular with both Greek and Roman playwrights. Sophocles wrote an *Acrisius* (*TrGF* fr. 60–76), *Danae* (*TrGF* fr. 165–170), and *Larisaioi* (*TrGF* fr. 378–383). Euripides also wrote a *Danae*.<sup>33</sup> Both Livius Andronicus (*TrRF* fr. 13) and Naevius wrote their own

29. Hyginus, *Fabula* 45 also differs from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 6.401–674.

30. *TrGF* fr. 381–388 with hypothesis.

31. *PLondon* 2110 credits Sophocles with three *Thyestes* plays: *TrGF* fr. 247–269; Lloyd-Jones accepts only fr. 247, and 255–260.

32. Discussed in volume edited by Stuttard.

33. *TrGF* fr. 316–330. The publication of the papyrus-hypothesis of Euripides' *Danae*

versions of *Danae* (*TrRF* fr. 2–12). Hyginus supplies the probable plot lines of Ennius on Perseus and Andromeda in his *Andromeda* (*TrRF* fr. 34–41) and Livius Andronicus' *Andromeda* (*TrRF* fr. 12).<sup>34</sup>

Livius Andronicus' *Aegisthus* (*TrRF* fr. 2–9) recounts the return of Agamemnon to Mycenae, familiar from Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, while Accius' *Aegisthus* (22–28 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 302–310 Dangel) tells the tale of the murders of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra from Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*. Naevius' *Iphigeneia* (*TrRF* fr. 16) is probably related to Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Tauris*.<sup>35</sup> The daughter of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus is the subject of Accius' *Erigona* (49–56 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 317–324 Dangel), based on Sophocles' *Erigone* (*TrGF* fr. 235–236). The play's action, if the summary in Hyginus' *Fabula* 122 is a guide, is that Orestes and Electra tried to kill their half-siblings. Aletes, the presumptive king, was murdered, but Erigone was spirited away to Athens to be a priestess of Artemis. The play might have ended with the double wedding of Orestes and Hermione, plus Pylades and Electra, itself more of a comic convention than tragic. The double title of Pacuvius' *Dulorestes* (*Orestes Enslaved* 113–160 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 87–118 Schierl 2006) could be tragic in content but its title belongs more to comic conventions.<sup>36</sup>

## HERCULES

Schauer (*TrRF* volume I) rejects, but Warmington accepted (fr. 19 *ROL*),<sup>37</sup> a play titled *Hesione* by Naevius. The play was named from the daughter of Laomedon, king of Troy, who broke his promise and refused to give her to Hercules – so Hercules killed him and took Hesione, a recurring feature of stories in Latin tragedy about Hercules (see *Hercules on Oeta* below) in which Hercules has sex with the daughter of a father he murdered. This might have been the plot of a play on *Laomedon* (*TrRF fabulae incerti auctoris* fr. 2) but less likely one on Hercules (*TrRF fabulae incerti auctoris* F139) which might be related to the story of Alcestis. Accius' *Amphitruo*

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(P.Oxy. 5283) has shown the problems associated with Vatic. Palat. Gr. 287 (= Collard and Cropp pages 338–45); see Karamanou (2006) 47–56.

34. Discussed in detail in section on Hyginus in volume edited by Stuttard, on which see also Boyle (2006) 38–39.

35. For a detailed discussion, see section on Adaptation in volume edited by Stuttard and also Boyle (2006) 31.

36. For a detailed discussion, see section on Adaptation in volume edited by Stuttard.

37. As does APGRD in its database of ancient plays.

(82–97 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 634–650 Dangel) is the story of the murder of Electryon, king of Mycenae and father of Alcmene, and her terms for consummating her marriage to Amphitryon. There is no reason to believe the play included the conception and birth of Hercules.<sup>38</sup>

Auge, mother of Telephus by sex with a Hercules she inebriates, is a character in Pacuvius' *Atalanta* (43–75a Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 37–61 Schierl 2006) and perhaps speaks the play's most famous line,<sup>39</sup> that women suffer "equivalent to slaves, objects of violence, need, [unsavoury] reputation, shame, [a life of] dread." While not about Hercules himself, Ennius' *Cresphontes* (*TrRF* fr. 43–48) dealt with descendants of Hercules cheated in the division of the Peloponnese, and, although Hercules is not the main character in Accius' *Alcestis* (57 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 633 Dangel), a messenger announces the unwilling return of Alcestis in the one line to survive — very different from the unannounced, drunken arrival of Hercules (*Alcestis* 476) in Euripides' pro-satyrical play from 438 BCE where Alcestis is shielded from recognition by Admetus for combined comic and dramatic effect. The Heracleidae could be the focus of a play otherwise unknown (*TrRF fabulae incerti auctoris* fr. 156). The duel between Hercules and Cynus, arranged by their divine fathers, might seem to be the focus of *TrRF incertorum incertae fab.* fr. 154b. Two lines are preserved in which Mars tells Hercules that he will be avenger of his son. Hercules responds that *virtus nusquam terreri potest*. Among lines which cannot be assigned to specific plays is a fragment (Ribb.<sup>3</sup> *ex incert. fab.* XVII) that seems to refer to the death of Hercules on Oeta and his veneration (*lampades*).

#### JASON AND MEDEA

Accius' *Phinidae* (*Sons of Phineus* 569–580 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 455–466 Dangel) concerns the freeing of Zetes and Calais, the sons of the title, by the Argonauts from imprisonment who heal their blinding by their stepmother, the bigamous second wife of Phineus, as a line spoken by Hercules (580 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 462 Dangel) seems to imply. Most of the fragments seem to be about the landing of the *Argo* and lines 569–573 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 455–459 Dangel) appear to indicate an Argonaut chorus. If this reconstruction is accurate, it would

38. *Amphitruo*, the comic version by Plautus, is better known and is discussed in the section on comedy in the volume edited by Stuttard.

39. *auas famulitas, vis, egestas, fama, formido, pudor* (53 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 55 Shierl [2006]).

mean that Aeschylus' *Phineus* (*TrGF* fr. 258–259) and Sophocles' two versions *Phineus A and B* (*TrGF* fr. 704–717a) are unlikely to be the models to which Sophocles' *Tympanistai* (*TrGF* fr. 636–645), covering much of the same ground, should be added. It does not guarantee that any of these treatments portrayed the same scenes as in Accius.

Ennius adds characters not in Euripides' *Medea* but also has a scene set after Medea's flight to Athens, hence its alternative title, *Medea sive Medea Exul* (*TrRF* fr. 89–100). That Athens is her place of exile is secured by the summary in Hyginus, *Fabula* 26. The parts of Ennius that were faithful to the plot of Euripides' *Medea* were also close to the words of the original Greek.<sup>40</sup> Pacuvius' *Medus* (218–243 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 161–189 Schierl 2006), while a tragedy, seems to contain some comic features.<sup>41</sup> Of the three Latin plays dealing with the different parts of the larger story of Medea, that of Pacuvius is the most original, dealing not with her children by Jason, but a son of Medea and Aegeus at Athens. The opening of Accius' *Medea sive Argonautae* (391–423 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 467–499 Dangel) has shepherds in Colchis dumbstruck at the approach of the Argo (391–410 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 467–485 Dangel), and the action apparently went through to the dismembering of Apsyrtus.<sup>42</sup> Accius's play thus followed Sophocles' *Cholchides* (*TrGF Women of Colchis* fr. 336–349) for which Hyginus, *Fabula* 22 (Aetes) and *Fabula* 23 (Apsyrtus) offer a possible synopsis. The action of Euripides' *Medea* is later, though, and Sophocles' *Rizotomoi* (*TrGF Root-Cutters*, if perhaps better understood as '*Cutters of Magical Herbs*', fr. 534–536) involves the deception of Pelias' daughters, as do Hyginus' *Fabula* 24 and Euripides' *Peliades* (*TrGF* fr. 601–610).

#### CALYDONIAN CYCLE

Calydon is the setting for Pacuvius' *Periboea* (271–313 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = Scheirl 2006 fr. 203–230). Oeneus married Althaea, and their son, Meleager, murdered his maternal uncles, favouring Atalanta. Periboea was Oeneus' second wife and their son, Tydeus, joined the Seven against Thebes to atone for killing an uncle. In the action of this play, his son, Diomedes kills his paternal uncles. The fragments of Pacuvius' play conform to the two frag-

40. For a larger discussion, see section on Translation in volume edited by Stuttard.

41. On this, see section on Comedy in volume edited by Stuttard.

42. That Apsyrtus speaks fragment 408 and Aetes fragment 409 indicates this.

mentary hypotheses to Euripides' *Oeneus* and its fragments.<sup>43</sup> This seems to be the version also in Accius, *Diomedes* (269–284 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 38–553 Dangel) with two lines (283–284 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 550–551 Dangel) suggesting that his play went as far as Diomedes going to Argos, eventually to become its king. The core story is in Accius' *Meleager* (440–460 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 500–522 Dangel). Two fragments are known from Sophocles' *Meleager* (*TrGF* fr. 401–406) with rather more extensive remains of Euripides' *Meleager* (*TrGF* fr. 515–537).

Pacuvius' *Atalanta* (43–75a Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 37–61 Schierl 2006) is a tour de force of a play within a play. Parthenopaeus searches for his mother, Atalanta, and the play includes the parallel story of Auge and Telephus. Both males narrowly avoid marrying their own mothers by mistake. Aeschylus' *Atalanta*, known only by title,<sup>44</sup> is sometimes given as a possible source. This extension of the myth of Atalanta is not in Hyginus 185, nor is the extension of the myth of Auge/Telephus in any of the three great Greek tragedians. The recognition tokens (61–64 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 45–47 Schierl 2006, acknowledged in the following fragment) are a plot device more familiar from New Comedy.<sup>45</sup>

One possible scenario for Accius' *Melanippus* (435–439 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 523–537 Dangel) is that Melanippus is the brother of Tydeus, killed by accident during a hunt for which *nemorum* (woodlands 435 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 532 Dangel) lends support, as do lines possibly attributed to Oeneus (425–427, 429, 435, 439 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 523–525, 530, 532, 537 Dangel). As a result, a different Melanippus, mentioned in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* 412–416, and killed in battle by Tydeus, becomes a less likely subject for Accius' play.

#### OTHER PLAYS

Euripides wrote two plays on Melanippe. In one, *Melanippe Sophos*, a character masked as a horse saves her from her father's wrath.<sup>46</sup> In the other, *Melanippe Captiva*, she marries the eponymous Metapontus in Italy (*TrGF* fr. 489–495). Both are far better preserved than Ennius' *Melanippa* (*TrRF* fr. 101–106), based on *Melanippe Sophos*. More than half of the fragments of

43. *TrGF* 558–568. Radt (*TrGF* p. 380) and Lloyd-Jones (p. 242) doubt an *Oeneus* by Sophocles.

44. *TrGF* pp. 136–37; Sommerstein (2008) 17.

45. On this point, see, esp., Fantham (2003); thanks to K. Philippides.

46. *TrGF* fr. 480–487, with three partial hypotheses.

Naevius come from his *Lycurgus* (*TrRF* fr. 17–40)<sup>47</sup> and Accius' *Stasiastae sive Tropaeum Liberi* (*Insurrectionists or Trophy of Bacchus* 604–607 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 401–405 Dangel) beg comparison with the Theban cycle, since it is a play of resistance to Dionysos. Aeschylus' *Edonians* *TrGF* fr. 57–61 is the most probable source.<sup>48</sup> Accius' title is a revealing hybrid of Greek and a Latin military term, evocative simultaneously of a series of vase paintings and later mosaics and frescoes of Dionysos. The plot of Accius' *Io* (387–389 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 377–379 Dangel) is that of Hyginus, *Fabula* 145 and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Authorship of a Republican *Prometheus* (ps.-Accius fr. 390<sup>1-2</sup>–390 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 374–376 Dangel), based on Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, is suspect.

#### ROME OF THE EMPERORS / SILVER LATIN

*Recitatio*, the oral presentation of dramas, is a distraction. Most, if not nearly all, are titles known to have been recited about characters from Roman history, and belong to the tradition of the historical pageants (*fabula praetexta*, see *Octavia* below) presented, generally, at triumphs of Republican generals. Tragic plays on historical subjects are known, and an argument can be made that the ghosts and rags and dream of the *Octavia* make a nod to Atossa in Aeschylus' *Persians*. Because the *Persians* was performed as part of a tragic trilogy (472 BCE), it seems appropriate to class Latin *fabula praetexta* as a tragic sub-species. When recitation treats Greek tragic themes, it does not substitute for performance, it supplements it, that is, drama in recitation is not a genre<sup>49</sup> but a type of performance. This is certainly true of Greek plays in reperformance in the Roman Empire. Plutarch<sup>50</sup> writes of his own times when he notes (854B) simultaneously performances (*θέατρα*) of Menander, discussion at banquets (*συμπόσεις*), dramatic recita-

47. This does not speak to its popularity but to its lexical fascinations.

48. This was a first play in the Lycourgan tetralogy for which there are also remnants of the *Bassarids* (*TrGF* fr. 23–24), *Neaniskoi* (*TrGF* fr. 146–146b), with its reconciliation to Dionysos and establishment of a cult, and the satyr drama, *Lycurgus* (*TrGF* fr. 124).

49. This distinguishes these plays from Tudor and Stuart 'closet dramas' with which they are sometimes compared. Casting all of Maternus' plays as 'closet dramas', that is, 'private performance' among friends, is a false equivalency since some, at least, had been performed (see below).

50. "Comparison between Aristophanes and Menander" is a difficult fragment to assess. *Syn-crisis* used elsewhere in Plutarch finishes a pair of lives for which there is no evidence here, *pace* Fowler (1936) 461. Its tone, however, is similar to Plutarch's other publicly delivered speeches, either as lectures or in competitions.



tion (*ἀνάγνωσμα*), school lessons (*μάθημα*), and competitions (*ἀγώνισμα*).<sup>51</sup> At a dinner party hosted by Plutarch, a prominent but unnamed Stoic contributes to two parts of an extended conversation (*symposium*)<sup>52</sup> offering the view that dramatic recitation and choral odes (*θυμέλην*<sup>53</sup> καὶ τὴν ὀρχήστραν)<sup>54</sup> should be forbidden in favour of

τὸ νεωστὶ μὲν ἐν Ῥώμῃ παρεισηγμένον εἰς τὰ συμπόσια μήπω δ' ἀναλάμπων  
ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς.

the new thing brought into Rome at dinners, not yet taken up by many.

He means here slaves trained to give dramatic readings from literature other than tragedy, such as Plato's dialogues. Deigenecianus (*Table Talks* 7, 711E) agrees that tragedy should be banned from dinner parties because it is *πάθος* and *οἴκτων* (painful and pitiable) and so unsuitable. Declamation, as understood by Plutarch, does not (or at least should not ideally) include tragedy.

In Tacitus' *Dialogue on Oratory* 2.1 Maternus is said to have recited (*recitaverat*) his *Cato* and will also recite his *Thyestes* (*Dialogue on Oratory* 3.2–4), a Greek tragedy but one with a Roman lesson to be drawn from it. The readings of his plays are problematic because his *Domitius Ahenobarbus* (on the grand père of the dead and disgraced Nero) seems to have been performed, as it is twinned with his *Medea*, but now is “famous throughout Rome and the provinces in readings (*rarissimarum recitationum fama in totam urbem penetrat, necdum ut per tot provincias Dialogue on Oratory* 10.6)”. The superlative adjective that precedes recitation hints at its low frequency. Plutarch does not contrast recitation with performance on stage (the modern scholarly impulse) but, rather, with conversation. Recitation should never substitute for conversation unless the conversation looks to bog itself down in politics and law. Recitation, then, was meant to drown out insults and provocations (*ἀκροαμάτων εἶα καιρὸς... λοιδορίαν τινὰ κατασβέσθαι καὶ εἰς ἄμιλλαν* 713F).<sup>55</sup>

51. Plutarch uses the Greek equivalent of *recitatio* (*ὑποκριτικὴν*) recommending recitation of philosophy and not plays at symposia; 612F–613A, *Table-Talk* 1 question 1.

52. *Table Talks* 7 questions 7–8 710B–713F.

53. Used here, as elsewhere, in Plutarch as another translation for Latin *recitatio*. Of an individual reciting parts and songs, see *CGL θυμέλη* 5.

54. *Table Talks* 7.711B.

55. On declamation in general, see Konstan (2015).

## NERO

Nero is the second axle wheel to Seneca. During his reign and during that of his predecessor, Claudius, Nero had an enormous influence on the performance of Greek tragedy, and other art forms, through his actions and personality. That Nero declaimed in public even as emperor is known but Suetonius (*De Rhetoribus* 1 and *Nero* 10) omits whether it was in Latin or Greek. Both are possible since Nero spoke in favour of laws in the Senate at Rome in Latin and in Greek (Suetonius, *Nero* 7). An ardent supporter of the arts, Nero instituted *scaenicos ludos* (literally ‘theatrical games’), among which were the *Ludi Maximi* dedicated to *Roma aeterna*.<sup>56</sup> The *Quinquennium Neronis*, significantly, was *more Graeco* (in Greek tradition).<sup>57</sup> Neither survived the end of his reign.

Nero was a frequent presence at plays watching from the *proscenium* (Suetonius, *Nero* 12.1) and dining in the orchestra before performances with the cast where they spoke in Greek (Suetonius, *Nero* 20.3). Nero sang a “Niobe” to the accompaniment of a lyre in the second *Quinquennium Neronis*, presumably in Greek,<sup>58</sup> not surprisingly since lyre seems to have been his preferred form of performance (Suetonius, *Nero* 16–23). In his performances of tragedies he wore masks of gods and goddesses, and masks with his own facial features or those of his favoured female companion at the moment (Suetonius, *Nero* 21.3) including Poppaea, the wife he later murdered (Dio Cassius 63.9.5).<sup>59</sup> Plays in which he sang —*cano* is routinely used in Suetonius and not *ago* for ‘acted’— were *Canace in Labour*, *Orestes the Matricide*, *Oedipus Blind*, and *Madness of Hercules*. Whether these were in Latin or Greek cannot be known but they clearly were done at Rome.<sup>60</sup> At a minimum they were Greek plots which were based on known Greek plays. The one performance in Rome for which there is a positive statement that

56. Suetonius, *Nero* 11. The anecdote in Suetonius mentions Afranius’ *Incendium* in which a house was burnt on stage, ironic because of the later fire at Rome. Cast members got to keep what furniture they rescued.

57. Suetonius, *Nero* 12.3, 21.1. Vacca’s *Life of Lucan*, however, seems to indicate that Lucan recited a poem in Latin when he competed. *Mos Graecus* did not require *lingua Graeca*.

58. Suetonius, *Nero* 21.2. As it celebrated fifth anniversaries of his reign, the dates should have been AD 59 and AD 63 (the second was on a shortened schedule) but AD 60 and AD 64 are more likely since shortening the second puts it in synchronism with his decennial.

59. See Sutton (1984).

60. His one theatrical innovation seems to have been a new design for a pneumatic organ used in the theatre (Suetonius, *Nero* 41.2).

it was in Greek was Nero's last. Just before his death, the last line he sang in public was from the play (*fabulam*), *Oedipus in Exile*, from which Suetonius quotes the line *θανεῖν μ' ἀνωγε σύγγαμος, μήτηρ, πατήρ* ('they lead me to die — wife, mother, father').<sup>61</sup>

#### SENECA

A persistent criticism of Seneca, and of Silver Latin in general, is lack of knowledge and use of Greek and Greek models. This is wrong-headed. For the Republican tragedians, there was nothing else for inspiration and emulation. For Seneca, there was a rich treasure trove in Latin not available to Pacuvius and Accius. Seneca did not turn his back on Greek, but rather, like the master chef he was, he mixed Greek and Roman ingredients adding deftly ones of his own. Seven of the eight surviving genuine plays<sup>62</sup> of Seneca (*Agamemnon*, *Medea*, *Phaedra*, *Madness of Hercules*, *Oedipus*, *Trojan Women*, and the fragmentary *Phoenician Women*) have extant Greek versions. Prior Greek versions of the eighth (*Thyestes*) are known only from fragments where Seneca would have had access to the full texts.

The prologue to *Hercules furens*,<sup>63</sup> shows immediately the distance Seneca put between himself and his models. Juno speaks the prologue (124 lines), rather than Amphitryon as in Euripides (59 lines). Seneca's choice

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61. Suetonius, *Nero* 46.3. Which play is unknown. It cannot be from Aeschylus' Theban trilogy (Sommerstein p. 175) or from Euripides' *Oedipus* (*TrGF* fr. 539a–556). The manuscripts and the four hypotheses are unanimous in giving the title of Sophocles' play as *Oedipus at Colonus*. As Greek secretary to the emperor, Suetonius would not have mistaken this play with *Oedipodem exsulem* of his text. There is no trace of this play either in ps.-Apollodorus or Hyginus. The language and contents of Julius Caesar's *Oedipus* are unknown (Suetonius, *Julius Caesar* 56.7). The father in the quotation is Claudius, his father by adoption.

62. Versions of the *Thyestes* are attested for Sophocles and Euripides but do not survive. For succinct, excellent synopses of individual plays, one should consult the summaries in *Brill's Companion to Seneca. Philosopher and Dramatist*, edited by Gregor Damschen and Andreas Heil.

63. Early manuscripts have just *Hercules* but later ones are unanimous in reading *Hercules furens* to distinguish it from the *Hercules on Oeta*. The order of the plays discussed here is that of the *OCT*. The dating of the plays is that of Marshall (2014), which follows Nisbet. The three clusters are *Agamemnon*, *Oedipus*, *Phaedra*, all probably pre-54 CE. The middle group are *Troades*, *Medea*, *Hercules furens*, and probably belong to the first years of Nero's reign. The *Thyestes* is probably post-62 CE and *Phoenissae* to the last one or two years of his life. I adopt *Troas* instead of the less likely but traditional *Troades*. So, too, *Thebais* is the title in the *A*-family of manuscripts and is more descriptive of *Phoe-*

focuses the play on its central conflict, the implacable hatred of Juno, rather than Amphitryon expecting his death and a marriage forced on Megara. Hecuba speaks the prologue (66 lines) to Seneca's *Troas* indicating the key component is the suffering of women, and specifically which Trojan Woman has lost the most.<sup>64</sup> Poseidon and Athena introduce Euripides' *Trojan Women*; Hecuba does not speak until line 98. A generous half (664 lines) of Seneca's *Phoenissae* (*Thebais* in the *A*-family of manuscripts) survives. The main loss are the choral odes but Oedipus speaks the prologue (53 lines),<sup>65</sup> whereas in Euripides, *Phoenissae*, the opening lines are assigned to Jocasta (87 lines). Oedipus' darkness of mood in Seneca (85–88) contrasts with Jocasta clinging to hopes of a resolution. The unhinged rage of Medea's *Di coniugales* introduces Seneca's *Medea* and Juno's *Soror Tonantis* opens *Hercules furens*. Medea's prologue (55 lines) in Seneca contrasts with nurse's tentative *Εἶθ' ὄφραλ'* opening Euripides' *Medea*. Medea's elderly retainers (*παιδαγωγός* 49, *τροφός* 1–48) introduce Euripides' play (1–95), while Medea is not heard from until line 96 and then with a hypermetric sigh. Lines 96–97 are spoken from within the palace (*ἔσωθεν*).

The prologues of Euripides' *Hippolytus* and Seneca's *Phaedra* could not be more different. Using choral dimeters and monometers Seneca's Hippolytus<sup>66</sup> arranges his hunting party in the Attic mountainside and prays to Artemis (1–84), whereas Euripides gives the opening lines (1–57) to Aphrodite and her plan to punish Hippolytus for spiting her divinity in favour of Artemis. Almost on cue, Hippolytus enters singing praise of the Virgin huntress (58–60). Oedipus opens (1–81a) Seneca's play of that name with a soliloquy, reviewing his coming to Thebes and the onset of the plague. Sophocles launches into the action: Oedipus addresses a gathering paternalistically (*τέκνα* 1, *παῖδες* 58) about the troubles at Thebes, often answering questions from a priest. Behind Seneca's *Agamemnon* is that of Aeschylus.<sup>67</sup> But whereas Aeschylus famously begins with the *Phylax* (1–39) tending a signaling torch, Seneca's play opens with the ghost of Thyestes (1–56) reluctantly at first but then exulting when he realizes that the moment is

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*nissae* (the title in the *E*-family). It has the additional virtue of mirroring Accius' *Thebais* (602–603 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 399–400 Dangel).

64. Harrison 2015, 118–50.

65. So Staley 2014, 111–24.

66. There is not agreement between manuscripts of the *E*- and *A*-families. From line 42, the *A*-family has trimeters, complicated by interpolations after line 62. What is undeniable is that the opening lines were sung and not spoken.

67. Tarrant (1976) 8–14 and the introduction to Boyle (2020).

coming for Aegisthus to avenge his father. It is the only play in which Seneca changes the chorus. He has a double chorus of Trojan women and Argive women contrasting with the elders of Argos in Aeschylus.<sup>68</sup> By the end of the first line, the entire audience would be aware that this is Seneca's take on a Greek myth and not a translation.

Plutarch's highest praise for Menander was that he wrote for both the many and the few, and his second highest praise is that Menander improved as a poet.<sup>69</sup> Similar laurels should crown Seneca. Ghosts do appear on the Greek stage, such as in Aeschylus' *Persians*. Polydorus in Euripides' *Hecuba* is the only ghost to speak the prologue (1–58) in surviving Greek drama, as he does also in Ennius' *Hecuba* (*TrRF* fr. 72). *Tantali umbra*, whipped on by the Fury in Seneca's *Thyestes* (1–121), spreads the toxin to spur on Atreus and the ghost of Thyestes (*Thyestis umbra*) opens Seneca's *Agamemnon* (1–56). Seneca's ghosts are both Greek and Roman. The ghost of Agrippina holds the middle of the post-Senecan *Octavia* (593–645). None of the fragments of Sophocles' *Atreus* has ghosts, nor are there any in his *Thyestes*. From the *testimonia* to Euripides' *Thyestes* comes the detail that Euripides dressed his ghosts on stage in rags (which he also did in *Cretan Women*). It is also what Cicero<sup>70</sup> records in reference to Pacuvius' *Iliona* where it is not the ghost of Polydorus but a false Polydorus who takes the stage (197–201 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 146 Schierl 2006 with pages 318–19). Ennius wrote a *Thyestes* in 169 BCE, the year of his death at the age of 70.<sup>71</sup> Although little is known of Varius' *Thyestes* aside from Tacitus' *Dialogue on Oratory* 12.6 and Accius' *Atreus* (197–234 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 29–68 Dangel), the back story of Accius' *Chrysippus* (262–268 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 23–28 Dangel) has the young Atreus and Thyestes commit the murder, as later Atreus insists that the young Agamemnon and Menelaus murder their cousins.

The only preserved lines of the ghost in Pacuvius include *mater te apello* ('mother, I call you' *Iliona*, 197–202 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 146 Schierl 2006 with pages 318–19) which Seneca transformed into Astyanax's plaintive *miserere*, *mater* ('have pity, mother' 792; anticipated 694, 703). Cicero, *Academica Priora* 2.27.88, noted of the performance he saw that, after the ghost spoke his last lines in Pacuvius (201–202 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 147 Schierl 2006), *Iliona* woke

68. On Seneca's *Agamemnon* as the most experimental of his tragedies, see Schiesaro (2014) 179–91.

69. Plutarch, Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander 854 A–B.3. James Shapiro lays out a similar case for Seneca's great imitator, Shakespeare (2005, 18–23).

70. Cicero, *Pro Sestio* 59.126 (*sordidatus et lugubri habitu ut solent*).

71. Manuwald *TrRF* II.8 *testimonium* 20 quoted from Cicero, *Brutus* 78.

up and considered the appearance to have been a dream. A similar relationship has been argued for the sequence in the *Octavia* where the ghost of Agrippina is followed by Poppaea waking up in a panic.<sup>72</sup>

The inspiration for Furies in Seneca, *Hercules furens* and *Thyestes* honours Greek tragedy and Roman tragedy. If pride of place goes to Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, the device is used in the opening of Pacuvius' *Hermiona* (161–164 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 120, 129 Schierl 2006) to explain why Orestes is at Delphi, eventually to murder Neoptolemus because of Hermione (172, 178 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 131–132 Schierl 2006). Alcmaeon in Ennius' play of that name is chased by Furies (*TrRF* fr. 13),<sup>73</sup> and the Furies get to chase Alcmaeon a second time for the murder of Eriphyle in Accius, *Eriphyle* (307 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 554 Dangel).

Seneca in *Troas* differs with his Latin sources as frequently as his Greek ones. One is not privileged over the other. In Accius' *Astyanax* (164–188 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 283–286 Dangel), as probably in his *Troades* (478 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 288 Dangel), Astyanax is still alive at the departure of the Greek fleet. It is when the fleet is blown back to Troy that Calchas reads the necessity of the death of Astyanax. Where Ennius follows Euripides in his *Medea* (*TrRF* fr. 89–100) he does so closely, but he adds elements that have her banished from both Corinth and Athens, which Seneca rejects in his version of the play. Pacuvius' *Medus* includes material not in Seneca, which is true also for Accius' *Medea* (391–423 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 467–499 Dangel). Seneca's interest in magic, and in comparing *epithalamium* to incantation make his play more modern for his audience.<sup>74</sup> The two preserved fragments of Ovid's *Medea* (1–2 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> p. 267), considered the best of the Latin versions of the story,<sup>75</sup> are spoken in rage by Medea comparable to her character in Seneca. This is consistent with Quintilian 9.3.73 who gives a sense of positioning of characters on stage in reference to Aerope, perhaps from Euripides' *Cretan Women*. Quintilian states that Aerope is 'played as' (*componuntur*) *tristis*, Ajax as *attonitus*, Medea as *atrox*, and Hercules as *truculentus*. This rings true for Medea and Hercules in Seneca and Hercules in *Hercules on Oeta*.

72. Harrison 2003, 2022. On this point there is not unanimity; among recent scholars, see Ferri (2003), Kragelund (2016) 258–62 and Ginsberg (2017) 52–3.

73. Also the title of a play by Accius (58–70 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 608–620 Dangel).

74. Philippides (2018), esp. 161–62.

75. Tacitus, *Dialogue on Oratory* 12.6.



FABULA PRAETEXTA(TA): *OCTAVIA*

Although Aeschylus' *Persians* was a historical drama, it was performed within an Athenian trilogy, and so, like satyr drama, is closely allied with tragedy.<sup>76</sup> This was not the tradition of Roman performance.<sup>77</sup> The political calculus of the producer of *Persians*, the young Pericles, is what brings that play closest to Roman Republican triumphalism and later imperial political re-assessment. Stand-alone plays on historical themes mirror Greek practice from the time of the Sacred Wars of Philip of Macedon. The Roman *fabulae praetextae* (or its variant *praetextatae*) are named for the officers of state who could wear the *praetexta*, a narrow purple stripe on their toga, during their term of office.<sup>78</sup> The closest contact with Greek culture would have been that the occasion of performance was sometimes associated with triumphs over Macedon and Greece. Three historical dramas are related directly to the triumphing general: Ennius' *Ambracia* (fr. I–IV Ribb.<sup>3</sup> pp. 323–24 = 374–380 Warmington); Naevius' *Clastidium* (fr. I–II Ribb.<sup>3</sup> pp. 321 = 1 Warmington), and Pacuvius' *Paulus* (fr. I–IV Ribb.<sup>3</sup> *Fabularum Praetextarum Reliquiae Pacuvius* pp. 325–26 = 256–260 Schierl 2006).<sup>79</sup> *Fabulae praetextae* drawn from mythic history tend not to be associated with triumphs, on the basis of what little evidence there is, and so one might suspect an association with entertainments legally obligated of aediles during their term of office:<sup>80</sup> Ennius' *Sabinae* (fr. I Ribb.<sup>3</sup> pp. 324 = 379–80 Warmington); Naevius' *Romulus sive Lupus* (fr. I–II Ribb.<sup>3</sup> pp. 321–22 = 1–3 Warmington);<sup>81</sup> Accius' *Aeneadae sive Decius* (1–16 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 676–691 Dangel) and *Brutus* (17–41 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 651–662 Dangel). An underrepresented genre, four potential fragments are cited by Schauer (*TrRF Fragmenta Adespota* fr. 40, 101, 147, and 178). The last in spite of being among the

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76. For which see the papers in Harrison (2005).

77. For which see Franko (2013).

78. This is clear from its distinction with *fabulae trabeatae* named from the dress of *equites*. See Suetonius *De Grammaticis* 22 (*M. Pomponius Marcellus*) and *Life of Domitian* 14.3.

79. See also Warmington fr. 1–3 and Manuwald (2003) 80, 123.

80. For which see *Testimonium* 33 (Livy 24.43.7), *Testimonium* 36 (Livy 34.44.5) and *Testimonium* 37 (Livy 34.51.4–8) in Schauer *TrRF* 1.8–9. The calendar for 354 CE proves that this practice continued into the late Empire; see Salzman 1990.

81. Possibly two different plays, so Ribbeck. Donatus on Terence, *Adelphoe* 4.1.21 refers to stage action (*dum in theatro ageretur*) that would presume nursing of Romulus and Remus who, in another fragment, are referred to as adolescents (*adulescentuli*). Its adjective *stulti* assures that the diminutive is pejorative.

*dubia* mentions camps and catapults, and Nonius Marcellus 552.7–17 was aware of ballista and arrows that are not included in the two lines he cites. The vibrancy of the genre persists at least into the later Julio-Claudians as represented by Pomponius Secundus' *Aeneas* (fr. I Ribb.<sup>3</sup> pp. 331).

There obviously cannot be any Greek models for the story line of the *Octavia*,<sup>82</sup> yet Greek tragedy is omnipresent in the play about Nero divorcing his wife, who was Claudius' daughter, for his mistress, Poppaea. The dream sequence of Agrippina which is reasonably a nightmare visited on Poppaea has been mentioned. Octavia calls upon the Moirai (Clotho 15) and the Furies (Erinys 23), and self-identifies with Electra (58). In role/situation reversal typical of Roman adaptation of Greek drama, her Orestes, that is, her brother, Britannicus, in this case is dead. At play's end, as Octavia is being sent in exile to Pandateria and her certain death, she wishes, like Iphigenia spirited away from Aulis to Taurus, she, too, might have some miraculous escape (977–978). In between, the debts of the unknown author to Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides and to Seneca are enormous, and subtle. Act three especially reminds the modern reader that this is a Roman play for a Roman audience: there is a debate, in the tradition of a Greek *ἀγών*, between Nero and Seneca, one as truculent as he was in real life and the other as verbose.

#### HERCULES ON OETA

The anonymous *Hercules on Oeta* is a fitting capstone to the vibrancy of tragedies in Latin and it illustrates most, but by no means all, of the complex compliment Roman drama paid to the Greek past and to its own past. It chose two Greek plays as models, Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and *Philoctetes*, which might help account for its great length (1998 lines).<sup>83</sup> In this it is a throw-back to earlier Roman tragedians (done also by Seneca), who several times conflated two or more Greek tragedies in their plays. When the anonymous author changed the title, it changed the focus from Trachis and its female chorus to Oeta, site of the cremation pyre of Hercules. The intertextuality is as complex as anything in Seneca. Not only are there numerous

82. The best overviews are the introductions to commentaries on the *Octavia* by Boyle and by Ferri.

83. As its length has been the argument against its performability, it is worth mentioning that Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* is also fairly long (1779 lines) as well as Euripides' *Phoenician Women* (1766 lines). All but one of Shakespeare's tragedies are longer than the *Hercules on Oeta*.

reminiscences from Sophocles, *Women at Trachis*, as one would expect, and his *Philoctetes*, but the great amount of space the script gives to Hercules' earlier triumphs and travails gives scope for verbal echoes from Euripides, *Herakles mainomenos*, and perhaps most frequently Seneca, *Hercules furens*. Hercules' fixation with not appearing to be girlish in showing his pain both brings his Roman audience to the gladiator's ethic of not showing pain during his death agony and has close parallels to Accius' *Philocteta sive Philocteta Lemnius* in which fragments 552–553 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 235–236 Dangel) and 562–565 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> (= 237–240 Dangel) have Philoctetes reference his own pain recalling Hercules' wailing on Oeta.<sup>84</sup> Philoctetes in Accius is as happy to blame the Greeks (560 Ribb.<sup>3</sup> = 241 Dangel) as *Hercules on Oeta* serially blames prominently Juno (blamed by both Euripides and Seneca for the madness of Hercules), Eros, Deianira, Hyllus, the Hydra, and Nessos. Fate, a frequent motivator in Seneca, is not absent from the list of possible suspects, nor that staple of Euripides in *Hecuba* and *Cyclops*, that is, the gods.

Like most Roman drama, on the deeper and wider Roman stage, *Hercules on Oeta* could be performed on a single split set. Although it is not possible to link them precisely to a specific play, numerous frescoes from Pompeii destroyed after the death of Seneca and before the composition of *Hercules on Oeta* give some clues on staging.<sup>85</sup> Hercules fronts Greek Herakles but behind the mask and costume emanates Roman imperial personalities and politics. Behind the intended divorce of Deianira for the pregnant Iole lurks visibly Nero divorcing Octavia for the pregnant Sabina and Domitian's attempt to set aside his wife, Domitia, the daughter of Corbulo, Nero's brilliant general, for his pregnant niece, Julia. The Greek plots of adultery, bigamy, incest are repurposed into a Roman plot of adultery at the pinnacle of the state, for which numerous Republican tragic references can also be adduced.

Hercules takes too long to die, rendering parts of the play perilously close to comedy.<sup>86</sup> Alcmena worries as much as Trojan women in Euripides and Seneca about what will become of her without her protector. The appearance of Philoctetes at the end of the play, particularly, his long explanation, is very much in the tradition of a messenger speech and looks to several Greek dramas but perhaps most immediately to the long speech by Theseus in Seneca's *Hercules furens* (640b–829 with interruptions by Amphitryon). Greek is the *deus ex machina* (although for the Roman stage

84. Discussed by Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 2.7.19.

85. See Varner (2000) 119–36, *inter alia*.

86. See Slater (2015) 283–308.

from the top level of the stage building) but it feels somehow Roman.<sup>87</sup> Short (1940–1996), it cannot compare to Aeschylus' *Eumenides*; nothing can. What Hercules' words of consolation to his mother, Alcmena, most closely parallel are Herakles' soothing words to Philoctetes at the end of Sophocles' *Philoctetes* (1408–1471). And yet his last speech evokes what Homer's Odysseus reports of seeing Hercules in the underworld, and the last lines give a prophecy much as a prophecy concludes Euripides' *Cyclops*.<sup>88</sup> The anonymous *Hercules on Oeta*, thus, is the culmination of all of the trends of an aggressive Roman eclecticism that paid homage simultaneously to multiple traditions and cultures and numerous artistic genres.

#### CONCLUSION: ROMANISATION/TRANSFORMATION OF SATYR DRAMA

Because satyr drama in Greece concluded a tragic trilogy, it is appropriate to conclude with a reflection on what Roman performance substituted for a satyr drama and ultimately how satyr drama reinvented itself in the Roman Empire. The chorus of Greek old comedy is missing in Roman comedy. Plautus and Terence chose Menander and other playwrights of New Comedy for their models. Satyr drama was already separated from trilogies in late classical Greece and the Roman instinct in the Republic was to look to Italic comic genres for inspiration. The search for verbal reminiscences of Attic satyr drama in Latin texts is unrewarding.

There is no evidence of Greek-based comedy in Latin in performance in the city of Rome under the emperors. This is partially a result of emperors increasingly in the field outside of Rome. History and biography followed the emperor; references to current events in the city of Rome become less and less compared to the Republic. Knowledge of Greek New Comedy, particularly outside of Rome and especially in authors writing in Greek, suggests it was a taste suited to the times and so must have existed. Plutarch mentions

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87. On differences between the Greek and Roman stage, see Small 2013 and Sear 1990 and 2006. Medea in Seneca exits for the last time as a *dea ex machina*; Philippides (2018) 168–69.

88. For which see also Thetis at the end of Euripides' *Andromache* (1231–1288), Athena in Euripides' *Suppliants* (1183–1234), Athena in Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Tauris* (1435–1499), Athena in Euripides' *Ion* (1553–1622), Castor in Euripides' *Helen* (1642–1692), Apollo in Euripides' *Orestes* (1625–1693), among others.

with approval recitations at dinner parties,<sup>89</sup> and prefaces his question (*Table Talks* 5 673D.1) on actors portraying pain with the note that Strato (otherwise unknown) had won a competition in comedy. The conclusion to the double question in *Table Talks* 7.7–8 (see above) is that Menander and New Comedy are most appropriate for a dinner party (*Table Talks* 712B–D). In spite of his years of residence in Rome, Plutarch leaves little trace of his time there and so there is no discussion of plays he might have seen.<sup>90</sup>

Imperial Roman taste focused on (and modern scholarly attention privileges) other comedic genres. Even so the preserved material for *exodium*, satyr drama, Atellan Farce, Mime, and Pantomime is very limited, and in several instances it is impossible to document any influences, especially within the area of Rome. Greek tragedy had satyr drama as a (comparatively) light close to a tragedy as Tudor audiences expected a jig (spirited dancing with a salty subject) to conclude performance of a tragedy and even comedy. *Romeo and Juliet* and *Henry the Fifth* both ended with jigs, sometimes with the actor who died in the final scene jumping up to dance in the skit. There was a Latin parallel, the *exodium*, for which the evidence is slight and there are no surviving notices of plot and performance. The literary references would argue that the *exodium* could be a skit, but it could equally be a mime or pantomime or Atellan farce. One Atellan farce is titled *Exodium* (*Exit Piece*) and attributed to a writer active during Cicero's lifetime (*Ad familiares* 7.1, to Marius) which gives one of the earliest notices of pantomime at Rome.<sup>91</sup>

Satyr drama is of interest because of new evidence coming to light, primarily in Boeotia, of performance of newly commissioned satyr dramas during Roman rule. At the local level it seems to have filled the space left by the decline of *ad hominem* attacks of Aristophanic Old Comedy. As it is not a performative genre in Latin or in Rome, it is worth a note only because it shows the persistence of Greek dramatic festivals during the empire, including ones that continued as competitions, and it also shows a vibrancy, perhaps renewal, of traditional types of performance.<sup>92</sup> The evidence from Boeotia indicates prize categories for satyr drama for both reperformance and for new plays. Continuity of performance in South Italy until at least Rome's

89. καὶ μίμοις καὶ ἠθολόγοις καὶ τοῖς Μέναδρον ὑποκρινομένοις τὰ συμπόσια χάραν ἔδοκεν (*Table Talks* 5.673B praef.).

90. One exception is a dinner party held in honour of his return to Rome after many years' absence (*Table Talks* 8 Question 7.727B).

91. K. Philippides brings to my attention Dupont (1985) 287–306 (on *exodium*).

92. See Skotheim (2021) 749–763. For evidence, particularly mosaics, suggesting continued performance of satyr drama into at least the fourth century CE, see Harrison (2021).

war against Pyrrhus in the 270s BCE is evident from South Italian vases.<sup>93</sup> Accius in an unassigned fragment of his *Advice for Playwrights*<sup>94</sup> refers to a dance specific to satyr drama that would seem to indicate it was still current.

The rise of Atellan farce, mime and pantomime are of interest partially because notices of them have an inverse proportion to the decline of notice in sources in the Latin West of comedy, and because of the influence they had even on imperial Roman tragedy.<sup>95</sup> L. Crassicius<sup>96</sup> started by translating plays but turned his attention to writing mimes. According to Plutarch,<sup>97</sup> mime was purposely badly written and persistently in bad taste. Although he seems to class both as sub-sets of mime,<sup>98</sup> Plutarch seems aware of both Roman pantomime and farce, neither of which he approves for after-dinner entertainment. The first is too long (*μήκη*) and unwieldy (*δυσχορήγητον*); the second, vulgar (*βωμολοχίας*) and gossipy (*σπερμολογίας*), not suitable content for even changing-room slaves.

Plutarch and Athenaeus record that performance, of Greek (New) Comedy, and particularly Menander, in Greece and Greek-speaking lands remained robust. Anecdotes pepper the biographies of Suetonius, while transformation of roles, and so costume, has been traced through different genres,<sup>99</sup> but Lucian, *On Dance* had much to say about masking as well as dancing in pantomime.<sup>100</sup> Although the first appearance of mime and pantomime, and Atellan farce, pre-date the emperors, these genres as we now understand them, and as they reinvented themselves, belong to the Empire. Plutarch (*Table Talks* 7 Question 5.706D–E) distinguishes among Euripides, Pindar, and Menander and what he considered low brow mime, songs for lyre and for pipe. In their evolution, Roman mime and pantomime dug into earlier Greek literature for inspiration. That they were successful in appropriation, a distinctly Roman salacious appropriation, earned Plutarch's disapproval.

93. See Carpenter (2005) 219–36.

94. Accius, *Advice for Playwrights*, Warmington fr. 7 *adespota*.

95. For Seneca's grasp and utilization of performative norms of mime and pantomime, see Zanobi (2014) and (2008).

96. Suetonius *De Grammaticis* 18: *Hic initio circa scaenam versatus est... dum mimographos adiuvat.*

97. Plutarch *Table Talks* 7 question 6. 706D: *κακοτέχνοις* and *κακοζήλοις*. Plutarch expands in his own voice in *Table Talks* 7 question 8. 712E–F.

98. *μίμοί τινές εἰσιν*. Roman pantomime: *ὑποθέσεις* LSJ II.5; farce: *παίγνια* CGL 2.

99. See, esp., Wyles 2013, 181–98 and Hall 2013, 451–73.

100. See Petrides 2013, 433–50.



The history of the Romanisation of Greek drama is endlessly fascinating because it was endlessly transforming itself. The tragedians writing in Latin in the Republic were as much themselves imports to Rome as the Greek plays they adapted. In the Empire the central position of Rome was constantly eroding as the emperors increasingly were elsewhere and those writing about plays in the Empire increasingly lived outside of Rome and increasingly wrote in Greek. Aulus Gellius is the exception that proves the rule. For the Republic there are no complete tragedies; for the Julio-Claudian emperors and their immediate successors, ten tragedies survive but no record of performance; the great observers of the Second Sophistic are almost all later and declined almost without exception to leave a record of performances they had seen and so how Romanisation of the Greek inheritance continued in the second century AD through the closing of theatres is largely, and sadly, lost.

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