

# 3 Naevius *Lycurgus* F 18 R. – Greek female bacchantes and their costume

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## 3.1 Introduction

The first piece of Latin poetry concerning female dress available to us is a verse from a tragedy by Naevius (ca. 280–200 BCE) bearing the title *Lycurgus*. It does not deal with the costume of Roman women, but with that of Thracian bacchantes—priestesses of the god Bacchus (Dionysus). The fragment, twice quoted by Nonius about six hundred years later, presents some difficulties. In contrast to the Twelve Tables and Cato, these arise less from a corrupt transmission of the text, but rather from the choice of the right variants and from the correct interpretation of single words, especially the term *mortualia*.

The section has been published many times in various editions of Naevius, of Roman tragedy, and of Nonius.<sup>1</sup> The text, as we read it today, goes back to Ribbeck (1852); the interpretation of the word *mortualia* as funeral dress goes back a few more years, having been proposed by Bothe (1837). Bothe's views have become canonical today and have found their way into Latin dictionaries. As a result, the bacchantes described by Naevius are dressed in a cheerful long robe of a striking red colour (*crocosta*) and a dark mourning dress!<sup>2</sup> The aim of the following analysis is to solve this contradiction and to offer a new solution for some old problems. Unfortunately, as in A 1–3, some odd garments—the *\*patagium* and the *mortualia*—will disappear in this process. Noise (*patagus*) and song will hopefully make up for this loss.

The myth about Dionysus and the Thracian king Lycurgus was dramatized by Aeschylus in his trilogy called *Lycurgeia* and, at about the same time, by Polyphrasmon,

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1 Cf. Naevius, *Lycurgus* F 12 Bothe (1823) 88; F 18 Ribbeck (1852) = Ribbeck<sup>2</sup> (1871); Naevius F 39 Warmington (1936); F 40 Schauer (2012); Marmorale (1950) 197; F 34 Traglia (1986); Lattanzi (1994) 231. Further editions are listed in Schauer (2012) 114, who provides a comprehensive doxography. It is unfortunate that the editions of the fragmentary Latin tragedies and comedies, unlike those of the Greek poets (TrGF, PCG), do not contain *subsidia interpretationis*.

2 See also Warmington (1936) (see below) and most recently R. Seaford, *Euripides. Bacchae*, Warminster 1997, 27, 222.

a tragic poet about whom we know very little.<sup>3</sup> The *Bacchae* of Euripides show us, with king Pentheus in the role of Lycurgus, how to imagine the basic structure of the plot. Dionysus is persecuted by Lycurgus, king of the Edonians, who is punished for his sacrilege in different ways afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

We have only few fragments left of both the Greek tragedies on Lycurgus and Naevius' play. So it is no longer possible to determine with certainty the Greek model Naevius used and adapted.<sup>5</sup> In some points, the *Lycurgus* resembles the *Edonoi* of Aeschylus.<sup>6</sup> However, the similarities are not so close that one can call Naevius' play a translation; they might simply be caused by parallel motifs.

In total, twenty-four fragments of Naevius' *Lycurgus* have survived, all but one transmitted by Nonius. It is also Nonius to whom we owe the fragment under discussion. The text has some difficulties that are characteristic of Nonius (which will be discussed in other chapters of this book).<sup>7</sup> Many quotations adduced by Nonius are in bad shape. Apart from that, they are nearly all mutilated at the beginning or at the end. There are also plenty of omissions and misspellings that impede understanding. It is often not clear whether mistakes are due to Nonius himself, his sources, or the manuscript tradition. However, they eventually had, so to say, a creative effect: Some obscure dress terms fascinating modern scholars, like the *mortualia*, were born out of this chaos.

## 3.2 Nonius' two versions of Naevius

The fragment of Naevius is quoted twice by Nonius. These quotations are given below as version A and version B. The two versions differ slightly, and it therefore seems best to first discuss which one we should use as a starting point and how to use it:

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Aeschyl. T 68. 78 (on the trilogy); F 23–25 (*Bassarai*). 57–67 (*Edonoi*). 146–149 (*Neaniskoi*) Radt; Polyphrasmon 7 T 3 Snell. Schauer (2012) 89 should be corrected; his reference leads to the Euripidean *Likymnios*.

<sup>4</sup> On the *Lycurgus* of Naevius, see especially O. Ribbeck, *Die römische Tragödie im Zeitalter der Republik*, Leipzig 1875, 55–61; K. Deichgräber, *Die Lykurgie des Aischylos. Versuch einer Wiederherstellung der dionysischen Tetralogie*, Nachrichten der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Altertumswissenschaft 3 (1939), 256–265; L. Lattanzi, *Il Lucurgus di Nevio*, *Aevum antiquum* 7 (1994), 191–265; W. Suerbaum, *Religiöse Identitäts- und Alteritätsangebote im Equos Troianus und im Lycurgus des Naevius*, in: G. Manuwald (ed.), *Identität und Alterität in der frühromischen Tragödie*, Würzburg 2000, 185–198.

<sup>5</sup> E. Bruhn, *Ausgewählte Tragödien des Euripides. Die Bakchen*, Berlin <sup>3</sup>1891, 29: “wenn wir wüßten, daß die aeschyleische Lykurgie die Vorlage für den Lucurgus des Naevius gewesen sei: was wir nicht wissen. Immerhin mögen die Ähnlichkeiten zwischen dem Lucurgus und den Bakchen erwähnt sein”; for a recent doxography, see Schauer (2012) 90.

<sup>6</sup> Deichgräber (n. 4) 232; E. R. Dodds, *Euripides. Bacchae*, Oxford <sup>2</sup>1960, xxxi–xxxiii; D. Ferrin Sutton, *Aeschylus' Edonians*, in id. (ed.), *Fons Perennis. Saggi Critici di Filologia Classica. Raccolti in Onore del Professore Vittorio D'Agostino*, Torino, 388–389; Lattanzi (n. 4) 198; most recently Suerbaum (n. 4) 190.

<sup>7</sup> Cf., for example, A 7 pp. 138–142; D 4 pp. 625–638; D 6 pp. 663–665.

**A** p. 866.7 L. *patagium*] ... *pallis patagis crocotis malacis mortualibus*

**B** p. 880.32 L. *caltulam et crocotulam*] ... *pallis patagiis crocotis malaciis mortalibus*

(for a translation, see below)

Both times, the verse of Naevius does not form the basis of Nonius' lemma, but follows after other quotations as additional evidence. In the first case (A), it is preceded by a half verse taken from the *Epidicus* of Plautus (231) *indusiatam patagiatam*; in the second case (B), it is quoted fourth in a lemma that is very chaotic. It has long been noted that the original verse in Naevius' text must have been a trochaic septenar.<sup>8</sup> In A, a syllable is missing. In contrast, B is metrically complete (for an analysis, see below). However, Nonius or some later scribe must have interfered with the text of version B to create the complete verse, adding inter alia a (mistaken) second I in *malaciis* for the lost letter U in *mortalibus*. After Ribbeck (1852),<sup>9</sup> editors of both Naevius and Nonius usually combine what they think to be the correct bits of both versions, putting together the first part of B (*pallis patagiis*) with the end of A (*malacis mortualibus*).<sup>10</sup>

At first glance, it might seem right to prefer the beginning of version B offering *\*patagiis* and to correct version A offering *patagis* accordingly. This is because Nonius adduces the verse in A as an example for the word *patagium*. He writes: *patagium aureus clavus qui pretiosis vestibis inmitti solet* (*\*patagium*: a golden stripe that they are accustomed to insert into expensive garments). However, there are some serious objections to restoring the form *\*patagium* in the text of Naevius. As to orthography, the spelling used by Nonius does not imply that a word was written in the same way by the authors quoted by him. It only shows which form of the word Nonius found in his copy of the respective authors or rather, as we will see in other places, which form he *wanted to* extract from it.<sup>11</sup> One should therefore avoid 'correcting' quotations of other authors in Nonius that offer a meaningful alternate spelling by using the form a word has in a lemma of Nonius. Moreover, the noun *\*patagium*, a gloss derived from the Plautine adjective *\*patagiatus* and only used by grammarians,<sup>12</sup> can hardly carry the meaning in Naevius that Nonius wants to assign to it.<sup>13</sup> Ancient scholars before

<sup>8</sup> Cf. most recently Schauer (2012) ad. loc.

<sup>9</sup> The first editions usually print the hypermetrical version of B, cf. the Aldina (1513) of Nonius: *pallis patagiis crocotis malatiis (or manicis) mortualibus*; so also Stephanus (1564) 225 in his edition of Naevius. Vossius detected the mistake, noting in his *Castigationes* p. 68 to the edition of Scriverius (1620): "*itaque, si malacia displicet, malacis legam, quomodo pallium malacum ibidem dixit Comicus.*" Bothe (1823) offers an odd proposal to get rid of the superfluous syllable: "*vel pronuntiandum est metri gratia malacis, vel U in mortualibus elidendum.*"

<sup>10</sup> Marmorale (1950); Lattanzi (n. 4) 231; Schauer (2012).

<sup>11</sup> See on it also my remarks p. 664.

<sup>12</sup> See D 3 pp. 612–615.

<sup>13</sup> The difficulty is usually not noted or is glossed over, cf. Warmington (1936): "with gowns and golden edgings"; Rousselle (1986) 196: "gowns with golden stripes"; Traglia (1986): "con ampi mantelli e frange dorate"; Lattanzi (1994): "con ampie vesti, frange dorate, crocotule, morbide gramglie."

Nonius thought that the word referred to a kind of trimming of dress. However, such a trivial ornament does not fit in with a literary genre like tragedy that is written in an elevated style.

As regards methodology, it is therefore better to not mix versions, but to choose between A or B. In contrast to B (*malaciis mortalibus*), version A does not have any obvious orthographical mistakes. As regards the content, we have already seen that it is difficult to explain the unparalleled word *\*patagium* in B, whereas the *\*patagus* in A has at least a good parallel in the Greek word πάταγος (see below). We should thus use version A as the basis of our reconstruction.

### 3.3 Naevius about Thracian bacchantes

In version A, the verse is to be interpreted as an incomplete trochaic septenar, missing one syllable. It can be completed by, for example, adding a *cum* at the beginning of the verse. The text then reads as follows:

*<cum> pallis, pātāgis, crōcotis, mālācis mortūalībūs*  
with *pallae*, noise, *crocotae*, and degenerate songs

The speaker of the words is not mentioned. It is either Lycurgus or one of his servants, who tells the king about the unusual apparel of Dionysus and his followers.<sup>14</sup> He describes some female bacchantes. The basic elements of their costume can be identified clearly. The term *palla* denotes their long dress.<sup>15</sup> Depending on the literary genre, our Greek sources call this either χιτών (in prose) or πέπλος (in poetry).<sup>16</sup> The Latin word *palla* suggests that Naevius found the term πέπλος in the tragedy he imitated. The long robe of the bacchantes was colourful and was also called βάσσαρα.<sup>17</sup> Women wore it together with the *crocota*, a red tunic typical for the cult of Dionysus.<sup>18</sup> The source of Naevius at this point may have spoken of χροχωτοί, which is still reflected in the Latin loanword *crocotae*. The costume consisting of two garments we read about in our text is thus similar to that of a statue of Dionysus described in a famous passage by the

<sup>14</sup> Cf. e.g. Ribbeck (n. 4) 59: “Bericht eines der Schergen”; Deichgräber (n. 4) 259: “paßt in Ton und Inhalt nur in eine Rede des Königs”; Schauer (2012) ad F 40.

<sup>15</sup> On this meaning, cf. B 3 pp. 292–297.

<sup>16</sup> For the term πέπλος, see Euripid. Bacch. 821: βυσσίνους πέπλους; 935–936: πέπλων στολίδες (Pentheus dressed in the robe of a bacchante). In the Euripidean expression βύσσινοι πέπλοι, the present and the heroic age are melted together. The peplos was made of wool, the chiton of linen.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. RE 3.1 (1897) s.v. Bassarai, Bassarides, col. 104 (O. Jessen); for further references, see Aeschyl. F 59 Radt and Ps.-Acro (~ Porph.) ad Hor. carm. 1.18.11.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. also A 10 pp. 205–206; B 1 p. 259; B 11 p. 417.

historian Kallixenos:<sup>19</sup> “a statue of Dionysus, ten cubits tall, pouring a libation from a golden drinking-cup, with a foot-long *chiton* (= *palla*) in purple reaching to the feet and a transparent *crocota* over it. He was wrapped in a purple himation with golden embroidery.”

The description given by Naevius fits perfectly with other images and descriptions of bacchantes. A fragment of the *Edonoi* of Aeschylus (F 59), a tragedy belonging to the Aeschylean trilogy that was perhaps used as a source by Naevius in his *Lycurgus*, comes very close to it in content: ὅστις χιτῶνας βασσάρας τε Λυδίας ἔχει ποδήρεις (who wears a *chiton* and Lydian *bassarai* reaching to the feet). The situation of the speech in Aeschylus seems to be very similar to that in Naevius. The words could be part of a report of a messenger or a speech of Lycurgus. They refer, however, not to a woman, but to a man wearing the costume of Dionysus, maybe the god himself.

### 3.3.1 The meaning of *patagus* (noise)

In Naevius, the two terms referring to dress—*palla* and *crocota*—are separated by the word *patagus*. As the correction to the gloss *\*patagium* in version B implies, Nonius looked for a further article of clothing because he wanted to have a continuous enumeration of garments. However, the word *patagus* is meaningful on its own and we should first think about whether it fits in. A *patagus* (παταγός) is the noise made by the retinue of Dionysus. It is also mentioned by the tragic poet Pratinas, a contemporary of Aeschylus:<sup>20</sup> “What hubris came to the altar of Dionysus that is full of *patagus* ... but I must make *patagus*, storming over the mountain with the naiads.”

The *patagus* is mainly caused by drums (*tympana*) carried by the bacchants. In his play *Edonoi*, Aeschylus also lists the various instruments and their noise, including a *tympanum*.<sup>21</sup> Together with clothes, music is usually considered the defining characteristic of Dionysus and his cult in literature. Propertius, for example, describes Bacchus and his procession as follows:

Prop. 3.17.29–34  
*candida laxatis onerato colla corymbis*  
*cinget Bassaricas Lydia mitra comas,*  
*levis odorato cervix manabit olivo,*  
*et feriet nudos veste fluente pedes.*

<sup>19</sup> Athen. 5.28 p. 198c (= Kallixenos FGrHist 627 F 2): ... ἄγαλμα Διονύσου δεκάπηχυν σπένδον ἐκ καρχησίου χρυσοῦ, χιτῶνα πορφυροῦν ἔχον διάπεζον καὶ ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ κροκωτὸν διαφανή. περιεβέβλητο δὲ ἱμάτιον πορφυροῦν χρυσοποίκιλον.

<sup>20</sup> Pratinas (4) F 1 Snell: τίς ὕβρις ἔμολεν ἐπὶ Διονυσιάδα πολυπάταγα θυμέλαν ... ἐμὲ δεῖ παταγεῖν ἀν’ ὄρεα σύμενον μετὰ Ναϊάδων.

<sup>21</sup> Aeschyl. F 57 Radt.

*mollia Dircaeae pulsabunt tympana Thebae,  
capripedes calamo Panes hiant canent.*

Loose clusters of ivy-berries (= garlands) will rest on your white shoulders. A Lydian *mitra* will surround your Dionysian hair. Your neck will be slippery, dripping with streams of sweet-smelling oil, and a flowing robe will touch your bare feet. Thebes in Boeotia will beat the wanton drum; goat-footed Pans will play on shepherd's pipes.

The *patagus* we find in Naevius is thus a typical element of a Dionysian revelry. The only objection to it could be that it is inserted between two garments. However, this 'disorder' creates the nice alliteration *pallis patagis*, making the position of *patagus* plausible. It also suits an agitated or even angry person talking about what he regards as a tumultuous rabble. The rest of the verse also seems to support this interpretation. However, there are some difficulties to be solved first.

### 3.3.2 The meaning of *malaca mortualia* ('degenerate songs')

The adjective *malacus* (= *mollis*) is a Greek loanword attested elsewhere in early Latin texts.<sup>22</sup> Naevius simply translated the Greek adjective μαλακός that he found in his source. But to which word does *malacis* refer? To *crocotis* or to *mortalibus*? In Plautus,<sup>23</sup> *malacus* is connected twice with a cloak (*pallium*); the Greek μαλακός can also refer to garments.<sup>24</sup> In Naevius too, the word could thus refer to the *crocotis*.<sup>25</sup> However, the alliteration, the metre, and the rhetorical structure of the entire statement point in the opposite direction. Taking *malacis* together with *mortalibus*, we get a meaningful caesura after the fourth foot. This structural interpretation has the additional benefit of bringing the sentence into complete accordance with Behaghel's law, which states that single limbs of a sentence tend to become longer.

But what then does the expression *mortualia* mean? At present, *mortualia* (as a plural noun) are defined in the dictionaries with more or less confidence as funeral garments.<sup>26</sup> This explanation goes back to Bothe (1837).<sup>27</sup> Since Bothe's view had so much influence on later research, it will be discussed here at full length. Bothe printed the text of Naevius as *pallis, patagiis, crocotis, manicis, mortalibus*. He then

<sup>22</sup> The editions up to Bothe (1823) print the noun *malaciis* (as translation of the Greek μαλακίαις), to which the following *mort(u)alibus* is added as an adjective. Apart from text-critical considerations, however, the content of this phrase is not clear either.

<sup>23</sup> Bacch. 71; Miles 688.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. LSJ s.v. μαλακός I.

<sup>25</sup> See Vossius (1620) (see above n. 9); Warmington (1936): "with soft saffron dresses."

<sup>26</sup> ThLL VIII s. v. *mortualia* col. 1520.63–65: i. q. *res ad mortuos sive funera pertinentes. de vestimentis*. Georges s.v. "Leichenkleider, Trauerkleider"; OLD s.v. b. (app.) "mourning garments"; see also LHS I 350 (3).

<sup>27</sup> F. H. Bothe, *Emendationes Nonianae*, RhM 5 (1837), 271.

commented at it as follows:<sup>28</sup> “The meaning is that the field is strewn with those garments of the fleeing bacchantes. The person, whoever it may be, calls them all *mortualia*, obviously because they belong to women who are destined for death by Lycurgus.”

The starting point of Bothe’s reasoning was, as it seems, the word *\*patagium*, which he took to denote the border of a garment. He wondered how it was to be explained in the given context and came upon the supposition that the clothes of the bacchantes could have already lain torn and scattered on the ground. He then buttressed his assumption by putting the old (and mistaken) conjecture *manicae* (sleeves) into the text,<sup>29</sup> finding in it another piece of the torn clothes. Since there was still the word *mortualia* to account for, Bothe added another twist to his explanation. According to him, the torn clothes of the bacchantes were called ‘funeral dress’ by the speaker because the person wanted to express that the bacchantes were destined for death by Lycurgus anyway. It is obvious that Bothe’s complicated theory was an ad hoc invention on his part. However, it was later taken up by the dictionaries. In a kind of circular reasoning, it was further spun out afterwards by later scholars, who took the meaning ‘funeral dress’ for granted.<sup>30</sup> The cheerful reveling of the bacchantes thus turned into a funeral procession.

The blatant contradiction to the red tunica called *crocota* shows that Bothe’s interpretation of *mortualia* is not correct. Bright red is not a colour of mourning among ancient Mediterranean cultures (and probably not of any culture at any point in history). Moreover, with the *palla* and *crocota*, the clothing of the bacchantes is already complete. We must therefore find another explanation. Methodologically, it is best to first look at parallels for the word *mortualia*. The adjective *mortualis* is attested two more times, only in early Latin literature, where it is always used as a noun in the neuter plural. This usage suggests that *mortualia* was a well-defined word, the meaning of which should not be changed at will.

The example most important to establishing its sense is a quotation from Cato which has been handed down to us by Gellius. He tells us how the grammarian Domitius accuses philosophers of busying themselves with mere linguistic trifles for their own sake:

<sup>28</sup> *stratus fuisse campus dicitur vestimentis illis fugientium Baccharum, quae cuncta vocat ille, quisquis est, qui narrat, mortualia, utpote morti destinatarum a Lycurgo.*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. already the editio Aldina (1513) of Nonius.

<sup>30</sup> Warmington (1936) 129: “an unexpected end to the list; perhaps it means grey or dark clothes”; Marmorale (1950) 197 “le vesti da lutto”; Traglia (1986): “fine gramaglie”; Lattanzi (1994) 232; Seaford (n. 2) loc. cit.

Gellius NA 18.7.3 (Cato F 19 inc. Jordan)<sup>31</sup>

*vos philosophi mera estis, ut M. Cato ait, mortualia (mortuaria codd.); glossaria namque colligitis et lexdia, res taetras et inanes et frivolas, tamquam mulierum voces praeficarum.*

You philosophers are, as M. Cato says, pure *mortualia*; for you collect glosses and words in need of explanation, things that are horrible, empty and frivolous like the wailing of mourning women.

The fragment of Cato comprises only the word *mortualia*.<sup>32</sup> Probably, Cato used the word in a depreciating way to denote a statement that he regarded as nonsensical. The archaist Gellius, himself a lover of the linguistic trifles he makes Domitius criticize, without doubt appreciated the word for its archaic sound. He therefore inserted it at any cost, even though it provoked some incongruity of sense when applied to philosophers (it refers to things, and not people). That *mortualia* was a gloss at the time of Gellius (Domitius) is shown by the fact that he adds an explanation of it at the end. According to him, *mortualia* (sc. *carmina*) are *mulierum voces praeficarum*, utterances of professional female wailers. As far as we can see, this explanation is right.

The meaning proposed by Gellius also fits in with the second evidence we have for the word *mortualia*, which comes from the *Asinaria* of Plautus. There, a speaker comments on a comic contract with a prostitute as follows (808): *haec sunt non nugae, non enim mortualia* (It is no joke because it is not *mortualia*). Again the expression *mortualia* denotes words without any meaning; again it is used metaphorically.<sup>33</sup> As is shown by its etymology, *mortualia* must have to do something with *mors* (death). That they were uttered by professionals-for-hire adds some point to the wit in Plautus because prostitutes could also be regarded as such.<sup>34</sup> We may therefore feel quite confident that Gellius' definition of *mortualia* is correct. As to its meaning, the word *mortualia* is thus equivalent to *neniae*, which is a more common word for lamentations and which is also used in a metaphorical sense.<sup>35</sup> Although the etymology of the term *neniae* cannot be elucidated with certainty (Etruscan?), it seems that, like in other cases, a Latin word (*mortualia*) existed side by side with a word of foreign origin, until one of them dropped out of use. In this case, the common *neniae* caused the rare *mortualia* to disappear in literature.

<sup>31</sup> *mortualia* has been rightly restored out of the dubious *mortuaria*; cf. also H. Tränkle, *Subsivica Gelliana*, *Hermes* 111 (1983), 110–111.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Ch. Heusch, *Die Macht der Memoria. Die 'Noctes Atticae' des Aulus Gellius im Licht der Erinnerungskultur des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.*, Berlin 2011, 360.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the comment of Ussing (1875) 199–200 on Plautus ad loc.: “*haec, inquit, seria sunt, non nugae; neque enim mortuis haec cantantur, sed vivis scribuntur. Etenim moris erat apud Romanos, ut in funeribus a conductis mulieribus, quae praeficae appellabantur, neniae cantarentur in honorem defuncti, inepta et incondita carmina.*”

<sup>34</sup> F. Hurka, *Die Asinaria des Plautus*, Munich 2010, 256: “Die Wertung des Vertrags als Negation der *neniae* ist besonders passend, da die Klageweiber wie Philaenium angemietet wurden.”

<sup>35</sup> Cf. OLD s. v. *neniae* 5.



On the basis of the attested sense (meaningless song or wail), we may now turn to the question what *mortualia* might signify in Naevius. It is obvious that the person speaking is referring to the music of the followers of Dionysus. In another fragment from the *Lycurgus*, the singing of the bacchantes is described positively as a melodious song (*suavisonum melos*).<sup>36</sup> Here, however, the speaker's attitude towards them is hostile, as is appropriate for Lycurgus or one of his servants. He therefore calls their song a lamentation (*mortualia*). In the metaphorical use of the term, two negative connotations are mixed up. On the one hand, the singing of the bacchantes is characterized as a kind of wail. On the other hand, it is declared to be completely void of sense (*nugae*). The attested meaning of *mortualia* thus fits in perfectly. We do not have to postulate a new meaning which has no parallels. The attribute of these lamentations (*malaca*) can be explained with the Greek word μαλακός sometimes used with music, then denoting tunes that were regarded as soft or 'effeminate.' This derogatory meaning applies well here, too. The expression *malaca mortualia* is spoken in utmost contempt and should be translated as 'degenerate songs.'<sup>37</sup>

### 3.4 Conclusion

Naevius describes bacchantes in their typical costume, the long robe (*palla*) and the red tunic (*crocata*). They beat drums (*patagus*) and sing 'degenerate songs' (*malaca mortualia*). The person speaking mixes up the logical sequence of words. The *palla* is followed by the *patagus*, the *crocata* by the singing. Maybe Naevius wanted to mirror the excitement of the speaker, who speaks of the bacchantes in a depreciating way. Rhetorically, the emotion felt by him is also underlined by a double alliteration. This much simpler interpretation makes perfect sense and accounts for all elements in the line without needing to take refuge in two dress glosses.

In his description, Naevius may have also kept close to his source, a Greek tragedy (Aeschylus?). The Greek verse translated by him is lost beyond retrieval, but three words are Greek loanwords. In any case, with Naevius' fragment we are entirely on Greek ground. It is no evidence for female Roman dress. This means that yet another Roman female garment has vanished before our eyes.

<sup>36</sup> Naevius, *Lycurgus* F 4 Ribbeck<sup>2</sup> = Naevius F 31 Schauer.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. LSJ s.v. μαλακός III 2 e of music, "soft, effeminate." Cf. also Prop. 3.17.33 (see p. 60): *molliā ... tympana* with Fedeli ad loc.

