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Pacuvius

Melodrama, Reversals and Recognitions

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Works and Context

It is strange but convenient for my purpose that Pacuvius has received so little attention in the past century or more. Mette's valuable survey of Roman tragedy in *Lustrum*, now forty years old[1] found surprisingly few studies of Pacuvian drama or discussion of individual fragments in any of the four canonical languages. For years after the magisterial investigations of republican tragedy by Ribbeck and Leo,[2] there was minimal interest in Ennius' nephew and Terence's older contemporary. Pacuvius was completely overshadowed by his more versatile uncle, until the useful monographs of M. Valsa and Italo Mariotti[3] (luckily the Italians cherish Latin poetry as part of their own inheritance, just as they cherish the poetry, music and fine arts of their peninsula over the last seven hundred years). After Mariotti, came the careful text of Giovanni d'Anna, with its detailed commentary: I have found his study the most helpful edition of the plays, and made it my point of departure.[4] In my student days we had to rely on the bare selections of Ernout's *Recueil de Textes Latins Archaïques*, followed soon after by Diehl's

1. Mette 1964.
2. Ribbeck 1875; Leo 1913.
3. Valsa 1957; Mariotti 1960. But both are indebted to Helm 1942; also Mariotti and D'Anna 1967 have built on Mette's ordering and interpretation of the fragments within the plays (Mette 1964, 78–107).
4. D'Anna 1967.

selection from early epic and drama.[5] Our best access was the well-annotated Loeb Classical Library text of E.H. Warmington.[6] At least we can now apply to understanding Pacuvius some of the learning and method of Harry Jocelyn's great, but demanding, edition of Ennian tragedy and subsequent articles. With Adrian Gratwick's brief section on Republican tragedy in the Cambridge History, Jocelyn represents the most informed work in our language known to me.[7] The good news is that we now have in print three discussions of individual plays from the recent Freiburg colloquium on identity and alterity in Roman tragedy. I am greatly indebted to Niall Slater for letting me benefit from his discussion of the *Chryses* (Slater 2000).

What did it mean to grow up as nephew of Ennius, the greatest poet of Rome (and Calabria), to earn distinction as a religious painter by adorning the shrine of Hercules in the Forum Boarium, to produce tragedies through the years of Caecilius and Terence, living on—according to literary anecdote—to meet and endorse the young Accius?[8] Accius' evidence, retailed by Varro and Cicero, puts Pacuvius' birth in 220 BC: how would it affect your creative originality to reach fifty still in the shadow of your uncle? Although Jerome puts the *floruit* of Pacuvius as late as 154, we can fairly suspect him of shifting the goal-posts to fill a convenient gap in the dramatic succession. Why did Horace's older contemporaries call Pacuvius *doctus*?[9] One of my arguments will be that, in praising the poet for *doctrina*—Greek learning—rather than inventive power, they reflected their own limited knowledge of Greek mythology as well as of poetic diction. For inquiry reveals not only Pacuvius' acknowledged and rather Hellenistic innovations of poetic language, but a taste for generating new melodramatic situations that seems to have carried him well beyond the Greek tradition. If the hypotheses of Pacuvius' plays were based on Greek models, the deviations we can trace in his *libretti* still show amazing independence of any known models.

Style and Language

I chose the term *libretti* partly because I think Roman tragedy is best appreciated in terms of grand opera, but more because Pacuvius, like his

5. Ernout 1916 went into a second edition in 1957. It cites 108 lines of Pacuvius, with linguistic rather than literary commentary. Diehl 1961 offers a much fuller selection with testimonia.
6. Warmington 1936. His text is cited in this paper as *ROL*; all subsequent references are to *ROL* vol. 2, except when otherwise indicated.
7. Jocelyn 1969, listing important earlier articles in its bibliography; Gratwick 1982 on early Roman literature, notably 129–37 on Pacuvian tragedy.
8. For the encounter of the old and young poets see Cic. *Brutus* 229, Gel. 13.2.
9. Hor. *Epistles* 2.1. 55–6, 'Pacuvius wins renown as a learned elder, Accius as a lofty one', *aufert Pacuuius docti famam senis, Accius alti.*

uncle, grafted material from one tragedy into another, and reset the metrical and musical format of the Greek models that formed the basis of his plays: surviving lines show the recasting of dialogue (recitative) as accompanied long verse (*arioso*) and even monody, and conversely, the remodelling of choral odes as plain *senarii* or accompanied long verse.[10] Our knowledge of Pacuvius is poorer and more conjectural than for Ennian tragedy, where we can, for instance, compare fragments of Ennius' *Medea* and *Iphigenia at Aulis* with the full Euripidean text. At best citations and papyrus remains offer a Euripidean counterpart for the key debate of Pacuvius' *Antiopa* between the musician Amphion and his brother, the philistine (*amousos*) hunter Zethus.[11] Amphion's splendid riddle of the tortoise-lyre offers a rich but perhaps misleading sample of Pacuvius' language, for the 'slow-stepping low rough country four-footer, with short head, snaky neck, and truculent gaze,' the 'disembowelled un-living creature with the living sound',[12] was already a riddle in Euripides, and the Latin compound adjectives only do justice to his model. He was equally mocked for the boldness of his description of dolphins as 'the spread-snouted curving-necked flock of Nereus',[13] but this seems to come from Latin poetry's first and finest description of a voyage and sea-storm in the lost *Teucer*.[14] Extended fragments of this narrative have survived because it was beloved by Cicero and imitated by Virgil, Ovid, Seneca and Lucan. The original was either a messenger speech or possibly a choral ode, which would have given full play to such rich compound adjectives. This scene and other shorter fragments from plays to be examined shortly show the romantic predilection for storm and shipwreck, and the displacement to remote and isolated lands, which is already reflected in Plautus' adaptation of Diphilus' *Rudens*.

As scholars have noted, excerpts from Pacuvius cited for literary reasons by Cicero and others are far less exotic in their language than the shorter fragments preserved by Festus or Nonius as examples of exceptional usage. But it would be dishonest to conceal that even six-word excerpts cited by Nonius or Festus for one eccentric formation often contain another. Besides Pacuvius' switches of active to deponent or passive verb-forms, and shifts of declension and gender for nouns, come both new noun-formations such as

10. See D'Anna's *index metrorum*, listing iambic septenarii and octonarii, abundant trochaic septenarii, and lyric anapaests (e.g. *Atal.* 63), cretics (*Atal.* 68, 72), and bacchiacs (e.g. *Iliona* 232) and even the odd versus reizianus at *Atal.* 62.
11. For the surviving fragments of the Euripidean tragedy see Kambitsis 1972.
12. *ROL*, *Antiopa* 4–6: cited by both *Rhet. Her.* 2. 43 and Cic. *Inv* 1.94 *quadrupes tardigrada agrestis humilis aspera/ breui capite, ceruice anguina, aspectu truci, euiscerata inanima cum animali sono.*
13. *Nerei repandirostrum incurviceruicum pecus*, from *Teucer*, *ROL* 292–3, mocked by Lucilius, 'that the cattle of Nereus, curved of snout, should frolic', *lasciuire pecus Nerei rostrique repandum ROL* 3. 235.
14. For the voyage and storm, cf. Warmington, *ROL* 350–65.

geminitudo (twinship) and *tristitas* (sadness), and words that were archaisms even in his time. Some of these are also found in Ennius, but Pacuvius also reverted to verb forms like *adiugare* and *abiugare/deiugare* (to yoke up, and unyoke) for Ennius' conventional *adiungere*. Yet it would be mistaken to belittle as primitive a practice admired as ultra-sophisticated when it occurs in the post-Classical poetry of Callimachus. Cicero and Varro confirm that Romans looked to the poets to give their language the verbal variation and innovation inappropriate to the courtroom.[15]

Pacuvius both deploys rhetoric and expresses delight in verbal skills: hence he was cited by the rhetorical tradition before Cicero. The *agôn* of Amphion and Zethus in which *mousikê* won the day was a natural tool for the school-room, but for Pacuvius' rhetorical mind-set compare his praise in the *Hermione* of the psychagogic power of speech, 'O you soul-bending queen of all the world, Eloquence', *flexanima atque regina rerum omnium oratio*, (ROL 187) or the claim in *Periboea* that oracles ('Delphic discourse') speak 'ambiguously but not falsely', *flexa sed non falsa autumare dictio Delphis solet* (ROL 334). Like his uncle, he was fascinated by oracles, because of their authority and ambiguity: several fragments play with the problems of interpreting ambiguous utterances.[16] Another Pacuvian argument in the form of a rhetorical thesis is cited in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: this extended and rather prosy passage explains why Fortune is represented by some philosophers as blind and cruel, because she randomly destroys the exalted; but others deny any role to Fortune 'just as Orestes, once a king, is now reduced to beggarhood by shipwreck; for this was inflicted on him by the waves, and not by chance or fortune',[17] Perhaps because his just deed of mother murder made him a favourite of rhetorical dispute, Orestes is hero of three Pacuvian tragedies, *Chryses*, *Doulorestes* and *Hermiona*. Pacuvius uses Orestes' role as avenger of his dead father on his murderous mother to give a strong antithetical punch to his rhetoric: 'If only I could put on my mother's nature to avenge my father!' (*utinam nunc matrescam ingenio ut*

15. On poetic licence both to coin new words and to modify existing forms, see Cic. *Orator* 67, 'I conclude that poets have greater licence than us to create and compound words, and in addition some of them serve pleasure (*uoluptati*, Madvig; *uoluntati* Codd) with sound rather than sense', and 163, 'fine-sounding words, but not words searched out for their sound, as poets do, but taken from the common stock'. So also Var. L.L. 9.5 'as the orator should not use the principle of analogy in all forms, since he cannot do so without offence, whereas the poet can easily cross all the barriers.'

16. Thus the tortoise riddle is answered: *ROL* 7–10, ' This utterance has been presented by you with such hedging around, that a wise man barely reached it by divination: we cannot understand unless you speak openly', *'ita saeptuose dictio abs te datur/quod coniectura sapiens aegre contulit:/non intelligimus, nisi si aperte dixeris;* cf. *Dulorestes* 151–2, 'I could not interpret in any way by divination, to what end his twisted utterance was aiming', *nihil coniectura quiui interpretarier/quorsum flexiuia dictio contenderet.*

17. *Rhet. Her.* 2. 36.

meum patrem ulcisci queam, ROL 136), and 'What can I do, when I am now loath to speak my father's name and ashamed to name my mother?' (*quid quod iam mihi/piget paternum nomen, maternum pudet/profari* (ROL 138–40). It is not surprising that Cicero turns to Pacuvius to illustrate the rhetoric of the passions in *de Oratore* and many of the moral crises and challenges of the *Tusculans*.

We can now move on from Pacuvius as a wordsmith to his originality and idiosyncrasies as a dramatist. As illustration I would like to compare the intrigues and dramatic presentation of four of his thirteen plays which have exceptional narrative features in common: all four have exotic settings, and exploit plots based on concealed or lost identity, with a *peripeteia* of recognition and rescue to suit Hellenistic tastes. These are *Atalanta, Chryses, Iliona* and *Medus*, all named for their protagonists, and all dealing with continuations of better-known myths. They not only continue mythical narratives from earlier tragedy, but, I would argue, they were conceived as sequels (spin-offs?) to his uncle's successful productions. Thus, the *Chryses* concerns Orestes and Iphigenia, but does not continue her adventures immediately after the divine rescue of Ennius' Euripidean *Iphigenia at Aulis*. Nor does he adapt Euripides' immensely popular *Iphigenia among the Taurians*. Instead Pacuvius reworks several elements of its action in a sequel to the Taurian adventure, introducing the role of Chryses. Pursued by Thoas, Orestes and Pylades are taking Iphigenia and the image of Artemis back to the Greek world, when they are forced to put in at a remote island occupied by another potential enemy. The *Medus* continues the story of Medea from Ennius' version of Euripides' tragedy, but some time after the episode in Athens dramatized by Euripides as the *Aigeus*—which Ennius may also have adapted.[18] The *Iliona*, in turn, is an extraordinary rewriting of the Polydorus myth told in Euripides' *Hecuba*, with a different account of Polymestor's treacherous murder and punishment. Only *Atalanta* ostensibly deals with a myth and a dynasty unsung by Ennius, and perhaps by any of the three great Greek tragedians. But the secondary action of this play involves the myth of Auge and Telephus, related to notorious Euripidean antecedents.[19] Indeed, uncle Ennius had set the Euripidean *Telephus*, covering a later phase of the myth: so we can again see Pacuvius developing his action beyond the

18. It is not clear whether the title *Medea Exul* denoted a second Ennian play or whether Ennius himself added an episode based on Medea's experiences in Athens to his adaptation of Euripides' *Medea*. Jocelyn is inclined to believe there was only one play, and that *Medea Exul* was a casual description by our ancient witness.

19. Telephus is notorious, because of Aristophanes' parodies of *Telephus* in *Thesmophoriazusae* and elsewhere and the citation of Euripidean exposure plots such as *Auge* centuries later by Menander's charcoal-burners in *Epitrepontes* 326–33.

mythical intrigue of an established tragedy.

For each of these plays, about twenty-five isolated fragments are clearly attested, cited from the play by name, and a further group of Pacuvian fragments seem to fit the context. But additional evidence of a different kind—of plots and dramaturgy—seems to lurk behind the *Fabulae* attributed to Hyginus, a collection of *genealogiae* drawn from sources related to Apollodorus' *Bibliotheke*. These clumsy texts cannot be the work of the Augustan librarian, but could be a summary made by an ignorant and incoherent second-century writer not in complete control of either Latin or Greek. The *Fabulae*, largely but not always in the form of synopses, are not expressed in terms of dramatic episodes or scenes. Yet the very strangeness of the myths, as presented in these summaries, seems a guarantee of their authenticity as records of lost dramas, and there are items in this collection which correspond to the four Pacuvian plays, and to no other plays that we know of.[20] For this reason, scholars have regularly used 'Hyginus' to elucidate the shattered fragments of Pacuvius.[21]

Atalanta

I shall begin with the problematic *Atalanta*, the most complex of these actions, because it was thoroughly explored over sixty years ago in a brilliantly argued thesis, advanced not by a literary scholar, but by a major ancient historian, Franz Altheim. In his *Epochen der Römischen Geschichte*,[22] Altheim argued that the time of Pacuvius and Terence was a key moment in the cultural growth of Rome. Just as Plautus made a new world out of comedy, a Greek genre that had narrowed itself too much, so Pacuvius sought out what was new in tragedy and tested how far he could take his originality. In choosing Pacuvius' *Atalanta* as the only literary work that he would examine from this epoch, and in reconstructing it step by step, Altheim aimed at a conclusion that reached across to Aristotle's theory of tragedy as we know it from the *Poetics*, and to the post-classical literary values of Aristotle's century.

Which of the Atalantas is the title character of this drama? Classical Greek mythology knew of two Atalantas, both addicted to virginity and athletics; the Arcadian daughter of Iason or Iasius, the huntress whom

20. The correlation is direct for *Medus* (XXVII), *Chryses* (CIX) and *Ilione* (CXXI) but only partial for *Atalanta*, part of whose action is implied in *Auge* in 'Hyginus' (XCIX).

21. See Dietze 1894, 24. But Robert 1878 and Wilamowitz 1883, 258, denied any relationship between 'Hyginus' and Roman tragedy: 'this has as little direct relation to Pacuvius as any other genuine plot in Hyginus to any other Roman poet.'

22. Altheim 1935 vol. 2. The play is discussed in his Part 3, 'A Change of Intellectual Direction' (*Veränderung der Geistigen Richtung*).

Milanion wooed by patiently serving her demands, and the Boeotian daughter of Schoeneus, who wounded the Calydonian boar and was the indirect cause of the death of Meleager. In most authors it is the latter Atalanta who tries to fend off suitors by challenging them to a foot-race: if they win, she will consent to marry them but if they lose, they must die. As in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Hippomenes wins her because he is equipped by Aphrodite with apples to distract her from the race. The couple are not usually credited with children, since they were transformed into lions by Aphrodite or Cybele when they offended the goddess by mating in her sanctuary.[23]

It is the Arcadian Atalanta who gives birth to Parthenopaeus, who will die in the expedition of the Seven against Thebes. But Apollodorus (3.9.1 and 2) shows just how confused had become the stories of the two heroines. Apollodorus' preferred version traces the family tree of Arcadia from the eponymous Arcas to his son Aleus and grandchildren by Aleus, including Auge, Cepheus and Lycurgus. Lycurgus is grandfather by different sons of both Atalanta and Milanion: thus the lovers are cousins, and note that Auge is their great-aunt. Unwanted by her father Iasus, Atalanta was herself exposed, but reared by wild creatures and recognized as a young girl: she then set up the challenge of the foot-race to fend off marriage. Milanion competed and won her, and she conceived Parthenopaeus either by him or by Ares. We will see that she exposed Parthenopaeus—an act hardly compatible with a version in which his father was her mortal husband.

Where does Auge come into our story? The royal kingdom of Pergamum, Rome's ally before and during the life of Pacuvius, celebrated its heroic ancestor Telephus, son of Heracles and Auge, with a frieze around its great altar that we can still see today.[24] This frieze narrates the life of Telephus from his exposure by Auge on Mt Parthenius, to his rescue by Hercules and travels to the court of king Teuthras of Moesia, where he would be reunited with his mother. We may ask how Telephus could be contemporary with the son of his mother's great-niece, but the quest and companionship of Parthenopaeus and Telephus is asserted by the Hyginus narratives entitled AUGE and TEUTHRAS. Here first are the synopses in Hyginus:

> (XCIX AUGE) Auge daughter of Aleus was impregnated by Hercules and when her labours approached gave birth on Mt Parthenius and exposed the baby there. At the same time Atalanta daughter of Iasius exposed her

23. Ov. *Met.* 10.560–704.

24. The frieze was actually brought to New York's Metropolitan Museum two years ago. See now *LIMC* VII 1, s.v. Telephus, 3.1–12 and 20–1. There is no known iconographical connection with the career of Parthenopaeus (*LIMC* VIII 1, Suppl. 942.)

son, begotten by Meleager. Now a doe suckled Hercules' son. Shepherds found them both and reared them, calling Hercules' son Telephus . . . and Atalanta's child Parthenopaeus, because she had exposed him on Mt Parthenius. Meanwhile Auge for fear of her father fled to Moesia to king Teuthras, who being childless adopted her as his daughter.

(C TEUTHRAS) Idas son of Aphareus wanted to rob king Teuthras in Moesia of his kingdom, but when Telephus son of Hercules came there seeking his mother as a result of an oracle, and with Parthenopaeus as his companion, Teuthras gave him his kingdom and his own mother unwittingly as his wife. Since she wanted no mortal to violate her body, she wanted to kill Telephus, unaware that he was her son. So when he came into the bedchamber she took a sword to kill him. Then it is said that by the will of the gods an enormous serpent came between them. Seeing it Auge dropped her sword and admitted her intention. Telephus, not knowing she was his mother, wanted to kill her; she appealed to Hercules her ravisher and from him[25] Telephus recognized his mother and brought her back to her country.

So, when we read among the fragments attributed to Pacuvius' tragedy these phrases: 'for the sake of tracking down my/our unidentified parents' and 'it pains and irks me more and more that I embarked on this journey in vain',[26] they evoke the journey of Parthenopaeus to seek out his mother Atalanta. We have only the testimony of Hyginus to confirm that he is accompanied by his friend Telephus, but the first sentence could equally describe a pair of parent-less sons on their search. And they must be a pair, however comical it may seem: I am, embarrassingly, reminded of the unison duet of *les deux Ajax* in Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, and the young heroes of *The Gondoliers*, whose identity is thrown into doubt from the beginning of the opera. The proof of the Pacuvian doubling comes in a fragment cited for the unique form *geminitudo* or 'twinship': 'I have a means to tell apart that twinship between you both', says a speaker, and that speaker is surely Atalanta.[27] D'Anna believes that she is also the speaker of his fr. VIII (ROL 69–70) 'I don't know what path to tread or first step to take in seeking out

25. Less probably 'from this event'; *ex eo* could perhaps be neuter.
26. D'Anna fr. II (61) = *ROL* 51, *parentum incertum inuestigandi gratia*; D'Anna fr. III (62–3) = *ROL* 54–5, *dolet pigetque magis magisque/me conatum hoc nequiquam itiner.*
27. D'Anna fr. IX 71 = *ROL* 56, *habeo ego istam qui distinguam inter uos geminitudinem.*

my offspring'.[28] This is one of several lines concerned to identify which (*uter*) of the young men is the long-lost son: 'Show me which of you two received the recognition-token,' 'I am showing the ring hung from my left arm.'[29] In another fragment, the recognition of Parthenopaeus has taken place: 'my son, shame makes me fear to speak out.'[30] But what precipitated this rush to recognition? A crucial line of a messenger speech, preserved for the rare Greek form *campter* (racing turn), reports a crucial phase in a foot-race: someone has overtaken Parthenopaeus himself on the last bend.[31] If there has been a foot-race it must be on the terms traditionally assigned to Atalanta: 'win the race and you marry me; lose it and you die.' Parthenopaeus, indeed, each of the youths—hence 'Parthenopaeus himself' (*ipsum P.*)—has risked the double hazard, of death or (incestuous) marriage. Given that this seems an entirely new mythical twist, the speech reporting the off-stage race will have kept the audience on tenterhooks; will our hero find himself forced to marry his mother, or merely face death? If Parthenopaeus and Telephus both lose, we can expect the two young men to be brought in bound for potential execution. Their coming doom would also explain the fragment of lyric monody asking the cause of an interlocutor's untypical sadness.[32] Instead of triumphing in her victory, Atalanta has been moved by a natural sympathy for the youth committed to die, and her lost answer, such as 'my son would be just your age', leads to mutual explanation. The two young men reveal their mission, and probably the oracle that caused it; then Atalanta describes the ring she left with her baby to identify him, and asks one of them to show it. Once the recognition is effected, she forces herself to overcome her shame and describe to her son (*mi gnate*) how she gave birth on the mountainside.[33]

28. *dubito quam insistam uiam/aut quod primordium capessam ad stirpem exquirendum.* This assumes that *stirps* here refers to descendants, though the same word could also denote ancestry. However, the meaning 'descendants' is more common; see Pacuvius fr. 18, 'who killed my descendants', *qui stirpem occidit meum*; cf. also Charisius' comment, GLK I 109.17 'they used to say *stirps* with the meaning of offspring in the masculine gender, as in Pacuvius . . . etc'.
29. 'Tell me which of you two it is to whom the token was given', *is uestrorum uter sit, cui signum datum est/cette* (D'Anna X, 72–3 =*ROL* 57–8): the reply seems to be: *suspensum in laevo bracchio ostendo ungulum* (D'Anna XI, 74 = *ROL* 59). But what is meant by *suspensum?* The ring is clearly not worn on a finger; if it was a woman's ring it would be too small for a healthy young hero's finger.
30. *mi gnate ut uereor eloqui porcet pudor*, D'Anna XII, 75 = *ROL* 61.
31. *extremum intra campterem ipsum praegradat/Parthenopaeum*, D'Anna VI, 66–7 = *ROL* 68–9. D'Argenio 1956 is even prepared to change the text to make Parthenopaeus subject and Atalanta object (*ipsam . . . Parthenopaeus*), because he is convinced Parthenopaeus must win.
32. 'What unaccustomed sorrow attacks your mind?', *quae aegritudo insolens mentem adtemptat tuam?* D'Anna VII, 68 = *ROL* 75.
33. D'Anna XII and XIV–XV, 75 and 77–9 = *ROL* 61, 64–6. There is a good model for this type of narrative in Creousa's tale of her imaginary friend's shame at Eur. *Ion* 336–60.

What this unwitting confrontation of mother and son amounts to, as Altheim showed, is the favourite *peripeteia* (reversal of fortune) of Aristotle's *Poetics*, in which a kinsman (*philos*) is about to kill a kinsman, but is recognized just in time to prevent the dreadful deed and provide a happy ending.[34] Whether Parthenopaeus loses the race, or, as Altheim argues, wins by tricking her and so faces an Oedipal fate-worse-than-death, we can see that Pacuvius has transferred to this mother and son the traditional crisis and recognition on the brink of a terrible fate—in this case the incestuous marriage of Auge and Telephus. Their recognition can only arise because of the *peripeteia* that Pacuvius himself has engineered.

As Altheim points out, the Roman poet's desire for this kind of *peripeteia* drove him to contrive an unlikely scenario. Why would Atalanta, a mother old enough to have a grown son, set up a marriage contest, whose purpose was to protect youthful virginity? How would she, or any man in authority over her (Greek *kurios*), have power to impose these terms on the competing suitors? She has no adoptive father comparable to Teuthras, who adopts Auge, to impose this sanction. Why, in any case, would the heroes risk the consequences? This distortion of myth and probability is singled out by Altheim as the strongest argument that Pacuvius was now putting dramatic values before the claims of mythical tradition; hence, that tragedy had come of age at Rome.

There is another problem, however, that Altheim only partially explored. Why bring in the second long-lost boy? What is Pacuvius going to do with Telephus? He sees a cue for Atalanta to relate Auge's sufferings in the lines referring to 'women oppressed by slavery, violence, deprivation, rumour, fear and shame', since the last three hardships in particular evoke an unmarried mother.[35] Other fragments, renewing the question-and-answer form, suggest that the story of Telephus' mother and his birth is now revealed to him (here I imitate Pacuvius' archaic diction):

> 'What ails you? What sadness takes hold of your expression?'
> 'I will now relate what I was trying to say when we were disturbed' . . .
> 'Tegea is an ancient city of Arcadia . . . (there Aleus begat three children of male sex . . . they brandish death, drive <her> from the kingdom and deny her as their kinswoman.' [36]

34. Aristotle's fifth and preferred type (*Poetics* 16, 1454 a16–17) when kinsmen are on the verge of doing harm to kin at the moment of recognition: the resolution arises from the action itself (*ex autôn tôn pragmatôn*) and from probability.
35. *quas famulitas, uis, egestas, fama, formido, pudor* . . . D'Anna XVII, 81 = *ROL* 71.
36. D'Anna XVII–XXIII, 81–8: but *ROL* assigns only XVII = 71, and XXII–XXIII = 70, 79, to this scene.

This brings the story of Tegea down to the present time when one of Aleus' sons 'is now in control of the kingdom handed down from his father'. (D'Anna XXIII = ROL 78) Here we have the raw material for a double action, one for each of two questing heroes and two long-lost sons. But Auge has fled to Asia Minor; there can be no second recognition, unless we allow Pacuvius to shift the location by taking the heroes all the way to Moesia.[37] Nor can Atalanta or some handy *deus ex machina* foretell the next recognition to Telephus, since he must go to Moesia without knowing his mother's circumstances. At best, either an oracle reported in the prologue scene, or Atalanta in her narrative—after all she is the protagonist—can give Telephus reason to seek his mother in Moesia. Partial disclosure by the god before the action began could then be supplemented by human knowledge, as Atalanta reveals Auge's name and the cruel treatment by her family that drove her from home to expose him on the mountain. Such tales of innocent women in distress were much loved by Pacuvius, whose *Antiopa* similarly has a woman impregnated by a god and abused and enslaved at Thebes until she is recognized by the twin sons she had to abandon on Mt Cithaeron.

We cannot resolve the role and quest of Telephus in *Atalanta* any more satisfactorily than this. What matters, as Altheim has shown, is Pacuvius' innovative dramaturgy; his invention of a double action, with which we might compare Terence's first comedy, the *Andria*, [38] and his romantic delight in lost identities, misguided threats and last-minute rescue through recognition. Indeed these ingredients, with one exception, are common to the three other plays to be considered.[39]

Medus

Closest in *dramatis personae* and outcome is *Medus*, the story of Medea's last-born son by Aegeus. Here is Hyginus' account:

> King Perses, brother of Aeetes and child of the Sun, was told by an oracle to beware of death at the hands of Aeetes' descendants. Medus while seeking his mother was carried by a storm to his land and seized by bodyguards who brought him to the king. Seeing he had come into the

37. This is actually proposed by D'Argenio 1956,163, but his work shows as little knowledge of ancient dramatic practices as of Pacuvian scholarship; he has not read Altheim.
38. Donatus confirms that Terence created the second young lover Charinus and his role in the action.
39. The exception is *Iliona*, where loyalty pre-exists between Iliona and her son, and recognition only changes Polydorus' attitude to his 'father' Polymestor. This play comes closer to the type which Aristotle in *Poetics* 14 classified as inferior, where the good triumph and the bad are punished.

> power of his enemy he falsely claimed that he was Hippotes, son of Creon. The king investigated carefully and had him thrown into prison. But then there came a drought; Medea arrived in her serpent-drawn chariot and falsely claimed that she was a priestess of Diana (Hecate?) who could expiate the drought. Hearing from the king that Hippotes son of Creon was there in prison, she thought he had come to avenge his father Creon; but she accidentally betrayed her own son; for she persuaded the king that he was not Hippotes but Medus, son of Aegeus, sent by his mother to kill the king, and she asked the king to hand over the prisoner to her to be killed because she thought he was Hippotes. (Hyg. XXVII MEDUS 1–4)

Need I go on? We have a situation in which Medus falsifies his identity; Medea believes the false identity and so exploits Perses' fear of Medea and her potential children to ensure the death of her supposed enemy. But the lie she tells is in fact the truth. This is her own son and—here I return to Hyginus—when she discovers he is not Hippotes,

> . . . she hands him the sword and tells him to take revenge on Perses for his usurpation of Aegeus' kingdom. Medus kills Perses and takes over the kingdom, calling the land Media by his own name. (MEDUS 5)

Is such a plot credible, and does it match our evidence for Pacuvius' play? Let me again compare New Comedy for a precedent for the combination of double bluff and recognition. In Menander's *Sicyonios*, a cheating litigant asks an old man Smicythus to claim to be the citizen father of the beautiful Sicyonian captive: and lo and behold, he turns out to be her real father!

How do the surviving fragments of *Medus* trace the action? The first four (and their internal order may well be wrong) reflect a dialogue between king and reporting shepherd: 'What calls you away from your pens?' 'I am resolved to tell you.' 'Who are these men?' "Some unknown low fellows.' 'Out with it: where did they say they were travelling?'[40] and perhaps also 'we looked around us from all sides; horror seized us.'[41] The scene sounds as though it was partly modelled on the opening of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Then Medus appears alone, praying to the sun for power to seek out his mother: 'Sun, I call upon you to bestow power upon me to seek out my mother!'

> *te, Sol, invoco ut mihi potestatem duis*

40. D'Anna IV, I and II (255, 251–2) = *ROL* 238, 239, 246. I have changed D'Anna's sequence, on the assumption that *ab stabulis* means literally 'from the pens' and so should be addressed to a shepherd who has reported, or brought in, the newcomer Medus.
41. *diuersi circumspicimus, horror percipit*, D'Anna VI, 257 = *ROL* 265.

> inquirendi mei parentis (D'A. III 253–4 = ROL 232–3)

The context is guaranteed by Charisius' explanation that the common-gender word *parens* (usually understood as 'father') is here applied to a mother.[42] Medus meets the king and probably identifies himself as Hippotes, who has come to avenge his father Creon on Medea: certainly he tells the king that she is wandering as an exile.[43] But the outcome is that Perses hands him over to be imprisoned. Next, another messenger reports the arrival of a beautiful woman in a chariot drawn by huge serpents with glittering, forked tongues[44] and Medea is welcomed by Perses as a servant of the gods.[45]

There seems to be a drought and famine, and Medea offers to avert it by a human sacrifice, presumably intending to dispose of 'Hippotes'.[46] It will be in this scene that she tells Perses that the captive cannot be Hippotes because he is dead: we have his inquiry 'why did you say that Hippotes was killed?'[47] Without any vestiges of the actual recognition scene, there is no way to improve on Hyginus' rather unsatisfactory account of Medea's recognition of her son. If she left him in Athens as an infant, neither would recognize the other without tokens. Or must we imagine her taunting him as Hippotes, with accusations such as 'your father made my husband Jason marry your sister', to provoke a recognition of the type Aristotle preferred, 'from the events themselves' (*Poetics* 16, 1455a16)? Instead of this recognition the accident of survival has preserved more than a dozen lines from another episode, when Aeetes is brought out from prison in full Pacuvian squalor—a new and climactic recognition scene:

> His eyes have sunken, his body withered with starvation, tears have consumed his bloodless cheeks with moisture, and on the squalor of his face, his matted dirty beard, unshorn, darkens his breast diseased with filth.[48]

Aeetes cannot believe his eyes, and must still be confused when she speaks

42. Charisius 130 (Barwick): 'If *heres, parens, homo* (heir, parent, person) are understood of both sexes, nevertheless they are always used in the masculine gender, for Pacuvius when he is showing that Medus is seeking his mother in the *Medus*, says . . . etc.'
43. D'Anna VII, 258 = *ROL* 239, 'what, then? Where is she? Where has she settled?' 'She is wandering a lost exile,' *quid tandem? ubi ea est? quo receptat? :: exul incerta uagat.*
44. D'Anna IX–X–XI, 260–3 = *ROL* 242–5.
45. 'O holy maiden of the gods above, you come long awaited: hail, O my guest', *caelitum camilla, exoptate aduenis: salue hospita*, D'Anna XII, 264 = *ROL* 257.
46. 'I can turn away this disaster with <sacrifice of> a human life', *possum ego istam capite cladem auerruncassere*, D'Anna XV, 267 = *ROL* 248.
47. *qua super re interfectum esse dixisti Hippotem?* D'Anna XIV, 266 = *ROL* 250.
48. *Refugere oculi, corpus macie extabuit,/lacrimae peredere umore exanguis genas / situm inter oris barba paedore horrida atque/ intonsa infuscat pectus inluuie scabrum.* Note the unusual hypermetric structure of the third line.

to him: 'I can tell, Father, that you are deceived by the similarity of voice.' 'Who are you, woman, to call me by that unfamiliar name?'[49] I have inverted D'Anna's sequence here; as I understand them, Medea's words, 'you are deceived by the similarity of voice', should follow his reaction to her voice (he may even be blind), and they suggest that he may have mistaken her for her sister, since his answer shows that he has not recognized Medea, even when she calls him father.[50] After the recognition, however, there is a reckoning to be made: Medea had violated his authority, betrayed the family and killed her own brother. There is no allusion to this last crime, but Medea proudly claims that she chose a mate instigated by Love, more powerful than any father: she even boasts that she left Aeetes when his kingdom flourished and everyone sought his favour, but now that he is in great danger and deserted by all, she is prepared to restore him single-handedly.[51]

But what is the danger, and how can she claim to be rescuing Aeetes single-handedly, unless this scene precedes her recognition of Medus? Remember that Hyginus says nothing of Aeetes' restoration. For this reason I would tentatively suggest—and here I seem to have Mette's support [52]—that the play moves from the pathos of Medea's reconciliation with her father (which is probably clandestine) to the final 'nick of time' recognition of Medus and their joint *coup d'état*: thus, straight pathos between father and daughter would precede the paradox and irony of the *peripeteia*. The essence of Pacuvius' *dénouement* is suggested by a parenthesis in the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus, anticipating the return of Medea with Medus and Aeetes' release.[53]

To Pacuvius' Roman audience this episode would surely have evoked the story of Amulius and Numitor as it was told in the second-century historians later used by Livy. The unlikely double exposure of the non-twins Parthenopaeus and Telephus and the suckling of one or both of them by female deer may evoke Romulus (not to mention Remus). And I would

49. *sentio, pater, te vocis calui similitudine:: quis tu es, mulier, quae me insueto nuncupasti nomine* D'Anna XX–XXI, 275–6 = *ROL* 258–9.

50. Editors acting on the reference to the role of Aegialeus = Absyrtus in this play by Cic. *N.D.* 3.48 have suggested that Aeetes mistakes Medea's voice for Aegialeus; but he would be more likely to make this mistake if Medus spoke to him.

51. D'Anna XXIII, XXIV, 279–80, 281–3 = *ROL* 260, 261–3.

52. Mette 1964, 103, describes the appearance of Aeetes and recognition scene before the death of Perses and succession of Medus. But he does not discuss the recognition between Medea and her son, because there are no fragments to locate.

53. Val. Fl. *Argonautica* 5. 687–9, cited by Helm 1942, 2166, 'until his daughter will help Aeetes after the long exile of his helpless old age (alas, how greatly impious deeds please the mighty fates) and a Greek grandson shall restore him to his kingdom' (*donec et Aceten inopis post longa senectae/exilia (heu magnis quantum libet impia fatis) nata iuuet, Graiusque nepos in regna reponat.* Cf. D.S. 4.56 and Apollod. 1.9.28.

suggest that this is not pure coincidence. The return to the light of Aeetes and his confirmation of Medus as his royal successor is modelled on the story of Numitor, just as the unlikely twinning of Telephus with Parthenopaeus may have been suggested by a patriotic recall of Rome's twin founders.[54] At least, we can surmise that Pacuvius himself adapted the myths to appeal to the Romans in terms of their own mythical origins.

Iliona and Chryses

So are *Iliona* and *Chryses* also concerned with looking for Mother? No, but both plays depend on a misrepresentation of parenthood and on a young prince discovering his real, if absent, father. Think of Polymestor's killing of young Polydorus, Priam's last-born son, as we have it in Euripides' *Hecuba*,[55] then imagine a rewrite in which Iliona switches the identities of her own newborn Deipylus[56] and his baby uncle: this is the premise of Pacuvius' play, as a fragment of the prologue indicates:

> At that time when Paris yoked Helen in unwedded wedding, I was then pregnant and my months of term near-completed, and at the same time Hecuba bore Polydorus last in labour.[57]

But this essential of the deception is only revealed after a memorable and gruesome ghost scene has opened the play: the slaughtered Deipylus appeals to his mother for burial:

> Mother, I call on you, you who relieve your care eased in sleep, and pity me not, rise and bury your son before the beast and birds <consume my flesh> and do not let my remains, with bones denuded, be smeared with gore and vilely scattered over the land.[58]

This poignant scene became notorious after the theatrical disaster in which

54. Note that they should have been from different generations. Telephus' mother Auge was supposedly great-aunt to Atalanta: and yet Atalanta's son took part in the expedition against Thebes—and died there, a generation before Telephus took baby Orestes hostage or was wounded by the young Achilles before Troy. It is easier to reconcile the involvement of the heroes in the Theban and Trojan epics than to resolve the confused genealogy of this Arcadian Atalanta. But mothers are normally interchangeable and therefore suspect elements in genealogy.
55. Also subsequently in Virg. *Aen.* 3 and Ov. *Met.* 13.
56. Or Deiphilus: his name is not attested outside the reports of this play and has been variously confused by the mss.
57. D'Anna *Iliona* VIII, 236–8 = *ROL* 215–17.
58. D'Anna IV, 227–31 = *ROL* 205–10.

the drunken dozing of the actor who played Iliona drove the whole audience to rouse him by chanting in unison the ghost's pathetic 'Mother, I am calling you!' (*mater, te appello*).[59] Two unassigned fragments may also describe Iliona's search for her son's body cast out on the shore: 'I am borne like the halcyon skimming over the shore,' and 'all the lurking places under the broad promontory, the hidden coves.' [60] But when Iliona speaks the prologue, the real Polydorus is away, consulting Delphi: only when he returns and finds his 'parents' unharmed does he take to questioning his 'mother'. Hyginus provides the full background: (CIX ILIONA: 2–end)

> When the Greeks . . . sent to Polymestor promising Agamemnon's daughter Electra to wife and a great quantity of gold if he killed Priam's son Polydorus, he did not reject their offer but unwittingly killed his own son Deipylus, thinking he had killed Polydorus son of Priam. When Polydorus went to Delphi to learn about his parents, he was told his homeland was burned, his father killed, and his mother enslaved. When he came home and saw things were not as had been told to him, believing he was Polymestor's son, he asked his sister Iliona why the oracle was mistaken: she told him the truth, and on her advice he blinded Polymestor and killed him.

Besides the lines about Polydorus' birth several fragments represent his scene of realization—what we might call 'self-recognition'—with Iliona, now revealed to be his sister and not his mother. And since it is Iliona who has been most deeply wronged by the murdering of her child, [61] I would assign to her the anticipation of vengeance which follows:

> Though the gods are ruining me, they want me to have help, since they give me time for revenge before I die.[62]

Other fragments reflect the entrapment of Polymestor as he goes in to Iliona to be blinded at her hands.[63] But Pacuvius cannot have missed the opportunity to stage the confrontation of Polymestor by his son that is no son, with

59. Before 56 BC, cf. Cic. *Sest.* 126, *Lucullus* 88 and *Tusc.* 1.106; also Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.60–2 with Porphyrio's comment.
60. These are best cited from *ROL*, where they are *incerta* 31, 32. D'Anna prints the Alcyone fr. as from *incertae fabulae*, but the other he excludes as spurious because of the active form *rimarem*.
61. We will pass over Polymestor's plan to discard her so as to marry Electra.
62. *di me etsi perdunt, tamen esse adiutam expetunt,/quom prius quam intereo spatium ulciscendi danunt*, D'Anna IX, 239–40 = *ROL* 241–2.
63. D'Anna XI, 242–3 *fac ut coepisti, hanc operam mihi des perpetem/oculis traxerim <aciem>* = *ROL* 220–1, and XII-XIII, 244–5 = *ROL* 223, 222 (in that order).

all its scope for naming and repudiation. A surviving line declares: 'you are ruined (*occidisti*), to tell you much at once in few words.'[64]

As in *Atalanta* and *Medus*, the 'happy ending' takes the form of a royal succession, here guaranteed by the transmission of Polymestor's seal ring (ROL 224) and conditional on the agreement of the conquering Greeks: 'The Greeks, I am sure, relying on the honour we paid them, will let him possess the sceptre' (ROL 226). Additional fragments suggest that a divine speaker foretells the outcome: there are allusions to the fall of Troy and grim fate of Agamemnon which would require divine knowledge.[65]

This brings us finally to *Chryses*, whose title figure is unknown to Homer and probably to the cyclic poets; although Sophocles wrote a play of this name and some fragments survive, they do not have any bearing on the Pacuvian action, and it is generally thought to have concerned a different myth.[66] The version entitled *Chryses* by Hyginus [67] starts from Chryses, grandson of the priest of Apollo whose daughter Chryseis was seized by Agamemnon, and returned, supposedly untouched, in *Iliad* book 1.[68] Chryses therefore believes himself to be the child of Apollo, and has grown up hating Agamemnon as his enemy. So when Orestes, Pylades and Iphigenia come to his island with the stolen statue of Artemis seeking shelter from the pursuing Thoas, Chryses wants to kill the son of his enemy. Different groups of fragments reflect Orestes' first-person report of their landing on the wild coast and appeal for help against Thoas: 'servants, bring weapons, bring them fast, Thoas is pursuing me.'[69] If the extended reflections on the vagaries of fortune that have shipwrecked and beggared Orestes belong to this play,[70] they probably belong to the chorus and occupy an interlude before the arrival of Thoas.

The precedent of Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* invites us to

64. *occidisti! ut multa paucis uerbis unose obnuntiem*, D'Anna XIV, 246 = *ROL* 246. Klotz reads this as *occîdisti*, 'you have killed me', metrically admissible in this trochaic sequence, but psychologically unconvincing.
65. D'Anna XV, 247 = *ROL* 224, followed by XVI–XVIII, 248–50 = *ROL* 226–8. Given this 'happy ending', I cannot believe that the play included the suicide of Iliona which is attested in a separate chapter of Hyginus on female suicides (CCLXIII). She could hardly have killed herself (off-stage, of course) without involving Polydorus in a burial scene as part of the *exodos*.
66. Mette (1964, 83) believes the Hyginus narrative could have corresponded to the contents of Sophocles' *Chryses*. However, since Wilamowitz (1883), 257–8, it has been recognized that our plot depends on Euripides' innovative action in *Iphigenia in Tauris*, (prior to Ar. *Aues* in 414) whereas Sophocles' *Chryses* is earlier. Wilamowitz suggested that Sophocles' play had a quite different action, the search of Chryses, son of Chryseis, for his 'sister' Iphigenia.
67. Hyginus *Fabulae* CXXI, following on from the action of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, CXX.
68. This was probably narrated in a prologue, as in comedy where the audience had to be informed about the parenthood of children wrongly identified at the beginning of the play. It is likely that Lucilius' allusion 'first when (s)he refuses to give back his identified daughter', *primum Crysi cum negat signatam natam reddere* (Book 29, *ROL* 3. 880) parodies a line in this prologue.
69. *tela, famuli, tela propere ferte, me sequitur Thoas*, D'Anna IX, 104 = *ROL* 89.

assume that Pacuvius' famous scene of altruistic self-denunciation praised by Cicero in *de Finibus* and *de Amicitia* belonged to this sequel-play rather than the mysterious '*Slave-Orestes*.[71] As Priestess, the Euripidean Iphigenia had to sacrifice one of the unidentified pair Orestes and Pylades but offered to spare the other if he will carry a letter to her brother in Argos. Each in turn begs to die if the other can go free, but the contest in altruism ends when she names her brother Orestes as recipient of the letter: Orestes declares himself and wins her support for their escape with the image of Artemis. Pacuvius reverses the situation, for it is Orestes that Chryses wants to kill (or rather surrender to Thoas) so that each of the heroes in turn claims to be Orestes so as to die for his friend: 'I am Orestes.' 'No, it is I, I say, who am Orestes' . . . 'So both us beg to be killed together.'[72] In his dialogue *de Amicitia* and twice in *de Finibus* Cicero reports the audience's passionate enthusiasm for this contest in nobility in what seems to have been Pacuvius' last play. It is a further confirmation that this dialogue belongs to *Chryses* that in *de Finibus* 5.63 Cicero reports the friends as disputing before a 'confused and emotionally distressed king', *conturbato errantique regi*. This suggests the confusion we might expect from the inexperienced Chryses rather than the sinister resolve of Aegisthus in the *Doulorestes* action. We recognize the same dramatic twists and emotional themes that enlivened the *Atalanta* in Chryses' reaction: 'I think I have discovered which of you is Orestes', and their protests: 'we beg by our unique loyalty (*unanimitatem*) which <no>? memory can unyoke . . . '[73]

It seems too that Pacuvius diversified the action by importing both religious and philosophical arguments, since Cicero[74] cites a speaker, presumably Chryses, consulting his citizen elders about an alarming omen. In

70. Note that *Rhet. Her.* 2.37 cites this passage without naming the play; Warmington retains the lines unassigned (37–46) and the brief comment on his sudden fall from kingship to beggary is not enough to attribute them to *Chryses* rather than, say, *Doulorestes*.

71. This confrontation between the King and the pair of friends is endorsed by Mette (1964, 83 and n. 1) who cites the scene depicted on a Roman silver goblet in the British Museum: there Orestes, Pylades and Iphigenia have the statue; Thoas is threatening Chryses, and Chryseis is urgently revealing to her son that Orestes is his half-brother. See LIMC III.1, s.v. Chryses 2, pp. 285–6 (Schefold) illustrated in III.2, p. 225 and Webster 1961, 22–3.

72. *ego sum Orestes:: immo enimuero ego sum, inquam, Orestes . . . ambo ergo una necarier/precamur* (D'Anna 118–21: assigned by Warmington ROL, 163–6 to *Doulorestes*. The speaker in *de Amicitia* 24 is Laelius, the dramatic date 129 BC. The scene of mutual self-sacrifice, whether in the Euripidean setting among the Taurians or the Pacuvian drama on Sminthe, was immensely popular at Rome; for the recall of Euripides in pictorial art at Pompeii and Ovid's adaptations in *Tristia* and *ex Ponto*, see Fantham 1992.

73. D'Anna XIV, 122 = *ROL* 100 *inueni, opino, Orestes uter esset tamen*, and XVIII, 127 = *ROL* 91–2 (sic) *perque nostram unanimitatem quam memoria deiugat*. Here most editors agree that a negative must be supplied.

74. *Orator* 155 = D'Anna XIX–XX, 128–30, 131–3 = *ROL* 101–3, 104–6.

apparent opposition a solemn speaker expounds in a different metre—accompanied trochaics—a theory about the universal immanence of Jupiter and the union of sky and earth. These lines have long been recognized as drawn from a choral ode in the *Chrysippus* of Euripides,[75]—so Pacuvius has cheerfully 'contaminated' material from a different dramatist in a procedure comparable to that of his contemporary Terence in *Adelphoe*. But Cicero attributes the lines to a natural philosopher, *physicus ille*. This can hardly be Orestes or the barbarian Thoas. Is it one of the citizen elders?[76] It seems that our poet introduced the debate for the sake of poetry and intellectual spice, digressing from the dramatic action.

But we left Orestes and Pylades under threat of death. What new revelation can change Chryses' mind and reverse the action? Iphigenia is somehow recognized in a riot or crowd-scene.[77] Then, according to Hyginus, Chryses' mother Chryseis,[78] hearing that the newcomers are Orestes and Iphigenia, confesses to her son that he himself was Agamemnon's child and so half-brother to Orestes. Nothing survives of Chryses' on-stage realization of his birth, the 'self-recognition' which triggers the happy reversal. While it clearly reconciles him with his uninvited guests, the realization may have echoed Ion's disappointment when he is asked to believe that his father is not Apollo but Xouthos.[79] Niall Slater has nicely brought out Chryses' recognition of the contradictions inherent in his new Greek identity: 'and as it well deserved,/ my father (Agamemnon) laid my country waste.'[80] Given Pacuvius' taste in intrigues, the happy ending reported by Hyginus is hardly a surprise. 'After the recognition, Chryses with his brother Orestes kills Thoas and they reach Mycenae unharmed with the image of Diana.'

These plays demonstrate most clearly what seems to be largely true of

75. Cic. *de Diu.* 1.131f = D'Anna XXI–XXIV, 134–41 = *ROL* 134–41. The interpolation from Euripides was first detected by Ribbeck (1875, 255–8).
76. Terence admits in the prologue that he interpolated a scene from Diphilus' *Commorientes* into his Menandrian libretto, and defends himself only against the different charge of using a scene that had already been translated into Latin.
77. D'Anna XII, 117 = *ROL* 117 *in turba Oresti cognita agnota est soror.*
78. The mss. of Hyginus are confused, but it is better to read *Chryse<i>s* and *quae*, retaining the relatively unambiguous *filio suo* ('to his/her son') than to accept Moritz Schmidt's change to *Chryses <senior>*. From what we have seen of Pacuvius we would expect a poignant episode of confession from mother to son.
79. E. *Ion* 530–9, 556–61 and 585. This is of course short-lived, since he really is child of Apollo (*Ion* 1607–9). On a lighter note we might also compare the *dénouement* of *Gondoliers*, when the two heroes, after believing for most of the operetta that one of them was son of the king of Barataria, are finally told that Luiz is the actual prince, and they are the children of the gondolier whom they originally treated as their father.
80. Slater 2000, 223, on *ROL* 118, *atque ut promeruit pater mihi patriam populauit meam.* (D'Anna repunctuates to give a different sense XVI (125), 'And how he deserved it! My father ravaged my native land', *atque ut promeruit! pater mihi patriam populauit meam.*)

Pacuvius' other adaptations: apparently they have in common actions freely remodelled or generated from traditional myths, whether by Pacuvius or some now unknown Hellenistic playwright.[81] These actions, typically, bring their heroes to remote and romantic places, or involve the pathos of imprisonment, abandonment and shipwreck. They display a preoccupation with identity and parentage, and they exploit popular and sentimental scenes or themes from Euripides' later romantic tragedies in dramatic reversals through recognition at a moment of crisis. Finally, they rely not on supernatural intervention but on a timely revelation of kinship between heroes and other figures brought into confrontation. But they also show features characteristic of Ennian tragedy and Terentian comedy: the metrical remodelling, the contamination of material from a second play, and the introduction of a second hero to double the intricacy of the plot. The plots chosen are favourites with later wall-painting:[82] since Pacuvius was himself a painter, we cannot exclude the possibility that the pictorial tradition preceded his choice of dramas, but they themselves may have promoted new paintings. These plays would also have a political appeal to Romans in the recurring motif of the triumph of twins or avenging heroes over a barbarian tyrant: over Perses, Polymestor, Thoas, as the twin sons of Antiope also triumphed over Lycus. In *Iliona* at least there is the special appeal of a Trojan myth, which Virgil would find important in his Aeneas narrative, both for Iliona's sceptre (*Aen.* 1.653) and for a (different) version of the death of Polydorus in book 3.

Even without continuous text, enough sound-bites have survived from these romantic tragedies to show that Pacuvius must have revelled in the poignancies and paradoxes of human misunderstandings. If his psychological appeal, as Altheim demonstrated for the *Atalanta*, matches exactly the taste of Aristotle and his epoch for melodramatic but happy reversals, we can also see in these dramas as much the foreshadowings of the future ancient novel as the transformation of past inheritance from Attic tragedy.

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81. One can of course cite Aristarchus, author of Ennius' model for the *Achilles*, or Polyeidos and others mentioned incidentally by Aristotle in the *Poetics*. But there is no reason to associate Pacuvius' plays with any one of these figures.
82. See Schefold 1957, for the frequency of Hercules and Telephus (3 examples), and Orestes and Pylades before Thoas (10 examples): both scenes occur in one *triclinium* of the Casa del Centenario.

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