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## “When He Should Have Said...”

# The Treatment of Humour παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν in the Aristophanic Scholia

**Abstract:** While the Aristophanic scholia do not normally pay much attention to the mechanisms of verbal humour, there are numerous annotations pointing out jokes “against expectation”. The term typically used for this common phenomenon is παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν rather than παρὰ προσδοκίαν, although the latter also occurs a few times, probably under the influence of rhetorical teaching. The scholiasts’ general awareness of the feature, and their insistence on it, does not, however, go hand in hand with any in-depth analysis; much rather, παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν risks being used as a cover-all label for a variety of comic devices and without much consideration being given to its contextual appropriateness. Moreover, there is some evidence to suggest that explanations by means of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν could be a last resort when difficult passages could not be explained in a more “sophisticated” manner.

## 1 Introduction

The Aristophanic scholia provide us with extensive and important insights both into ancient scholarship on comedy and into the needs and interests of comedy’s non-scholarly readers. They do not, however, indicate exactly who these readers were, nor why they were reading Aristophanes (or comedy) in the first place. It is often assumed, with good reason, that Aristophanes continued to be widely studied in Hellenistic and Roman times because his language reflected Classical Attic usage and vocabulary that lay beyond the horizon of fifth- and fourth-century

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prose texts<sup>1</sup> and because the plays moreover shed much light on a central period of Athenian history. However, it would no doubt be wrong to believe that Aristophanes' post-classical reception was entirely guided by instructional considerations or blind to the poet's more strictly literary qualities. In fact, the entertainment and enjoyment factor must have played a major role as well, not just because there was apparently some utilitarian discussion on whether reading Aristophanes *at school*<sup>2</sup> was appropriate — as witnessed by Galen's treatise εἰ χρησιμον ἀνάγνωσμα τοῖς παιδευομένοις ἢ παλαιὰ κωμῳδία — or because various sources explicitly speak of the poet as *facetissimus* or *festivissimus* (Cic. *Leg.* 2.37; Gell. *NA* 1.15.19; Gell. *NA* 13.25.7; Gell. *NA* praef. 20; cf. also Pers. 1.124, *praegrandis*; Macrob. *Sat.* 5.20.13, *lepos*) and mention his χάρις (Ath. 4.158c, Ath. 6.269e, etc., χαρίεις; cf. also [Demetr.] *Eloc.* 128?), a quality that encompasses more than just stylistic achievement (on which see also Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.65–66; [Longinus] *Subl.* 40.2), but also because Plutarch, prefacing his own scathing remarks on Aristophanes' art in the *Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander* (Plut. *Mor.* 853a–854d), decries that ὁ μὲν ἀπαιδευτος καὶ ιδιώτης οἷς ἐκεῖνος λέγει ἀλίσκεται. As Plutarch himself specifies in this context, he is thinking, for example, of the poet's use of puns (παρωνυμῖαι), and he stresses that *he*, unlike other people, can *not* detect the “literary skill” usually ascribed to Aristophanes (ἡ θρυλουμένη δεξιότης).

Even so, the focus of the scholia clearly lies elsewhere. Many of them provide rather basic linguistic information, paraphrasing unfamiliar words or seeking to untangle constructions that are, or are taken to be, problematic. Others hark back to specialised treatises on κωμωδοῦμενοι and tell the user of the commentary more about the countless historical people mentioned in the comic text. A third major group of notes identify intertexts and help to navigate through the sea of topical allusions. In all of these areas, and especially in the last one, Aristophanic humour has its place, and neither did this escape the ancient commentators. But what is generally missing from the scholiasts' remarks is any sign of a deeper analysis of humour and any systematic approach to the matter. With regard to intertextuality, for instance, the coverage is very exhaustive as far as the enumeration of actual or potential source texts is concerned — so much so that there is

<sup>1</sup> While still being particularly accessible: see Coker 2019, 66 on Galen's opinion expressed in *De nominibus medicis* (103v–104v in Meyerhof/Schacht 1931, 31–33); note also Galen's (lost) works on everyday vocabulary (πολιτικὰ ὀνόματα) in Aristophanes, Cratinus, and Eupolis (Gal. *Libr. Propr.*, p. 19.48 Kühn), and cf. further e.g. Phot. *Bibl.* 158 p. 101b 4–15, on the canon of Phrynichus' *Sophistic Preparation*.

<sup>2</sup> For an explicit testimony of Aristophanes being studied at school in Roman times, see Lib. 1.9 (= Ar. test. 76).

sometimes a danger of overshooting the target — but the question is hardly ever asked what role a given "parody" plays within the comic product. That comedy has to parody and that parody is funny is taken for granted, but neither the mechanism of the phenomenon "parody" nor its function of adding a layer of interpretive complexity to the genre receive sufficient attention.

*Mutatis mutandis* a similar picture emerges if we look at the treatment of other forms of verbal humour in the scholia. While puns or jokes καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν (including double entendres) are picked up with some regularity, further elements, though being hardly less prominent in Aristophanes' comic language, are given shorter shrift. In particular, stylistic persiflage is often neglected when it is *just* that, i.e. when a passage does not at the same time allude to some *concrete* model, especially in the corpus of tragedy; and in the case of many a comic word coinage, the users of ancient commentaries were not alerted to the fact that the unusual word in question was more than just one of the many lexemes that were to be found in classical texts but had fallen out of use in the Hellenistic and Roman periods (and therefore required semantic elucidation). Generally speaking, and allowing for some degree of variation, one may thus say that the overall approach to Aristophanes' verbal art was atomistically "lexicological". Individual lexical entries got related to each other (punning/παρονομασία, καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν jokes) and new lexical entries could be fashioned where needed, but what is missing from the commentary is the systemic component that would have been necessary in order to adequately decode or describe more formally oriented patterns of humour.

Since formal similarities are of crucial importance where puns and καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν jokes are concerned, this does not of course mean that *no* attention was paid to the comic *signifiant*. Yet, the precedence assigned to the *signifié* level also comes to the fore when we compare the commentators' relative neglect of stylistic humour to their alertness as far as another prominent, though hardly *more* prominent, type of Aristophanic humour is concerned: jokes παρ' ὑπόνοιαν. Many instances of punning (παρονομασία) work in such a way that a contextually expected or expectable lexical item X is substituted by another item Y whose formal similarity makes the addressee think of the expected item without naming it (cf. e.g. Ar. *Nub.* 709–710, ἐκ τοῦ σκίμποδος δάκνουσί μ' ἐξέρποντες οἱ Κορίνθιοι, "the Corinthians are crawling out of the couch and biting me", with Κορίνθιοι, "Corinthians", replacing expected κόρεϊς, "bedbugs"). However, the non-fulfilment of such audience "expectations" may be used for comic effect also when there is no formal

similarity<sup>3</sup> between X and Y. It is this latter type which is often termed *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* in the scholia and whose fairly extensive<sup>4</sup> identification by the scholiasts the present article will explore, as a first step towards a more comprehensive description of the analysis of humour in the *scholia Aristophanica*.<sup>5</sup>

## 2 Terminology: *παρὰ (τὴν) ὑπόνοιαν* and *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*

The following scholion on a line in *Lysistrata* may serve as a basic example of such a scholiastic diagnosis. It relates to a song in which the Chorus outline the blessings restored peace will bring to private life. Everyone, they sing, will be welcome to

Χο. ... χωρεῖν ἄντικρυς  
ὥσπερ οἴκαδ' εἰς ἐαυτῶν γεννικῶς, ὥς  
ἢ θύρα κεκλείσεται.

Ar. *Lys.* 1068–1071

(Chorus) ... come straightaway, as if coming home to their own place, in a proper manner, for — the door will already be closed!

Σ Ar. *Lys.* 1071a τοῦτο εἰς γέλωτα εἶπεν. R — 1071b *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* δέον “ἀνεψχθήσεται”. R

1071a He said this to raise a laugh. — 1071b Against expectation, when it should have been “will be opened”.

<sup>3</sup> Or indeed identity, as with *καθ' ὁμωνυμίαν* jokes: Quintilian (*Inst.* 6.3.84) groups these phenomena together as the *genus decipiendi opinionem aut dicta aliter intelligendi* (“the type of cheating expectation or understanding differently what has been said”; cf. further Section 5).

<sup>4</sup> The failure to point out conspicuous instances is uncommon, at least for the plays that are well-served by the scholia; the lack of pertinent notes on e.g. Ar. *Thesm.* 515 and Ar. *Eccl.* 128 may of course be seen in connection with the generally less comprehensive character of the scholia on the “women’s plays”. In any case, it is definitely untrue that “negli *Scholia aristofanei*, rare sono le allusioni al fenomeno” (Filippo 2001–2002, 62).

<sup>5</sup> For a comprehensive *modern* take on, and typology of, *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* humour in Aristophanes (as part of a wider poetics of surprise), see Kanellakis 2020a, 23–87 (parts of which Kanellakis 2020b duplicates). An overview of Aristophanic instances, arranged according to semantic types, is offered by Filippo 2001–2002; cf. also Aloni 1995, esp. 90–95, for whom “*attesa frustrata*” is one of three basic manifestations of Aristophanic verbal humour, next to “*straniamento*” (= “defamiliarisation”) and “*svelamento*” (= “revelation” by means of ambiguity). In what follows, the scholia are quoted according to the edition by Koster *et al.* 1960–2007.

The label *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν*, which is applied here, is the scholiasts’ standard<sup>6</sup> way of referring to the phenomenon, which modern literature often speaks of as *para prosdokian* (παρὰ προσδοκίαν). However, as is often the case in the scholia, the critical terminology is handled flexibly, if not inconsistently.

Firstly, as was highlighted by W.G. Rutherford, next to the more frequent *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν* label there are also some instances of *παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν* with the definite article. According to Rutherford, the latter must be “the earlier and more correct form”, since “[t]he article brings out the precise signification, namely ‘at odds with the (hearer’s) mind’, and serves as a plain signal not to take *παρὰ* (τὴν) *ὑπόνοιαν* for an exact equivalent of *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*”.<sup>7</sup> This conclusion seems over-confident, not just because the distribution of the variants with and without article do not point to any chronological sequence,<sup>8</sup> but also because *ὑπόνοια*, as intended here, is not so much “the hearer’s mind” as a broadly conceived “suspicion, conjecture, guess” of what is to follow (cf. LSJ s.v. I.1). Accordingly, although it is of course always anchored in a specific situation (just as much as a *προσδοκία* is), the *ὑπόνοια* in question can well be taken as a generalised concept which, as such, may but need not take the definite article. Typical jokes *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν* run counter to conjectural expectation as defined by a given semantic context, yes, but they do this by defying *any* reasonable conjecture or expectation,

6 This needs to be stressed because it has been wrongly claimed that “*par’ hyponoian* [...] normally means an allusion or metaphor” (Kanellakis 2020a, 31, and cf. *passim*); the “terminological inconsistency of the annotators” relates much more to their occasional use of *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* instead (cf. immediately below; on fuzzy uses of *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν*, see further Sections 5–6). By a similar confusion, Montana 2013, 154–155, reads Aristophanic scholia that make mention of *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν* as if they meant *καθ’ ὑπόνοιαν* “by insinuation, covertly” (cf. LSJ s.v. II), referring to the *ὑπόνοια* (i.e. “underlying/hidden meaning, innuendo” *vel sim.*) Aristotle opposes to outspoken *αἰσχρολογία* (Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1128a 23–24).

7 Rutherford 1905, 450.

8 *Παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν* is confined to the scholia on *Wasps* (Σ<sup>VTAlid</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 449; Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 924c; Σ<sup>RV13</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 1136; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 1365), *Frogs* (Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 308f; Σ<sup>VEΘNBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 501d; Σ<sup>RVEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 547–548; Σ<sup>VMEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 970d; Σ<sup>RVMEΘ(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 992b) and *Plutus* (Σ<sup>ΘBarbAld</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 324; Σ<sup>ΘNBarbAld</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 818g), but these do not otherwise share clear characteristics. Also, the manuscripts themselves may haphazardly disagree with each other in individual cases (cf. Σ<sup>V</sup> [παρὰ τὴν ὑ.] vs. Σ<sup>TLhAld</sup> [παρ’ ὑ.] Ar. *Vesp.* 924c; Σ<sup>RV</sup> [παρὰ τὴν ὑ.] vs. Σ<sup>TLhAld</sup> [παρ’ ὑ.] Ar. *Vesp.* 1365; Σ<sup>V</sup> [παρὰ τὴν ὑ.] vs. Σ<sup>RMEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> [παρ’ ὑ.] Ar. *Ran.* 308f; Σ<sup>ΘBarbAld</sup> [παρὰ τὴν ὑ.] vs. Σ<sup>VMMatr</sup> [παρ’ ὑ.] Ar. *Plut.* 324; Σ<sup>ΘNBarbAld</sup> [παρὰ τὴν ὑ.] vs. Σ<sup>V</sup> [παρ’ ὑ.] Ar. *Plut.* 818g). At best, the carefully phrased Σ<sup>VMEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 970d, which forms part of a sequence of doxographic notes on the interpretation of Ar. *Ran.* 970 by scholars up to and including Didymus, could suggest that some post-Didymean scholar with a strong grasp on the tradition (e.g. Symmachus?) already wrote *παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν* at least in this instance; but even that would be a daring inference.

without there necessarily being a single specific one (cf. Engl. *against expectation* vs. *against the expectation*).

Secondly, and more importantly, alongside παρ' ὑπόνοιαν the expression παρὰ προσδοκίαν is encountered as well, albeit almost exclusively in notes on *Acharnians* and *Peace*.<sup>9</sup> Since παρὰ προσδοκίαν is an established term for a rhetorical figure (σχῆμα), which *need* not be used for humoristic purposes, it is less precise when applied to the comic device.<sup>10</sup> When Pseudo-Demetrius (*Eloc.* 152) uses an Aristophanic παρ' ὑπόνοιαν joke (and one that is classified as such in Σ<sup>R/RV</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 179a/b) as one of two illustrations for witty παρὰ προσδοκίαν,<sup>11</sup> he therefore stresses that an additional dimension is involved as well: namely the lack of a rational connection with what precedes (οὐδ' ἡκολούθει τοῖς προτέροις), a feature that is also highlighted in one Aristophanic scholion where — quite exceptionally — the mechanics of the humour are briefly looked at:<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> With the single addition of Σ<sup>RF</sup> Ar. *Lys.* 702 in the *scholia vetera*. Beyond, there is just Σ<sup>rec.</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 179a, which uses the two terms in one breath (παρὰ προσδοκίαν καὶ παρ' ὑπόνοιαν διαβάλλει αὐτόν) for a passage where the older scholia have παρ' ὑπόνοιαν only (Σ<sup>R/RV</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 179a/b); this might be under the influence of the reference to this specific passage in [Demetr.] *Eloc.* 152 (cf. below). Pace Filippo 2001–2002, 62, Σ<sup>rec.</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 783 is different: παρὰ προσδοκίαν is there an explanatory gloss on παραχρήμα.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Rutherford 1905, 450; I have been unable to consult Bilbao Ruiz 2005. In rhetoric, the concept of παρὰ προσδοκίαν (~ παράδοξον) can be traced back to Aristotle (or, more precisely, to Theodorus of Byzantium in the late fifth century BCE: cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1412a 26–28): see e.g. Bonanno 1987, 222–225; Celentano 1995, 168–169; Filippo 2001–2002, 59–60; Celentano 2003; Kanellakis 2020a, 27–31. Kanellakis underlines that, “[f]ollowing the Aristotelian tradition, *Tractatus Coislinianus* puts *para prosdokian* under the category ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων γέλως rather than ἀπὸ τῆς λέξεως”, but this need not entail an exclusion of verbal παρὰ προσδοκίαν: the fact alone that such παρὰ προσδοκίαν relates to the *signifié* more than to the *signifiant* could legitimise the classification. Even so, we do not of course know if the older Peripatetic analysis of comedy used the term παρὰ προσδοκίαν at all, or *initially* applied it somewhat differently from how we find it employed in the Aristophanic scholia (cf. Rutherford 1905, 451).

<sup>11</sup> The other is the Cyclops' promise to “eat last No-one” in Hom. *Od.* 9.369, which is of a very different nature. That [Demetr.] *Eloc.* 152 misquotes the Aristophanic passage by introducing the beginning of Ar. *Nub.* 149 into Ar. *Nub.* 178 does not affect his point. By contrast, Hermogenes (*Method.* 34, pp. 453–454 Spengel) chooses as his example of παρὰ προσδοκίαν something taken ἐκ τοῦ βίου (rather than ἐκ τοῦ κωμικοῦ), although the phenomenon as such falls under the wider heading of κωμικῶς λέγειν.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. also Σ<sup>VEΘNB<sup>arb</sup></sup> Ar. *Nub.* 12d, where the word X that would be “expected” instead of χρεῶν, “debts”, is corrupted, but where it is said that X would have been “in line and consistent with <the preceding word> φάτνη” in Ar. *Nub.* 13 (ἵνα ἐξῆς καὶ ἀκολουθῶς τῇ φάτνῃ λέγειν δοκῇ). Of course, the “rational connection” can take very different forms: cf. e.g. n. 24 below on Σ<sup>VEM</sup> Ar. *Av.* 102d appropriately observing how in that passage an antonym rather than a (partial) synonym is expected.

Χρ. ἄλλ' οὗ τι κρύψω· τῶν ἐμῶν γὰρ οἰκετῶν  
πιστότατον ἡγοῦμαί σε καὶ κλεπτίστατον.

Ar. *Plut.* 26–27

(Chremylus) I won't conceal it, for I think of all my slaves you are the most trustworthy and the most — thievish.

Σ Ar. *Plut.* 27a κλεπτίστατον RsAld(U): τὸ σχῆμα παρ' ὑπόνοιαν ἐπήγαγε, VMNMatrBarb RsV<sup>57</sup>Ald(U) κωμικῶς παίζων. VMMatrRsV<sup>57</sup>Ald(U) — 27c ἅμα καὶ χαριεντιζόμενος διὰ τὸ τῆς κωμωδίας μειδιαστικόν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ τὸν MatrRsV<sup>57</sup>Ald(U) οἰκέτην ποιεῖ ἀποδοχῆς τε τυγχάνοντα καὶ χλεύης παρὰ τοῦ δεσπότου· ἦν γὰρ ἐλπίς συμφώνως τῷ πρώτῳ λεχθήσεσθαι καὶ τὸ δεύτερον. RsV<sup>57</sup>Ald(U)

27a *Most thievish*: He employed the figure παρ' ὑπόνοιαν, making a comic joke. — 27c <He says this> as a joke, the aim of comedy being to make people smile, and at the same time he lets the servant be the object of some approbation and some jest from his master; *for the expectation was that the second element was going to agree with the first one.*

At best, one could thus argue that, from a classificatory perspective, παρὰ προσδοκίαν is the genus and παρ' ὑπόνοιαν the species — save that παρ' ὑπόνοιαν is not a term employed in rhetorical literature. Rutherford therefore finds it significant that “both the [sc. Aristophanic] commentators who use παρὰ προσδοκίαν at all often, have a strong rhetorical bias”.<sup>13</sup> While this formulation is based on the problematic contention that the scholia on every Aristophanic play have their own distinct profile because they go back to separate source commentaries,<sup>14</sup> the concentration of παρὰ προσδοκίαν remarks in the older scholia on *Acharnians* in particular is indeed noteworthy. Moreover, the idea that it is influenced by rhetorical analysis aligns with the fact that in one case the phenomenon is explicitly introduced as a σχῆμα:

Δι. ἄγ', ὦ θύγατερ, ὅπως τὸ κανοῦν καλὴ καλῶς  
οἷσεις βλέπουσα θυμβροφάγον. ὥς μακάριος  
ὅστις σ' ὀπύσει κάκποήσεται γαλαῖς  
σοῦ μηδὲν ἥττους βδεῖν...

Ar. *Ach.* 253–256

(Dicaeopolis) Come on, daughter, make sure you beautiful girl carry the basket beautifully, with a savoury-eating look in your eyes. How blessed is he who will marry you and beget — weasels that are in no way inferior to you in farting...

<sup>13</sup> Rutherford 1905, 450.

<sup>14</sup> For a rejection of this thesis and the more plausible assumption that different selections from, and additions to, a common basis were made depending on the extent to which each play was read in late antique and Byzantine classrooms, see Boudreaux 1919, 176–184.

Σ Ar. Ach. 255 κάποιήσεται γαλᾶς; ἀντὶ τοῦ “παῖδας δριμυτάτους”. τοῦτο δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καλεῖται παρὰ προσδοκίαν. ἔδει γὰρ φάναι “ἐκποιήσεται παῖδας νεανίας”. REF

*And beget weasels:* Instead of “pungent children”. This figure is called *para prosdokian*; for he should have said “will beget youthful children”.

It appears that the commentator who is responsible for the formulation of this note did not overlook the humorous point but regarded παρὰ προσδοκίαν as an appropriate label for the comic device as well. This need not exclude that earlier commentators had already picked up the same joke and spoken of it as παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν, but it is of course impossible to prove that there was any kind of (half-)systematic terminological revision during the history of this set of scholia. More likely, perhaps, our annotator used the term he regarded as correct when commenting on παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν passages that had *not* previously been singled out as such. This might explain both why there are also a good number of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν notes on *Acharnians*<sup>15</sup> and why in the majority of παρὰ προσδοκίαν notes on passages from *Acharnians* the diagnosis of a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν/παρὰ προσδοκίαν joke is actually more questionable than in the case of Ar. Ach. 255.<sup>16</sup> They include Ar. Ach. 119, where the primary comic point, as observed in the scholion itself, is the humorous alteration of a Euripidean verse, so that there

15 See Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 18a; Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 756; Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 850a; Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 1173a; Σ<sup>EF</sup> Ar. Ach. 1181a; cf. also Σ<sup>ec</sup> Ar. Ach. 1001b; Σ<sup>ec</sup> Ar. Ach. 1026c. The same is true for *Peace* (Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 249aα; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 368; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 402b; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 425c; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 526a; Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 822; Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Pax 1186; Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Pax 1319) and *Lysistrata* (Σ<sup>Bar/R</sup> Ar. Lys. 114α/β; Σ<sup>RF</sup> Ar. Lys. 937; Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. Lys. 1057; Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. Lys. 1071), the other two plays with occasional παρὰ προσδοκίαν notes. Note that the label παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν may occasionally be used even where παρὰ προσδοκίαν would seem justified because a *rhetorically* unexpected, but contextually appropriate, word/phrase occurs: see e.g. Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Pax 1319 (on Ὑπέρβολον ἐξελάσαντας, “throwing out Hyperbolus”, in Ar. Pax 1321), Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 526a (on ἀστρατείας, “freedom of campaigning”, as a metaphorical nice smell in Ar. Pax 526), and especially Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Plut. 23c (on Chremylus’ threat to Carion, ἵνα μᾶλλον ἀλγῆς, “so that it’s even more painful”: here the phrasing τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ λόγου παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν may intimate that παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν is a *rhetorical* figure; cf. similarly Σ<sup>NBarbAld(U)</sup> Ar. Plut. 20c and Σ<sup>VMNMatrBarbRsV57Ald(U)</sup> Ar. Plut. 27a, although in the latter case a real comic παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν is at stake). On extended uses of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν, see further Sections 5–6 below.

16 Cf. also, apart from the examples given in the main text, Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 615a, where the notion that χρεῶν, “of debts”, is *para prosdokian* is due to an old corruption and the scholiast’s failure to understand that the preceding parallel ἐράνου/ἐράνων (regularly) means “cash-loan(s)” (cf. Olson 2002, 233; Kanellakis 2020a, 48); Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 684a, where there may be a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke, but if so it is ἡλύγην, “shadow”, rather than δίκης that is παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν (cf. Olson 2002, 247; Kanellakis 2020a, 44); and Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 974a, where it is not clear what is “unexpected” (or funny) specifically about the adjective χλιαρά, “warm” (cf. Filippo 2001–2002, 86; Kanellakis 2020a, 48). Thus, only in Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 733a is the label παρὰ προσδοκίαν applied as legitimately as it is in Σ<sup>REF</sup> Ar. Ach. 255.



is not ostensibly more παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour than in other parodistically transformed paratragic lines (which are *not* normally labelled in this way),<sup>17</sup> and Ar. Ach. 751, which rather revolves around a phonological pun on διαπίνομεν (or Megarian διαπινόμες = /diapi:nomes/) ~ διαπεινᾶμες (= /diape:na:mes/):<sup>18</sup>

Δι. καὶ τοῖν μὲν εὐνούχοιν τὸν ἕτερον τουτονὶ  
ἐγὼ δ’ ὅς ἐστι, Κλεισθένης ὁ Σιβυρτίου.  
ὦ θερμόβουλον πρωκτὸν ἐξυρημένε...

Ar. Ach. 117–119

(Dicaeopolis) And of the two eunuchs, I know who one is, this one here, Cleisthenes the son of Sibyrtius! O thou, shaved off on your hot-headed arse...

Σ Ar. Ach. 119 ὦ θερμόβουλον: παρωδία χρήται. ἔστι γὰρ ἐν Τημενίδαις Εὐριπίδου, “ὦ θερμόβουλον σπλάγχχον”. οὗτος οὖν σκώπτων Εὐριπίδην προσέθηκε “πρωκτὸν” παρὰ προσδοκίαν. REFLh

*O hot-headed:* He applies parody; for in Euripides’ *Temenidai* (?) there is the phrase “O hot-headed heart”. So, in order to ridicule Euripides he inserted “arse” against expectation (*para prosdokian*).

Δι. πῶς ἔχετε;  
Με. διαπεινᾶμες αἰὲ ποττὸ πῦρ.  
Ar. Ach. 751

(Dicaeopolis) How are you? — (Megarian) We keep starving by the fire.

Σ Ar. Ach. 751 διαπεινᾶμες αἰὲ: παρὰ προσδοκίαν, ὡσεὶ ἔφη “διαπίνομεν αἰὲ πρὸς τὸ πῦρ”· ὁ δὲ εἶπε “διαπεινᾶμες”· οἱ γὰρ πότοι χειμῶνος πρὸς τὸ πῦρ γίνονται· εἶρκε δὲ οὕτω διὰ τὸν λιμόν. “διαπεινᾶμες” δὲ ἀντὶ τοῦ “διαπεινώμεν”. ἢ οὕτως· ἐσχάτως πεινώμεν, ὥστε καὶ τὰ

**17** Notwithstanding the fact that on one level the “unexpected” is of course always present in parody (see Rau 1967, 16); such deformations can be seen as the phrase-level equivalent of lexical punning. Hermogenes (*Method.* 34, p. 453 Spengel) explicitly differentiates παρὰ προσδοκίαν from κατὰ παρωδίαν.

**18** The second part of Σ<sup>EF3Lh</sup> Ar. Ach. 751 (starting with ἢ οὕτως) could be taken to doubt the presence of a pun (or “*para prosdokian*”) altogether, but this may represent an addition by someone other than the person who came up with the παρὰ προσδοκίαν diagnosis. Kanellakis 2020a, 69–70 accepts this diagnosis by allowing for “single-word *para prosdokian*” because “the first part (διαπειν-) [sc. of διαπεινᾶμες] phonetically predisposes us to expect διαπίνομεν”; yet, such a justification seems rather too sophisticated for what the scholia normally offer. On Ar. Ach. 119, Kanellakis 2020a, 57–58 rightly notes that this “is funny regardless of whether it is recognised as a *para prosdokian*”: “not every verbal substitution in a parody of a tragic line is automatically a *para prosdokian*, but it is so when the underlying material is a trademark of tragic style, i.e. a formula or a famous quote”.

ἱμάτια ἀποδόμενοι καθεζόμεθα πρὸς τῷ πυρὶ διὰ τὸ ρίγος. ἢ διαπύρως καὶ ἐκτόπως πεινῶμεν, ὃ καὶ βέλτιον. Εἰ<sup>3</sup>Lh

*We keep starving*: *Para prosdokian*, as if he were saying “We keep drinking by the fire”; yet, he said “we keep starving”. <The phrasing is> because in the winter drinking parties take place by the fire. However, because of the hunger he said this instead. <The form> διαπεινᾶμεν stands for <Attic> διαπεινῶμεν. Or else, <what is meant is> “We are exceedingly hungry so that we even sell our clothes and sit by the fire because of the cold”; or “we are ardently and excessively hungry”, which is an even better explanation.

Although the situation with *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* notes on *Peace* may be slightly better,<sup>19</sup> and although we shall see that the label *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν*, too, can be used imprecisely (Sections 5–6), it seems fair to say that at least the critic who is responsible for the *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* notes on *Acharnians* was not the most perceptive literary scholar. Whether it was a single person we cannot tell. However, it should be borne in mind that if there had been an entire group of Aristophanic critics with this terminological preference, the concentration of the *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* notes in the scholia on just two plays would become even more difficult to account for than it is anyway.

Very tentatively, we may even go one step further. Thanks to the subscription in ms. V (Venetus Marcianus 474) to the scholia on *Peace*, we know that the metrical analysis of that play followed Heliodorus, while the annotations are by and large culled from the commentaries of Symmachus and Phaeinus (κεκώλισται πρὸς τὰ Ἡλιοδώρου, παραγέγραπται ἐκ Φαείνου καὶ Συμμάχου). This certainly does not mean that there cannot be minor additions here or there, but it makes it less likely that any notes presenting real substance come from a third source. Now, at least the *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* note in Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 363a is a substantial one.

<sup>19</sup> See at least Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 363a, where a parallel is invented to illustrate how the line works (εἰπὼν δὲ “οὐδὲν πονηρόν” *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* ἐπήγαγε τὸ “ἀλλ’ ὅπερ καὶ Κυλλικῶν”, ὥσπερ εἶπεν “οὐδὲν κακὸν ποιῶ, ἀλλ’ ἱεροσουλῶ”, “Having said ‘Nothing bad’, he adds, *para prosdokian*, ‘but what Cillicon also did’, as if he said ‘I am not doing anything bad, but robbing a temple’”; cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 66) and Σ<sup>RV(bis)I</sup> Ar. Pax 898b (τῷ πέει, “with the penis”, instead of τῷ σκέλει, “with the leg”), possibly also Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Pax 505a (δικάζετε, “you are holding trials”, instead of something like φωνεῖτε, “you are talking”; but cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 54), but not Σ<sup>RVLh</sup> Ar. Pax 95, since neither the question τί πέτει; “Why are you flying?”, nor the subsequent τί μάτην οὐχ ὑγιαίνεις; “Why are you out of your mind?”, are situationally “unexpected” in Ar. Pax 95 (cf. Section 7 with n. 45; Kanellakis 2020a, 42). In several scholia on the same play (Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. Pax 235aa; Σ<sup>RVf</sup> Ar. Pax 425aa; Σ<sup>RVf</sup> Ar. Pax 901a), where alternative ways of designating *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν* humour are used (δὲον εἰπεῖν/ἀντι τοῦ; cf. Section 3 below), Rutherford 1905, 451 also finds an “odd trick of annotating, not τὸ *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* εἰρημένον, but the something already said against which that clashes”. The one *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* note on *Lysistrata* (Σ<sup>Rf</sup> Ar. Lys. 702) also concerns an actual *παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν* joke.

To credit Symmachus with a terminological change from *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* to *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* would seem unwise, and not just because what little we know about Symmachus points to a scholar with some literary acumen. More crucially, if the responsibility was already Symmachus', we should expect *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* notes to be spread more widely since Symmachus' commentaries on Aristophanes, written in the second century CE, were influential enough to supersede even the monumental earlier work by Didymus Chalcenterus.<sup>20</sup> With Phaeinus, by contrast, the situation is different. By his (uncertain, but post-Symmachean) time, most of the *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* jokes that are annotated as such in the extant scholia will already have been picked up, with only few pertinent cases left to be added.<sup>21</sup> For these, someone like Phaeinus, whose compilation was probably meant to address the more basic instructional needs of a later age, could well have introduced the *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* terminology that was familiar from rhetorical teaching. Uncertain though it is, such a scenario would thus account, on the one hand, for the fact that *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* notes are common enough to suggest their origin in a *relatively* prominent source of the Aristophanic scholia, and on the other hand also for their numerical and (on average) qualitative inferiority as compared to the *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* notes. More confidently, meanwhile, we may retain that the more traditional critical term in comic scholarship,<sup>22</sup> and the one most likely used already by Aristophanes' Alexandrian commentators, will have been *παρὰ (τὴν) ὑπόνοιαν*, with *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* intruding secondarily from the teaching and analysis of rhetoric.

**20** On Symmachus, Phaeinus, and their place in ancient Aristophanic scholarship, see e.g. White 1914, xlix–liii, lxviii–lxix; Boudreaux 1919, 144–164; Montana 2003; Montana 2015; Willi, forthcoming b.

**21** The case of Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 363a is telling if read alongside Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. Pax 363d. The latter note contains considerable learning, of the type that is usually associated with Didymus (cf. the references to Theopompus [*FGrHist* 115 F 111, corr. for Θεόφραστος], Callimachus [fr. 607 Pfeiffer], and Leander [*FGrHist* 492 F 15]), but it starts with the surprisingly naive remark οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως φησὶν οὐδὲν πονηρὸν ποιεῖν ταῦτα εἶναι, ἅπερ καὶ Κιλλικῶν, “I do not know how he can say that doing what Cillicon did is doing nothing bad”, which misses the joke.

**22** But not just comic scholarship: *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* is also used in the scholia on non-comic authors, including orators (cf. Σ Aeschin. 1.18 [41b Dilts]; Σ Aeschin. 3.100 [220 Dilts]; Σ Aeschin. 3.187 [427 Dilts]; Σ Aesch. *Cho.* 95; Σ Dem. 18.237; Σ Dem. 18.239b; Σ<sup>bt</sup> Hom. *Il.* 2.359; Σ<sup>bt</sup> Hom. *Il.* 4.127b; Σ Lucian. 77.10.2; Σ Pl. *Grg.* 473b), more commonly in fact than *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* (although audience “expectation” is a concept with which ancient critics freely operate: see Nünlist 2009, esp. 149–151). The remarks on scholiastic *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* by Kanellakis 2020a, 31 n. 91 are misleading because he does not differentiate between scholia where *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* is used in a technical sense and others; for the former see only Σ Dem. 1.27a/b; Σ Dem. 1.29; Σ Dem. 4.15, as well as Epicharmus fr. 98.50.

### 3 Other formulations: ἀντὶ τοῦ and δέον εἶπεῖν

In addition to the two designations discussed so far, numerous scholia use further, less specific, ways of referring to παρ' ὑπόνοιαν jokes. In such cases we most commonly read either ἀντὶ τοῦ or δέον εἶπεῖν (each with variants),<sup>23</sup> as in the following examples:

Φι. ὦ Κέκροψ ἥρωας ἄναξ, τὰ πρὸς ποδῶν Δρακοντίδῃ,  
περιορᾷς οὕτω μ' ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν βαρβάρων χειρούμενον,  
οὕς ἐγὼ 'δίδαξα κλάειν τέτταρ' εἰς τὴν χοίνικα;

Ar. Vesp. 438–440

(Philocleon) O lord and hero Cecrops, Dracontides as far as the parts by your feet are concerned, will you quietly watch how I am wronged by barbarian men whom I have taught how to — cry in full measure?

Σ Ar. Vesp. 440a οὕς ἐγὼ 'δίδαξα: μήποτε καὶ τοῦτο παροϊμακόν. ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ εἶπεῖν “πέττειν καὶ διαρτίζειν” “κλάειν” εἶπεν. VI

*Whom I have taught:* Possibly this too [sc. “do such-and-such τέτταρ' εἰς τὴν χοίνικα?”] is an idiomatic expression. But instead of “how to bake and make bread” he said “cry”.

Πε. Τηρεὺς γὰρ εἶ σύ; πότερον ὄρνις ἢ ταῶς;

Ar. Av. 102

(Peisetaerus) So you are Tereus? A bird or — a peacock?

Σ Ar. Av. 102a<sup>24</sup> πότερον VI ὄρνις VEG ἢ ταῶς VE: ἔπαιξε· δέον γὰρ εἶπεῖν “ἄνθρωπος” VEGMLh εἶπεν “ἢ ταῶς”. ὁξύνεται δὲ καὶ περισπᾶται. VEGM

*A bird or a peacock:* He made a joke, for when he should have said “<or> a man” he actually said “or a peacock”. <ταῶς> has an acute or a circumflex accent.

The problem with this type of παρ' ὑπόνοιαν notes is that the same phrasing is also applied when there can be no question of παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour. Thus, ἀντὶ

<sup>23</sup> Such as ἀντὶ τοῦ εἶπεῖν (Σ<sup>REI3</sup> Ar. Ach. 1060a; Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. Thesm. 746 etc.), ἔδει εἶπεῖν (Σ<sup>REI3Lh</sup> Ar. Ach. 756; Σ<sup>RVTLh</sup> Ar. Pax 637b etc.), or the slightly paradoxical βούλεται λέγειν, “he wants to say”, of Σ<sup>VEI29</sup> Ar. Eq. 49a. A further type is ὥσει ἔλεγε/ἔφη/εἶπεν, as at Σ<sup>RV/VTLh</sup> Ar. Pax 756ba/β (and cf. Σ<sup>EG3Lh</sup> Ar. Ach. 751 and Σ<sup>RV</sup> Ar. Pax 363a quoted above in Section 2 and in n. 19 respectively).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Σ<sup>VEI</sup> Ar. Av. 102d, which further specifies that the surprise effect is achieved by adding, following disjunctive ἢ, a term for the species (“peacock”) to the term for the genus (“bird”), sc. in lieu of some kind of an antonym (τὸ γενικὸν εἰπὼν, εἴτα τὸ εἰδικόν).

τοῦ is a frequent way in which the scholia introduce exegetic paraphrases, but even δέον/ἔδει εἰπεῖν can appear in environments where there is simply a pun<sup>25</sup> or where an annotator thought a different way of putting things might have been more natural:<sup>26</sup>

Σ Ar. *Ran.* 1014a διαδρασιπολίτας ME: ἀντὶ τοῦ “δειλούς” VEΘBarb(Ald)

*Run-away citizens:* Instead of “cowards”.

Σ Ar. *Av.* 69 ἀλλὰ σὺ RV τί θηρίον ποτ’ εἶ RVEΓ: δέον εἰπεῖν “ὄρνεον” πρὸς τὸ τεραστικὸν τοῦ σώματος “θηρίον” εἶπεν. RVEΓMLh

*But you, what kind of animal are you?:* When he should have said “bird”, he said “animal” with a view to the strange appearance of his [sc. the Hoopoe Servant’s] body.

As a result, although in most instances it is clear whether or not a comment of this sort identifies a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke, there can be some ambiguity. If, for example, δέον εἰπεῖν in Σ<sup>v</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 511c is taken to imply a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke, this entails that the commentator who is responsible for the phrasing failed to notice that πνίγω, “stew”, is just as much a culinary verb as ἔψω, “cook”, is (cf. the glossing of πεπνιγμένον as ὀπτημένον, “roasted”, and ἡψημένον, “cooked”, in Σ<sup>R/v</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 511a/b respectively); whereas if he used δέον εἰπεῖν more freely, and meant only that the less specific ἔψω could also have done the job *under normal circumstances* (i.e. when no καθ’ ὁμωνυμίαν joke on the double meaning of πνίγω as “stewing (food)” or “grilling (someone in court)” was to be introduced), no such oversight needs to be imputed on him:

Φι. οὐδὲ χαίρω βατίσιν οὐδ’ ἐγγέλεσιν, ἀλλ’ ἥδιον ἂν  
δικίδιον σμικρὸν φάγοιμ’ ἂν ἐν λοπάδι πεπνιγμένον.

Ar. *Vesp.* 510–511

(Philocleon) Also, I don’t like rays and eels, but would rather eat a little lawsuit stewed in a pan.

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. Σ<sup>VEΓ/RM</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 59a/b; Σ<sup>VTLh</sup> Ar. *Pax* 415b; Σ<sup>RVT</sup> Ar. *Pax* 756f (where the manuscripts R and V — followed by Olson 1998, 37 and Wilson 2007, 315 — have ἐλιχμώντο in the text, but our scholion and some later manuscripts point to a *varia lectio* ἐλιχνώντο punning on λίχνος, “glut-tonous”; this issue is separate from the παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke in the same line, as picked up by Σ<sup>RVT/VTLh</sup> Ar. *Pax* 756ba/β: cf. n. 23).

<sup>26</sup> For whatever reason: in Σ<sup>RVEFM</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1108, whoever annotated δέον εἰπεῖν “καὶ λεπίσουσι” against κάκλέψουσι, “and they will hatch”, may simply have overlooked that ἐκλέπω was a standard word for “hatching” in Classical Greek.

Σ Ar. *Vesp.* 511c πεπνιγμένον: δέον εἰπεῖν “ῥηψιγμένον” φησὶ “πεπνιγμένον” ἀπὸ τοῦ συμβαίνοντος ὑπὸ τῶν δικαστῶν τοῖς δικάζομένοις. V

*Stewed*: When he should have said “cooked”, he said “stewed” because of what happens to the accused at the hands of the judges.

## 4 “Prospective” vs. “retrospective” παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour

Even leaving aside ambiguous cases like the one just cited, when the scholia are diagnosing παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour, they can be looking at a variety of different phenomena.

Firstly, it makes sense to differentiate between what may be called *prospective* and *retrospective* παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν jokes, respectively. In both of these, “the semantic value of the second part of a structure (word, phrase, or sentence) contradicts the semantic value of the first part, motivating the reader/listener to reframe, i.e. to reinterpret the first part in the direction of the latter part”.<sup>27</sup> However, only “prospective” παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν jokes are jokes “against expectation” in the strict sense, as they consist of sequences in which the audience is *primed* to expect a particular continuation of a given utterance — whether in terms of a specific wording or just of general content — only to be surprised by what is then actually said (which may even be the exact opposite of what was expected).<sup>28</sup> The priming itself is usually achieved by wider contextual cues, although in the case of a well-known idiom or quotation being modified the correctly quoted beginning of the sequence in question may suffice. In Ar. *Ach.* 119, for example, it is conceivable that the mere ὦ θερμόβουλον at the start of the line was sufficient on its own for the audience to recognise the Euripidean model verse and hence to expect σπλάγχχνον as the next word — rather than the actual πρωκτόν (cf. Section 2, with Σ<sup>REFLh</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 119).

<sup>27</sup> Kanellakis 2020a, 34. This formulation implicitly marginalises purely *stylistic* discontinuity, disruption, and *aprosdoketon*, just as the scholia do in their approach to verbal humour (cf. Section 1), although it is of course a common enough phenomenon in Aristophanes (cf. e.g. Silk 2000, 136–137; Napolitano 2007, 46–47, 49–52).

<sup>28</sup> Thus κεκλείσεται, “[the door] will be closed”, for expected ἀνεψχθήσεται, “will be open”, at Ar. *Lys.* 1071 (with Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Lys.* 1071b; cf. Section 2); similarly, Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Lys.* 1057 treats μηκέτ’ ἀποδῶ, “shall not pay back”, in Ar. *Lys.* 1057 as a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke for ἀποδῶ.

Several more of the examples already adduced unmistakably belong to this prospective type of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν (cf. Section 2 with Ar. *Ach.* 255 and Ar. *Plut.* 27, Section 3 with Ar. *Vesp.* 440 and Ar. *Av.* 102), and so do the following two instances from *Wasps* and *Lysistrata*. As the scholia on the lines in question point out, in Ar. *Vesp.* 238, where the Chorus reminisce about their youthful exploits on campaign abroad, the listeners expect greater achievements than stealing a piece of bakery equipment, and in Ar. *Lys.* 114, where Calonice is declaring her readiness to support Lysistrata’s plan come what may, something like “even if I had to fight” (not: “drink”) would be contextually warranted.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, the *Wasps* example shows that the scholiasts acknowledged the possibility of general rather than specific priming and allowed for παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν diagnoses that have scope over an entire line or more, not just one or two words:<sup>30</sup>

Χο. πάρεσθ’ ὃ δὴ λοιπόν γ’ ἔτ’ ἐστίν, ἀππαπαῖ παπαιάξ,  
ἦβης ἐκείνης, ἡνίκ’ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ξυνῆμεν  
φρουροῦντ’ ἐγὼ τε καὶ σύ· κᾶτα περιπατοῦντε νύκτωρ  
τῆς ἀρτοπώλιδος λαθόντ’ ἐκλέψαμεν τὸν ὄλμον...

Ar. *Vesp.* 235–238

(Chorus) We’ve got here all that’s left, aiai, oioi, of that youthfulness of ours when we were together on sentry-duty at Byzantium, I and you: and then, patrolling at night — we got away with stealing the baker’s mortar...

Σ Ar. *Vesp.* 238a τῆς ἀρτοπώλιδος: παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν τοῦτο δέον εἰπεῖν “τοὺς πολεμίους ἐχειρωσάμεθα” ἢ “λόχον τινὰ ἐποιήσαμεν”. VALd

*The baker’s:* This <line> is against expectation, as they should have said <something like> “we overpowered the enemy” or “we organised an ambush”.

Λυ. ἐθέλοιτ’ ἂν οὖν, εἰ μηχανὴν εὖρομ’ ἐγώ,  
μετ’ ἐμοῦ καταλῦσαι τὸν πόλεμον;  
Κα. νῆ τὼ θεῶ,  
ἐγὼ μὲν ἂν, κᾶν εἴ με χρεῖη τοῦγκυκλον  
τουτὶ καταθεῖσαν ἐκπιεῖν αὐθημερόν.

Ar. *Lys.* 111–114

<sup>29</sup> The alternative proposed by Σ<sup>Bar</sup> Ar. *Lys.* 114α (παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν “ἀμπέχεσθαι”) does not fit semantically; why should anyone “expect” Calonice to say “even if I had to put on this dress of mine”? However, Aristophanes’ joke also contains a “retrospective” element (cf. below) in that the audience only realise once ἐκπιεῖν is said that καταθεῖσαν was to be understood, καθ’ ὁμώνυμιαν, as “put down for payment” rather than literal “put down (in order to be free in my movements)”.

<sup>30</sup> With the lemma τῆς ἀρτοπώλιδος, the scholion only cites the first words of the line, but that is standard practice when larger stretches are meant.

(Lysistrata) So, would you be ready, if I found a way of doing it, to put an end to the war together with me? — (Calonice) By the two goddesses, yes, I would, even if I had to put down this dress of mine and then — drink it all on this very day!

Σ Ar. *Lys.* 114β παρ' ὑπόνοιαν. δέον εἰπεῖν “μάχεσθαι”, “ἐκπιεῖν” εἶπεν. R

Against expectation: when she should have said “fight”, she said “drink it all”.

In “retrospective” παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν jokes, by contrast, the humour arises not so much from the audience having been primed in advance to expect a continuation other than the one that is eventually uttered, as from the audience realising, *after* some X has been said, that Y would have yielded a more “normal/logical” (hence *in hindsight* more “expected”) utterance in the wider context. Unsurprisingly, it is in this domain in particular that παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour can overlap with punning,<sup>31</sup> but it should be stressed that typical παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν jokes do not require phonological similarity in the way puns do (see further Section 5).

To give an example, in *Ar. Nub.* 833–837 Strepsiades wants to act as an apologist of the Socratics’ way of life, and in that context he makes reference to the philosophers’ neglect of personal hygiene, a point that could indeed be regarded as something positive if it were attributed to asceticism or the like, but not if the negative aspects of φειδωλία (“stinginess” rather than “thrift”) are understood to be its motive. Here, then, there can be no question of the audience already *expecting* (e.g.) ὑπὸ καρτερίας when they do not even know yet what Strepsiades is going to talk about; but once he has finished, it is at least arguable<sup>32</sup> that the phrase ὑπὸ τῆς φειδωλίας jars with the laudatory aims of the proposition:

Στ. εὐστόμει  
καὶ μηδὲν εἴπηρ φλαῦρον ἄνδρας δεξιὺν  
καὶ νοῦν ἔχοντας, ὧν ὑπὸ τῆς φειδωλίας  
ἀπεκείρατ' οὐδείς πώποτ' οὐδ' ἠλείψατο  
οὐδ' εἰς βαλανεῖον ἦλθε λουσόμενος...

Ar. Nub. 833-837

(Strepisades) Hold your tongue and don't speak ill of clever, intelligent men, of whom – because of their thrift – not one has ever had his hair cut, or anointed his skin, or gone to the bath to wash...

**31** And also parody: cf. again the case of *Ar. Ach.* 119 mentioned above, on the assumption that  $\tilde{\omega}$  θερμόβουλον alone was not a sufficient prime on its own.

32 But not more than that: since for someone with Strepsiades' mindset φειδωλία is indeed something positive, the παρ' ὑπόνοιαν reading advocated by the scholion must not be taken for granted. See Section 7 for further examples of scholia not paying enough attention to intradramatic logic in diagnosing παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour.



Σ Ar. *Nub.* 835c δοκῶν ἐπαινεῖν ψέγει. RVENp ἀντὶ γὰρ τοῦ εἰπεῖν “καρτερίας” εἶπε “φειδωλίας”. RVE

While he thinks he is praising them, he criticises them; for instead of saying “<out of> self-control”, he said “<out of> stinginess”.

It may be noted that in this case the phrasing with ἀντὶ τοῦ is chosen, and the label παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν is not used. In fact, it is possible that the application of the phrases ἀντὶ τοῦ and, especially, δέον εἰπεῖν to παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour originates precisely with such retrospective instances. Yet, counter-examples also exist, both with ἀντὶ τοῦ/δέον εἰπεῖν referring to prospective παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν jokes (cf. Section 3 above, with Σ<sup>VT</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 440a and Σ<sup>VEΓMLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 102a) and with παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν diagnoses affecting retrospective ones. For the latter, compare for instance Ar. *Vesp.* 1167, where the paradoxicality of Philocleon’s complaint only becomes obvious once the line is complete, or Ar. *Ran.* 1005, where the Chorus’ qualification of tragic poetry as λῆρος, “babbling”, contradicts the deferential tone with which they are otherwise addressing Aeschylus:<sup>33</sup>

Bδ. οὐκ ἔστι παρὰ ταῦτ’ ἄλλα.  
Φι. κακοδαίμων ἐγώ,  
ὅστις ἐπὶ γήρᾳ χίμετλον οὐδὲν λήψομαι.  
Ar. *Vesp.* 1166–1167

(Bdelycleon) There’s no way around this! — (Philocleon) Poor me, in my old age I will not get a single chillblain!

<sup>33</sup> On the difficult interpretation of the passage, see e.g. Dover 1993, 317–318; Beta 2004, 168–169; in theory, λῆρος might refer only to *pre*-Aeschylean tragedy, which then got better thanks to Aeschylus, but the scholia undoubtedly see “λῆρον as referring [...] to the art of tragedy as a whole” because only then is there a form of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν (or, in Dover’s words, “a somewhat alien note [in] the play”; cf. also Σ<sup>RVEM</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 359b on λήρων/λόγων). For further retrospective examples with the label παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν, see e.g. Σ<sup>REIT3</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 18a (adding δέον γὰρ εἰπεῖν; but cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 41); Σ<sup>RETLh</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 756 (+ ἔδει γὰρ εἰπεῖν; but cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 54); Σ<sup>VEΓOM</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 167b (+ δέον εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>RVEΘNMA</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 1261b (+ δέον εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>Vald</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 19a (παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν combined with a καθ’ ὁμωνυμίαν joke on ἀσπίς, “shield/asp viper”); Σ<sup>RVEIT2</sup> Ar. *Av.* 38a; Σ<sup>RVEΘNBarbLutRsAld</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 972a; for ones with other formulations e.g. Σ<sup>RETLh</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 81a (ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν; disputed by Kanellakis 2020a, 73–74 because of its retrospective nature); Σ<sup>REIT3</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 1082a (ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>VEΓ3Θ</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 539a (ἀντὶ τοῦ); Σ<sup>VEΓOMLh</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 905 (ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>REΘMatr</sup> Ar. *Nub.* 37aα (ὡς εἰ ἔλεγε); Σ<sup>Vald</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 1187b (δέον εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>RVEFMLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1288 (δέον εἰπεῖν); Σ<sup>RVEFMLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1628a (δέον εἰπεῖν; a prospective reading is also possible since a question containing δοκεῖ σοι (*vel sim.*) is expected already before paradoxical οἰμῶζειν opens the phrase οἰμῶζειν δοκεῖ σοι;).

Σ Ar. *Vesp.* 1167b παρ' ὑπόνοιαν ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν “ἀγαθὸν οὐδὲν λήψομαι, ὅστις τὰ τῶν γερόντων οὐ λήψομαι”. VT Ald

Against expectation, instead of saying “I will not get anything good as I will not get what old men should”.

Χο. ἀλλ' ὦ πρῶτος τῶν Ἑλλήνων πυργώσας ῥήματα σεμνὰ  
καὶ κοσμήσας τραγικὸν λῆρον, θαρρῶν τὸν κρουνὸν ἀφίει.

Ar. *Ran.* 1004–1005

But you, who were the first of the Greeks to build impressive words like towers and to adorn tragic babbling, be confident and let your spring flow.

Σ Ar. *Ran.* 1005a καὶ κοσμήσας Μ τραγικὸν λῆρον VME: παρ' ὑπόνοιαν. VMEΘBarb(Ald) — 1005c λῆρον R: ἀντὶ τοῦ “τὴν τέχνην”. RVMEΘBarb(Ald)

1005a *Adorning tragic babbling*: Against expectation. — 1005c *Babbling*: Instead of “the art”.

That prospective and retrospective παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour are not strictly kept apart is all the more understandable because they sometimes shade into each other. With regard to Ar. *Ran.* 1005, for example, one could say that the hymnic tone of the preceding words makes us expect a continuation in the same register; so, although we are not primed to hear τέχνην or any other semantically predictable phrase *per se*, there is enough priming *not* to expect λῆρον. Similarly, in Ar. *Eq.* 1034 the Sausage-Seller is reciting one of his (mock-)oracles warning Demos of a dog who will sneak into the kitchen by night and lick out all the pans and — islands. Although the verbal form διαλείχων here occurs only at the very end of the relevant line, by the time the audience have heard λήσει σε κυνηδὸν νύκτωρ τὰς λοπάδας they may already be waiting for a verb such as “eat out, empty”, and any further direct object added to λοπάδας by means of καὶ should therefore refer to “pots” or the like, thus creating a prospective expectation which is disappointed by the lexeme νήσους. However, since καὶ νήσους is a mere add-on, without syntactical necessity, its insertion at the same time produces retrospective surprise:

Ἀλ. εἰσφοιτῶν τ' εἰς τοῦπτάνιον λήσει σε κυνηδὸν  
νύκτωρ τὰς λοπάδας καὶ τὰς νήσους διαλείχων.

Ar. *Eq.* 1033–1034

(Sausage-Seller) Going into the kitchen without you noticing he will, like a dog, lick clean by night the pans and the islands.

Σ Ar. *Eq.* 1034c καὶ τὰς νήσους διαλείχων· ὅτι ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν “τὰς χύτρας” παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν εἶπε “τὰς νήσους”· τουτέστι τοὺς τῆς πόλεως φόρους διαρπάζων καὶ τοὺς νησιώτας διασείων. VEGΘM

*And licking clean the islands:* <To note> that he said “the islands” against expectation, instead of “the pots”; that is, robbing the tributes paid to the city and extorting money from the islanders.

## 5 Παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν and punning/καθ’ ὁμωνυμίαν humour

Secondly, as has already been noted (Section 4), there is some overlap between (especially, though not necessarily, retrospective) παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour and punning (paronomasia). When a pun occurs, the audience are also meant to think of the word that is substituted by the pun as the one that was in certain ways “expected”. If one were to adopt a broad concept of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν, puns could therefore be subsumed under this umbrella term, invoking the authority of Aristotle who, in his *Rhetoric* (3.11, 1412a 26–31), directly compared ἐν τοῖς γελοίοις τὰ παραπεποιημένα, “altered expressions in jokes”, with τὰ παρὰ γράμμα σκώμματα, “derision by change of letter”, because they both “cheat [sc. expectation]” (ἐξαπατᾷ γάρ).<sup>34</sup> In practice, however, the specificity of punning, which presupposes phonological similarity, is such that παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν is better reserved for counter-expectational jokes that are independent of phonological conditioning. By and large, this restriction of the term (or of its competitor παρὰ προσδοκίαν)<sup>35</sup> does seem to be observed in the scholia, but every now and then an exception occurs. One case, Σ<sup>EG3Lh</sup> Ar. *Ach.* 751 (with παρὰ προσδοκίαν), has been discussed before (Section 2), and another is encountered in the following scholion on

<sup>34</sup> Note that Aristotle speaks of neither παρὰ προσδοκίαν nor παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν here; cf. n. 10 above, also on the *Tractatus Coislinianus*. Filippo 2001–2002, 128–138 includes a large number of puns in her survey of Aristophanic *aprosdoketon*.

<sup>35</sup> In contrast with the vaguer ἀντὶ τοῦ and δέον εἰπεῖν; see Section 3. Whether e.g. the line annotated by Σ<sup>VI<sup>th</sup></sup> Ar. *Pax* 728a (ἐστυκότες Γ: ἔδει εἰπεῖν “ἐστῶτες”, “*Having an erection:* He should have said ‘standing’”) is thought of as primarily containing a pun or a (retrospective) παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke is therefore difficult to tell. In Σ<sup>RVMEΘ</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 418a, the wording οὐκ ἔφυνσε φράτεραι, “he had not yet grown kinsmen”, is presented like a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke (ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰπεῖν “ὀδόντας”, “συγγενεῖς” εἶπεν, “Instead of saying ‘teeth’, he said ‘relatives’”; cf. later Σ<sup>Tz.</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 418a, τὸ σχῆμα παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν), but the fuller version in *Suda* φ 692 reveals that the source commentary did acknowledge the pun on φράτεραι ~ φραστήρας, “second teeth”.

*Clouds*, where the commentator wants to find a punning link between καταπεφρόντικα and “expected” καταπεφρόνηκα:<sup>36</sup>

Φε. διὰ ταῦτα δὴ καὶ θοιμάτιον ἀπώλεσας;  
Στ. ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἀπολώλεκ’, ἀλλὰ καταπεφρόντικα.

Ar. *Nub.* 856–857

(Pheidippides) So because of that you lost your upper garment? — (Strepsiades) I have not lost it, I have thought it off.

Σ Ar. *Nub.* 857aβ παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν ἀντὶ τοῦ “καταπεφρόνηκα” ὑπὸ φιλοσοφίας “εἰς τοὺς φροντιστὰς ἡνάλωσα” λέγων. Rs

Against expectation since, instead of “I think nothing of it” (because of philosophical training), he is saying “I spent it on the thinkers”.

Moreover, in view of the close connection between punning and καθ’ ὁμωνυμίας jokes, it is unsurprising if we find the occasional slip of this kind also when dealing with the latter type of humour, as in the following brief note on a double entendre in *Lysistrata*:<sup>37</sup>

Κι. ἄνθρωπος ἐπιτρίψει με διὰ τὰ στρώματα.  
Μυ. ἔπαιρε σαυτόν.  
Κι. ἀλλ’ ἐπῆρται τουτογί.

Ar. *Lys.* 936–937

(Cinesias) This woman will finish me off with her bedding! — (Myrrhine) Get yourself up! — (Cinesias) But this one here is up!

Σ Ar. *Lys.* 937 ἀλλ’ ἐπῆρται τουτό γε Γ: τὸ αἰδοῖον δείκνυσιν. παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν δὲ ἀπῆντησεν. RΓ

*But this one is up:* He is pointing to his penis. The reply is against expectation.

<sup>36</sup> Whether the suspected pun on καταφρονεῖν is intended in Ar. *Nub.* 857 is of little relevance. For yet another example, see Σ<sup>ME(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 85c (punning on μακάρων/Μακεδόνων).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. also Σ<sup>RVMEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 547–548, but it is most uncertain if the author of this note thought of χοροὶ in ἐξέκοψε τοὺς χοροὺς τοὺς προσθίους, “he punched out my front rows”, as polysemous (“rows [of teeth]” vs. “choruses”) when he wrote παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν; the situation may well be similar to the case of Ar. *Vesp.* 189, where modern commentators assume that κλητῆρ meant both “donkey” and “summons-witness” (see MacDowell 1971, 157; Biles/Olson 2015, 147), but where it would be rash to decry the misconstruction of a καθ’ ὁμωνυμίας joke as a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke in Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 189b (ἀντὶ τοῦ “ὄνου” ἢ “ἡμόνου” “κλητῆρος” εἶπεν, “He said ‘summons-witness’ instead of ‘donkey’ or ‘mule’”) when the evidence for the “donkey” meaning is so tenuous (consisting mainly of Ar. *Vesp.* 1310).



the scholiasts' use of παρ' ὑπόνοιαν terminology is equally generous — even though, in these latter cases, it is at least possible to guess with some confidence what the utterance might have looked like if there had been *no* stylistic intervention or humorous disruption (and the respective scholia indeed venture to make such guesses):<sup>41</sup>

Χο. τάδε μὲν λεύσσεις, φαίδιμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ;  
σὺ δὲ τί, φέρε, πρὸς ταῦτα λέξεις;

Ar. Ran. 992–993a

(Chorus) Do you behold this, splendid Achilles? Now you, come on, what will you reply to this?

Σ Ar. Ran. 992a/b τάδε Ε μὲν λεύσσεις, RME φαίδιμ' Ε: πρὸς τὸν Αἰσχύλον λέγει ὁ χορὸς ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτοῦ· ἔστι δὲ ἀρχὴ αὕτη Μυρμιδόνων Αἰσχύλου. RVMEΘBarb(Ald) τοῦτο δὲ παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν. RVMEΘ

*Do you behold this, splendid...*: The Chorus are addressing Aeschylus with some of his own words; for this is the beginning of Aeschylus' *Myrmidons*. This is against the expectation.

Βδ. νῆ Δι' ἧ μοι κρεῖττον ἐκστῆναι τὸ παράπαν τοῦ πατρὸς  
μᾶλλον ἢ κακοῖς τοσοῦτοις ναυμαχεῖν ὅσημέραι.

Ar. Vesp. 478–479

(Bdelycleon) By Zeus, it's better for me to renounce my father once and for all, rather than fight at sea against such big problems every day.

Σ Ar. Vesp. 479a ναυμαχεῖν: δεόν εἰπεῖν “μάχεσθαι”. VΓ<sup>2</sup>LhAld

39–40); but since Carion simply does not get a chance to go on, the interruption by Chremylus still constitutes a phenomenon of a different kind (and, *pace* Rutherford 1905, 450 n. 55, it must be an interruption even in the scholiasts' eyes: cf. the wording οὐκ εἴασε εἰπεῖν). Contrast e.g. Ar. Vesp. 1226–1227, where Philocleon is *supposed* to recite the next line in the skolion, but fails to come up with semantically appropriate content; even so, Ar. Vesp. 1227 is not classified as παρ' ὑπόνοιαν in Σ<sup>VΓAld</sup> Ar. Vesp. 1227 (which merely notes οὐδὲν δὲ τοῦτο πρὸς τὸ ἐξῆς τοῦ σκολίου, “but this has nothing to do with the continuation of the skolion”).

**41** This is not to say that the scholia *always* specify what would have been the “expected” wording when their παρ' ὑπόνοιαν analysis is appropriate: cf. e.g. Σ<sup>RVEF2M</sup> Ar. Av. 876d on the vocative μητηρ Κλεοκρίτου, “mother of Cleocritus!”, following the address to δέσποινα Κυβέλη, “Mistress Cybele”, in the same line (παρ' ὑπόνοιαν ἐπήγαγεν, “He added <Κλεοκρίτου> against expectation”); since Cybele is the mother goddess *par excellence*, also known as the μεγάλη μήτηρ, “Great Mother” (cf. Ar. Av. 874–875), or μήτηρ θεῶν, “mother of the gods” (*Hymn. Hom.* 14.1), Κλεοκρίτου is indeed a surprise substitute for e.g. μεγάλη or θεῶν here (cf. also Section 8, n. 57).

*Fight at sea:* When he should have said “fight”.

Χρ. Φιλέψιος δ' οὐχ ἔνεκα σοῦ μύθους λέγει;  
 ἡ ξυμμαχία δ' οὐ διὰ σὲ τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις;  
 ἐρᾷ δὲ Ναῖς οὐ διὰ σὲ Φιλωνίδου;  
 Κα. ὁ Τιμοθέου δὲ πύργος—  
 Χρ. ἐμπέσοι γέ σοι.  
 τὰ δὲ πράγματ' οὐχὶ διὰ σὲ πάντα πράττεται;

Ar. *Plut.* 177–181

(Chremylus) But Philepsius, doesn't he tell his stories for your sake? The alliance with the Egyptians, isn't it there because of you? Naïs, doesn't she love Philonides because of you? — (Carion) The tower of Timotheus... — (Chremylus) ...may crash on you! All business dealings, aren't they conducted because of you?

Σ Ar. *Plut.* 180 ἐμπέσοι γέ σοι REAld: (α) παρ' ὑπόνοιαν τὸ “ἐμπέσοι γέ σοι”, δέον εἰπεῖν “θαυμαστός καὶ μέγας”. REMatrBarbRsV<sup>57</sup> Ald | (β) οὐκ εἶασε εἰπεῖν “διὰ τὸν Πλοῦτον”, ἀλλ' ἐπήγαγε παρ' ὑπόνοιαν “ἐμπέσοι γέ σοι”. VMENMatrBarbAld

*May crash on you:* (α) The phrase “may crash on you” is against expectation, since he should have said “is wonderful and big”. | (β) He did not let him say “because of Wealth”, but supplied, against expectation, “may crash on you”.

Thus, since the extension of the label to cases of “retrospective” παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour — or even puns and the like — had already begun to erode the underlying concept, it eventually became so bleached for some of its users that they could treat it as if παρ' ὑπόνοιαν were a generic formula for any kind of textual surprise effect in comedy.

## 7 Intra-dramatic vs. real-world expectation

Fourthly and finally, in addition to this tendency of turning παρ' ὑπόνοιαν into something of a catch-all term, the scholiasts are also guilty of a further analytical blunder which is no less problematic (although occasionally shared with modern critics).<sup>42</sup> They repeatedly fail to differentiate between what might be expected in

<sup>42</sup> See the pertinent discussion by e.g. Filippo 2001–2002, 92 and Kanellakis 2020a, 41–48 on Ar. *Eq.* 296 quoted below. Kanellakis 2020a, 50–53 also gives some examples where modern critics have mislabelled as *para prosdokian* other figures of speech, in ways that are reminiscent of the material in Section 6.

the real world and what is “expected” or “logically consistent” within the comic world on stage.

We have already come across one likely example of this issue when discussing the presumed replacement of the phrase ὑπὸ καρτερίας by ὑπὸ φειδωλίας in *Ar. Nub.* 835 (Section 4, with n. 32). The scholion there forgets that this utterance by Strepsiades, however unusual it might be in the mouth of a “normal” person, is perfectly in line with the speaker’s general way of thinking.<sup>43</sup> Another, even clearer, illustration of the phenomenon is found in the following exchange in *Knights*, where the Paphlagonian and the Sausage-Seller are trying to outdo (and outshout) each other in terms of how badly behaved or street-wise they can be:

- Πα. διαβαλῶ σ’ ἐὰν στρατηγῆς.  
 Ἀλ. κυνοκοπήσω σου τὸ νῶτον.  
 Πα. περιελῶ σ’ ἀλαζονείαις.  
 Ἀλ. ὑποτεμοῦμαι τὰς ὁδοὺς σου.  
 Πα. βλέψον εἰς μ’ ἀσκαρδάμυκτον.  
 Ἀλ. ἐν ἀγορᾷ κἀγὼ τέθραμμαι.  
 Πα. διαφορήσω σ’ εἴ τι γρύξει.  
 Ἀλ. κοπροφορήσω σ’ εἰ λακήσει.  
 Πα. ὁμολογῶ κλέπτειν· σὺ δ’ οὐχί.  
 Ἀλ. νῆ τὸν Ἑρμῆν τὸν ἀγοραῖον.  
 κάπιονκῶ γε βλεπόντων.

*Ar. Eq.* 288–298

(Paphlagonian) I’ll discredit you if you become a general! — (Sausage-Seller) I’ll beat you like a dog on your back! — (Paphlagonian) I’ll round you up with telling rubbish! — (Sausage-Seller) I’ll cut off your paths! — (Paphlagonian) Look at me without blinking! — (Sausage-Seller) I’ve also grown up in the streets! — (Paphlagonian) I’ll tear you to pieces if you make one peep! — (Sausage-Seller) I’ll toss you on a dung heap if you open your mouth! — (Paphlagonian) I profess to steal; and you don’t! — (Sausage-Seller) Yes, of course, by Hermes of the market-place, and then I even deny it on oath when people have seen it all.

In this context, to claim that the Paphlagonian’s ὁμολογῶ κλέπτειν is παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν does not make sense. In *Ar. Eq.* 296 there is of course no specific (prospective) expectation of what he will say next, but that it proves to be in line with

<sup>43</sup> Contrast Σ<sup>VTAld</sup> *Ar. Vesp.* 449 and Σ<sup>VTLhAld</sup> *Ar. Vesp.* 525a, which establish an explicit connection between two παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν instances in lines spoken by Philocleon and his personal character (δεικνὺς τὸ σκληρὸν αὐτοῦ, “showing his harshness”, ὑπεμφαίνων τὸ φιλόδικον, “underlining his obsession with lawsuits”). However, in these passages the παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν diagnosis remains legitimate because even someone of Philocleon’s ilk could be expected to say something different under the given circumstances.



his questionable character is not a (retrospective) surprise either. That the average Athenian would pride himself on other things is neither here nor there:

Σ Ar. *Eq.* 296 ὁμολογῶ κλέπτειν: τοῦτο παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν λέγει, ὡς ἂν εἰ ἔλεγε “σώφρων εἰμὶ καὶ πεπαιδευμένος”. ὁ δὲ αὐχεῖ ἐπὶ τῷ κλέπτειν. ἃ κλέπτω, ὁμνύω μὴ κεκλοφέναι, ὃ ἐστὶν ὑπερβολὴ ἐπιπορκίας. VEG<sup>3</sup>ΘΜ

*I profess to steal:* He says this against expectation, as if he were saying “I am a good and educated citizen”. The other <then> brags with his stealing: What I steal, I swear not to have stolen, which constitutes the epitome of perjury.

In the same vein, one may query whether it is true that the Chorus of *Wasps*, with their half-human, half-insect identity, “should have said τὰς οἰκίας” instead of ἀνθρώπια at Ar. *Vesp.* 1080, when they are remembering how the barbarians came to destroy their homes (see Σ<sup>VT<sup>Lh</sup>Ald</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 1080b, δέον δὲ ἦν εἰπεῖν “τὰς οἰκίας”);<sup>44</sup> whether there is anything “unexpected” about Philocleon referring to the new, and for him unfamiliar, Persian cloak he gets from Bdelycleon as a κακόν, when this is so well-aligned with his conservative character (see Σ<sup>VT<sup>3</sup></sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 1136, παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν· καινὸν παραλαμβάνει ἱμάτιον); or whether the humour in Euelpides’ statement in Ar. *Av.* 27–28, about his and Peisetaerus’ wish to “go to the ravens (~ go to hell)” (δεομένους ἐς κόρακας ἐλθεῖν), is adequately captured by again using the label παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν (see Σ<sup>Γ<sup>2</sup></sup> Ar. *Av.* 28b): after all, what this is really about is not any expectation on the part of the audience, which is (retrospectively) “disappointed”, but the comic literalisation of an idiomatic expression.<sup>45</sup> Even more extremely, meanwhile, when Chremes’ acquaintance in

<sup>44</sup> Echoed by Biles/Olson 2016, 404 (“the word [sc. ἀνθρώπια] is in any case reserved for the end of the line as a *para prosdokian* for ‘homes’ *vel sim.*”); note that a few lines later the Chorus also refer to the barbarians as being “stung” (Ar. *Vesp.* 1088, κεντούμενοι). In a case like this, or similarly Σ<sup>VT<sup>3</sup></sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 639 on the Chorus’ blissful self-description ἐν μακάρων δικάζειν αὐτὸς ἔδοξα νήσοις, “I thought I was passing judgement on the islands of the blessed” (δέον εἰπεῖν “οἰκεῖν” “δικάζειν” ἔφασαν ὡς φιλόδοικοι), Σ<sup>RVE<sup>TM</sup>Lh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 92 on the Hoopoe’s order ἄνοιγε τὴν ὕλην, “Open the woods!” (δέον εἰπεῖν “τὴν θύραν”), and Σ Ar. *Eccl.* 683 on Praxagora’s announcement to repurpose the allotment machines so that they assign people to a dinner place rather than to a tribunal (δέον εἰπεῖν δικάζειν, εἴτε δειπνεῖν), it would perhaps be possible, if far-fetched, to argue that the formula δέον εἰπεῖν does not simply mean “he/they/she should have said”, but rather implies a premise like “Were it not for the comic setting...”.

<sup>45</sup> See also Section 2 with n. 19 on Σ<sup>RVLh</sup> Ar. *Pax* 95, and further e.g. Σ<sup>VE<sup>TM</sup>Lh</sup> Ar. *Eq.* 1033a; Σ<sup>RVELh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1173; Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Thesm.* 1025 (cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 42–43); Σ<sup>EG<sup>Barb</sup>3Ald</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 278α (accepted as retrospective παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν by Kanellakis 2020a, 36); Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Plut.* 805bβ (with the label παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν: but it corresponds to the play’s logic for Carion to express surprise at material wealth reaching even people who are not criminal; other scholia here do not talk of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν).

*Ecclesiazusae* predicts that the Athenians, having voted for the abolition of private property, will soon change their minds again, this indictment of the *demos*' tendency to overturn its own decisions does not even clash with conventional opinion as expressed elsewhere in comedy (cf. Ar. *Ach.* 632, Ἀθηναίους μεταβούλους; Ar. *Eccl.* 586–587; Plato *Com. fr.* 239),<sup>46</sup> yet is still classified as παρ' ὑπόνοιαν by a commentator (see Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Eccl.* 798).<sup>47</sup>

## 8 Παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour and interpretation

Given this readiness in the scholia to diagnose παρ' ὑπόνοιαν jokes even when the situation does not really warrant it, it does not come as a big surprise if the commentators sometimes also think of παρ' ὑπόνοιαν explanations when they are facing challenging passages they have difficulty accounting for otherwise.<sup>48</sup> Thus, whereas Ar. *Av.* 16 has been athetised in modern times because the phrase ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων mirrors the identical verse-end of Ar. *Av.* 13 but does not make sense here, ancient interpreters tried to resolve the issue either by arguing for syntactically and/or semantically contorted readings<sup>49</sup> or by declaring the

<sup>46</sup> As well as outside comedy: see Ussher 1973, 186 and Vetta/Del Corno 1989, 224, especially on *Isoc.* 8.52.

<sup>47</sup> By contrast, some awareness of the contextual conditioning of a παρ' ὑπόνοιαν joke is shown in Σ<sup>TLh</sup> Ar. *Pax* 708 (on Hermes telling Trygaeus to take Opورا as a wife and “beget with her — grapes”, ἐκποῖοι σαυτῷ βότρυς): since Opورا is indeed a woman on stage, this nevertheless involves true παρ' ὑπόνοιαν (οὐκ εἶπε τοὺς παῖδας, ἀλλὰ “βότρυς” διὰ τὴν Ὀπώραν, “He did not say ‘children’, but ‘grapes’ because of Opورا”; cf. Kanellakis 2020a, 38–39).

<sup>48</sup> In addition to the examples in the main text, see Σ<sup>RVM9fMLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 515a (contrasting with the view expressed in Σ<sup>RVM9fM</sup> Ar. *Av.* 515b and supported by Dunbar 1995, 350–354), Σ<sup>RVEΘ</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 1466b (contrasting with the plausible non-παρ' ὑπόνοιαν reading of Σ<sup>VMEΘ(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 1466a), or also Σ<sup>RVM9fMLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 575a and Σ<sup>RVEfM</sup> Ar. *Av.* 609, where no παρ' ὑπόνοιαν/δέον εἰπεῖν formulation is used, but broadly comparable Aristophanic “errors/misquotations by design” are postulated (ἴριν instead of ἴρᾱν, πέντε instead of ἑννέα, cf. Willi, forthcoming a); the suspicion that Aristophanes could deliberately mislead his audience is also attested in Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Thesm.* 21a and Σ<sup>VEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 661 (whereas Σ<sup>V</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1047a/cβ may imply an inadvertent blunder by the poet). In Σ<sup>RVE</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1654b, the idea that γνησίων in ἀδελφῶν γνησίων, “legitimate brothers”, humorously replaces its antonym νόθων is probably due to a simple failure to understand Peisetaerus' (logical: cf. Σ<sup>RVEfLh</sup> Ar. *Av.* 1653b) reasoning; a misunderstanding is also likely in Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. *Vesp.* 231c.

<sup>49</sup> By either (a) inserting strong punctuation after ὃς ὄρνις ἐγένετ(ο), and thus reading ἀπέδοτο instead of κάπεδοτο at the beginning of Ar. *Av.* 17, accepting an unnatural and unnecessary ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων, “from/at the bird-market”, at the start of the new sentence and overlooking that

problematic words to be παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν for ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων — apparently without being worried that the resulting “joke” would then be lame in the extreme:<sup>50</sup>

Πε. ἦ δεινὰ νῶ δέδρακεν οὐκ τῶν ὀρνέων,  
ὁ πινακοπώλης Φιλοκράτης μελαγχολῶν,  
ὃς τῶδ’ ἔφασκε νῶν φράσειν τὸν Τηρέα,  
[τὸν ἔποφ’, ὃς ὄρνις ἐγένετ’ ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων,]  
κάπέδοτο τὸν μὲν Θαρρελείδου τουτονὶ  
κολοιὸν ὀβολοῦ...

Ar. Av. 13–18

(Peisetaerus) The guy from the bird market has really treated us badly, Philocrates the crazy bird-seller, who said that these two were going to show us Tereus, [the hoopoe, who became a bird from the birds,] and who sold us this jackdaw son of Tharreleides for an obol...

Σ Ar. Av. 15a ὃς τῶδ’ ἔφασκε νῶν: οἱ μὲν φασιν αὐτὸν διασύρειν τὸν αἰσώπειον λόγον, καὶ δέον εἰπεῖν “τῶν ἀνθρώπων” λέγειν “ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων”, οἱ δὲ οὕτως· ὃς ἔφασκε μᾶλλον τῶν ἄλλων ὀρνέων δύνασθαι προηγήσασθαι τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ δεῖξαι ἡμῖν αὐτόν. VEF

*Who said that these two [...] to us:* Some commentators say that he is making fun of the Aesopic story and that he says “from the birds” when he should have said “<from> the humans”, while others <take it> like this: Who said that he was better able than the other birds to lead the way and show him to us.

Σ Ar. Av. 16a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν εἶρηκε τὸ “ὃς ὄρνις ἐγένετ’ ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων”. ἔδει γὰρ “ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων”. VEF<sup>2</sup>M | 16a ὄρνις ἐγένετ’ ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων R: ἔδει εἰπεῖν “ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων”. REG<sup>2</sup>

16a He has said “Who became a bird from the birds” against expectation; for it should have been “from the humans”. | 16a *He became a bird from the birds:* He should have said “from the humans”.

Similarly, there was disagreement over the reasons why the slave Carion, in *Plutus*, describes as one consequence of the newly acquired wealth in his household

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“one cannot say ‘Tereus, the Hoopoe who became a bird’ without explaining how, when or where he did so” (Dunbar 1995, 142) or (b) taking ἐκ τῶν ὀρνέων as an implausibly delayed complement of (i) φράσειν or (ii) τοῦτω (i.e. (i) “that these two were going to show us Tereus [...] from among the birds” or (ii) “that these two, of the birds [= more than the other birds], were going to show us Tereus”), which would still leave ὃς ὄρνις ἐγένετ(ο) stranded; for (a) see Σ<sup>VEF2</sup> Ar. Av. 15c and Σ<sup>RTM</sup> Ar. Av. 16b, for (b) see Σ<sup>VEF</sup> Ar. Av. 15b, Σ<sup>VEF2</sup> Ar. Av. 15c, and Σ<sup>R</sup> Ar. Av. 16b [= (i)] as well as the second part of Σ<sup>VEF</sup> Ar. Av. 15a [= (ii)].

50 Filippo 2001–2002, 103 wants to rescue this approach by postulating that ὀρνέων might be endowed with a “simbolismo sessuale” (i.e. ὄρνις ~ “phallus” > “man”); but there is little support for such an assumption.

the fact that they are now wiping their bottoms with garlic (σκορόδια) rather than stones. Whereas some commentators were content with the idea that σκορόδια are chosen here because people would have *eaten* garlic when they were still poor (see  $\Sigma^{RVE\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 818b;  $\Sigma^{RVME\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 818c;  $\Sigma^{RVE\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 818e), and another discusses the usefulness of garlic for the purpose in question (see  $\Sigma^{VE\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 818f), there are again also those who detect a παρ' ὑπόνοιαν layer. According to this reading, σκορόδια would be said instead of something like “towels” (or, in modern terms, “toilet paper”) and potentially be extra funny because wiping one's bottom with garlic might burn — but the annotator responsibly indicates that he is unsure about this latter interpretation:<sup>51</sup>

Κα. ...ἀποψώμεσθα δ' οὐ λίθοις ἔτι,  
ἀλλὰ σκοροδίοις ὑπο τρυφῆς ἐκάστοτε.  
*Ar. Plut.* 817–818

(Carion) ...and we no longer wipe our bottoms with stones, but regularly with garlic plants, for luxury.

$\Sigma$  *Ar. Plut.* 818a ἀλλὰ REΘN σκοροδίοις RMEΘNAld ὑπὸ τρυφῆς Ald: γελοιῶς, ἀντὶ τοῦ “σαβάνοις”. RVMEΘNBarbAld

*But with garlic plants, for luxury:* Instead of “with towels”.

$\Sigma$  *Ar. Plut.* 818g εἰ ἄρα δηκτικόν τι ἔχει, τάχα ἂν εἴη παρὰ τὴν ὑπόνοιαν εἰρημένον. VEΘNBarbAld

*If <the garlic> somehow has a burning effect, it might perhaps be said against expectation.*

Earlier in the same play, Chremylus' refusal to say χαίρετε, “Hello!”, to his fellow demesmen, addressing them with ἀσπάζομαι, “I greet you”, instead, is understood by several scholia to imply a change in greeting practice (as the context indeed suggests);<sup>52</sup> but one reader who failed to grasp this, or found it unconvincing, preferred to postulate a παρ' ὑπόνοιαν joke:

<sup>51</sup> He is however followed by Kanellakis 2020a, 74.

<sup>52</sup> See  $\Sigma^{RVE\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 322a (ὁ Χρεμύλος, ὡς καινισθεὶς τῇ τύχῃ, καινοτέραν προσηγορίαν ἐπινοεῖ, “Chremylus, being rejuvenated by his luck, thinks of a more recent form of address”);  $\Sigma^{RV\Theta NBarbAld}$  *Ar. Plut.* 322bα/β;  $\Sigma^{VM}$  *Ar. Plut.* 322d; cf. Sommerstein 2001, 161; Willi 2003, 62–63 (although I am no longer sure that we should accept an ephemeral change of greeting fashion in real-world Athens at the time).

Χρ. “χαίρειν” μὲν ὑμᾶς ἐστίν, ὧνδρες δημόται,  
ἀρχαῖον ἤδη προσαγορεύειν καὶ σαπρόν·  
ἀσπάζομαι δ’ ὅτι ἡ προθύμως ἤκετε

Ar. *Plut.* 322–324

(Chremylus) To say “Hello” to you, my friends from the deme, is now old-fashioned and rotten; but I greet you, because you’ve come so eagerly.

Σ Ar. *Plut.* 324 ἀσπάζομαι MAld: παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν· εἰπὼν γὰρ μὴ ἔρεῖν “χαίρειν”, “ἀσπάζομαι” φησίν. VMΘMatrBarbAld

Against expectation: For having said that he will not say “Hello”, he <nonetheless> says “I greet you”.

Only exceptionally, however, can we connect an ancient scholar’s name to such a discussion about the presence or not of παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν humour, as in the following instance. When Dionysus and Xanthias in *Frogs* are about to enter the palace of Pluton and have already encountered the hostile doorkeeper, the god gets worried about what will happen next and therefore challenges his slave to change dress with him and prove that he is really more courageous. Xanthias readily accepts, only to hear a snappy reply from Dionysus:

Ξα. φέρε δὴ ταχέως αὐτ’· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλὰ πειστέον.  
καὶ βλέψον εἰς τὸν Ἡρακλειοξανθίαν,  
εἰ δειλὸς ἔσομαι καὶ κατὰ σὲ τὸ λῆμ’ ἔχων.  
Δι. μὰ Δι’ ἀλλ’ ἀληθῶς οὐκ Μελίτης μαστιγίας.

Ar. *Ran.* 498–501

(Xanthias) Quick, bring it on then; after all I have to obey. And watch this Heracles-Xanthias, if I’ll be a coward and have your kind of guts. — (Dionysus) By Zeus, no, you’ll truly be the Melitean — flogging-slave!

The question is what to make of οὐκ Μελίτης μαστιγίας at the end of this exchange. As in the cases discussed before, the difficulty was removed by positing a παρ’ ὑπόνοιαν joke and seeing in μαστιγίας a surprise substitute for Ἡρακλῆς (see Σ<sup>VEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 501d; ἀντὶ τοῦ in Σ<sup>RVEΘBarb(Ald)</sup> Ar. *Ran.* 501a also implies as much). Given the Heracleian context and since there was in fact a shrine of Heracles in the deme of Melite, about which much informative detail could be provided, this idea seems well-founded. Even so, it was rejected by the post-Aristarchean commentator Apollonius, who instead favoured a prosopographical allusion to the notorious womaniser Callias son of Hipponicus. Callias, so the reasoning went, (i) lived in Melite and (ii) used to wear a lionskin, just like Heracles, when serving in the army — an odd habit that would also be ridiculed in

Ar. *Ran.* 430 where mention is made of Callias' "pussy-skin". To what extent these points were independently established, and not just read out of the Aristophanic text (i.e. (i) out of the present passage, and (ii) out of Ar. *Ran.* 430 combined with the present passage) is impossible to tell. But in any case Apollonius — or possibly some reader(s) after him — sought to prop up this alternative interpretation<sup>53</sup> by additional arguments. They highlighted (iii) that picking out Melite where nothing but a reference to Heracles was required would be surprising when there were so many other Heracles shrines as well; (iv) that the formulation "from Melite" is how one speaks of a real person, but not of a god who resides "in a place"; and (v) that if, as the supporters of the *παρ' ὑπόνοιαν* reading had observed, the Heracles shrine in Melite had been established during the great plague of the early 420s, there would also be a chronological problem because Aristophanes' comic career already started in the same period. As it stands, argument (v) is so obviously flawed when dealing with a passage from a comedy that does *not* belong to Aristophanes' early production that one would like to think it was added to Apollonius' case (or misrepresented)<sup>54</sup> by some later reader whose grasp of chronology was poorer than one would like to assume for a scholar working in the tradition of Aristarchus; but it has to be conceded that the wording in the relevant scholion presents it as entirely parallel with the preceding items. By contrast, (iii) and (iv) are indeed valid — though hardly decisive — considerations:<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Which does not seem to have originated with Apollonius, for  $\Sigma^{\text{VE}\Theta\text{Barb}(\text{Ald})}$  Ar. *Ran.* 501c starts by recording Apollonius' approval (not authorship) of the idea. The continuation suggests that Apollonius was as keen to invalidate actual or conceivable objections (e.g. that the *κωμωδούμενος* was not identifiable enough in the text) as to add some positive support of his own. Since Apollonius son of Chaeris criticised the identification of another *κωμωδούμενος* (or *κωμωδουμένη*) by Aristarchus' student and successor Ammonius, who wrote an influential treatise on *κωμωδούμενοι* (see  $\Sigma^{\text{VTAld}}$  Ar. *Vesp.* 1238b; on Ammonius, cf. Bagordo 1998, 50, 74–76; Montana 2006), and since there is no particular reason to see in the Apollonius of  $\Sigma^{\text{VE}\Theta\text{Barb}(\text{Ald})}$  Ar. *Ran.* 501c a different Aristophanic commentator of the same name (cf. Boudreaux 1919, 77–78; Montana 2002), the unnamed source for the notion that Callias was also mocked in Ar. *Ran.* 501 might again be Ammonius. That Apollonius objected to Ammonius once need not of course mean that he could not agree with him elsewhere.

<sup>54</sup> "More recent than/too recent for Aristophanes" (*νεώτερον*) would seem more logical than *παλαιότερον*; for such an argument in the scholia, cf.  $\Sigma^{\text{VE}\Theta\text{MatrBarbAld}}$  Ar. *Plut.* 385b.

<sup>55</sup> Regarding (iii), note that  $\Sigma^{\text{RVE}\Theta\text{Barb}(\text{Ald})}$  Ar. *Ran.* 501a implicitly contains two potential justifications of the choice of Melite: the connection with Heracles' initiation, which may be of significance at the entrance to the underworld, and the existence of a particular *ἄγαλμα* of which Xanthias might be visually reminiscent.

Σ Ar. *Ran.* 501a οὐκ Μελίτης RMEBarb μαστιγίας MEBarb:

1. ἀντὶ τοῦ “ὁ ἐκ Μελίτης Ἡρακλῆς”. RVEΘBarb(Ald)
2. ἡ γὰρ Μελίτη δῆμος τῆς Ἀττικῆς, ἐν ᾗ ἐμυήθη Ἡρακλῆς τὰ μικρὰ μυστήρια. RVEΘBarb(Ald)
3. ἐκλήθη δὲ ἀπὸ Μελίτης νύμφης, RVMEΘBarb(Ald) ἢ ἐμίγη Ἡρακλῆς. VMEΘBarb(Ald)
4. α. ἐπειδὴ ἐν Μελίτῃ ἐστὶν ἐπιφανέστατον ἱερὸν Ἡρακλέους ἀλεξικάκου. VMEΘBarb(Ald) | β. ἔστι δὲ ἐκεῖ καὶ ἱερὸν Ἡρακλέους. RVEΘBarb(Ald)
5. τὸ δὲ τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ἄγαλμα ἔργον <A>γελάδου τοῦ Ἀργείου, τοῦ διδασκάλου Φειδίου. VEΘBarb(Ald)
6. ἡ δὲ ἰδρυσις ἐγένετο κατὰ τὸν μέγαν λοιμόν. ὅθεν καὶ ἐπαύσατο ἡ νόσος, πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπολλυμένων. VEΘBarb(Ald)

*The flogging-slave from Melite:* 1. Instead of “Heracles from Melite”. 2. For Melite is a deme of Attica, in which Heracles was initiated into the Lesser Mysteries. 3. It got its name from the nymph Melite, to whom Heracles made love. 4. α. Because in Melite there is a very famous shrine of Heracles the Averter of Evil. | β. There is a shrine of Heracles there. 5. And the image of Heracles is a work of Hageladas of Argos, the teacher of Pheidias. 6. The establishment <of the shrine> took place in the time of the great plague; as a consequence, the illness, from which many people were dying, came to an end.

Σ Ar. *Ran.* 501c 1. Ἀπολλώνιος οὐ κακῶς ὑπονενοῖσθαι φησι τὸ κωμωδεῖσθαι τινα. ἴσως δὲ ὅτι ἦρχε, διὰ τοῦτο οὐκ ὠνομάσθη.

2. ἡ ὀλίγον πρότερον εἰρησθαι. Καλλίας γὰρ ὁ Ἴππονίκου ἐν Μελίτῃ ᾧκει. παρειακάει δὲ αὐτὸν Ἡρακλεῖ, ἅμα χλευάζων διὰ τὸ λεοντῇ ἐν ταῖς μάχαις χρῆσθαι, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ὀπίσω· “κύσθου λεοντῇν ναυμαχεῖν ἐνημμένον” (430). VEΘBarb(Ald)
3. ἐπεὶ εἶγε ὄντως ἐπὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέα ἀνέφερε, τί μᾶλλον εἶπε τὸ “ἐκ Μελίτης” καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἄλλου δήμου; πανταχοῦ γὰρ Ἡρακλέα ἐπιφανῆ.
4. σύνηθές τε οὐχ οὕτω λέγειν ἐπὶ θεῶν “οὐκ Μελίτης”, ἀλλ’ “ὁ ἐν Μελίτῃ”, ὡς καὶ “Ζεὺς ὁ ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ”, ἐπὶ δὲ ἀνθρώπων “ἐκ Μελίτης”, “ἐξ Ἰῶος†”, “ἐκ Κολωνῶν”. VEΘBarbV<sup>57</sup>(Ald)
5. πῶς δὲ καὶ παλαιότερον εἶναι Ἀριστοφάνους τὸ ἄγαλμα, εἰ ἀκμάζοντος τοῦ λοιμοῦ ἰδρύθη; σχεδὸν γὰρ μειρακίσκος ἦδη ὧν ἤπτετο τῶν ἀγώνων. VEΘBarb(Ald)

1. Apollonius says the idea that some person is being made fun of here is not bad. Perhaps <this person> was not named because he was in office; 2. or else, <he suggests> he had been mentioned a little earlier. For Callias the son of Hipponicus lived in Melite; him he likens to Heracles, ridiculing him at the same time for his habit of wearing a lion-skin in battle, as in the following passage: “to fight at sea wearing a pussy-skin”. 3. <All this is likely to be the case> since, if he were really making reference to Heracles, why did he say “from Melite” rather than from some other deme, Heracles being famous everywhere. 4. Moreover, about gods one does not normally say “the one *from* Melite”, but “the one *in* Melite”, as for instance also “Zeus *in* Olympia”; but about humans <one does say> “from Melite”, “from †?†”, “from Kolonos”. 5. And how could the god’s image be older than/too old for Aristophanes if <the shrine> was established at the height of the plague? After all, Aristophanes began to take part in the comic competitions when he was still almost an adolescent.

It was probably a side-effect of the number of uncontroversial factual and prosopographical allusions in the Aristophanic text if some ancient commentators,<sup>56</sup> keen to display their learnedness, did not then hesitate to reject a fairly straightforward παρ' ὑπόνοιαν joke as long as they could come up with a more sophisticated alternative, however far-fetched the latter might be. How widespread such an attitude was, the scholia no longer allow us to tell because we are not normally as well-served by them as in the example just discussed.<sup>57</sup> Indirectly, however, the Apollonian case seems to confirm what the generous over-application of the παρ' ὑπόνοιαν label elsewhere also suggests: that παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour, although (or since?) omnipresent in Aristophanes' plays, was not really felt to be worth critically engaging with. It was accepted as part of what makes Aristophanic comedy fun to watch and read; but it was not something that made comedy fascinating to the ancient scholar and invited him to look more closely and discover that, as one *modern* critic put it, “ben lungi dall'essere banali dispositivi comici esclusivamente funzionali allo scatenamento del riso, molti degli *aprosdoketa* aristofanei sono invece procedimenti argomentativi dotati di eccezionale forza persuasiva”.<sup>58</sup>

**56** And not just ancient ones: even Dover 1993, 256–257, following van der Valk 1980, 75, is wary of rejecting the Apollonian theory, despite pointing out that Callias' native deme was Alopeke, not Melite (cf. Davies 1971, 256). Instead, he observes (as argument (vi), so to speak) that “Kratinos [fr. 81] calls Kallias στιγματίας ‘tattooed (sc. like a runaway slave)’ because his property was heavily mortgaged. If Kallias lived more in Melite than elsewhere, if he had ever worn a lion-skin, and if Kratinos' στιγματίας was remembered, then Σ<sup>RVE</sup> is right, and Dionysos is saying ‘You look like Kallias!’”. But why should Aristophanes then not have helped his audience at least a little by writing στιγματίας rather than μαστιγίας?

**57** Similarly, though, an “anonymous” counter-expectational reading contrasts with different, non-παρ' ὑπόνοιαν, interpretations by named scholars in a group of scholia on ὑπερεπυρρίασε in *Ar. Ran.* 308 (see Σ<sup>VMEΘBarbAld</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 308a [Aristarchus], Σ<sup>VEΘBarbAld</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 308c [Demetrius Ixion] vs. Σ<sup>VMEΘBarbAld</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 308f [παρ' ὑπόνοιαν]). By contrast, in *Ar. Ran.* 320 Aristarchus read Διαγόρας rather than δι' ἀγορᾶς (as preferred by Apollodorus of Tarsus and others: Σ<sup>VMEΘBarbAld</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 320f) and therefore took ἄδουσι earlier in the line to be ironic (ἐν εἰρωνείᾳ κειμένον τοῦ λόγου); such irony could also be framed as “retrospective” παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour — and the phrase ἀντί τοῦ is indeed used (see Σ<sup>VMEΘBarbAld</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 320b; cf. also Σ<sup>Tz</sup> *Ar. Ran.* 320a [παρ' ὑπόνοιαν]); Filippo 2001–2002, 75) — but in this case the ironic/παρ' ὑπόνοιαν interpretation was also the one allowing to display greater knowledge. In *Ar. Av.* 876, meanwhile, the status of Κλεοκρίτου as παρ' ὑπόνοιαν for θεῶν (or μεγάλη) was not disputed (cf. Section 6, n. 41), only the reasoning behind it (see Σ<sup>RVE12</sup> *Ar. Av.* 876e [Symmachus] vs. Σ<sup>RVE12</sup> *Ar. Av.* 876f [Didymus]).

**58** Napolitano 2007, 65; cf. also Kanellakis 2020a, 77–81.



## Conclusion

We set off from the observation that verbal humour, while not being actively disregarded in the scholia, never occupies a prominent place in them (Section 1). At first sight, the sheer number of annotations which speak of, or at least acknowledge, παρ' ὑπόνοιαν jokes might seem to contradict this claim. On closer inspection, however, they turn out to contain only a minimum of critical reflection. That the terminology can be vague, inconsistent, and possibly subject to some diachronic change under the influence of rhetorical instruction (Sections 2–3) is symptomatic, but less revealing than the fact that phenomena of very different kinds tend to be grouped together without further reflection. Next to a core of truly counter-expectational instances, there is a substantial group of "retrospective" cases where expectations are only "disappointed" in hindsight (Section 4); and these, in turn, shade into an even wider group of mechanisms used to cause audience surprise in which expectation is no longer a central factor at all (Sections 5–6). Furthermore, just as the scholia do not always differentiate fully between the comic author and his characters, so they may also forget that what is expected in the world on stage is not necessarily the same as what would be expected in the real world (Section 7). All of this leads to a situation where παρ' ὑπόνοιαν diagnoses can be used as an easy fix to plaster over interpretative challenges or where, vice versa, doubt can be cast on likely cases of παρ' ὑπόνοιαν humour merely because other, more "learned", interpretations are more exciting to the critical scholar's mindset (Section 8). And yet, the very fact that so many παρ' ὑπόνοιαν notes *are* transmitted in the scholia does provide further evidence for the general premise stated at the beginning. No matter how much more scholarly attention was paid to historical or linguistic details, ancient readers never completely forgot that the principal *raison d'être* of Aristophanic comedy was and remained popular entertainment.

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