

Abstract: In Pacuvius' *Dulorestes* frg. 18.139 R.³ (*utinam nunc matrescam ingenio, ut meum patrem ulcisci queam!*) the *hapax* *matresco* seems signalling the paradox of becoming *similis matris* as a requirement to do an action, the matricide, which will turn around the mother herself. The Pacuvian reinterpretation of the myth of Orestes seems to be based on the overturning of the Roman model (that is to follow the father's path, the *generis fatum*). The struggle of following the mother's path (*similes matris*) ranks the Pacuvian *persona loquens* among the Latin heroes/heroines (i.e. Hippolytus, Phaedra, Deianira, Hermione) characterized by an unusual resemblance to their mother and, in so doing, it overturns the canon; in fact what the *generis fatum* has prescribed do not lead to virtue but to its opposite.

Keywords: Pacuvius, *Matresco*, Orestes, *Generis fatum*, Resemblance.