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A NOTE ON FR. COM. ADESP. 1147 KASSEL–AUSTIN

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In a thorough investigation (ZPE 99, 1993, 245–78) of three papyri apparently originating from one roll written in the third century B.C. (P.Cologne 203 and 243, first published by K. Maresch in *Kölner Papyri V* (1985) 1–21 with plates xxvii–xxviii, and VI (1987) 52–60 with plate xix respectively; P.Michigan inv. 6950, first published by R. Nünlist in ZPE 99, 245–53 with plates iii–v; these texts are republished as fr. adesp. 1147 in Kassel–Austin, *Poetae comici graeci VIII* pp. 478–91 with a more convenient line-numbering which is adopted here in this note), Nünlist tentatively suggests that the extant portion of this roll may perhaps derive from Menander’s *Dis Exapaton*.

If Nünlist is correct in this attribution, Plautus’ adaptation of *Dis Exapaton* in his *Bacchides* must have involved both original composition of text and changes in plot-construction on a scale unparalleled (according to general belief<sup>1</sup>) elsewhere in Plautus. In fact Nünlist cannot point to any verbal links between fr. com. adesp. 1147 and Plautus’ *Bacchides* of the sort that link the *Oxyrhynchus* fragments of *Dis Exapaton* vv. 11–30, 83–87 and 91–113 with *Bacchides* 494–519, 698–700 and 526–62 respectively, although the damage that this does to Nünlist’s argument is admittedly lessened by the fact that much of the opening act of *Bacchides* is not preserved in the Palatine manuscripts.

Nünlist’s attribution is ultimately based on two references to Ephesus in fr. com. adesp. 1147 (ἄνθρωπος ὃν ὑπερηδύς, ὃ πότνια λ[υ]ϙ / κληδοῦχ’ Ἐφεσία, σὸς πολίτη[ς] 26–27; [Ἐ]φέσιος παχύς 168). These he linked with the references to Ephesus in Plautus’ *Bacchides* (171, 231, 236, 249, 306–313, 336, 354, 388–89, 561, 776).

The identity of fr. 1147’s [Ἐ]φέσιος παχύς is open to question. Nünlist assumes (249–50) that παχύς here means ‘stupid’, as at *Ar. Nub.* 842, and that the reference is to the Greek counterpart of the soldier Cleomachus in *Bacchides*; however, although Plautus describes Cleomachus as non-Athenian (*peregrini . . . militis* 1009), he never identifies him as Ephesian in the preserved portions of *Bacchides*. On its own [Ἐ]φέσιος παχύς could also be taken as a reference to Theotimos, the rich priest of Artemis at Ephesus with whom (according to the lying Chrysalus) 1200 golden Philips had been deposited for safety by the Plautine Mnesilochus (= Menander’s *Sostratos*); the wealth of Theotimos is emphasised by Plautus (*Bacch.* 331–39), and παχύς is used in Attic with the sense of ‘wealthy’ (*Ar. Vesp.* 288 with Σ<sup>v</sup>, *Pax* 639, possibly *Equ.* 1139; cf. also Photius and the *Suda* σ 830 s.v. παχεῖς<sup>2</sup>). But a link here with Theotimos is probably mistaken; in fr. 1147 that reference to a fat cat from Ephesus is followed immediately by the entrance of another character from a stage house (v. 169), and in the *Bacchides* scene around this point no new character comes on stage.

It is the other Ephesian reference in fr. 1147 that scuttles or at least more seriously damages its attribution to *Dis Exapaton*. Vv. 26–27 derive from an early scene in the play. Here, according to Nünlist, the παιδαγωγός Lydos appears to be mocking his companion Moschos (= *Pistoclerus* in Plautus) when he imagines him saying ἄνθρωπος ὃν ὑπερηδύς, ὃ πότνια λ[υ]ϙ / κληδοῦχ’ Ἐφεσία, σὸς πολίτη[ς]. Admittedly the papyrus text is here defective, and its interpretation not wholly certain<sup>3</sup>, but most probably Moschos is being made to invoke Artemis as the goddess who protects Ephesus and to claim that he is a citizen of that city. Yet in Plautus’ *Bacchides* none of the characters claims Ephesian origins, and the city figures in the plot only as the place where, in the antecedents to the staged

<sup>1</sup> In accepting a due measure of Plautine originality, I cannot go along with all the views of Eckard Lefèvre and the Freiburg school, while applauding the important contribution that they have made to our understanding of Roman comedy.

<sup>2</sup> See ZPE 121 (1998) 38.

<sup>3</sup> See here especially Maresch in *Kölner Papyri V* (1985) 15. The alternative interpretations of N. Zagagi, ZPE 62 (1986) 39 (not an apostrophe to Artemis but an address to a hetaira or a bawd) and Nünlist (an attempt to combine the Maresch and Zagagi interpretations) appear less satisfactory.

action, the Athenian Mnesilochus (= Sostratos in *Dis Exapaton*) spent two years, trying to recover a debt owed to his father and there falling in love with a hetaira of Samian origin (*Bacch.* 574).

However, Maresch's assignment of fr. 1147 to Menander<sup>4</sup> remains attractive, but its play title remains elusive. The possibility that it was his *Ephesios* has perhaps been too easily dismissed. Such a title would be appropriate for a play in which the young man in love was a sole Ephesian then present in some other city<sup>5</sup>, and the fragments quoted from Menander's *Ephesios* supply nothing that runs counter to fr. 1147<sup>6</sup>. Indeed one of them (*Men. fr.* 172, ἐπ' ἀρίστω λαβῶν / ὀψάριον) would neatly anticipate vv. 48–49 of fr. com. adesp. 1147 (χρηστῶς δηλαδὴ / ἠρίστικας σεαυτόν).

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<sup>4</sup> *Kölner Papyri V* (1985) 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. my commentary on *Alexis* (Cambridge 1996) 120–21, 128–29, 244.

<sup>6</sup> The fragment quoted by Nonius 1.2 with the heading *Caecilius Efesione* (Ribbeck, *CRF*<sup>3</sup>, Leipzig 1898, p. 46) also contains nothing that runs counter to fr. com. adesp. 1147, but although it is sometimes assumed that *Caecilius*' model here was Menander's Ἐφέσιος, a title *Efesio* (or *Ephesio*) is better interpreted not as a Latin variant for *Ephesius*, but as a slave name (cf. Ribbeck ad loc.).