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NOTES ON THE SAMIA

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Somewhat surprisingly, more than twenty years after the publication of the Bodmer papyrus of the Samia, it is still controversial whether Chrysis should be supposed capable of feeding the baby transferred by Moschion to her care, having lost a child of her own shortly before the play opens. Habituated as we are to generally satisfactory alternatives to breast-feeding, we are in danger of underestimating a practical point which would have appeared much weightier to Menander's audience and which is crucial for our understanding of the intrigue on which the plot turns.

The inference that Chrysis could act as a foster-mother was based on Demeas' report (long familiar from the Cairo papyrus) that he had seen her feeding the baby (265-6)

αὐτὴν δ' ἔχουσαν αὐτὸ τὴν Καμίαν ὀρώ
ἔξω καθ' αὐτὴν (καὶ) διδοῦσαν τιθίον.

Not everyone accepted this conclusion; it could be argued that Demeas was mistaken and that Chrysis was merely taking the baby to herself to calm it down.¹

With the publication of the Bodmer papyrus it seemed to many scholars that an explicit reference to Chrysis' own child eluded us by no more than a hair's breadth in Moschion's opening monologue, and that some tense of τίκτω must have stood at the beginning of 56:

ἀπὸ ταῦτομάτου δὲ συμβέβηκε καὶ μάλ' (εὔ·)
ἔτικτε]ν ἢ Χρυσίς· καλοῦμεν τοῦτο γάρ

So the OCT.²

The most determined proponent of the contrary view, that Demeas was mistaken when he supposed Chrysis to be suckling the child, has been Christina Dedoussi, who, in response to an article by F.H.Sandbach,³ has recently restated her position:⁴ 'Chrysis' hypothetical child originated from lines 50ff. of the Cairo Papyrus (265ff. in Bodmer Pap.), and the only

¹ Thus C.Dedoussi in her commentary (Athens, 1965) ad loc., and in Entretiens Fondation Hardt 16 (1970), 177, T.B.L.Webster, AJP 94 (1973), 207, H.Hofmann, Proc. xiv International Congress of Papyrologists (London, 1975), 167ff., N.Holzberg, Menander: Untersuchungen zur dramatischen Technik (Nürnberg, 1974), 33 n.102, K.Gaiser, GB 5 (1976), 111-4, A.Blanchard, Essai sur la composition des comédies de Ménandre (Paris, 1983), 130.

² Even those who believe in Chrysis' baby might think the lacuna at the beginning of 56 better left without supplement, particularly since further emendation appears to be required if we supply part of τίκτω here (either μάλ'(εὔ) Austin or [όστ' (ἔτ)εκε]ν Arnott (Gn.42 (1970), 26)). H.-D.Blume (Menanders 'Samia': eine Interpretation (Darmstadt, 1974), 15 n.28) argues for an alternative reconstruction, with Χρυσίς as subject of εἴληφ':

τὸ π]αίδιον γενόμενον εἴληφ' οὐ πάλαι-
ἀπὸ] ταῦτομάτου δὲ συμβέβηκε καὶ μάλα
εἰς καιρό]ν - ἢ Χρυσίς· καλοῦμεν τοῦτο γάρ

³ LCM 11.9 (1986), 158-60.

⁴ *ibid.* 13.3 (1988), 39-42.

evidence for its short existence was Demeas' report that he saw her giving the baby her breast. But this does not necessarily mean that Chrysis was really suckling Plangon's baby. She was merely trying to calm the baby (239), and it seems that this was a common practice in antiquity, as it still was early in this century in China, according to the novelist Pearl S. Buck. The Bodmer *Samia* has shown clearly that Plangon's baby was suckled by its own mother (535-6 and 540-1), thus Chrysis' ability to suckle is unnecessary. Demeas having been already told that Chrysis was the mother of the baby concluded that it was really hers because he saw her giving it the breast.' But the only evidence which Dedoussi cites for what she describes as common practice, a passage from Pearl Buck's novel *The Mother* (1934) seems irrelevant, since it concerns a boy of five, obviously well past regarding his mother's bosom as a real source of nourishment.⁵ A breast-fed baby would be enraged, not placated, at the offer of a breast from which no milk was forthcoming. In any case, the Nurse succeeds in calming Plangon's baby down, at least temporarily (244-5); on Dedoussi's interpretation it is hard to see what Chrysis could do for the child that the Nurse could not.

There was surely no point in Chrysis taking charge of the baby if she could not feed it. Though Plangon and her mother might, in their normal daily routine, have been constantly in and out of Demeas' house and vice versa (35-8), and casual neighbourly visiting could give Plangon the chance to feed her baby often enough to maintain her milk supply so that she could later take the child back without difficulty, Chrysis would have been left with a hungry baby on her hands by night, when it would have been impossible for Plangon to satisfy the baby's needs undetected.⁶ Chrysis sees herself as a superior alternative to a hired wet-nurse (84-5)

πρότερον δ' ἔγωγε πάντ' ἄν ὑπομείναι δοκῶ
ἢ τοῦτο τίτθην ἐν κυνοικίᾳ τινὶ

If she could not herself feed the baby, it is impossible to understand why she does not at least attempt to reveal the truth when it is clear that the intrigue has backfired (368ff.); she could not anticipate Niceratus' offer of accommodation, and if Demeas' wrath threatened to bar the infant from its regular food-supply, we should surely expect her obvious concern for its welfare to override her consternation at this delayed explosion.

How exactly was the intrigue meant to work? What was its point? Sandbach has argued⁷ that Chrysis intended to maintain the deception indefinitely and thus put Demeas under a moral obligation to support her and the child. This reconstruction is difficult to square with Moschion's protest (478) ἔπειτα σ' ἀδικεῖ Χρυσίς, εἰ τοῦτ' ἔστ' ἐμόν; Its weaknesses are

⁵ 'Now in the darkness the boy nuzzled against her, fumbling at her breast. She let him suckle, lying in warm drowsiness. Her breast was dry, but it was soft and gave remembered comfort to the child.'

⁶ Dedoussi does not touch on this problem of *νυκτιπλάγκτων ὀρθίων κελευμάτων*, to which Sandbach well adverts.

⁷ *op.cit.* 158.

succinctly stated by Peter Brown:⁸ 'What this view amounts to is that Chrysis is party to a plot to deprive of citizenship a child she knows to be of citizen parentage. But the baby is Demeas' grandson, and his son (Moschion) has promised to marry its mother; it seems to me more likely that Chrysis hopes to earn Demeas' gratitude by saving his grandson for as long as is necessary until the young couple's marriage is securely arranged'. Dedoussi has argued at greater length against long-term deception,⁹ and points out that Moschion was compelled by law to perform the religious and civil acts which would eventually permit his son to obtain all the rights of ἀγχικτεία and πολιτεία; otherwise he would be exposed to the danger of a suit brought against him by his son, at his coming of age, demanding all the rights he had by birth. Citizen status is a matter of supreme importance in New Comedy;¹⁰ we should think very poorly of Moschion if he were prepared to contemplate thus frustrating his son's chances in life.

Moreover, prolonged deception hardly seems feasible. Too many people knew the truth, and even commonplace discussion of family resemblances would be fraught with danger. It is ironic that the secret is betrayed so quickly by the Nurse (236ff.), who is devoted to Moschion's interests,¹¹ but sooner or later careless talk, or worse, spiteful innuendo in the course of some domestic crisis was anyway all too likely, and the consequences of Demeas' anger, when he realised how extensively he had been hoodwinked by those closest to him, might be expected to be formidable and long-lasting. λαθεῖν δὲ τοῦτ' ἐβουλόμην ἐγώ (529) says Moschion; the aorist infinitive does not favour continued subterfuge

But what is the point? At first we might think that the intrigue was motivated by Moschion's reluctance to distress his father.¹² But his first priority must be to obtain Demeas' consent to his marriage (which he does not expect to be easily given), while Demeas, it might safely be assumed, would be likely to find a clear legal¹³ and moral obligation more cogent than youthful appeals to ὁ τῆς ἐμῆς νῦν κύριος γνώμης Ἔρωσ (632). The fact that Moschion has already acknowledged paternity and sworn to marry

⁸ Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar 6 (1990) 265 n.73.

⁹ loc.cit. (n.4)

¹⁰ Cf. K.Treu, 'Menanders Menschen als Polisbürger', *Philologus* 125 (1981), 211-4.

¹¹ The contrast between ταῦτα τὰ κοινά κτλ.. (242-3), the familiar, practically meaningless, commonplaces which women address to babies, and the sensational implications of the Nurse's words is extraordinarily effective. Much subsequent misunderstanding might have been avoided if the women had considered the possibility that Demeas might have heard what the Nurse said even though he failed to react immediately, and had warned Moschion. But Demeas' normally quick temper makes it natural for them to discount his capacity for self-control at this critical moment, and the Nurse would obviously not want Moschion to hear of her gaffe.

¹² For the sake of brevity I shall not constantly remind the reader that Moschion is Demeas' son only by adoption.

¹³ Legally, Moschion was liable to prosecution for rape. But a rich and unscrupulous young man in his situation was in a relatively strong position vis-à-vis a poor plaintiff. See further Gomme-Sandbach, 33f.

Plangon (50-53,¹⁴ cf. 624, where ὄρκος takes precedence over πόθος is the most powerful argument available to him, unpalatable as it must be to confess his lapse from κομιότης (2-4, 18, 47-8, 67-9). If that lapse must sooner or later be revealed anyway, there is surely everything to be said for using it to further the plan on which his heart is set.

The real grounds for anxiety surely lie in the reaction to be expected from Niceratus on discovering that in his absence his daughter had borne a child fathered by their rich young neighbour.¹⁵ It might be thought unfair to judge from his violent outburst when he finds Plangon feeding the baby (532ff.); having, as he believes, almost been inveigled into handing over his daughter to a young man inculpated in a liaison with his father's concubine, he now discovers that the girl has apparently disqualified herself for any respectable match. But in his outrage at what he regards (not unreasonably) as Demeas' over-lenient reaction to Moschion's offence (492ff.) he makes it clear that he has no qualms about washing dirty linen in public. Moschion might well fear that Niceratus, who appears to be characterised as poor but proud,¹⁶ would choose to prosecute him for rape rather than commit his daughter's happiness to a young playboy.¹⁷ Niceratus' wife, too, would have reason to dread her husband's wrath at her negligence, and it is natural to think that sympathy for a neighbour whose friendship she valued was among Chrysis' motives.¹⁸

I take it, then, that when the scheme was first concocted (surely by Chrysis herself) Moschion was expected to explain about the baby in the course of getting Demeas' consent to the marriage. With his father firmly enlisted as his ally, negotiations with his prospective father-in-law should have been relatively straightforward. Of course Demeas was likely to be annoyed at the intrusion of an infant lodger into his well-ordered household (ὁ πατήρ χαλεπανεῖ <οἱ> 80), with its persistent claims on Chrysis' attention;¹⁹ but he could be expected to take the arrangement in good part once its purpose was made clear to him and he had recovered from his initial disappointment at the postponement of the domestic peace and comfort in which he could hope to recover from his journey.

¹⁴ We might expect his offence to be aggravated by the fact that Plangon was a guest in his house when the rape occurred.

¹⁵ See in particular M. Treu, *RhM* 112 (1969), 237.

¹⁶ Like Gorgias in the *Dyscolus*; see further E. Keuls, *ZPE* 10 (1973), 9-11. Also to be borne in mind is the principle well expressed in Euripides' *Antiope* (F 214) κῆδος καθ' αὐτὸν τὸν κοφὸν κτὰς θαι χρέων.

¹⁷ Cf. Chremes' misgivings about Pamphilus as a son-in-law (*Ter. Andr.* 543ff., 828ff.).

¹⁸ In her rather ambiguous position as an ex-hetaera currently mistress of a prosperous household Chrysis might be expected to attach particular importance to the friendship of a respectable neighbour.

¹⁹ *Lysias* 1.9-12 well illustrates what he might expect. It seems worth raising the question whether nursing mothers were normally regarded as debarred from sexual activity. Contracts for wet-nursing regularly prohibit intercourse (e.g. *BGU* 1106, 29-31 μηδ' ἀνδροκοιτοῦσαν μηδ' ἐπικυοῦσαν μηδ' ἕτερον παραθηλάζουσιν παίδιον), lactation being incompatible with pregnancy (and unreliable as a contraceptive). Demeas would have further reason to feel aggrieved if he supposed that Chrysis had embarked on a course of action incompatible with sexual activity for some two years (until the baby is weaned); her supposed unavailability would give further point to γαμετὴν ἐταίραν, ὡς ἔοικ', ἐλάνθανον ἔχων (130-1).

I would guess that the timetable goes wrong, and that Demeas was not meant to encounter the baby until Moschion (whose meeting with his father appears to take him by surprise (127ff.)) had explained the situation. Having lost the initiative in raising this somewhat embarrassing subject, Moschion resorts to adolescent moralising as a damage-limitation exercise (137-42), thus, we might guess, giving Demeas an excellent opportunity to broach the topic of marriage to a girl of poor but respectable antecedents. Moschion, finding that all is plain sailing where he had expected resistance, postpones his embarrassing confession, without considering that in Chrysis' interests the truth should be revealed to Demeas without further delay; he is, we notice repeatedly, selfish and self-centred. Matters now proceed much faster than the conspirators could have hoped; marriage that very day is now the plan.

When Demeas reflects on the happy way in which his plan for Moschion's marriage corresponds to the boy's own wishes (163-4)

ταυτόματόν ἐστιν ὡς ἔοικέ που θεὸς
 κρίνει τε πολλὰ τῶν ἀοράτων πραγμάτων

we may remember that Moschion had drawn attention to the working of ταυτόματον²⁰ in the circumstances which favoured the baby's transfer to Chrysis (55). The motif of the coincidentally convenient foster-mother, vulnerable to the charms of another infant because she has lost her own (cf. *Epir.* 264ff.), is familiar from legend. One of the most memorable instances is Herodotus' account of Cyrus (1.108ff.), who owed his life to the spontaneous maternal feeling of a peasant woman whose own baby had been born dead;²¹ behind this narrative we may discern native tradition in which the infant prince was suckled by a dog (cf. 1.122.3), and we may suspect that Herodotus himself was responsible for rationalising the story. A resemblance was long ago noted between Herodotus' account of Cyrus' early years and the story of Paris as it was presented in Euripides' *Alexandros*, where the familiar story-type is given a strange twist, as the child exposed and then recovered grows up to be not a saviour-hero but the ruin of his city.²² If some among Menander's audience were reminded of Euripides' play, they would surely have seen a further piquancy in Moschion's rather priggish attack on the artificiality of the distinction between νόθος and γνήσιος (137-42)

²⁰ On ταυτόματον (for which 'contingency' is perhaps the best translation) see further Gomme-Sandbach ad loc. and on *Epir.* 1108. Blume (op.cit. (n.2) 68 n.18), noting Menander's tendency to blur the distinction between τύχη and ταυτόματον, well speaks of 'die Ambivalenz einer Begebenheit, welche man sowohl als einen Zufall im banalen Sinne, als auch als geheimnisvoll wirkende Fügung betrachten kann.'

²¹ On this story-type see further G.Binder, *Die Aussetzung des Königskindes* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1964), B.Lewis, *The Sargon legend* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), 149ff.

²² See C.Robert, *Bild u. Lied* (Berlin 1881), 233-9. On the *Alexandros* see further B.Snell, *Euripides' Alexandros u. andere Strassburger Papyri mit Fragmenten griechischer Dichter* (Hermes Einzelschr. 5, 1937), R.A.Coles, *A new Oxyrhynchus Papyrus: the hypothesis of Euripides' Alexandros* (BICS Suppl. 32, 1974), R.Scodel, *The Trojan trilogy of Euripides* (Hypomnemata 60, Göttingen 1980), esp. 20-42, 83-90. We might conjecture that Aphrodite's prominence in that play might have given it a particular interest for the writers of New Comedy.

since the agon of the Alexandros apparently turned on the unimportance of externals, the low correlation between social status and merit.²³

Menander's debt to Euripides was recognized in antiquity,²⁴ and a year seldom passes without papyrological publications adding a further item to the account. Admittedly, the effect is often hard to gauge. The prudent critic will of course attempt to distinguish between, on the one hand, unambiguous allusions which the audience was clearly expected to recognise as such, marked by tragic language and metre, perhaps even by explicit quotation, at times a powerful source of comic effects (as e.g. in Onesimus' appeal to Smicrines (Epir. 1123-5) and Daos' string of *gnomai* (Aspis 407ff.).²⁵), and, on the other hand, a covert influence, much more pervasive and subtle in its effects, manifested in the use of themes and techniques especially favoured by Euripides;²⁶ but in the analysis of particular cases the distinction may not be clear-cut. Nor should we underestimate the danger that our view of the relationship between the two authors suffers severely from the loss of many plays very familiar to Menander's audience; there is a risk of distorting the general picture by highlighting the effects of intertextuality as it appears to us with our extremely restricted view of the range of drama current in the fourth century.²⁷ Still, it seems reasonable to suppose that the factors which established the ascendancy of the select plays (Hecuba, Orestes, Phoenissae, Hippolytus, Medea, Andromache, Alcestis, Rhesus, Troades, Bacchae) were already to some extent at work²⁸ and that we are on safer ground with them than with the rest.

²³ We may suspect that it was this tragedy in particular which suggested *τρέχειν ἐν ἀγῶνι* as exemplifying what a young man might choose to do on being restored to his proper status after being brought up *ἐν ἐργάταις* (Epir. 323f.).

²⁴ Cf. Quintil. Inst. 10.1.69 'Hunc (Euripidem) admiratus maxime est, ut saepe testatur, et secutus, quamquam in opere diverso, Menander'; Satyrus, Vita Eurip. 39 vii 1-22 (though this passage is concerned with Euripides' influence on New Comedy in general (even if we may suspect that Satyrus was thinking principally of Menander), not on Menander in particular). For an interesting discussion of what Menander has to say about tragedy see J. Łanowski, *Eos* 55 (1965), 245-53.

²⁵ I wonder whether Daos' facility in quotation is to be understood as a reflection of his earlier career as a paedagogus. Anthologies originally developed to serve the needs of the classroom (see further H. Chadwick, *RAC* 7 (1969), 1131-6, s.v. *Florilegium*), and no doubt an intelligent paedagogus might absorb a fair amount of such material in the course of waiting for his schoolboy charge (as depicted in the schoolroom scene on the famous Duris cup in Berlin (Berlin F 2285; CVA Berlin Bd.2, pp.29f., Taf. 77,78; Beazley, *ARV*² pp. 431-2, N° 48).). (Lydus in Plautus' *Bacchides* is the only other paedagogus identified as such in New Comedy; there is no recognized character type).

²⁶ See further A. Hurst, 'Ménandre et la tragédie', *Relire Ménandre (Recherches et Rencontres 2, Geneva 1990)*, 93-122, where references to the more important treatments of this topic may be found (94f.).

²⁷ Cf. R.L. Hunter, *JHS* 99 (1979), 180: 'Given the very limited extent of our corpus of Attic tragedy, it seems prima facie unlikely that, if a scene in New Comedy has a quite specific tragic model, that tragic scene will still be extant today.'

²⁸ On the selection see further W.S. Barrett, *Euripides, Hippolytos* (Oxford, 1964), 50-53, G. Zuntz, *An Inquiry into the Transmission of the Plays of Euripides* (Cambridge, 1965), 254-61; C.H. Roberts, *MH* 10 (1953), 270-1.

A certain parallelism between the Samia and the Hippolytus has often been noted. It has been most fully explored by A.G.Katsouris,²⁹ who has cogently argued that Theseus' confrontation with Hippolytus (Hipp. 902-1101) was in Menander's mind when he devised Demeas' confrontation with Moschion (Sam. 452-538).³⁰ Both scenes start with the two young men unaware of the situation as seen by the two old men and repeatedly asking for an explanation (Hipp. 903f., 909, [912]; Sam. 452f.). At first the two old men are reluctant to reveal their accusations, but their sons insist. Theseus and Demeas alike see this as arrogance (Hipp. 936ff., 950, 952; Sam. 461f.) but their sons' persistence at last provokes them to state their accusations explicitly (Hipp. 944 ἤιχνυνε τὰμὰ λέκτρα; Sam. 477 τὸ παιδίον κόν ἐστιν). The two young men are both somehow inhibited in these confrontations, Hippolytus by his oath (Hipp. 1033), Moschion by the presence of his prospective father-in-law (Sam. 490f.). Cumulatively, the resemblances between these two scenes surely go beyond coincidence, and it seems reasonable to suppose that Menander expected some at least of his audience to see, and relish, the parallel (as he no doubt hoped that some would appreciate the affinities with Euripides' Alope in the arbitration scene of the Epitrepontes (218-375)).³¹ It is thus a nice touch that when Demeas' thoughts turn to legendary precedent, it is Helen (337) who provides a parallel for Chrysis' conduct (as he misconceives it). Since he believes that Chrysis deliberately set herself to seduce Moschion, Phaedra would have been a much more appropriate comparison; surely Menander intended us, the audience, to have the satisfaction of feeling that we could do better than Demeas here.³²

It clearly adds piquancy to Demeas' monologues (206-79, 325-56) and subsequent confrontation with Moschion (451-537) if we compare his reaction to the evidence against his son with Theseus'. The latter, as Artemis points out (Hipp. 1320-4), is much too hasty in his condemnation (885ff.). Admittedly, the circumstantial evidence against Hippolytus is serious, but Theseus takes far too lightly the chorus' warnings (891-2, 900-1, 1036-7) and his son's solemn oath (1025-31, cf. 1055-6); in any case, *nemo repente fuit turpissimus*. By contrast, there is an air of monumental reasonableness about the first of Demeas' long monologues (217-79); he presents himself as a man who, though he has suffered a shock, is determined not to jump to conclusions. He is so far predisposed to favour his son against the woman he loves that he will not state what he regards as her real offence (373-4), and thus

²⁹ Tragic Patterns in Menander (Athens, 1975) 131-5.

³⁰ See also S.Jäkel, 'Euripideische Handlungsstrukturen in der Samia des Menander', *Arctos* 16 (1982), 19-31. (I must note, but obviously disagree with, Blume's expression of scepticism in his very severe review of Katsouris' book (Gn. 51 (1979), 729): 'Die "Parallelen" zwischen Hippolytos und Moschion sind reine Fiktion: keines der beigebrachten Argumente überzeugt').

³¹ See further Gomme-Sandbach ad loc., Katsouris, op.cit. 147-50.

³² Niceratus has a more scatter-shot approach to legendary precedent (495-8; well discussed by Blume, op.cit. (n.2) 192-7). Should we perhaps infer that irritation at this absurd catalogue of more or less comparable situations from tragedy provokes Demeas to suggest (what might be thought a rather silly conceit) that the myth of Danae provides an explanation for Plangon's pregnancy (589ff.)?

denies her the chance to defend herself, though for all he knows she might have been the innocent, protesting, victim of Moschion's lust.³³ He is conspicuously (almost ostentatiously) fairminded in viewing Moschion's presumed offence in the light of his past behaviour (272-4, 343-7)³⁴ here, in fact, he surely goes too far in his attempt to minimise his son's culpability (328-47); what might be a suitable line of defence for a fourteen-year-old schoolboy implies serious moral weakness where an adult is concerned.³⁵ Niceratus, we should note, blames both parties involved in the supposed affair (492ff.), though his choice of mythological parallels, in that it is restricted to males, implies that he regards Moschion as the more guilty. εἴς γε τοὺς ἄλλους ἀμαρτῶν σου πρόνοιαν ἠλίκην / ἔσχον (704-5) is Demeas' own analysis of his procedure, and he has good reason to use the plural. It is not only Chrysis and the baby to whom he has acted wrongly;³⁶ Niceratus is rightly horrified at the thought that he was about to marry his daughter off to a young man guilty of gross immorality. The play's happy ending should not obscure the fact that Demeas was prepared, in what he conceived to be Moschion's interests, to conceal from the boy's prospective in-laws what they had every right to know.

Demeas' leniency³⁷ towards Moschion is the more striking in view of the fact that he is undeniably portrayed as rather hot-tempered. If the parallel with the Hippolytus appears obvious to us, we might wonder whether Demeas is supposed to have taken to heart the dreadful consequences of Theseus' precipitate condemnation of his son.³⁸ Yet, ironically, like Theseus he errs by over-confidence in his own reasoning; both assume too readily that they have all the relevant information, and that there is no point in consulting others.³⁹

³³ Her former career no doubt creates a prejudice against her. - It is worth noting that Theseus fails to make it clear to Hippolytus what he supposes his son to have done; it is thus not surprising that Hippolytus defends himself as if he had been charged with seduction (1010-20).

³⁴ He invokes a similar principle on his own behalf at 709f. We may be reminded of a famous fragment of Euripides' Phoenix (F 812,4-6) *κἀγὼ μὲν οὕτω χῶςτις ἔστ' ἀνήρ κοφός / λογίζομαι τάληθές, εἰς ἀνδρὸς φύειν / σκοπῶν δίαίταν θ' ἦντιν' ἡμερεύεται*. On this play see Gomme-Sandbach on Sam. 498; on possible echoes in the Samia see J.-M. Jacques, *Ménandre, La Samienne* (Paris, 1971), xxiv f.

³⁵ We might wonder whether anxiety about just such a development had led to Demeas' earlier hesitation about taking Chrysis into his household (23ff.) if he did not seem so obviously flabbergasted by the turn which events appear to have taken. See also Jacques, *op.cit.* xxxix.

³⁶ So Gomme-Sandbach *ad loc.*

³⁷ If it is accepted that Demeas is preternaturally lenient, we should surely connect his attitude with his adoptive relationship to Moschion; the over-permissive Micio of Terence's *Adelphoe* provides an obvious parallel. Keuls (ZPE 10 (1973) 20) well speaks of 'the insecurity of the two characters with regard to each other'.

³⁸ H.J.Mette (*Hermes* 97 (1969), 438) well emphasises the contrast between Demeas' reaction and Theseus'. (But when he says 'Hier nimmt Demeas die Reaktion des Theseus des hohen Mythos bewusst zurück, der im Drama des Euripides ohne Überlegung der Verleumdung seiner Gattin Phaidra Glauben schenkt', I cannot see that 'bewusst' is actually to be found in the text).

³⁹ Cf. W.P.Arnott, *Gn.* 42 (1970), 25, 'Demeas makes a series of catastrophic misinterpretations, relying on the same cleverness and always pontifically sure that he is right (153f., 316ff., 466, 477ff.). The Samia's theme could well be described as the ignorance of a clever man.'

I believe that other significant reverberations of the *Hippolytus* are to be observed in the *Samia*. More than most tragedies it lends itself to visualisation in terms of a prosperous middle-class household. Phaedra's well-justified confidence in the sympathy of her concerned and curious neighbours and her strikingly modest summation of life's pleasures (383-4)⁴⁰ evoke an atmosphere of normality rather unusual as the background for Greek tragedy. Hippolytus' threat to observe her demeanour and that of the Nurse when they have to face Theseus (661-2) might not be thought to amount to much within the spacious accommodation of a heroic palace, where it ought to have been easy enough for the women to evade Hippolytus in their encounters with his father. It is within a more modest and circumscribed setting that this threat takes on some force, as we picture the increasing strain imposed by a sardonic, taciturn young man watching every expression of conjugal affection with a sceptical eye until Phaedra can bear it no more and betrays herself. Hippolytus' singleminded refusal to compromise or to make conventional gestures of respect towards a power for which he has no time represents a familiar enough type of adolescent extremism,⁴¹ even if the play calls for an explicit emphasis on chastity, the negative corollary of his commitment to Artemis and hunting, which makes him appear eccentric. While it may be a trivialisation of Euripides' play to highlight those features which might be thought to anticipate the modern novel of sexual impropriety among the Hampstead reviewing classes, this approach suggests that the *Hippolytus* might have been a particularly effective stimulus to Menander's dramatic imagination, and that it may be rewarding to look for further signs of its influence.

We may start with the characterisation of Moschion, ὁ κόκυμιος.⁴² It is hardly possible to overstress the importance of his opening monologue.⁴³ By introducing Moschion to us before any of the other characters Menander enlists our sympathy for this rather self-centred youth, as we gain our initial view of events from his standpoint.⁴⁴ Even more important than

⁴⁰ Admittedly, a puzzling passage (A.H.Sommerstein (BICS 35 (1988), 23-8) would delete 383-7); I should take it as an unusually perceptive comment on the enervating, and indeed corrupting, effect of a harem-like seclusion.

⁴¹ Euripides' Theonoe demonstrates the proper demeanour of a committed celibate towards Aphrodite (Hel. 1006-8).

⁴² The verdict of Gomme-Sandbach (p.542), 'a nice youth fundamentally, but a little spoiled and somewhat weak' seems to me much too kindly. Norma Miller assesses him more shrewdly (Penguin translation (Harmondsworth, 1987), 13): 'He is weak, unable to face responsibility, willing to involve others in his difficulties, and anxious always to shift the blame from himself ... self-centred, irresponsible (and so potentially dangerous).' The excellent discussion by M.Treu (RhM N.F. 112 (1969) 249-54) well emphasises the fragility of the ethical basis to Moschion's κοκυμότης. See also W.S.Anderson 'The ending of the *Samia* and other Menandrian comedies', *Studi classici in onore di Quintino Cataudella ii* (Catania, 1972), 155-79 (esp. 155-61); J.N.Grant, 'The father-son relationship and the ending of Menander's *Samia*', *Phoenix* 40 (1986), 172-84.

⁴³ See D.Bain, *Menander, Samia* (Warminster, 1983), 113, for objections to describing this speech as a prologue.

⁴⁴ Apart from the usual commentaries I have found particularly helpful the discussions of this important speech by Blume, *op.cit.* (n.2), 1-21, S.Dworacki, *Technika dramatyczna Menandra* (Poznań, 1975); 104-9,

its function as a vehicle for factual details necessary for our understanding of what is to follow is the manner in which his speech serves to characterise Moschion and, in particular, its presentation of his self-image.⁴⁵ It is a happy chance that what is preserved starts with a reference to his own feelings; this strikes the keynote of his exposition, giving due prominence at the outset to his sense of shame and his distress at the disappointment he is likely to cause his father.

Having, we must suppose, outlined the circumstances of his adoption by Demeas and the latter's generosity towards him, he says (17-8) ἀττείαν δ' ὄμωσ / τούτων χάριν τιν' ἀπεδίδουν· ἦν κόσμιος.⁴⁶ This self-characterisation attracts our attention the more because it marks the end of an important section of his exposition. When Demeas uses the same epithet in his description of Moschion (272-4) κύνοιδα γάρ τῶι μειρακίωι, νῆ τοὺς θεοῦσ. / καὶ κοσμίωι τὸν πρότερον ὄντι χρόνον ἀεὶ / καὶ περὶ ἔμ' ὡσ ἔνεστιν εὐσεβεστάτωι, a reasonably attentive listener may be expected to recall the earlier occurrence. Its importance is driven home when Demeas describes his son once more in similar terms (344), τὸν εἰς ἅπαντας κόσμιον καὶ κόφρονα. The epithets with which κόσμιος is paired illuminate a characteristic which sets Moschion off from the generality of wealthy young men in New Comedy, though admittedly it is a rather negative quality, primarily a matter of avoiding trouble.⁴⁷

By allowing Moschion at the outset to introduce himself in this way Menander achieves effects which could not have been attained if it had been left to another (even a divinity) to describe him, and we find entirely convincing his distress and preoccupation with αἰσχύνῃ (47-8, cf. 67). At the same time the rather condescending tone observable in his account of Demeas' relationship with Chrysis (21ff.) tends to suggest an immature young man who takes a poor view of others' follies because he has not himself been exposed to comparable temptations.⁴⁸

Moschion's much stressed κοσμιότησ might be seen as a bourgeoisification of Hippolytus' κόφροσύνη. Early in the play Hippolytus is presented as very conscious of his

J. Blundell, *Menander and the Monologue* (Göttingen, 1980), 40 n.11, S. Goldberg, *The Making of Menander's Comedy* (London, 1980), 92-5, Grant, *op.cit.* (n.42) 177f. A recently published Berlin papyrus, scanty remains of 21 lines in which Χρυσίς can be read, may belong here; see further W. Luppe and W. Müller, *APF* 29 (1983), 5-7 (P. Berlin 8450; I/II). But even if the identification were more than a guess, this fragment would not be much help on its own.

⁴⁵ It is interesting to compare Simo's account of Pamphilus with which Terence's *Andria* opens.

⁴⁶ κόσμιος in self-predication is striking. 'His claim to have behaved properly in his youth ... is later confirmed by Demeas (v. 273), but it may cause us to reflect that such a judgement about one's actions is usually best left to others' (R.L. Hunter, *The New Comedy of Greece and Rome* (Cambridge, 1985), 103). Blume (*op.cit.* (n.2) 10f.) has an interesting discussion of ἀττείαν.

⁴⁷ See further Mette, *Hermes* 97 (1969), 432-9, Jacques, *op.cit.* (n.34) xxx f., Blume, *op.cit.* (n.2) 11f.

⁴⁸ There is of course a nice humour in the contrast between his own description of himself acting with a man-of-the-world efficiency and the timid perplexity which he displays once the action of the play gets under way.

own αἰδώς and εὐδέβεια (73-87). We are not left to find confirmation of Aphrodite's judgement simply from general observation of his behaviour, but, by the dramatist's licence, are allowed to overhear his thoughts as he addresses the divinity who prizes these qualities which, as he protests in moments of crisis, are an essential part of his personality.⁴⁹

κοκμιότης, however, is more superficial, a matter rather of respectability. In any case, as Moschion makes clear, he can no longer properly lay claim to this quality. ἦν κόκμιος: imperfect tense. Its significance for the plot lies in his reluctance to disillusion Demeas. There is no reason for him to fear that the sacrifice of his reputation as a youthful paragon would seriously affect their relationship; though he may fear Demeas' anger when he comes to hear of his lapse, the old man might be expected to accept readily enough that (485-7) τὸ πρᾶγμα ... ἔστιν οὐ πάνδεινον ἀλλὰ μυρίοι δήπου ... τοῦτο πεποήκασι.⁵⁰

Moschion lets slip an ideal moment for his embarrassing confession, which could so suitably have been made when it transpired that his own wishes regarding Plangon coincided with Demeas' plans (145ff.). Knowing as we do that the conventions of the genre guarantee a happy ending we observe with fascination the imbroglio created by the postponement of this disclosure and the unexpected twist to the plot generated by Moschion's preoccupation with Demeas' opinion of him. At the beginning of Act 5 we see that the day's events have not taught him the dangers of deviousness.⁵¹ He wants a more fulsome apology than Demeas' businesslike οὐδὲν ἀδικεῖς Μοσχίων (μ')· ἐγὼ δέ σε / ὑπονοῶν τοιαῦτα (537-8), overlooking his father's ready acceptance of his explanation. He takes no thought for the effect on Plangon should she come to hear of the callous masquerade⁵² by which he expresses his sense of grievance at Demeas' suspicions, quite failing to allow for his own part in fostering them.

The effect of this last act is surely enhanced by recollection of the reconciliation between father and son which concludes the Hippolytus. Hippolytus is no less concerned than Moschion about his father's good opinion: δακρύων ἐγγύς τόδε, / εἰ δὲ κακός γε φαίνομαι δοκῶ τε σοί (1070-1).⁵³ Both Hippolytus and Moschion have been led to conceal essential facts from their fathers by their characteristic qualities: Hippolytus' εὐδέβεια keeps

⁴⁹ See, in particular, Hipp. 654-6, 993ff., 1100f., 1364ff., 1383. (Critics who find Hippolytus unpleasantly self-righteous seem to have lost sight of the fact that the circumstances in which he finds himself are highly abnormal.)

⁵⁰ Cf. Ter.Ad. 688 'fecere alii saepe item boni', Heaut. 956f. 'quid ego tantum sceleris admisi miser? volgo faciunt.'

⁵¹ For some interesting comments on this part of the play see E.Masaracchia, *Helikon* 18-19 (1978-9), 258-75 (esp. 268ff.).

⁵² There is a splendid absurdity in the contrast between Moschion's proud attitudinizing here (616ff.) and his previous appearance when he lacked the courage to face Niceratus (539). So too with his choice of the soldier's role for his charade: in New Comedy the soldier is characteristically the lover who enjoys independence, in complete contrast to the reality of Moschion's way of life.

⁵³ For Hippolytus the worst thing about the whole affair is that his father thinks him evil (1070-1); this is the negative to which the supreme happiness of hearing his father pronounce the words "Dear son, how noble you have proved to me!" is the positive obverse.' (G.E.Dimock, *YCS* 25 (1977), 257).

him faithful to his oath of silence (1307-9),⁵⁴ Moschion's concern with κομιότης prevents his being straightforward with Demeas. Our sense of Moschion's pettiness in nursing his grievance⁵⁵ is intensified by the contrast with Hippolytus' magnanimity (Hipp. 1405ff.). Moschion's response to his father's remonstrance and appeal for forgiveness (724-5)⁵⁶ conclusively demonstrates his superficiality.⁵⁷

In his preoccupation with respectability Moschion may well remind us of Phaedra, who makes no secret of her code of conduct (Hipp. 403-4) ἐμοὶ γὰρ εἴη μήτε λανθάνειν καλὰ / μήτ' αἰσχρὰ δρώσῃ μάρτυρα πολλοὺς ἔχειν.⁵⁸ It is significant that Moschion, in protesting against Chrysis' expulsion, urges Demeas to think what the neighbours will say (458-9), as if this was the strongest argument he knew.⁵⁹ Like Phaedra he attaches disproportionate importance to keeping up appearances. We might wonder whether this trait is to be connected with his own origins, about which some information must have been given in his opening monologue: had he himself (like Hippolytus) been conceived out of wedlock?

Wilamowitz's too kindly estimate of Habrotonon should warn us against viewing hetaerae through rose-coloured spectacles; but it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Chrysis, for all her socially dubious background, comes out of the affair better than anyone else.⁶⁰ In her we see an outstanding example of Menander's gift for the sympathetic and convincing portrayal of women characters endowed with determination and intelligence.⁶¹ If for many readers the Bodmer papyrus brought a major disappointment by ruling out the possibility that Chrysis

⁵⁴ Artemis' testimony should outweigh the implications of 1060-3.

⁵⁵ Cf. 619-20; we should be more sympathetic to a spontaneous outburst.

⁵⁶ 'New Comedy does not have much time for philosophers and in any case when characters are referred to as "philosophizing" what they have actually uttered tends to be the commonest of commonplaces ... so that this is a most unfair description of Demeas' admirably candid and direct speech.' (Bain ad loc.)

⁵⁷ Grant (op.cit. (n.42) 181) well says 'Moschion's only response to Demeas' case smacks of surliness rather than of repentance and forgiveness ... (183). Even at the end of the play when the problems and misunderstanding have been cleared away Moschion seems unable to meet Demeas halfway and to make his own contribution towards establishing a new kind of relationship.'

⁵⁸ Cf. Sommerstein (op.cit. (n.40) 24): 'Her consistent prayer is ... "May I never be seen to be κακή" (cf. 321, 403-4, 430; also 420 (ἀλῶ), 489, 596, 687, 720-1).'

⁵⁹ Perhaps we should allow that it is also likely to have particular weight with Demeas, whose inclination is clearly to paper over Moschion's relationship with Chrysis instead of actually asking him what has been going on. Delicacy can go too far.

⁶⁰ 'Die hellste Gestalt in diesem Bild ... ist ... die Hetäre Chrysis in ihrer Hilfsbereitschaft und Kindesliebe, für die sie so schwer büßen muss.' (F.Stössl, RhM 112 (1969), 209).

⁶¹ K.Treu's excellent remarks on Menander's women characters fit the Samia particularly well (Philologus 125 (1981), 214): 'Der Dichter selbst zeigt sie eher mit Sympathie. Die zahlreichen misogynen Sentenzen mögen überwiegend auf das Konto des jeweiligen Sprechers und seiner Situation kommen. Kumuliert spiegeln sie doch die Urteile und Vorurteile einer Männergesellschaft. In ihr bestanden die Chancen der Frau auf Selbstverwirklichung eben darin, die ihnen vorgegebenen Rollen gut zu spielen. Vor diesem allgemeinen Hintergrund heben sich dann aber jene Frauen um so bemerkenswerter ab, die persönlich mit Mut und Moral über die gezogenen Grenzen hinauswachsen und damit zugleich über die Statur der Männer. Deutlicher noch als sonst steht Menander hier in der emanzipatorischen Linie des Euripides. Der heroische Gestus der Tragödie ist der Komödie jedoch verwehrt. Sie muss näher am Alltag bleiben.'

might be rewarded with the unexpected disclosure of citizen status and the prospect of marriage to Demeas, the play's bitter-sweet quality surely gives it a more lasting appeal than would have been attainable with an ending more obviously in accordance with poetic justice.*

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