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MENANDER, MISOUMENOS 152–59 SANDBACH (552–59 ARNOTT)

aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 122 (1998) 20

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N. Gonis' recent publication of P. Oxyrhynchus 4408²⁹, containing portions of Men. Mis. 152–59 S whose text in places coincides, in places conflicts, with that of P. Oxyrhynchus 2656, is careful and punctilious. This short note deals with the dramatic background to two of its details.

(a) At vv. 153–55 S (553–55 A) P. Oxy. 4408 seems to provide:

παρεισφέρ[ω]ν
εἶ]σω τις ἡμᾶς λαυθάνει, νῦν δ' οὐκέτι,
ἄν οἱ θεοὶ θέλωσιν.

Whether these lines are spoken by Krateia, as Gonis prefers (p. 43: here following Turner and Webster), or by Syra, as in my Loeb edition of Menander (II.294–5), their content provides further evidence for one of the dramatic incidents that seems to have occurred near the beginning of the third act. That incident apparently followed a request made by Thrasonides to Getas for a sword (fr. 2 Sandbach, 3 Körte and Sisti, 4 Arnott), which Getas refused, presumably because he feared that his master might use the sword to commit suicide. Getas then seems covertly to have removed all the weapons from Thrasonides' house to that of his neighbour Kleinias (cf. v. 109 S). Consequently all of Thrasonides' swords were in Kleinias' house by the time that Demeas arrived there (178–79 S). In vv. 153–55 S accordingly the speaker must be referring to Getas' secret transfer of the swords, apparently just completed. *παρεισφέρω* does not occur elsewhere in extant Menander, but it was used at least from the fourth century B.C. on in Athens with the meaning 'I introduce/smuggle in' (LSJ s.v., citing P. Tebtunis 38.12, 2nd century B.C.).

(b) P. Oxy. 4408 identifies two people on stage up to v. 155 S at least – an elderly female slave and Krateia's former nurse – by name as Syra and Chrysis respectively. At 155 Chrysis suggests to Syra that they should now leave the stage. The opening of the next line is partially abraded, but P. Oxy. 4408 seems to give:

ἐγὼ [συν]άχθομαι δέ, νῆ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν·
ἡμεῖς κ . . [. .] .

The oath by Artemis confirms that the speaker here is female³⁰, and in this context the most appropriate person to voice it would presumably be Syra, responding to Chrysis with these words directly before they left the stage³¹.

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²⁹ The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, 64 (1997) 42–50 with a photograph (pl. IV); cf. volume II of the Loeb Menander (Cambridge, Mass. 1996) p. 294 n. 1.

³⁰ Cf. e.g. B. B. Rogers (London 1904) on Ar. Thesm. 517, D. Bain, *Antichthon* 18 (1984) 40, A. H. Sommerstein in *Lo spettacolo delle voci*, edited by him and F. De Martino, 2 (Bari 1995) 67; cf. Gonis p. 49.

³¹ Gonis (pp. 43–44) would prefer Syra at this point to be a mute, identifying the two women speakers in this scene as Chrysis and Krateia. This is by no means impossible, but why in that case would the presence of a mute character on stage here be dramatically necessary?