

# Ἵπο- in Aristophanes and ὑποκριτής

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SOME THIRTY YEARS AGO Gerald Else proposed a new interpretation of the Attic dramaturgical term ὑποκριτής, 'actor'.<sup>1</sup> It had long been taken to signify 'answerer': so LSJ *s.v.*, and so Else, whose novel suggestion was that *τραγωδός* was the proper term for the first actor in Greek tragedy, since originally author and actor were identical. Only the *second* actor (and subsequently the third, as the term became generalized) was properly ὑποκριτής, the 'answerer'. The clearest examples of the 'answerer-actor', as we might term him, are the messengers who bring to the scene information from without and who relate it in response to the queries of the first actor.<sup>2</sup> This interpretation, if accepted, has several consequences for our picture of the development of tragedy. For example, Aristotle had always been understood to have attributed the introduction of the second actor to Aeschylus, the third to Sophocles—a source of difficulties since Aeschylus himself used a third actor. Else's interpretation permits that both the second and the third actors were Aeschylean innovations. The so-called third actor of Sophocles would then have been not the third speaking role but the substitute for the *τραγωδός* when Sophocles no longer played a part himself.

This argument has not been generally accepted. Pickard-Cambridge preferred the traditional interpretation; allowing uncertainly that ὑποκριτής might mean 'answerer', he nonetheless maintained that it was only the general term for actor and did not originally bear the specialized sense of 'second actor'.<sup>3</sup> Lesky rejected the first term altogether: 'answerer', he argued, was not a proper gloss for ὑποκριτής in any case.<sup>4</sup> The Attic for 'to answer' was ἀποκρίνεσθαι, while ὑποκρίνεσθαι properly means 'to interpret', and so ultimately by extension, 'to interpret a rôle, to play a part'. This would have been the primary sense until late times (p.473). The earliest occurrence of

<sup>1</sup> G. F. Else, "The Case of the Third Actor," *TAPA* 76 (1945) 1–10.

<sup>2</sup> G. F. Else, continuing the argument in "ΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΗΣ," *WS* 72 (1959) 75–107, at 104–07.

<sup>3</sup> A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (Oxford 1953); cf. 126–27, 130–32 of 2nd ed. (Oxford 1968).

<sup>4</sup> A. Lesky, "Hypokrites," in *Studi in Onore di Ugo Enrico Paoli* (Firenze 1955) 469–76.

ὕποκριτής ‘actor’ is in Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1279, produced in 422 B.C. (though its still earlier use is presupposed by the ὑπόκρισις of *P.Oxy.* III 408, a Pindaric fragment)—as ‘actor’, but not as ‘answerer’ (p.475). The actor was the ‘interpreter’; of *what* is another question (p.476).

In 1957 Else reaffirmed his position in his study of the *Poetics*: “ὕποκριτής originally denoted the *second* member of the acting company, who was called into being as ‘answerer’ to the first.”<sup>5</sup> But in the same year Koller attempted to refine Lesky’s argument by a study of the occurrence of ὑποκρίνεσθαι and ὑποκριτής in selected texts from Homer to Plato.<sup>6</sup> He repeated the assertion that the verb means ‘to interpret’ and does not occur in Attic as ‘to answer’. ὑποκριτής itself is found in Plato in conjunction with ῥαμφοδοί (*Ion* 532D) and is apparently conceived by Koller as an ‘explainer’ of the poet, a stand-in who made clear to the audience what the poet had expressed hermetically. Thus the term would have been applied to the tragic actor who ‘explained’ the matter of the play, an essential step in the development of tragedy: “Erst aus dem Zusammenstoss des Chores mit der fremden Gestalt des ὑποκριτής, des ‘Deuters’, entfaltet sich die attische Tragödie” (pp.106–07). In support of this Koller argues that ὑπο- itself developed a sense of ‘Begleitung, Vertretung’ from the original local use. Thus, e.g. ὑπάδειν (*Frogs* 874), ‘an Stelle eines andern singen’; and so ὑποκρίνεσθαι, ‘an Stelle eines andern entscheiden, für einen andern deuten’ (pp.101–02).

The Aristophanic instance is not at all persuasive. The text arguably means ‘sing to the Muses’, ‘invoke the Muses’, or ‘sing with the Muses’, but not possibly ‘sing in lieu of the Muses’. Koster provided very few examples of this alleged sense of ὑπο-, and in 1959 Else attacked the point in a detailed study of the element in Homer.<sup>7</sup> He argued that the contexts in which ὑποκρίνεσθαι occurs involve a challenge or problem, always concrete and practical. ὑπο- indicates response, as against Lesky’s ‘bringing out another level of meaning’; a verb compounded with ὑπό will tend to denote activity as a reaction or response. Else adduced some 55 ὑπο- verbs in the Homeric poems which can be so explained, the reaction ranging from simple reply to accompaniment, deference, fear and so on, depending on the context.

<sup>5</sup> G. F. Else, *Aristotle’s Poetics: The Argument* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1957) 167. Reiterated in Else, *The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy* (= Martin Classical Lectures 20, Cambridge [Mass.] 1965) 58–59, 86.

<sup>6</sup> H. Koller, “Hypokrisis und Hypokrites,” *MusHelv* 14 (1957) 100–07.

<sup>7</sup> *op.cit.* (*supra* n.2).

*ὑποκρίνεσθαι* itself does not mean simply to give a reply, for it involves a decision or judgement; nor does it mean simply the making of the judgement [for which *κρίνω* serves] (pp.84–85).

Else's catalogue of *ὑπο-* 'in reaction' verbs is impressive and represents an important lexicographical contribution which has yet to be recognized—*e.g.*, they are not included in the LSJ Supplement (1968). Yet the weight of this evidence has been ignored. Schreckenberg does not even cite Else's earlier arguments on *ὑποκριτής*,<sup>8</sup> while Zucchelli allows the Homeric interpretations but denies their relevance to the particular case of *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* (and therefore to the Attic fifth-century term *ὑποκριτής*).<sup>9</sup> While favoring 'to interpret' as the Attic sense, he fails to investigate *ὑπο-*, for which Patzer takes him to task (p.645).<sup>10</sup> Patzer has rejected the whole 'interpret' argument, returning to 'answerer' (pp.650–51)—'genauer also Bescheidgeber'—and himself opts for *ὑπο-* as 'unterstützend', both locally and metaphorically, 'in support of, in aid of' (pp.645–46). Pohlenz too has reasserted *ὑποκριτής* as 'answerer' and emphasized Homeric *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* as indicating response.<sup>11</sup>

This paper comments on two points raised in this argument: *ὑπο-* as a compositional element indicating response, and the Attic for 'to reply'.

## I

LSJ *s.v.* *ὑπό* F.I-III allows three basic meanings for the preposition in composition, *compendiose* 'under', 'somewhat' and 'secretly'. The sense 'in response or reaction' is not specifically acknowledged, though a number of individual glosses elsewhere in the work assume this meaning, *e.g.* *ὑπάγω*, 'bring forward in reply'; *ὑπερωτάω*, 'reply by a question'; *ὑπηχέω*, 'sound in answer'; *ὑπορχέομαι*, 'dance with or to music' (*cf.* *ὑπάδω*); *ὑποσιγάω*, 'to be silent at or during'; *ὑποτρομέω*, 'tremble before anyone'. The response, and the relation of responder to stimulus, can be on any of many levels, from cringing servility to compliance to outrage. These senses are an aspect of LSJ F.I.3, 'under . . . the agency or influence', where however the lexicon adds 'to

<sup>8</sup> H. Schreckenberg, *ΔΡΑΜΑ* (Würzburg 1960) 111–22.

<sup>9</sup> B. Zucchelli, *Ἵποκριτής: origine e storia del termine* (Genova 1962) 19: "Noteremo infine che l'interpretazione preposta dall'Else [of the Homeric uses of *ὑποκρίνεσθαι*] non può spiegare il carattere solenne e definitivo dei giudizi espressi"—a *petitio principii*.

<sup>10</sup> H. Patzer, rev. of Zucchelli, in *Gnomon* 42 (1970) 642–52.

<sup>11</sup> M. Pohlenz, "Furcht und Mitleid?," *Hermes* 84 (1956) 69 n.1.

express subjection or subordination’, an occasional but not at all a necessary concomitant of the sense: see the first four verbs listed above. The notion of response ought therefore to occur commonly in contexts involving interaction. But there is in LSJ a wholesale application of the other basic senses of *ὑπο-* to such compounds in general, many of them *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα* of uncertain nuance whose context often does not provide a clear meaning to the prefix. *ὑπο-* ‘somewhat’ is so lavishly distributed that the LSJ Supplement (1968) has had to withdraw some of the instances, e.g., *ὑπάργιλος*, “omit ‘somewhat’”; *ὑπεκκαλύπτω*, “delete ‘from below or a little’.” In consequence of the reglossing, some items compounded in *ὑπο-* no longer differ in sense from the uncompounded: see the lemmata *τρομός*, ‘trembling, unsteady’, and *ὑπότρομος*, ‘quivering, shaking; somewhat afraid or timid’, the latter now revised by the Supplement s.v., “omit ‘somewhat’,” so that the *ὑπο-* is by implication otiose.

Plainly the lexicography of *ὑπο-* wants a thorough reworking. I here merely present a few verbs, Aristophanic examples of *ὑπο-* ‘in response’. The advantage in investigating Aristophanic vocabulary is that it can reveal a standard fifth-century Attic response to imaginative language. Some of the words noted below were as old as Homer, so that their repetition in later comedy does not prove an independently perceived force of *ὑπο-* ‘in response’. But neologisms can be understood only by a prior grasp of the sense of their elements, if they be compounded, or their congeners, if they be formed by derivation or analogy. Compounds in *ὑπο-* which show the sense ‘to [do something] in reaction or in response’ demonstrate the viability of the element in that meaning in fifth-century Attic. In the list below the double asterisk (\*\*) indicates *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα* in Aristophanes, the single asterisk (\*) those not known to have occurred earlier.

(i) *ὑπακούω*. LSJ I.2, ‘answer when called’.

Various senses of reacting to a call are widely attested in both prose and verse; see LSJ s.v. I-III generally. One example in Aristophanes suffices. In the *Wasps* (273–74) the Chorus has come to meet Philocleon, but he is not about, contrary to their expectation:

*τί ποτ’ οὐ πρό θυρῶν  
φαίνεται ἄρ’ ἡμῖν ὁ γέρων οὐδ’ ὑπακούει;*

In this case simply ‘listen’ or ‘hear’ would be pointless (for that sense see, e.g., *Wasps* 318); the question is not whether Philocleon can perceive their coming, but why he is not coming himself to meet them. ‘Respond’ is required by the situation and to correlate with φαίνεται: “Why ever does he not appear before the doors [ἄρα= surprise that he doesn’t], nor even respond?” Nor would the sense ‘obey, submit’ (LSJ II.1, 3) fit the relationship of chorus and Philocleon. For ὑπακούω elsewhere in Aristophanes as reacting to a call see *Acharnians* 405, *Clouds* 360, *Ecclesiazusae* 515.

(ii) \*\* ὑπερυθρίαω. LSJ, ‘grow rather red, blush a little’.

The only occurrence in literature is at *Plutus* 702. Carion, approached by the god Asclepius and his daughters Iaso and Panacea, unexpectedly farted. “The god must have been disgusted.” “No, but Iaso ὑπερυθρίασε and Panacea held her nose and turned away . . .” “And the God?” “He didn’t even notice.” Asclepius’ nonchalance is contrasted with the reactions of his daughters, and their response should be parallel. That Iaso should blush ‘a little’ is pointlessly weak when set against Panacea’s defensive movements. The inadequacy of the gentle blush may well be the explanation for the textual variant ὑπερυθρίασε, corrected by Bergk (as a haplography of a compound in ὑπερ- rather than ὑπο-) to ὑπερηρυθρίασε. The sense is correct; the fart is meant to be astonishing and offensive. To blush ‘a little’, certainly in reaction to it, is out of keeping with the comic impetus of the passage. Cf. Rogers, who prints ὑπερυθρίασε but translates ‘blushed a rosy red’. Either Bergk’s emendation should be accepted, or the ὑπο- should be understood as other than deprecating: ‘her reaction was to blush’. In either case I take the verb to be a compound of the common ἐρυθρίαω, not a construction upon ὑπέρυθρος or ὑπερέρυθρος.

(iii) ὑποκινέω. LSJ, ‘. . .move a little’.

The lexicon cites a number of passages in which the meaning of the word changes sensibly in relation to context. At *Frogs* 637–73 occurs the famous beating match, as Aeacus attempts to determine whether Dionysus or Xanthias is truly a god by pummeling them in turn, εἴπερ θεὸς γάρ ἐστιν, οὐκ αἰσθήσεται (634). Aeacus must therefore strike with full vigor while his victims pretend not to notice: ὁπότερόν γ’ ἂν νῶν ἴδης κλαύσαντα πρότερον ἢ προτιμήσαντά τι τυπτόμενον, εἶναι τοῦτον ἡγοῦ μὴ θεόν (637–39). Therefore when Xanthias says

σκόπει νυν ἦν μ’ ὑποκινήσαντ’ ἴδης (644), his point is not whether he moves a lot or a little under the blow, but whether he moves *at all*—even perception of the blow would prove that he is not divine. The point is humorously repeated through the whole passage, as both Dionysus and Xanthias, in increasing distress, pretend not even to be aware of the beating. ὑποκινέω must therefore mean here ‘to move in response [to a blow]’, and LSJ should be emended.

(iv) \* ὑποκρούω. LSJ II, ‘break in upon, interrupt’.

The ambiguity of the English ‘interrupt’ may obscure the Greek. ὑποκρούω does not refer to an unrelated intervention from without, as Coleridge was interrupted in the composition of *Kubla Khan* by the untimely arrival of the person from Porlock; but to a reaction to a speaker, a reply or retort in support, query or denigration of his argument. At the lowest level the ὑπόκρουσις could be non-verbal noise or disconnected cries; see, e.g., *Ecclesiazusae* 588, μή νυν πρότερον μηδεὶς ὑμῶν ἀντείπη μηδ’ ὑποκρούση, where disapproval is expected—Rogers *ad loc.*, ‘heckling’. Praxagora foresees the inevitable interruption, but when it occurs it is not heckling, rather a naive and inoffensive question from Blepyrus in response to the point which she is making. πῶς οὖν ἔσται κοινὸς ἅπασι; he asks. He should have waited to learn, ἔφθης μ’ ὑποκρούσας (595–96).

The word had already occurred at *Ecclesiazusae* 256. Praxagora is asked how she will handle the reactions of the assembly: “What if Cephalus insults you?,” “What if Neocleides reviles you?,” “What if they interrupt (ὑποκρούωσιν) you?” All these possibilities will be in reaction to her outrageous proposal, that women should rule the state.

These three Aristophanic examples illuminate a fourth, at *Plutus* 548, where LSJ is desperately wrong: III in *Med.*, ‘find fault with, attack’, otherwise unattested. The source of the gloss is presumably Pollux 9.139, Ἀριστοφάνης δ’ ἐν Πλούτῳ καὶ τῷ ἐπικρούσασθαι [ἐπικρούσαι CL] ἐπὶ τοῦ νουθετῆσαι κέχρηται. The relevance of this to our question is doubtful. The text of *Plutus* 548 is firmly ὑπο-; of Pollux, firmly ἐπι-. Emendation somewhere is required to bring the two passages into conformity. But there is no certainty that Pollux is referring to this Aristophanic text anyway. He does not cite it, but says that the word is found in the *Plutus*, which it is not in our texts, and one can as easily attribute it to the first, lost *Plutus* as force it into our

text by emendation. Hall and Geldart (OCT) have it both ways, noting in their apparatus to *Plutus* 548 the word *ἐπεκρούω* as a variant derived from Pollux for the *ὑπεκρούω* which they print in text; but giving *ἐπικρούσασθαι* again as fr.448 attributed to the first *Plutus*. Third, the sense of ‘beat, strike, hammer’ is appropriate to *ἐπικρούω* (LSJ *s.v.*) but is not attested for *ὑποκρούω* unless Pollux is emended. The gloss at LSJ *s.v.* III results from a confusion of all these elements: it must derive from the Pollux passage, which it does not cite; it assumes against the texts as we have them that the reference in Pollux is to the surviving *Plutus*; and it applies his sense of *ἐπικρούσασθαι* (which is unexceptionable, though the middle is otherwise unattested) to Aristophanes’ *ὑποκρούσασθαι*—as far as we can tell, applying the wrong meaning to the wrong word in the wrong play.

But the meaning is still ‘interrupt’, and the middle voice indicates that the interrupter is furthering his own argument, not simply attacking or intervening in that of the speaker.

- 456–86 Poverty and Chremylus quarrel over her benefits to mankind and agree to argue formally, stating a penalty for the loser.
- 487–88 Choral introduction to the context.
- 489–506 Chremylus poses the advantages of universal wealth.
- 507–16 Poverty responds with the disadvantages of universal wealth.
- 517–34 Discussion, ending in three lines wherein Poverty praises herself.
- 535–47 Chremylus harshly retorts on the subject of physical misery, breaking the continuity of the contest: (1) these verses are in effect an answer to the case which Poverty has yet to present; (2) they are anyhow beside the point—*ὃ μὲν οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν βίον εἴρηκας, τὸν τῶν πτωχῶν δ’ ὑπεκρούω*, she says (548).
- 548–97 Poverty attempts to make her own case while Chremylus and Blepsidemos interject snide remarks, and Poverty complains that they will not be serious and dispute properly (557, 574–75).

Thus Chremylus has interrupted the course of the argument and proffered considerations of his own. Therefore the middle voice; *cf.* the active at *Ecclesiazusae* 595–96, above, where Blepyrus in inter-

ruption questioned Praxagora's proposal but did not make an attack on it nor present an alternative to it. 'Interrupt [a speaker]' is exactly right for *Plutus* 548; in the middle voice, 'to make one's own argument in interruption'. The entire LSJ III entry should be deleted.

(v) \*\* *ὑποπέρομαι*. LSJ, 'break wind a little'.

In the contest of the *Frogs*, Aeschylus complains that Euripides' tragedies produce worthless citizens and gives the specific example of the Lampadephoria, *λαμπάδα δ' οὐδεὶς οἶός τε φέρειν ὑπ' ἀγυμνασία* *ἔτι νυνί* (1087–88). This recalls to Dionysus a humorous experience of seeing an obviously untrained and inept runner in the torch race, being beaten by the crowd at the Thriasian gates:

οἱ Κεραμῆς

ἐν ταῖσι πύλαις παῖονς' αὐτοῦ  
 γαστέρα, πλευράς, λαγόνας, πυγῆν·  
 ὁ δὲ τυπτόμενος ταῖσι πλατεΐαις  
 ὑποπερδόμενος 1097  
 φυσῶν τὴν λαμπάδ' ἔφευγε.

Aeschylus' argument is ridiculous, Dionysus' confirmatory anecdote equally so. The picture of the pale, fat runner is enhanced by that of his beating at the hands of his fellow citizens, apparently a standard hazard in the torch race (see Rogers' note *ad loc.*). Note that this runner is beaten not about the head and shoulders but in the middle. The fart which results is not only embarrassing in itself, but by extinguishing the torch it causes the runner and his tribe to lose the race—which is the real point of all this activity—for it was won by him who first arrived at the altar and lit the flame.<sup>12</sup> Joke is piled on joke; even the position of *ὑποπερδόμενος* as a single word forming the anapaestic monometer which so frequently introduces the paroemiac indicates a nicety of style on Dionysus' part completely at variance with the subject matter. In the face of all this LSJ's 'a little' is anticlimactic, weakening the passage when in Greek it rises to final disaster in 1098. The inhabitants of the district may regularly have pummeled the runners who passed through the gates, but in this case the result was spectacular. Its recollection crowns the whole

<sup>12</sup> Daremberg-Saglio, s.v. "Lampadédromia."



anapaestic passage, the description of an event which had caused Dionysus to laugh himself dry (1089–90).<sup>13</sup>

The LSJ gloss is impossible: torches were large and were steeped in oil, pitch, resin or wax to guarantee a perdurable flame. It would take a tremendous wind to extinguish them, and that is just the point of the joke, that the runner, in being beaten, broke wind not *a little* but *a lot*, so prodigiously as to blow out his own torch. LSJ should be corrected to read, ‘break wind as a consequence’.

(vi) \*? ὑποτένω LSJ, ‘moan in a low tone, grumble’.

See also ὑποστενάζω, LSJ ‘utter low moans’, and ὑποστεναχίζω, LSJ ‘groan beneath’. This is not the place to disentangle all three verbs in the passages in which they appear; but Else (p.98) has already argued that ὑπεστενάχιζε, *Il.* 2.781, signifies response, ‘groaned (at the coming of)’. As to ὑποστενάζω, its sense at *Ajax* 1001 is surely moaning-in-response-to: “A rumor said you were gone, ἄγὼ κλύων . . . ὑπετέναζον.” Teucer is shattered; ‘utter low moans’ is weakening here.<sup>14</sup>

ὑποτένω also occurs at *Acharnians* 162, where again LSJ’s ‘grumble’ weakens the comic effect, which from the beginning of the play has depended on exaggeration of situation and emotion. Thus, (1) no one at all has come to the Pnyx save Dicaeopolis, though it is the day of a κυρία ἐκκλησία; (2) when the citizens do arrive, it is all in a rush and a jumble; (3) the first speaker, Amphitheus, claims to be a god and is straightway hauled off by the archers amid great clamor; (4) the absurd Ambassadors appear, to tell a ludicrous story of their sufferings during a lengthy, luxurious and expensive journey to Persia; (5) they introduce a fabulously costumed messenger from the King whose announcement is largely gibberish but can be interpreted to mean that the embassy was a complete waste of time and money (he

<sup>13</sup> Stanford takes *φυσῶν* otherwise, ‘blowing his torch to keep it alight’. But *φυσάω* at Theophr. *De Igne* 28 means ‘to extinguish by blowing’, and the whole point of this passage is Dionysus’ agreement with Aeschylus’ allegation that incompetence in the torch race is characteristic of today’s spoiled youth. The greatest failure lies in letting the flame go out, the greatest incompetence lies in putting it out oneself, the greatest comic effect lies in farting it out. LSJ s.v. π.4 should be followed.

<sup>14</sup> I see no point in Jebb *ad loc.*, “restraining the vehemence of his grief.” One person might be so described by another (as Jebb describes Teucer), but he would hardly so describe himself: “I groaned, but not beyond the bounds of good taste,” or the like. The case of *Ajax* 322 is different, the editors agreeing on ‘low’ as the sense, not ‘in restraint’; and so at *Electra* 79.

is nonetheless invited to dine at state expense); (6) another Ambassador arrives, from heavy drinking at the Thracian court, his journey too apparently lengthened because of his continuing pay; (7) he introduces an unruly crowd of Odomantes who scrabble about altogether like Waugh’s Welsh band in *Decline and Fall* and steal Dicaeopolis’ lunch while he is debating (163–68). They also seem better suited to sexual attacks than to military (158, 161). And withal this worthless mob is offered to the Athenians by their ally Sitalces not as an earnest of his cooperation but on condition that they be paid two drachmas a day, *τούτοις δύο δραχμάς*. Dicaeopolis is appalled and repeats the Ambassador’s words in emphasis, exclaiming “*Two drachmas —for these?!*” The sum is enormous, twice as much as the maximum attested for military pay during the Peloponnesian War.<sup>15</sup> *ὑποστένου μέντ’ ἄν ὁ θρανίτης λεώς* (= ‘our best men’, see Rogers *ad loc.*) (162)—surely not *grumble*, as LSJ, inappropriate both to the comic impetus of the passage and the logic of the argument. The Assembly scene uses strong language throughout, Sitalces’ proposal is idiotic and insulting, and no regular military men, seeing double pay awarded the useless Odomantes, would ‘grumble’: they would employ loud, offensive and colorful language of the sort reserved to enraged sailors and special lexis. Aristophanes even here is incorrigible and in *στένω* (LSJ ‘bewail, lament’) uses a term from Epic and Tragedy designed to give a ponderous solemnity to the justified outrage of the military. The term here is paratragic but is nonetheless forceful. It ought not to be weakened by a deprecating *ὑπο-*. ‘Moan in a low tone’ and ‘grumble’ spoil the point.

(vii) *ὑφαρπάζομαι*. LSJ to *Clouds* 490, Med. ‘snap up the meaning of a sentence’.

The gloss misses the ambiguity and therefore the joke in the text. Socrates is attempting to introduce Strepsiades to the Phrontisterion. “Tell me your ways so that I can knowledgeably proffer you new devices” (*ἵνα . . . μηχανὰς . . . καινὰς προσφέρω*, 478–80). Strepsiades wrongly understands him to speak in military terms, *μηχανὰς προσφέρειν* = ‘bring siege equipment against’: “For God’s sake, do you

<sup>15</sup> W. K. Pritchett, *Ancient Greek Military Practices* (Berkeley 1971) 14–24. The evidence varies, as did the rate of pay, but the absolute maximum in our sources for an individual (i.e., without *ὑπερετήε*) is one drachma per day. This passage, not cited by Pritchett, is good evidence for two drachmas as wildly high.

intend to besiege me?" (481). The joke lies in Socrates' use of philosophic terminology which is taken quite otherwise by the naive Strepsiades (though another level of the joke may be the imposition of this terminology on Socrates, for *μηχανή* in Plato is sometimes disparaging, e.g. *Laws* 908D *σοφιστῶν μηχαναί*). Socrates tries again, but Strepsiades' inability to comprehend reappears several lines later (488ff):

SOCR. ἄγε νυν ὅπως ὅταν τι προβάλω σοὶ σοφὸν  
περὶ τῶν μετεώρων, εὐθέως ὑφαρπάσει.  
STR. τί δαί; κυνηδὸν τὴν σοφίαν σιτήσομαι;

Here too Socrates uses the terminology of philosophical discussion in *προβάλω*: LSJ 'propose a question', cf. *πρόβλημα*, and urges Strepsiades to seize on what he is about to say. And again Strepsiades hears the words differently, as *προβάλλω* 'throw before' (*n.b.*, 'throw before dogs' in Hdt. 9.112), and *ὑφαρπάζω*, LSJ 'snatch from under, take away underhand', *i.e.* *ὑπο-* as 'under' or 'secretly'. With the image in his mind of a scrap of food thrown to a dog, he replies, "What in the world? Am I to gobble wisdom like a dog?" Socrates in exasperation at Strepsiades' inanity exclaims, *ἄνθρωπος ἀμαθῆς οὕτως καὶ βάρβαρος* (492); that is, he does not reply to him directly, for the simplest attempt at philosophic statement will be misunderstood. LSJ renders *βάρβαρος* in this passage as 'brutal, rude' (*s.v.* II), Rogers as 'savage'. But the word specifically indicates incapacity in Greek, LSJ "non-Greek . . . 2, esp. of language," and Socrates' complaint is precisely Strepsiades' blockheaded perversion of language: "This man's a dunce, and he can't understand Greek"—a hyperbole with which one can sympathize. Now since Strepsiades' dog simile is wrong—its wrongness is the joke itself—it cannot have been intended in Socrates' original statement; had it inhered in *ὑφαρπάσει*, then that statement would have been gibberish, for *προβάλλω* is a term of art and the two verbs would make no sense together. Therefore Socrates' philosophical vocabulary must include both verbs, and so must Strepsiades' misunderstanding. It is precisely because the joke lies here that *ὑφαρπάσει* as used by Socrates cannot mean what LSJ suggest. Just what Socrates meant is a matter of surmise since the word occurs rarely in the philosophical texts—once in Plato, *Euthydemus* 300D, as 'interpose'. I suggest that in our passage Socrates is saying, "when I put forth something clever, you [in response, *ὑπο-*] seize it." The LSJ gloss,

'snap up . . .', represents not what Socrates said but Strepsiades' misunderstanding of it. (Nor should the rest of the gloss, ' . . . the meaning of a sentence', stand uncorrected. Socrates is not beginning an analytic dialogue in these lines; rather, having just undertaken to help Strepsiades [478–80] but discovering that he is weak in both memory and address [483–87], Socrates will simply present him with clever devices: "When I pose something clever, see to it that you straightway seize it." Strepsiades has to grasp not the 'meaning' of anything, but *κοφόν τι* itself. Cf. the post-parabasis passage from v.627, where Socrates' disgust with Strepsiades derives not from the latter's inability to comprehend but simply to remember the smallest matter.)

LSJ *s.v.* *ὑφαρπάζω* 2.Med. should be corrected to 'respond by seizing'; and *s.v.* *βάρβαρος* move the reference to *Clouds* 492 from II to I.2.

This assortment of *ὑπο-* words from Aristophanes illustrates the persistence of the sense 'in response or reaction'. There are in fact dozens of instances, in prose and verse, from many authors over the centuries. These examples suffice, for they show that this sense still obtained in the fifth century, in words which Aristophanes' audience had never previously used or even heard. 'In response' was for them one regular meaning of *ὑπο-*, and to that extent is justified the rendition of *ὑποκριτής* as 'responder, answerer'.

## II

There remains the other argument indicated above, that *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* means 'to interpret' in Attic. One can of course maintain, as does Zucchelli, that Else's demonstration of the sense 'in response' for *ὑπο-* in any number of Homeric words does not prove that sense of it in *ὑποκρίνεσθαι*. And one could accept 'in response' without taking the verb as 'to answer', e.g. 'to interpret [e.g. an oracle] in response to one who inquires about it'. It is impossible to deny this gloss since the Homeric contexts in which the verb appears allow it. But that it should mean this in Homer does not require that it mean the same everywhere, and Lesky has overstated his case when it comes to *ὑποκριτής*. His position has two facets to it:

- (1) *ὑποκρίνεσθαι*, common as 'to answer' in Ionic, does not mean that in Attic; [*a fortiori* *ὑποκριτής* cannot mean 'answerer']

- (2) ἀποκρίνεσθαι is the Attic for ‘to answer’; [had the Athenians wished to denote the actor as ‘answerer’ they would have used \*ἀποκριτής *vel sim.*]

These assertions have been repeated in the more recent literature. I would argue that the first is incorrect, the second misleading.

- (1) ὑποκρίνεσθαι. LSJ Med., ‘reply, make answer’.

It is said that this sense does not apply in Attic, yet there are several examples of it, whose significance is simply denied in the most casual way.

a. Thucydides 7.44.5. In the dark confusion of the battle of Epipolae the soldiers asked each other the password, εἰ δ’ αὐτοὶ μὴ ὑποκρίνοιντο, διεφθείροντο. The reading ὑπο- is found in all the major manuscripts and is a key reading in the tradition of the archetype. Modern critics either deprecate it as an Ionicism or alter it. The variant ἀπο- first appears in F<sup>2</sup>, which is no earlier than the eleventh century and at least three steps removed from the archetype according to Kleinlogel’s stemma.<sup>16</sup> Presumably the variant was an intended correction or an integrated gloss. Hude (Teubner) and Bodin/de Romilly (Budé) have kept to the manuscript tradition, ὑποκρίνοιντο; Jones/Powell (OCT) read ἀποκρίνοιντο, probably to regularize the text to what is assumed to be standard Thucydidean style. Now as will be seen below, the latter verb has a special nuance of the giving of a considered answer, where the former has to do with a declarative statement in answer to a question of fact. And it is just in this passage that we want ‘to respond to an inquiry’: the situation is dramatically charged, but the question is one of fact, “What is the password?” The answer does not require rumination, philosophical examination or self-justification; the password is a given, and either you know it or you don’t. ἀποκρίνοιντο would be quite the wrong word here; ὑποκρίνοιντο must be the right one. The editions should stand with the manuscripts.

b. Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Aulis* 1354. Achilles relates to Clytaemnestra his treatment by the army when he forwarded his claim to Iphigeneia. To his report of the taunt of unworthiness brought against him, Clytaemnestra asks, ὑπεκρίνω δὲ τί;—“What was your reply?” ὑπεκρίνω is found in both L and P, i.e., it is as certain as anything in the

<sup>16</sup> A. Kleinlogel, *Geschichte des Thukydidestextes im Mittelalter* (Berlin 1965) 29, 132.

manuscript tradition. But it does not appear in some of our texts (e.g. Murray's OCT) since it was edited away by Triclinius, who altered to ἀπεκρίνω. Now the original situation in which Achilles found himself may have been tense, and his response to the army considered; but Clytaemnestra is here asking for the facts. She is not asking, "On what grounds did you defend yourself?" but "What did you say?" The alteration is unnecessary; here too the editions should stand with the manuscripts.

c. Aristophanes fr.585 Kock.

“ἄκων κτενῶ σε, τέκνον.” ὁ δ' ὑπεκρίνετο  
 “ἐπὶ Παλλαδίῳ τᾶρ', ὦ πάτερ, δώσεις δίκην.”

The context is unknown. The manuscripts read as here; some editors, most recently Edmonds, have arbitrarily altered to ἀπεκρίνατο. The father does not pose a question in the text as we have it, though it is possible that his four words were originally the end of a query now invisible. At any rate the boy responds with a fact; indeed the fact is the reason we have the fragment at all, for it is preserved in Eustathius 1419.52 as an illustration, ἐδίκασον δὲ κατὰ Πausανίαν ἐκεῖ ἀκουσίους φόνους οἱ ἐφέται. The joke may even lie in the choice of ὑπεκρίνετο rather than ἀπεκρίνετο, that is that the response of the child is not defensive or pleading or accusatory but incredibly dispassionate, even pedantic in the face of disaster. There is no reason to alter the text.

d. IG I<sup>2</sup> 410, a fifth-century inscription.

πᾶσιν ἴσ' ἀνθρώποι[ς] ὑποκρίνομαι, ἥστις ἐ[ρ]οτᾶι·  
 ἥος μ' ἀνέθεκ' ἀνδρῶν Ἀντιφάνες δεκάτεν.

Lesky (473–74), Koller (101 n.3) and Zucchelli (23) reject this evidence out of hand. The inscription is Athenian, but the language of an elegiac couplet is taken by them as suspect: “nella lingua della poesia epigrammatica, com'è da tutti ammesso, l'influenza dell'epica è troppo vasta per consentirci trarre qualche conclusione.” That is true for much of elegiac, but the language of this couplet is otherwise prosaic Attic. ἐρωτάω does not occur with the short first syllable in Epic or fifth-century Ionic; and when it is found in epic hexameters with εἶρ-, it never falls in final position in the line.

Note that here too ἀποκρίνομαι would be out of place. The answer is a matter of fact, “Antiphanes dedicated me as a tithe.” There is no reason to reject this evidence beyond an insistence on forcing it to fit a theory.

One other example in fifth-century Attic is possible but uncertain: e. Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 401. Dicaeopolis marvels at Cephisophon’s reply to his question, “Is Euripides within?” CΕΡΗ., “He is not within, being within.” ΔΙC., “How is he within, yet not within?” CΕΡΗ., “His mind is without, etc., and he is within writing, etc.” ΔΙC., ὁ δοῦλος οὕτωςι σοφῶς ὑποκρίνεται (396–401). The Ravenna ms. reads thus, the others ἀποκρίνεται. Even if the text as above is correct, as I believe it to be, the meaning of the verb is not certain and may be deliberately ambiguous. Rogers *ad loc.*, “the cleverness of Cephisophon seems to consist in his giving such an ingenious answer, οὐκ ἔνδον, ἔνδον ἐστίν, rather than in interpreting his own enigmatic utterance.” But that requires understanding Dicaeopolis’ ὑποκρίνεται as referring to Cephisophon’s first reply at 396, not the one just uttered at 397–400. Further, the second answer is a witty (οὕτωςι σοφῶς) interpretation of a conundrum which Cephisophon has himself posed. It may even be that ὑποκρίνεται is here used absolutely as ‘acts’: even Euripides’ assistant plays the part of a Euripidean actor. A certain solemnity would have to be made evident in the performance of the rôle of Cephisophon, but the sentiments which he expresses here are appropriate to the extremes of Euripidean rationalization, and his utterance of them is couched in the tragic rather than the comic trimeter. Thus ‘interpret’, ‘answer’ and ‘act’ are all possible senses of the verb in this passage.

Here then are four instances of ὑποκρίνεσθαι ‘to answer’ in fifth-century Attic, in four authors, in prose and verse. Editors have tried to eradicate each of the first three by altering the texts; the fourth, on stone, is said not to matter. The whole procedure is Procrustean: having resolved that the verb does not have the sense ‘to answer’ in Attic, they remove the offending word wherever it appears in Attic, to preserve the theory rather than the texts. And this is done in a completely offhand way. Thus Zucchelli (p.32), who finding the word “exceptional” in this sense in Attic, prefers ‘to interpret’ and cites *Wasps* 53 in support. He neglects to emphasize that the citation is unique and therefore still more exceptional than ‘to answer’. He con-

cludes, “per *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* ‘interpretare’ i documenti, per quanto non abbondanti [!—there is one only] appaiono più sicuri” [*scil.* than for ‘rispondere’], and further that this was probably the sense of the word “nell’attico più antico,” for which there is no evidence whatever, only the presumption of a monosemantic continuity stretching back to Homer and the occurrence of the word in that sense, correctly, in the later Atticizers. Such disinclination to face the evidence is outdone by Koller, who simply announces that *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* ‘to answer’ is restricted to Ionic and dismisses the entire matter of the Attic occurrences in a two-sentence footnote (101 n.3).

A problem still remains. It was the very rarity of the word in Attic which made scholars distrust the few instances in which it occurs and which led to the conclusion that it should be accepted only as Ionic. Inquiries and answers abound in Attic Greek; if *ὑποκρίνεσθαι* is Attic ‘to answer’, why is it so uncommon, and what other word *did* the Athenians use? Curiously, the evidence is very sparse. *ἀμείβεσθαι* and *ἀντιφωνεῖν* are found in the tragedians but almost never in prose; *ἀνταμείβεσθαι* is even rarer; *ἀπαμείβεσθαι*, so common in Homer, apparently occurs only once in Attic: Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.5.15, where it has a Homeric flavor, for it introduces Tissaphernes’ long speech in answer to Clearchus’ long speech; *ἀντιλέγειν* and *ἀντιπεῖν* include the element of contradiction or disputation. The remarkable fact is that there was no word at all in common use meaning ‘to answer an inquiry’; the prosaic Attic is simply a form of *λέγειν*, *φάναι* or *εἰπεῖν*. There must be hundreds of examples. Thus from the *Anabasis*, (a) Xenophon asked, “Why did you call me?” *ὁ δὲ λέγει αὐτῷ . . .* (3.4.39). (b) Asked what he needed, the Rhodian replied, “Skins.”—*ἔρωτώμενος δὲ ὅτου δέοιτο, Ἀσκῶν, ἔφη* (3.5.9). (c) A man asked where he might find Proxenus—*. . . ποῦ ἂν ἴδοι Πρόξενον . . . ἐπεὶ δὲ Πρόξενος εἶπεν ὅτι αὐτός εἰμι ὃν ζητεῖς, . . .* (2.4.15–16).

What then of *ἀποκρίνεσθαι*?

(2) *ἀποκρίνεσθαι*. LSJ Med., ‘give answer to, reply to a question’. 2. ‘answer charges, defend oneself’.

The second sense, ‘answer charges’, is well enough attested; of the first too there are many occurrences, yet when it is considered carefully in context, a certain tone begins to emerge, as I have suggested above. For examples, LSJ cite Thucydides 1.90.2–3: the Spartans demanded that the Athenians not rebuild their walls, the which in



response (*ἀποκρινόμενοι*) they refused. At Thucydides 3.61.1, to the Spartans' deadly question, "What good have you done the Lacedaemonians in this war?," the Plataeans replied (*ἀπεκρίναντο*) in self-defense. At Thucydides 5.42.2 the Athenians in fury sent away the messengers who had come about Panactum, thinking themselves ill-used (*χαλεπῶς ἀποκρινόμενοι ἀπέπεμψαν*). At Thucydides 8.71.1, to envoys of the Four Hundred seeking a peace treaty, Agis gave no encouraging response (*οὐδὲν ξυμβατικὸν ἀπεκρίνατο*). In each case the answer responds to some kind of pressure—a threat, an offer, a plea—and in each case the response is considered. It reveals a decision taken, an attitude held or a judgement made by the responder; insofar as the responder is involved in the matter at hand it is self-interested, and even life or death can hang upon it. On the response (*ἀπόκρισις*) of the Plataeans to the Spartans depends their very survival. The last case is hardly different from LSJ *s.v.* 2, 'answer charges, defend oneself' and reveals that this second sense is only a category of the first. When all the instances of *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* and *ἀπόκρισις* are vetted, the results are the same. The Boeotians' response to the Athenian herald's request in Book 4, the Melian response to the Athenian threat in Book 5, the Camarinean response to the Athenian proposal in Book 6, Astyocho's response to the sailors' demands in Book 8—these and the other Thucydidean examples all show in *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* a reaction to pressure and the assumption of a position.

The word occurs as well in Tragedy and Comedy. In Euripides' *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, Clytemnestra insists that Agamemnon reveal his purpose: "Did you intend to kill our daughter?" Agamemnon, evasively, "... You suspect what you ought not." Clytemnestra, "... *ἀπόκριναι!*" (1131–3). For attitude and intent see also *Suppliants* 516. The notion of self-revelation, without subjection to attack, is found at *Bacchae* 1271, Cadmus gently to Agave, "Can you answer (*ἀποκρίναιο*) clearly [coming from your trance]?" Finally the apothegm of fr.977, *ἢ γὰρ κιωπή τοῖς σοφοῖσιν ἀπόκρισις*, plainly implies an involvement in the situation on the part of the wise; an answer to a plain question of fact—"What time is it?"—would make no sense here. So too in Aristophanes, where *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* occurs ten times, always with the note of judgement in reply. In five of these passages the imperative means either 'give a considered opinion' or 'make your case'; in *Thesmophoriazousae* 740, virtually 'tell the truth!'

In fourth century prose *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* continues to have this preg-

nant significance. In Isocrates see, e.g., 6.58, “those who oppose me demand that I answer (*ἀποκρίνασθαι*) where I think aid will come from”; and *ἀπόκρισις* means such a considered answer or a decision (8.62, 12.170). In Plato and Aristotle the word has a coloring appropriate to a philosophical setting, ‘to answer the problem (when put as a question) being *ἡ ἐρώτησις, τὸ ἐρωτώμενον* or *τὸ ἐρωτηθὲν* (e.g., Pl. *Resp.* 487E, Arist. *Metaph.* 1007a9–11). ‘To answer’ here is to state one’s position in dialectic; in fact the phrase *αἱ ἐρωτήσεις καὶ αἱ ἀποκρίσεις* means ‘dialectic’, Isocrates 15.45. But the association of the two terms goes back to the fifth century when *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* as ‘to answer’ first appears. At Thucydides 3.61.1, “the Plataeans answered the question” [*viz.* “What good have you done the Lacedaemonians?”]—*τὸ ἐρωτηθὲν ἀπεκρίνοντο*. And in *Clouds* 345, Socrates is parodied saying to Strepsiades, presumably characteristically, *ἀπόκριναί νυν ἄττ’ ἄν ἔρωμαι*, effectively “Give me a serious answer.” The dialectical situation is free from threats and pleas, but the question put is often a challenge, and the answer is seriously considered and assumes the personal commitment of the answerer.

Therefore the assertion that ‘to answer’ in Attic was *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* is too casual. The word always connotes the personal involvement of the answerer and is not used for a factual answer to a simple inquiry, “What is your name?,” “Which is the road to Delphi?” But it is this sense which ‘answerer’ in tragedy demands. As Else has shown, the messenger is the character best identified as ‘answerer’, for it is he who brings information to the play from outside and who delivers it in response to inquiry. The inquiry of itself does not bear on him personally. For this kind of response *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* does not serve, which is why *\*ἀποκριτής* is unknown, not because the actor is no answerer, but because *ἀποκρίνεσθαι* is the wrong word here.

It is especially instructive to note instances in which ‘to answer’ is supplied by both *λέγειν κ.τ.λ.* and *ἀποκρίνεσθαι*, depending on the sense required. In Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.3.4–7, messengers from the Persian King came to Clearchus, who was wary of them. He asked them what they wanted. They replied with the fact (*ἔλεγον*) that they had come to negotiate a truce. Clearchus countered, calculating his position, and sent them away—*ὁ δὲ ἀπεκρίνατο*, “First we must fight since we’ve had nothing to eat.” The messengers subsequently returned from the king and promised to lead the men to provisions under a truce. Clearchus asked whether the truce applied to some of

his men or to all; οἱ δὲ, "Ἀπασι, ἔφασαν. Clearchus' answer to the offer of truce was a decision based on consideration, ἀπεκρίνατο. The messengers' answers were statements of fact which they simply conveyed, ἔλεγον, ἔφασαν.<sup>17</sup> For another good example of the distinction between the two expressions 'to answer', see the trial of Orontes at *Anabasis* 1.6.7–8.

In sum,

- i. ἀποκρίνεσθαι as 'to answer' in Attic has the specialized connotation of responding to a threat, challenge, charge, plea or proposal; and indicates that the answerer takes a position or makes an evaluation. The verb does not mean 'to answer an inquiry' on a question of fact.
- ii. ὑποκρίνεσθαι does indeed mean 'to answer' in Attic, specifically 'to answer an inquiry' on a question of fact.
- iii. The rarity of ὑποκρίνεσθαι is not owing to its being foreign to Athens. Rather, *all* such words are comparatively uncommon, owing to a disinclination in Attic to use any word at all specifying simply verbal response to inquiry. The usual Attic is just a verb of 'saying', λέγειν, φάναι or εἰπεῖν.
- iv. \*ἀποκριτής, implying self-interested response, would have been inappropriate for the 'answerer' of early tragedy.
- v. ὑποκριτής is perfectly satisfactory as 'answerer' in Attic, particularly in view of the practical difficulties in devising a *nomen agentis* with such a meaning from λέγειν κ.τ.λ.

The objections brought against ὑποκριτής 'answerer' do not stand. Whatever the sense of ὑποκρίνεσθαι elsewhere, in fifth-century Attic it occurs most frequently—indeed almost exclusively—as 'to answer', whence ὑποκριτής 'answerer'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Thuc. 7.10.1, where the messengers sent to Athens by Nicias ὅσα τε ἀπὸ γλώσσης εἶρητο αὐτοῖς εἶπον καὶ εἴ τις τι ἐπηρώτα ἀπεκρίνοντο—i.e., they announced that which they had been told to say, and in answer to questions on these matters (ἐπι-) they replied with their own judgements (as against those things which they conveyed from Nicias).

<sup>18</sup> I am grateful for the criticisms of the anonymous reader, who has helped to improve the Aristophanic readings above without agreeing with them.