Some Accian Women

Niall W. Slater (Atlanta)

In 1890 the great French actress Sarah Bernhardt was touring in London in a production of Sardou's *Cleopatra*. Although she had played the same title role in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, this play gave Bernhardt even more scope for her richly melodramatic and indeed erotic acting style. In the course of the play she vamped her way across the stage, winning and losing Antony and an empire until at last, having pressed the serpent to her bosom, she expired in the arms of her lover. After the curtain fell on one London performance, an elderly dowager in the audience was heard to remark to her companion: "How unlike, how very unlike the home life of our own dear queen!"[1]

This may sound like a joke about an unsophisticated viewer, but a closer look suggests the story is more two-edged than that. The combination of Sardou and Bernhardt is not without significance; these productions were meant to be exotic and scandalous. French critics deprecated Sardou but knew that his profoundly visual and spectacular plays sold, both in France and abroad.[2] One doubts that this lady would have voiced the same reaction to even Bernhardt as Shakespeare's Cleopatra. Beneath this seemingly unsophisticated criticism actually lie a number of presuppositions about decorum and the plausibility of women characters on stage, and particularly the problem of translating character from one cultural system to another.

Accius faced related challenges when trying to Romanize the women of tragedy for his audience. While we cannot articulate all the expectations about female character and behavior that a Roman audience brought to the theatre, we can be equally sure that these expectations were not simply identical with those of the Greek audience for the plays and myths upon which Accius drew. What follows is at this stage more of a thought experiment than an argument, in which I will explore some of the things said by and about female characters and behavior in the surviving remains of Accius. Some fragments float in complete isolation. In other cases, a cluster of fragments may allow us to say a little more about the overall design of a play.

---

1 Gold / Fizdale 1991, 245.

2 Taranow 1972, 207; cf. p. 107 on Bernhardt's "serpentine movement".

Accian tragedy has a reputation for blood and violence. His most recent editor, Madame Dangel, speaks of «la célèbre violence du théâtre accien».[3] When first exploring the theme of women in Accius, I suspected that, like Sardou, he too might be prone to accentuate the violence or at least the unrestrained behavior of the women in his dramas. There is some evidence for this, but much less than anticipated. Let us begin, however, with two or three possible examples of this tendency in Accius.

The *Tereus* of Accius tells the story of the Thracian king who married Procne. When sent by Procne to fetch her sister Philomela from Athens for a visit, Tereus rapes her on the return trip and then cuts out her tongue and imprisons her to keep the news of his crime from reaching Procne. Philomela weaves her story into a tapestry which she sends to Procne, who rescues her, and then the two sisters together take vengeance on Tereus by killing his son Itys and feeding the remains to the father at dinner – as one might say in Hollywood, it is a story of Medea meets Thyestes. When he discovers the truth, Tereus pursues the sisters, but they are all changed into birds.

Accius seems to have followed the Sophoclean version of the story. That choice may imply a particular coloration to the actions of Procne and Philomela. Livius Andronicus had already dramatized *Tereus* for a Roman audience, possibly following the legend as given in Hyginus *fabulae* 45, in which Tereus also kills his brother, an action which shares focus then with his crimes against the sisters.[4]

The plot of Accius's play is in any case certainly a violent one. One fragment of his version seems to come from the prologue:[5]

Tereus, trag. 639–642 W. (= 636–639 R.^{3} = 439–442 D.):
Tereus indomito more atque animo barbaro
conspexit in eam; amore vecors flammeo,
depositus, facinus pessimum ex dementia
confingit.
With uncontrolled passions and barbarous heart
Tereus looked on her; maddened with love's flame,
struck down, in his madness he committed
the worst of crimes.

3 Dangel 1995, 17. This violence is certainly related to the frequency of tyranny as a theme in Accius: Reggiani 1986–87, 70.

4 See Warmington 1936, 10–11, 542–543. Livius Andronicus, *Tereus, trag.* 27–28 W. = 26–27 R.^{3} implies that Itys is an infant in arms in his play. It is apparently spoken by Procne, who says she is taking her child to give to a wet-nurse, but in fact she is about to kill him, doubtless a deeply horrifying moment.

5 So Warmington 1936, *ad loc.*, whose numbers for the fragments I have followed throughout, and Degl' Innocenti Pierini 1980, 22.

Sophocles did not employ the expository prologue *per se*. One would very much like to know the identity of the speaker here, all the more so since this third person description may have replaced a moving prologue speech in the Sophoclean version, spoken by Procne, portraying the isolation she feels as a young Greek bride in this barbarian land.[6] The form here is thus entirely owing to Accius. Tereus's 'barbarous heart' (*animo barbaro*), 'madness' (*vecors*, *dementia*), and 'dreadful crime' (*facinus pessimum*) are all laid out for us before we meet the characters of the drama on stage. This view of Tereus as a violent and barbarous tyrant[7] will certainly then color our view of the reciprocal violence employed by the sisters in the play itself.

Another fragment may give further context for the violence in that it suggests Bacchic worship is somehow involved in the play's action:

Tereus, trag. 647 W. (= 642 R.^{3} = 445 D.):
deum Cadmogena natum Semela adfare et famulanter pete.
Address the Cadmus-born god, the son of Semele, and like a servant, seek him.

Quite possibly, a festival in honor of Bacchus becomes the occasion for Philomela to send the tapestry to her sister and thus communicate her situation.[8] Again, if this was part of the Sophoclean version, we do not know of it. Association with Bacchic cult will have made the women more dangerous in Roman eyes, though this long after the suppression of Bacchic rites at Rome the guilt by association may not be so great.

Allow me to digress for just a moment to note the treatment of this theme in Ovid, which is likely influenced by Accius. There with typical Ovidian inversion Procne, having found out where her sister is imprisoned, uses the occasion of the Bacchic rites to go in the guise of a maenad and break her sister out of her prison (*met.* 6.587–600):

tempus erat, quo sacra solent trieterica Bacchi
Sithoniae celebrare nurus: nox conscia sacris.
nocte sonat Rhodope tinnitibus aeris acuti,
nocte sua est egressa domo regina deique
ritibus instruitur furialiaque accipit arma.
vite caput tegitur, lateri cervina sinistro
vellera dependent, umero levis incubat hasta.
concita per silvas turba comitante suarum

6 Sophocles, *Tereus*, TrGF IV F 583 (Radt). Knox 1977, 200–201 sees strong parallels to the situation of Euripides' Medea. Welcker (cited in Radt) thinks the fragment is from the Sophoclean prologue. It seems Accius wished to establish the villainy of Tereus before introducing us to Procne.

7 Reggiani 1986–87, 81: «Tereo è la piú riuscita rappresentazione di tiranno barbaro e bestiale.» Cf. also R. Degl'Innocenti Pierini (this volume).

8 Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1980, 23. The cult of Dionysus Sabazius is in the background here.

595 *terribilis Procne furiisque agitata doloris,*
Bacche, tuas simulat. venit ad stabula avia tandem
exululatque euhoeque sonat portasque refringit
germanamque rapit; raptaeque insignia Bacchi
induit et vultus hederarum frondibus abdit
600 *attonitamque trahens intra sua moenia ducit.*

Note particularly *Bacche, tuas simulat* (596). The emphasis on play-acting is particularly Ovidian.

Together the sisters plot their revenge. Warmington attributes another tragic fragment by its content to this play, although Dangel does not accept it as Accian:

Tereus, trag. 651 W. (= *trag. inc.* 240 R.^{3}):
struunt sorores Atticae dirum nefas.
The Attic sisters plot a dreadful wickedness.

If Warmington is right, some voice in the play does acknowledge the wickedness of the women's deeds.

Someone in the play certainly opposes the violence and suggests it is typical of women:

Tereus, trag. 643–644 W. (= 647–648 R.^{3} = 448–449 D.):
video te, mulier, more multarum utier
ut vim contendas tuam ad maiestatem viri.
I see, woman, that you follow the ways of many women
in combating your husband's sovereignty.

Warmington thinks this is the chorus speaking, while Dangel attributes it to a servant, trying to save the child Itys. It sounds more like the editorial voice of the chorus to me, but certainty is impossible.[9]

The most terrifying line is undoubtedly the following:

Tereus, trag. 650 W. (= 646 R.^{3} = 450 D.):
alia hic sanctitudo est, aliud nomen et numen Iovis.
Sanctity[10] is other here, other the name and power of Jove.

9 I find odd the suggestion of Reggiani 1986–87, 86 that *more multarum* hints at the *plebs* here. Surely gender is more at issue here than class, and the portrait of Tereus as a tyrant will have generated some sympathy for those who opposed him in the play. The image is very powerful, however; compare Accius, *Astyanax, trag.* 133 W. (= 164 R.^{3} = 263 D.), *qui nostra per vim patria populavit bona* and *Epigoni, trag.* 275 W. (= 288 R.^{3} = 588 D.), *et nonne* [...] *velle vim vulgum vides.* De Rosalia 1982 omits fr. 643–644 W. s.v. *vis.*

10 In Accius, *Phoenissae, trag.* 596 W. (= 593 R.^{3} = 566 D.), *delubra caelitum arae sanctitudines*, the plural *sanctitudines* might suggest taking the word to mean more concretely 'shrines' or 'holy places'. If so, the speaker in *Tereus* here may also imagine a different temple for a different Jove.

Warmington thinks Procne speaks here, while Dangel attributes it once again to a servant. We have a rejection of all that the Romans would value in an assertion of an alternate universe, with another sovereign god and another morality. There is certainly a tragic grandeur here, which reminds me of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (Act 3, Scene 4): "I banish you." If this is indeed Procne, she is as great and terrible as Medea.

Let us now turn to that tragic heroine. Accius's *Medea* seems to have been set at an earlier stage in her bloody career than Euripides' version, or that of Pacuvius. It dramatized her flight from Colchis with Jason and the murder of her brother Apsyrtus along the way. André Arcellaschi dates the play around 110 B.C. and suggests that its plot alludes to the career of Mithridates, who also murdered his brother and conquered the region of Colchis.[11] Whether we accept this reconstruction or not, the play must have been a fascinating study of the development of one of the most remarkable characters on the tragic stage. Yet to coax much about the psychology of Medea herself from these fragments is a frustrating business indeed. Let me look at just three. The first is fr. 405 W.:

Medea, trag. 405 W. (= 414 R.^{3} = 493 D.):
nisi ut astu ingenium lingua laudem et dictis lactem lenibus.
Unless, so that I may cleverly flatter his conceit with my tongue and dupe (him) with soft words.

Most scholars attribute this line to Medea herself, though Arcellaschi expresses some non-trivial doubts.[12] Medea is certainly dangerous not just for her magical powers but also for her powers of persuasion.[13] It seems certain in any case that the speaker is referring to Apsyrtus as the object of these deceptive words.

Unfortunately, apart from this line, we see Medea only through the eyes of others. It is likely that someone speaks the following to Medea:[14]

Medea, trag. 404 W. (= 419 R.^{3} = 496 D.):
principio extispicum ex prodigiis congruens ars te arguit.
First, the art of the haruspices, agreeing with the prodigies, convicts you.

11 Arcellaschi 1990, 185–193.

12 Warmington, Klotz, and Dangel all favor Medea as speaker, but see Arcellaschi 1990, 174–175, making a possible case for Jason.

13 Andreas Bagordo kindly reminds me that fr. 6–8 W. from Book I of Accius's *Didascalica* (= *gramm.* 5–6 D. = 9 FPL^3) are sometimes assumed to refer to Medea: *falsidica audax / gnati mater pessimi, odibilis natura inpos / excors et fera.* The adjective *falsidica* would certainly be apt to this passage of *Medea*, although *gnati mater pessimi* seems out of place for Medea. Note also *astu* in Accius, *Neoptolemus, trag.* 475 W. (= 475 R.^{3} = 184 D.), where it may refer to the cunning of Ulysses.

14 Arcellaschi 1990, 178: «Fragment des plus obscurs.» He is even unsure whether it is spoken to Medea, though most others think so.

Dangel suggests that this is a priestess speaking, identifying Medea when she comes in disguise. The references to the art of the haruspices and prodigies align the authority of the Roman state religion against the foreign sorceress.[15] We get another view from a fragment unfortunately plagued by textual problems and uncertainty about the speaker:

Medea, trag. 408 W. (= 417 R.^{3} = 495 D.):
tun dia Mede es, cuius aditum exspectans pervixi usque adhuc?
Are you divine Medea, for whose arrival I have lived in waiting until now?

Dangel gives this to a priestess again and suggests the phrase *dia Mede* is imitation of religious song and magic.[16] Warmington gives it to Apsyrtus himself, and Mario Erasmo suggests that the adjective *dia* in his mouth emphasizes his naïveté in dealing with Medea.[17] It is one of the rules of the modern horror film that one should not get to know the victims in too much detail before they are killed off. If an interview takes place between her brother and Medea before she kills and dismembers him, this will certainly render her an even more frightening character than Euripides' version.

Let us spare one glance for Clytemnestra, who might have seemed a prime candidate for an even bloodier and more desperate characterization in Accius than her Greek forebears – yet the meagre fragments we have suggest a more complex character. It was certainly a script which lent itself to spectacle to judge from Cicero's report of a production using six hundred mules (surely an exaggeration).[18] She speaks at least once in what survives, a rather dignified answer probably given to an accusation from Electra:[19]

Clytaemnestra, trag. 245 W. (= 41 R.^{3} = 300 D.):
matrem ob iure factum incilas, genitorem iniustum adprobas.
your mother for justice done you blame, your father for injustice you approve.

15 It is worth noting that Ennius emphasizes the foreignness of Medea in his *Medea exul*: see especially fr. 266–268 Warmington (= *trag.* 219–220 Jocelyn = 219–221 R.^{3}) and the comments of Jocelyn 1967, *ad loc.* and Erasmo 2001, 85–86 *ad* 3. Cf. also P. Schierl (this volume).

16 Dangel 1995, 351.

17 Warmington 1936, *ad loc.*; Erasmo 2001, 57 and 104 *ad* 12. Contra, Arcellaschi 1990, 177–178.

18 Cicero, *fam.* 7.1.2.

19 So Warmington 1936, *ad loc.* Many commentators compare Sophocles, *El.* 287–290:
αὕτη γὰρ ἡ λόγοισι γενναία γυνὴ
φωνοῦσα τοιάδ' ἐξονειδίζει κακά·
"ὦ δύσθεον μίσημα, σοὶ μόνῃ πατὴρ
τέθνηκεν; ἄλλος δ' οὔτις ἐν πένθει βροτῶν;"

Perhaps more intriguing is this fragment:

Clytaemnestra, trag. 235–236 W. (= 38–39 R.^{3} = 298–299 D.):
ut, quae tum absentem rebus dubiis coniugem
tetinerit, nunc prodat ultorem.
so that she, who held fast her absent spouse
when things were doubtful, now betrays the avenger.

Dangel suggests, in part on the basis of this passage, that Clytemnestra only recently betrayed her husband Agamemnon, thinking he had himself in turn betrayed her with Cassandra.[20] If so, this suggests that, as with Procne in the *Tereus*, the audience is at least invited to consider the experiences and immediate emotional impulse which underlie the character's violence.

We might also consider in this connection the traditional Greek view that Helen was the cause of the Trojan War. She is so named in Accius's *Telephus* – but she does not bear the responsibility alone:

Telephus, trag. 614–615 W. (= 609–610 R.^{3} = 77–78 D.):
quantam Tyndareo gnata et Menelai domus
molem excitarit belli pastorque Ilius.
What a mass of war the daughter of Tyndareus and
the house of Menelaus and the Ilian shepherd have roused.

Paris and the house of Menelaus are equally joined in the guilt in this fragment, which seems to come from the play's prologue.[21]

Our survey thus far has turned up little in the way of traditional Greek misogyny, even in the descriptions of particularly bloody and violent women in Accian tragedy. The depiction of violence may exceed the Greek precedent, but the women's motivations are as complex, if not more so.

As we turn elsewhere in Accius, a larger pattern appears in which positive values associated specifically with Roman women are emphasized in, or added to, the characterizations of the heroines of Greek tragic myth. Let us begin with the line which initially attracted me to the study of women characters in Accius, the sole surviving fragment of his *Alcestis*:

Alcestis, trag. 20 W. (= 57 R.^{3} = 633 D.):
cum striderat retracta rursus inferis.
when she had shrieked, drawn back again from the
underworld.

20 Compare the discussion of G. Aricò (this volume) of the «valorizzazione del ruolo di Egisto», which complements a greater complexity in the role of Clytemnestra.

21 So Ribbeck, cited in Dangel 1995, 285. She compares also the language of *Atreus, trag.* 165 W. (= 200 R.^{3} = 31 D.): *maior mihi moles, maius miscendumst malum,* [...]. On the complexity of Telephus's position between Greeks and barbarians, see W. Stockert (this volume).

A grammarian preserved this fragment for us only to illustrate the form *striderat* – but in combination with the participle *retracta*, that word is the key to a very interesting conclusion about Accius's play. We know the story of Alcestis primarily through Euripides' version, though the tragedian Phrynichus certainly staged her story as well.[22] Alcestis in Euripides' play speaks extensively about herself and her willing sacrifice for her husband and family; she is promised by her husband and the chorus undying fame. She dies – but then her tragedy becomes, in Anne Pippin Burnett's famous phrase, a "catastrophe survived."[23] She is brought back from the dead by Heracles and reunited with her husband Admetus – but notoriously does not say a word. This single fragment tells us that Accius's Alcestis differed radically from the silent Greek heroine. Alcestis must be the subject in this fragment, and she violently and vocally protests as she is dragged back from the choice she has made to sacrifice herself for her husband. The silence of Alcestis in Euripides has been interpreted in many ways, often as a criticism of her husband Admetus.[24] The reaction recorded here in Accius allows no such ambiguity. His Alcestis, having put her hand to the plow, has no wish to turn back. Would it then be too much to hear in this line the same Roman courage, determination, and self-sacrifice of the words of Arria Major to her husband: "It does not hurt, Paetus"?[25]

Another fragment suggests Romanization of marital values. From Accius's *Neoptolemus* we have this interesting line:

> *Neoptolemus, trag.* 476 W. (= 474 R.^{3} = 189 D.):
> *sed quem mihi iungent? cui, quae cum illo fuerim, dignabor dari?*
> But to whom will they join me? To whom shall I be fitly given, who once was with him?

Many commentators agree that the speaker here should be Deidamia, worrying about her future if her son is taken away to fight at Troy. Yet it is by no means clear that in the Greek myth Neoptolemos's departure need imply that Deidamia must marry again. Certainly in Quintus of Smyrna[26] we hear Deidamia lamenting the dangers of robbery and mistreatment she will be subject to if left alone without a son to protect her, but she says nothing there about the dangers of, and a disinclination against, remarriage. The issue in this passage clearly is about dignity and moral values.[27] Perhaps the concerns of the Greek heroine have been transformed in Accius into the values of a Roman *univira*.

Let us turn finally to the female character I have found most fascinating in the remains of Accius. His *Andromeda* portrayed a myth already dramatized not only by Sophocles and Euripides, but by Ennius as well. Both the Greek versions were clearly sensations on the stage of their time. The Sophoclean *Andromeda* brought the heroine on stage to be bound to stakes, awaiting the sea monster. This visual effect seems to have impressed the vase painters of the time powerfully and perhaps influenced large-scale painting as well.[28] The best evidence for this is the stunning white-ground crater by the Phiale Painter, now in the museum at Agrigento, famous not only as a work of art but also as a document in theatre history. This vase bears one example of a small but remarkable group of καλός-inscriptions which include a patronymic.[29] Floating in the visual field between a coolly contemplative Perseus, resting his elbow on one knee, and Andromeda, the object of his gaze, bound to her stakes is this inscription: ΕΥΑΙΟΝ ΚΑΛΟΣ ΑΙΣΧΥΛΟΥ. We cannot be sure whether Euaion was playing Perseus or Andromeda, but this does seem to be a document of the original Athenian production of Sophocles' play. We usually think of Sophocles as the enlightened exponent of σωφροσύνη, but the clear appeal of this production was profoundly voyeuristic, where the appeal of the bound woman in imminent danger of death is essential to its hold on its audience.

Euripides therefore faced a considerable challenge in creating his own version of this story, even if many years after the Sophoclean production. He attempted to outdo his predecessor by opening with the scene of Andromeda bound to her rock, presumably bringing her on at the beginning by means of the *ekkyklema*.[30] Most of what we know about this production relies on the brilliant parody in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*, where the old relative adopts the role of Andromeda as one of his attempts to act his way out of imprisonment, leaving Euripides in that play to adopt the roles of both Echo and Perseus. The voyeuristic element was no less powerful in

22 The best discussion of this is Dale 1954, xii–xiv.
23 Burnett 1971, esp. 22–46 on *Alcestis*.
24 See my discussion of Alcestis's silence in Slater 2000, with summary of other views.
25 *non dolet, Paete.* See Pliny, *epist.* 3.16 for the full story and also Martial 1.13.
26 *Posthom.* 7.280–286.
27 Compare the title character speaking of his gift in Accius, *Meleager, trag.* 439 W. (= 447 R.^{3} = 511 D.), *exuvias dignavi Atalantae dare.* The whole issue of that play turns on the issue of Atalanta's worthiness.
28 Trendall / Webster 1971, 63–65 and pls. III, 2,1–3, discussing the Agrigento crater (ARV^2 1017.53), a red figure pelike in Boston (63.2663), and a red figure hydria in the British Museum (E 169, Group of Polygnotos, ARV^2 1062). On the last, see also Petersen 1904, 104–112.
29 Shapiro 1987.
30 See recently Klimek-Winter 1993, 200–201 (and cf. Webster 1965; Sutton 1984, 20–21). For use of the *ekkyklema*: Webster 1967, 193 (citing Séchan).

this version, as one of the most famous fragments shows. Perseus, presumably flying over the scene, mistakes Andromeda for a statue because she is so beautiful.[31] Again the power of the male gaze in this production is essential to its appeal, even though Euripides innovates in other ways. By placing Andromeda's exposure to the sea monster and the rescue so early in his play, Euripides must continue the story beyond there, which he develops and complicates by requiring Perseus to argue for her hand after the rescue.

It is no small challenge to reconstruct the action of Accius's version of the Andromeda story from the fifteen surviving fragments of his play. I accept in the main Dangel's reconstruction of the action, a Minotaur-like story, where the sea monster must be fed every month, with male as well as female victims.[32] Perseus becomes her rescuer and suitor, but then there is resistance, whether from her parents or others, and Perseus must struggle to win his bride. Just how Perseus is brought to her aid is not entirely clear: does he first see her while flying by, when she is already being offered as a sacrifice, as in the Greek plays, or does her father Cepheus somehow enlist Perseus's help?

Let us look at some of the fragments for what they might possibly tell us about Andromeda as a character. She is apparently set out for sacrifice in an enclosed area (possibly a sanctuary of Neptune?) which now bears witness to the monster's previous depredations. I have chosen to follow Warmington's text of fr. 70 W. here, with Mercier's emendation:

Andromeda, trag. 70 W.:
immani tabe templum obvallatum ossibus.
a shrine of foul decay, walled in with bones
(= 113 R.^{3} = 384 D.):
immane te habet templum obvallatum ossibus.

I think it less probable that Andromeda is being addressed here, as Ribbeck and Dangel's text would have it;[33] rather, this line could be spoken by Andromeda herself. In either case, the imagery of desecration is clear and dire.[34] Fr. 71 W. then describes Andromeda's condition when left in this awful place, and it is likely to be her own description:

Andromeda, trag. 71 W. (= 111 R.^{3}):
misera obvalla saxo sento paedore alguque et fame.
wretched one, walled in with jagged stone in filth, cold, and hunger
(= 385 D.):
misera, obvalla saxo, senio, paedore alguque et fame[35]

I leave aside here the question of how Perseus's aid is enlisted and turn to what I think is one of the most telling fragments of this play:

Andromeda, trag. 64 W. (= 102 R.^{3} = 393 D.):
nisi quid tua facultas nobis tulat opem, peream.
Unless your power aid us, I perish.

This text does incorporate a widely accepted emendation at the end of the line.[36] The line must be spoken by Andromeda herself, apparently just before her rescue. The line rings with a markedly different spirit from that expressed in one of the more notorious lines from Euripides' *Andromeda*, fr. 132 Nauck^2:

ἄγου δὲ μ', ὦ ξεῖν', εἴτε πρόσπολον θέλεις
εἴτ' ἄλοχον εἴτε δμωίδ' ...
Take me with you, stranger, as a servant, if you wish,
or wife or slave ...

The desperation and debasement of these lines stands in stark contrast to the words of Accius's heroine in fr. 64 W. What fascinates me here is the word *nobis* in combination with *peream*. This suggests that Andromeda is speaking on behalf of more than herself. It could be that she is thinking of her family or her people in general, but that does not seem to me the most compelling reference under the circumstances. Given the other resemblances to the story of Theseus and the Minotaur, I wonder if she has become the leader of a group of victims, who are the referent of *nobis*. If so

31 Euripides, fr. 125 Nauck^2, calls her both εἰκώ τινα and an ἄγαλμα. It is just possible that Sophocles anticipated this image. Carden 1974, 236–241 attributes P. Oxy. 213 to Sophocles and thinks that its reference to a λι]θουργὲς εἰκόνισμα may indicate the *Andromeda*. Carden speculates that Perseus may see Andromeda and think she is a victim of Medusa, turned to stone, only to realize when she moves that she is alive. It would then be a typical Euripidean move to take an image Sophocles thought purely pathetic and bring the eroticism to the surface by having his Perseus attracted by her beauty which is like that of a statue.

32 Monthly: *trag.* 62 W. (= 100 R.^{3} = 380 D.). For male victims, note the gender of *datus* in *trag.* 72 W. (= 112 R.^{3} = 383 D.): *qui neque terraest datus, nec cineris causa umquam evasit vapos*, apparently discussing previous victims of the monster. For the general reconstruction, Dangel 1995, 335–336.

33 Also Petersen 1904, 110, who gives it to Perseus.

34 Klimek-Winter 1993, 367–368 objects that *templum* should mean a real religious shrine and suggests it may be that of Ammon (whence the oracle about Andromeda may come, if we follow the version of the myth in Apollodorus 2.4.3), surrounded in the desert by the bones of men and animals. This seems a strained interpretation to me, especially as the *templum* could be the fane of Neptune, now taken over by the sea monster he has sent. See also De Rosalia 1982, s.v. *templum*.

35 Klimek-Winter 1993, 328 also prefers the reading *senio*, meaning grief or misery; cf. Plautus, *Stich.* 19: *haec mi dividiae et senio sunt*, *Truc.* 466: *id illi morbo, id illi seniost, ea illi miserae miseriast.*

36 Klimek-Winter 1993, 326, 355–356, however, omits *peream*. He is also uncertain about the speaker.

the passive woman in distress of the Greek tragic tradition has become a much more active and self-assertive character.

Problems with pronouns embolden me to a further speculation about fr. 77 W., preserved by Nonius only to illustrate an unusual feminine abstract, *famulitas*:

Andromeda, trag. 77 W. (= 118 R.^{3} = 382 D.):
nam postquam parvos vos oppressit famulitas,
For after slavery oppressed you while young ...

Both Warmington and Dangel take *parvos* as modifying *vos*. Only Dangel suggests a speaker attribution: Cepheus, perhaps as he speaks to the people about the sea monster. That implies, however, that the destruction has been going on for so many years that it began in the childhood of those who are now adult citizens. This is certainly possible, given other ways in which the story has been modified, but I wonder if it might not also be possible to imagine Andromeda herself speaking this line, as she rallies of the other prospective victims, themselves also just on the verge of adulthood.

Let us turn briefly to male views about women in the play. Fr. 74 W. must be king Cepheus speaking to Perseus,[37] whether before or after the rescue:

Andromeda, trag. 74 W. (= 114 R.^{3} = 396 D.):
alui educavi; id facite gratum ut sit seni.
I fed and raised (her); you behave rightly (to her) to gratify an old man.

Though no word of the fragment refers specifically to Andromeda, this looks like traditional male-male bonding and alliance.[38] That makes the imagery in the next fragment, fr. 73 W., all the more curious:

Andromeda, trag. 73 W. (= 115 R.^{3} = 395 D.):
quod beneficium haut sterili in segete, rex, te obsesse intelleges.
that you have sown this kindness in no barren field, o king, you will know.

The addressee must be Cepheus, the king.[39] If Perseus is the speaker, however, as Warmington believes, he inverts some old and very traditional sexual imagery, for the speaker assimilates himself to the field into which seed

[37] Klimek-Winter 1993, 368–369 thinks Cepheus also.

[38] The importance of such alliances, and the harmony of values and views they should normally entail, is implicit in the criticism of Alcmaeon's behavior in his play that someone utters to his father-in-law (*Alcmeo, trag.* 28–29 W. [= 64–65 R.^{3} = 612–613 D.]): ... *qui ducat, cum te socerum viderit, / generibus tantam esse inpietatem?*

[39] Klimek-Winter 1993, 370 has problems with Perseus designating Cepheus's action as a *beneficium*, but this is not a problem if Andromeda was first promised to another.

is sown, a profoundly female image. Does Perseus somehow identify himself and his interest completely with those of Andromeda already and thus use this image of himself?

Fr. 78 W. by contrast embodies a completely traditional misogyny:

Andromeda, trag. 78 W. (= 105–106 R.^{3} = 386 D.):
muliebre ingenium, prolubium, occasio.
female nature, lust, opportunity.

Who speaks this? And of whom? Dangel thinks this refers to the sin of Cassiopeia, Andromeda's mother, whose boasting brought the curse of sea monster upon them. Klimek-Winter, citing Welcker before him, draws attention to *occasio*. This seems to be a prospective warning, rather than a retrospective description, so he suggests that it is Cepheus warning his daughter Andromeda. I think we can only be sure it is a male speaker and, I submit, one whose views are refuted by the courage and initiative displayed by Andromeda in the play.

Of lines most likely to have been spoken by the title character[40] there remains only fr. 76 W.:

Andromeda, trag. 76 W. (= 116 R.^{3} = 394 D.):
donec tu auxilium, Perseu, tetulisti mihi.
until you brought me aid, Perseus.

It must come from near the end of the play. If, as the Euripidean precedent suggests, Perseus was not immediately given the hand of Andromeda after the rescue but had to strive further against some opposition (another promised suitor?), this has the ring of one who has won through to the final success.

We have had very few straws with which to make these bricks, but nonetheless the fragments of the *Andromeda* do suggest a title character far more assertive than her Greek predecessors – no passive victim displayed as spectacle, but an active and assertive young woman, perhaps even a leader for her fellow prospective victims. She is thus a fit partner for her heroic rescuer; in short, she is a Roman woman.

There are certainly other fragments we might explore, including a few more of particular interest in that they must be lines spoken by female characters in the dramas. I hope our survey thus far, however, has sufficed to demonstrate one or two predominant tendencies in Accius's composition of female characters. The celebrated violence of Accian tragedy certainly included the choice of some particularly violent myths with leading

[40] All scholars agree on this attribution: Klimek-Winter 1993, 371–372.

women characters, but with the possible exception of Medea, portrayed at an earlier stage of her murderous career, Accius does not seem to have made these women more violent or bloodthirsty than their Greek originals. Even where traditional expressions about the lust, violence, and rebelliousness of women appear in the fragments, we can usually see another point of view reflected as well in other fragments. Moreover, the noble heroines have often acquired particularly Roman virtues in their translation to the Roman stage: devotion to a single husband, courage, independence, and even leadership. This Romanization certainly will have facilitated sympathy for, and to some extent even identification with, the women of Accius on the part of both men and women in the original audience. On the narrative level his heroines remain embedded in their original Greek myths, but their otherness has been subtly and regularly modified to begin to assimilate them into a Roman system of values and identities, just as Shakespeare's noble Greeks and Romans to the values of his own time. Accius's most famous line doubtless remains the words of Atreus, *oderint dum metuant*, which Seneca calls *illo exsecrabili versu*.[41] Perhaps this preliminary survey of women in Accius at least suggests that the poet was capable of other kinds of greatness in characterization as well.[42]

Bibliography

Arcellaschi, A.: Médée dans le théâtre latin d'Ennius à Sénèque, Rome 1990 (CEFR 132).

Burnett, A.P.: Catastrophe Survived. Euripides' Plays of Mixed Reversal, Oxford 1971.

Carden, R.: The Papyrus Fragments of Sophocles, Berlin / New York 1974.

Dale, A.M.: Euripides. Alcestis, Oxford 1954.

Dangel, J.: Accius. Œuvres (fragments), Paris 1995 (CUF lat. 322).

Degl'Innocenti Pierini, R.: Studi su Accio, Firenze 1980 (Quaderni dell'Istituto di filologia classica «Giorgio Pasquali» dell'Università degli studi di Firenze 1).

41 Accius, *Atreus*, *trag.* 168 W. (= 203–204 R.^{3} = 47 D.), a favorite of Caligula (Suetonius, *Cal.* 30); Seneca, *clem.* 1.12.4; cf. also Seneca, *ira* 1.20.4.

42 I am deeply grateful to Prof. Dr. Lefèvre and the Sonderforschungsbereich for the generous invitation to deliver a version of this paper in Freiburg in November 2001. It is a matter of abiding regret that a previous commitment prevented me from benefitting from the exchange at the conference itself.

De Rosalia, A.: Lexicon Accianum. Conscripsit A. De R., Hildesheim / Zürich / New York 1982 (Alpha – Omega, Reihe A, Lexika, Indizes, Konkordanzen zur klassischen Philologie, LIII).

Erasmo, M.: Archaic Latin Verse, Newburyport (Mass.) 2001.

Gold, A. / Fizdale, R.: The Divine Sarah. A Life of Sarah Bernhardt, New York 1991.

Jocelyn, H.D.: The Tragedies of Ennius. The Fragments ed. with an Introduction and Commentary, Cambridge 1967 (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 10) (repr. with corr. 1969).

Klimek-Winter, R.: Andromedatragödien. Sophokles, Euripides, Livius Andronikos, Ennius, Accius. Text, Einleitung und Kommentar, Stuttgart 1993 (BzA 21).

Knox, B.M.W.: The 'Medea' of Euripides, YClS 25, 1977, 193–225; reprinted with some abbreviation in: E. Segal (ed.), Oxford Readings in Greek Tragedy, Oxford 1983, 272–293.

Petersen, E.: Andromeda, JHS 24, 1904, 99–112 and pl. V.

Reggiani, R.: Rileggendo alcuni frammenti tragici di Ennio, Pacuvio e Accio, QCTC 4–5, 1986–1987, 31–92.

Ribbeck, O.: Scaenicae Romanorum poesis fragmenta. Vol. I. Tragicorum Romanorum fragmenta, tertiis curis recognovit O. R., Leipzig 1897.

Shapiro, A.: Kalos-Inscriptions with Patronymic, ZPE 68, 1987, 107–118.

Slater, N.W.: Dead Again: (En)gendering Praise in Euripides' *Alcestis*, Helios 2000, 27, 105–121.

Sutton, D.F.: The Lost Sophocles, Lanham (Md.) / New York / London 1984.

Taranow, G.: Sarah Bernhardt. The Art within the Legend, Princeton (N.J.) 1972.

Trendall, A.D. / Webster, T.B.L.: Illustrations of Greek Drama, London 1971.

Warmington, E.H.: Remains of Old Latin. Newly ed. and transl., Vol. II. Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Pacuvius and Accius, London / Cambridge (Mass.) 1936 (The Loeb Classical Library 314).

Webster, T.B.L.: The *Andromeda* of Euripides, BICS 12, 1965, 29–33.

–: The Tragedies of Euripides, London 1967.

IDENTITÄTEN UND ALTERITÄTEN

Herausgegeben
von

Hans-Joachim Gehrke Monika Fludernik
Hermann Schwengel

BAND 13

ALTERTUMSWISSENSCHAFTLICHE REIHE
BAND 3

ERGON VERLAG

Accius und seine Zeit

Herausgegeben von

Stefan Faller und Gesine Manuwald

2002

ERGON VERLAG