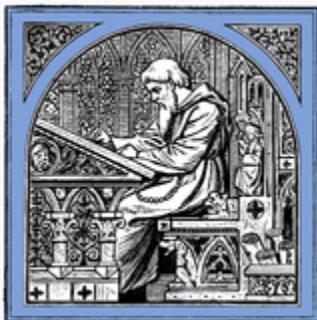


# 1911 Encyclopædia Britannica, Volume 1 — Accius, Lucius



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**ACCIUS, LUCIUS**, Roman tragic poet, the son of a freedman, was born at Pisaurum in Umbria, in 170 B.C. The year of his death is unknown, but he must have lived to a great age, since Cicero (*Brutus*, 28) speaks of having conversed with him on literary matters. He was a prolific writer and enjoyed a very high reputation (Horace, *Epistles*, ii. 1, 56; Cicero, *Pro Plancio*, 24). The titles and considerable fragments (about 700 lines) of some fifty plays have been preserved. Most of these were free translations from the Greek, his favourite subjects being the legends of the Trojan war and the house of Pelops. The national history, however, furnished the theme of the *Brutus* and *Decius*,—the expulsion of the Tarquins and the self-sacrifice of Publius Decius Mus the younger. The fragments are written in vigorous language and show a lively power of description.

Accius wrote other works of a literary character: *Didascalīcōn* and *Pragmaticōn libri*, treatises in verse on the history of Greek and Roman poetry, and dramatic art in particular; *Parerga* and *Praxidica* (perhaps identical) on agriculture; and an *Annales*. He also introduced innovations in orthography and grammar.

See Boissier, *Le Poète Accius*, 1856; L. Müller, *De Accii fabulis Disputatio* (1890); Ribbeck, *Geschichte der römischen Dichtung* (1892); editions of the tragic fragments by Ribbeck (1897), of the others by Bährens (1886); Plessis, *Poésie latine* (1909).



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