

FOUR EMENDATIONS IN ARISTOPHANES

Clouds, 254–62

- Σω. κάθιζε τοῖνυν ἐπὶ τὸν ἱερὸν σκίμποδα.
 Στ. ἰδοῦ, κάθημαι.
 Σω. τουτονὶ τοῖνυν λαβὲ 255
 τὸν στέφανον.
 Στ. ἐπὶ τί στέφανον; οἶμοι Σώκρατες,
 ὥσπερ με τὸν Ἀθάμανθ' ὅπως μὴ θύσετε.
 Σω. οὐκ, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα πάντα τοὺς τελουμένους
 ἡμεῖς ποιούμεν.
 Στ. εἶτα δὴ τί κερδανῶ;
 Σω. λέγεω γενήσῃ τρῖμμα, κρόταλον, παιπάλῃ. 260
 ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἀτρεμεῖ.
 Στ. μὰ τὸν Δί' οὐ ψεύσει γέ με·
 καταπαττόμενος γὰρ παιπάλῃ γενήσομαι.

The last line should, I believe, be printed as a question. Strepsides is seated on the sacred σκίμπους, and a wreath is put on his head, which makes him feel like a sacrificial victim. In 261 he is told to hold still, and we gather from καταπαττόμενος that at this point he is being sprinkled with some dry substance. If we put the full stop at the end, he is saying, 'I can see you won't disappoint me: being sprinkled like this will make me into flour all right'. If we make it a question, it is 'No fear, you won't trick me: you mean being sprinkled is the way to turn into flour?' This seems more in keeping with his apprehension in 257, and it allows what is perhaps a more natural sense to μὰ τὸν Δί' οὐ ψεύσει γέ με (or γ' ἐμέ). It is appropriate that he should shy at being sprinkled, an unsettling thing at the best of times, and particularly now, because, even more than coronation, it was a procedure reminiscent of a sacrifice. This does not escape the scholiast, according to whom Socrates uses the powder of two λίθοι πώρωοι which he has just ground together: συναγαγὼν τὰ ἀπὸ τούτων θραύσματα βάλλει τὸν πρεσβύτερον, καθάπερ τὰ ἱερεῖα ταῖς οὐλαῖς οἱ θύοντες. The commentator cannot have known what substance Aristophanes actually used, and it seems quite possible that it was bran, which we know to have been used in some private purification-rituals (Dem. 18.259, quoted by Dover on line 254) as well as in sacrifices. In any case it is difficult to believe that the poet did not have the parallel in mind, after 257, and it is accordingly implausible that Strepsiades, who is seen taking evasive action after 260 (ἀλλ' ἔχ' ἀτρεμεῖ) should say nothing to make the point explicit, but on the contrary settle down suddenly contented with his treatment. It may be objected that Aristophanes is only concerned to write funny lines and cares nothing for the consistency of a character's attitudes from moment to moment. But apart from the fact that to defend an inferior interpretation of the paradosis in this way is to show a bias in favour of convention—the issue is not whether the conventional reading is tolerable, but whether it is preferable—my argument is not that Strepsiades ought in principle to be coherently portrayed, rather that Aristophanes' train of thought in these lines ought to lead directly to coherent reactions on Strepsiades' part.

Clouds, 677–80

- Στ. ἀτὰρ τὸ λοιπὸν πῶς με χρὴ καλεῖν;
 Σω. ὅπως;
 τὴν καρδόπην, ὥσπερ καλεῖς τὴν Σωστράτην.
 Στ. τὴν καρδόπην, θήλειαν;
 Σω. ὀρθῶς γὰρ λέγεις.
 Στ. ἐκεῖνο †δ' ἦν ἄν†· καρδόπη, Κλεωνύμη.

Socrates is teaching Strepsiades not to say ἡ κάρδοπος. In 680 the rustic masters the point, and extends it to the name of Cleonymus. δ' ἦν ἄν is clearly corrupt. The unmetrical lemma to the scholium in E, δ' ἄν ἦν, suggests no remedy, and may be dismissed as a fortuitous transposition of the *paradosis* reading. Dover quotes two conjectures of Blaydes, ἐκεῖνό τ' ἄρ' ἦν and ἐκεῖν' ἄρ' ἄν εἶη. The first I do not understand; neither *τοι* nor the ἦν ἄρα idiom is appropriate. Nor is εἶη ἄν, when Strepsiades has just been told twice that it is so. I have little doubt that what Aristophanes wrote was ἐκεῖνο δύναμαι.

Clouds, 878–81

εὐθύς γε τοι παιδάριον ὃν τυννοντοῖ
 ἔπλαττεν ἔνδον οἰκίας ναῦς τ' ἔγλυψε
 ἀμαξίδας τε σκυτῖνας ἡργάζετο
 κακὰ τῶν σιδίων βατράχους ἐποίει, πῶς δοκεῖς;

'Children used to cut wheels and carts from hides', says the scholiast brightly. It is no doubt possible to make toy carts out of hard leather, but it is eccentric. The ships he carved must have been of wood. If he wanted carts, he would have got better ones by using more wood. Naber's *σुकῖνας* has its attractions: Dover notes that the two adjectives are variants in Antiphanes fr. 122.4, and says he is restrained from printing the conjecture in his text 'only by the reflection that phrases denoting physical objects often mean something quite different from what they seem to mean literally' (a consideration crippling to much textual criticism, if it were applied generally). Against *σुकῖνας* one may remark that it is needlessly specific—why fig-wood in particular?—and oddly so after the wooden ships. I suggest that *σुकῖνας* is to be retained (giving a sequence of four different working materials) and the noun changed to *ἀναξυρίδας*. Cf. Hdt. 1.71.1 *σुकῖνας* . . . *ἀναξυρίδας*. That Greek boys in the fifth century played Persians, and dressed up in leather trousers to do so, may not be recorded but would not surprise. Corruption of *ἀναξυρίδας* to *ἀμαξίδας*, easy anywhere, was especially easy after *ἀμαξίδα* sixteen lines before.

Birds, 698–9

οὔτος δὲ Χάει πτερόεντι μιγείς νυχίῳ κατὰ Τάρταρον εὐρύν
 ἐνεόττευσεν γένος ἡμέτερον καὶ πρῶτον ἀνήγαγεν εἰς φῶς.

Halbertsma's *νυχιος* is clearly an improvement on *νυχίῳ*. We want the adjective to be predicative, equivalent to an adverb with *μιγείς*, not merely a further descriptive epithet of Chaos, and a predicative adjective is naturally attached to the agent unless it refers more particularly to the condition of the patient.

But what is the point of saying that Eros mated with Chaos 'in the night', a qualification wholly uncharacteristic of Greek genealogical literature? He came from an egg laid by Night Ἐρέβους ἐν ἀπείροσι κόλποις (694), but after hatching

out of it with his shining golden wings (697) he cannot be considered a specifically nocturnal power: he has ever been active by day and night alike. In any case it is doubtful whether day and night can be imagined as having any reality in Tartarus. I propose *μυχίῳ* (or *μύχιος*). *μυχίῳ κατὰ Τάρταρον* = *μυχῶ Ταρτάρου*. *μυχός* is at home in the context of sexual union (*b. Aphr.* 262 f. *τῇσι δὲ Σειληνοὶ τε καὶ εὐσκοπὸς Ἀργεῖφρόντης μίσγοντ' ἐν φιλότῃ μυχῶ σπείων ἐροέντων*; *Il.* 9.663 f., 24.675 f., *Od.* 3.402 f., 4.304 f., 7.346 f.); it is appropriate to the mysterious recesses of Tartarus (*Hes. Tb.* 119 *Τάρταρά τ' ἡερόεντα μυχῶ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης*; *Soph. Niobe*, P. Grenf. ii 6 (a) 3.8 (R. Carden and W.S. Barrett, *Pap. Frr. of S.*, p. 201) *μυχαλὰ Τάρταρα*); and the transmitted dative is then more acceptable, because these recesses are more closely connected with Chaos than with Eros.¹

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¹ Miss N.V. Dunbar has kindly drawn my attention to the fact that in the quotation of the passage in the *Suda* s.v. *χάος* (iv. 786.22 Alder), *μυχίῳ* in fact appears as a variant. The two manuscripts that give it,

S and C, are apographa of V which is here missing but presumably also had *μυχίῳ*. So there is a chance, but not a strong one, that this was the original *Suda* reading.