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## ARISTOPHANES, WASPS 1208–15 AND THE NON-ELITE SYMPOSION\*

### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the portrayal of social class and conviviality in Aristophanes' Wasps 1208–15 and argues that the passage—in which Bdelycleon corrects Philocleon's clumsy reclining as he prepares to attend an elite symposion—assumes that Philocleon (though a man of modest means) is no novice to reclined symposia, merely to the elegance expected of wealthy symposiasts. It is argued that the exchange between father and son focusses on reclining elegantly rather than on more rudimentary points, and that the passage's language of haste suggests the matter is viewed as a trivial preliminary to more important components of Philocleon's sympotic education. The article then considers external evidence supporting the argument that symposia were widespread through the social spectrum in fifth-century Athens, although more modest symposia did not employ costly paraphernalia such as banqueting klinai. Based on this external evidence and on consideration of the terminology in Wasps 1208–15, it is further argued that a klinê would have been used as a prop during the scene and that the scene centres on Philocleon's unfamiliarity with using this costly piece of furniture rather than on more general ignorance of reclined conviviality. This conclusion has implications for sympotic scholarship, which remains divided on the extent to which symposia were restricted to the wealthy elite in Classical Athens. This article provides support for the position that sympotic conviviality was widespread across the social spectrum and that differences between elite and non-elite symposia centred on paraphernalia (such as banqueting klinai) and behavioural norms.*

**Keywords:** Aristophanes; Wasps; symposion; klinê; social history; conviviality

### INTRODUCTION

The Archaic and Classical *symposion* has been the subject of considerable scholarly interest: though interpretations of this convivial occasion differ in many particulars, it is generally understood as a post-prandial elite male social gathering at which wine was consumed by reclining revellers who performed and improvised music, poetry and witticisms in an agonistic spirit as conversation flowed on a range of topics and entertainers such as *hetairai* offered a variety of services.<sup>1</sup> Aristophanic comedy

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica: A Symposium on the Symposion* (Oxford, 1990); O. Murray, *The Symposion. Drinking Greek Style: Essays on Greek Pleasure, 1983–2017*, ed. V. Cazzato (Oxford, 2018); O. Murray and M. Tecuşan (edd.), *In Vino Veritas* (London, 1995); A. Schäfer, *Unterhaltung beim griechischen symposion: Darbietungen, Spiele und Wettkämpfe von homerischer bis in*

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frequently includes sympotic scenes and references, and they have often served as evidence for scholarly examinations of Classical *symposia*.<sup>2</sup> *Wasps* 1122–264, in which Bdelycleon teaches his father, Philocleon, how to comport himself in a high-society *symposion*, has been particularly prominent in discussions of sympotic drinking.<sup>3</sup> The elaborate comedy of manners in this section of the *Wasps* centres on social class and sympotic activity, paying particular attention to the cultured Bdelycleon's frustrations as he attempts to teach his comparatively coarse father how to dress, converse, recline and play *skolion* (the drinking game of witty and humorous poetic improvisation) in polite society.<sup>4</sup> This article examines lines 1208–15, in which Bdelycleon instructs his father on the practice of reclining, a passage which has important implications for broader understandings of fifth-century Athenian *symposia*. There are two general schools of thought on the passage, centring on the specific nature of Philocleon's ignorance about reclined conviviality. One possible interpretation is that Philocleon is unaccustomed to drinking while reclining—that is, that he is used to drinking while sitting—and that he therefore requires instruction on the basic practice of reclining to drink.<sup>5</sup> This interpretation has been championed by scholars who closely associate reclined drinking

*spätklassische Zeit* (Mainz am Rhein, 1997); M.L. Catoni, *Bere vino puro: immagini del simposio* (Milan, 2010); K. Lynch, *The Symposium in Context: Pottery from a Late Archaic House Near the Athenian Agora* (Princeton, 2011); K. Topper, *The Imagery of the Athenian Symposium* (Cambridge, 2012); F. Hobden, *The Symposium in Ancient Greek Society and Thought* (Cambridge, 2013); M. Węcowski, *The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet* (Oxford, 2014); S. Corner, 'Symposium', in J. Wilkins and R. Nadeau (edd.), *A Companion to Food in the Ancient World* (Malden and Oxford, 2015), 234–42.

<sup>2</sup> See especially E. Bowie, 'Wine in Old Comedy', in Murray and Tecuşan (n. 1), 113–25; A.M. Bowie, 'Thinking with drinking: wine and the symposium in Aristophanes', *JHS* 117 (1997), 1–21; N. Fisher, 'Symposiasts, fish-eaters and flatterers: social mobility and moral concerns in Old Comedy', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (edd.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes: Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (London, 2000), 355–96; J. Wilkins, *The Boastful Chef: The Discourse of Food in Ancient Greek Comedy* (Oxford, 2000); B. Pütz, *The Symposium and Komos in Aristophanes* (Oxford, 2007<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>3</sup> E.g. M. Vetta, 'Un capitolo di storia di poesia simposiale. (Per l'esegesi di Aristofane, "Vespe" 1222–1248)', in M. Vetta (ed.), *Poesia e simposio nella Grecia antica: guida storica e critica* (Rome and Bari, 1983), 117–31; F. Cooper and S. Morris, 'Dining in round buildings', in Murray (n. 1 [1990]), 66–85, at 77–8; O. Murray, 'The affair of the mysteries: democracy and the drinking group', in Murray (n. 1 [1990]), 149–61, at 150; O. Murray, 'Forms of sociality', in J.-P. Vernant (ed.), *The Greeks* (Chicago and London, 1995), 218–53, at 239; O. Murray, 'Symptotica—twenty years on', in C. Orfanos and J.-C. Carrière (edd.), *Symposium: banquet et représentations en Grèce et à Rome* (Toulouse, 2003), 13–21, at 17; A. Dalby, *Siren Feasts: A History of Food and Gastronomy in Greece* (London and New York, 1996), 14; E. Bowie (n. 2), 114; A.M. Bowie (n. 2), 8–11; J. Davidson, *Courtesans & Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (London, 1997), 53; Fisher (n. 2), 356–7, 370–1; A. Steiner, 'Private and public: links between *symposion* and *syssition* in fifth-century Athens', *ClAnt* 21 (2002), 347–90, at 351 n. 27; D. Collins, *Master of the Game: Competition and Performance in Greek Poetry* (Washington, DC, 2004), 99–110; I.M. Konstantakos, 'The drinking theatre: staged symposia in Greek comedy', *Mnemosyne* 58 (2005), 183–217, at 199; K. Lynch, 'More thoughts on the space of the symposium', in R. Westgate, N. Fisher and J. Whitley (edd.), *Building Communities: House, Settlement and Society in the Aegean and Beyond* (London, 2007), 243–9, at 247; Węcowski (n. 1), 90.

<sup>4</sup> As noted by Pütz (n. 2), 96, it is not clear how Bdelycleon himself found acceptance in elite social circles. See also Fisher (n. 2), 356–7, contrasting the coarse father with his more cultured son.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Murray (n. 3 [1990]), 150; Murray (n. 3 [1995]), 239; Murray (n. 3 [2003]), 17; Cooper and Morris (n. 3), 77–8; Dalby (n. 3), 14; Steiner (n. 3), 351 n. 27. Murray (n. 3 [1990]), 150 and (n. 3 [1995]), 239 is a bit ambiguous as to whether the issue is the simple fact of reclining or the more particular challenge of reclining with aristocratic grace, though the assertion at Murray (n. 3 [1995]), 237 that there was a 'class distinction between seated and reclining conviviality' suggests that he views the issue as reclining in general.

with *symposia* and *symposia* with the Athenian elite.<sup>6</sup> Following this interpretation, Philocleon—a man of moderate means—would not typically participate in *symposia*, which are the province of the elite, and he is therefore unaccustomed to reclining while drinking. The other interpretation is that Philocleon has some pre-existing familiarity with reclined conviviality but requires a primer on how to recline with the grace and refinement that would be expected in a high-society *symposion*.<sup>7</sup> This second interpretation has been championed by scholars who argue that sympotic participation was not limited to the wealthy elite.<sup>8</sup> These scholars maintain that certain graceful refinements and the use of costly equipment such as banqueting *klinai* and metal drinking vessels may have been limited to the elite, but that lower-cost *symposia* involving reclining on the ground and less-expensive ceramic vessels were enjoyed by a wider range of the social spectrum. This article argues that the lesson in reclining Philocleon receives from Bdelycleon indicates that the former does indeed have experience reclining at *symposia* on the ground and that the scene centres on his unrefined mannerisms and his unfamiliarity with banqueting *klinai* rather than on complete sympotic ignorance. As is briefly discussed at the end of this article, this position has implications that go beyond the interpretation of *Wasps* 1208–15 and speak more broadly to the relationship between social status and reclined conviviality in Classical Athens.

#### ‘HOW AM I TO RECLINE?’

A close reading of the passage in question strongly suggests that Philocleon is not being taught to recline because he never does such a thing while drinking; he is rather being taught how to recline elegantly among the wealthy and well-mannered. The passage begins with a transition, as Bdelycleon has grown tired of listening to examples of the

<sup>6</sup> On *symposia* as the province of the elite, see especially Węcowski (n. 1), *passim*; W. Filser, *Die elite Athens auf der attischen Luxuskeramik* (Berlin / Munich / Boston, 2017), 173–209, 234–5 and 568–72, as well as the collected works of Murray (n. 1 [2018]), *passim*, who has been most influential in championing a vision of the *symposion* as the quintessential custom of the Greek elite. For the close association of *symposia* and reclining, see especially Cooper and Morris (n. 3), 77–8; O. Murray, ‘Sympotic history’, in Murray (n. 1 [1990]), 3–13, at 6–7; O. Murray, ‘The symposion between east and west’, in V. Cazzato, D. Obbink and E.E. Prodi (edd.), *The Cup of Song: Studies on Poetry and the Symposion* (Oxford, 2016), 17–27, at 19; Topper (n. 1), 4–5. For the contrary view that reclining was more incidental to the *symposion*, see Węcowski (n. 1), 117–21.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. A.M. Bowie (n. 2), 10; Fisher (n. 2), 356–7; Wilkins (n. 2), 207; Pütz (n. 2), 83–97; Lynch (n. 3), 247. Though A.M. Bowie (n. 2), 10 is slightly ambiguous as to whether the scene turns on complete sympotic ignorance or only on ignorance of refined manners, his comments on page 3 suggest that he means the latter. Fisher (n. 2), 356–7 is somewhat ambiguous on the point: though he views Philocleon as emblematic of the ‘vulgar and coarse’ (in opposition to the ‘smart, politically active, *sympotai*, the *kaloi kagathoi*’), he discusses the old man as one who ‘never used to recline on *klinai* to drink’ rather than as one who never reclined at all (see below on *klinai* and social class). Similarly, Lynch (n. 3), 247 argues that Philocleon displays familiarity with low-cost and low-class *symposia*, though she does not dwell on the specific question of his reclining posture. Pütz (n. 2), 83–97 is somewhat ambiguous on Philocleon’s experience of reclined conviviality but suggests that Philocleon may have had prior familiarity with non-elite *symposia*; see especially page 96: ‘[Philocleon] has apparently never been at a symposium, at least not an aristocratic one, himself . . . Philocleon does also have at least a limited knowledge about symposia.’

<sup>8</sup> On *symposia* as not limited to the wealthy elite, see e.g. Schäfer (n. 1), 41–68; Fisher (n. 2); Wilkins (n. 2), 205–8; J. Wilkins and S. Hill, *Food in the Ancient World* (Malden and Oxford, 2006), 69–71; Lynch (n. 3); Lynch (n. 1), 170–3; K. Lynch, ‘Drinking and dining’, in T.J. Smith and D. Plantzos (edd.), *A Companion to Greek Art*, (Malden, 2012), 525–42, at 532–3; Corner (n. 1), 237–9; R. Nadeau, ‘Table manners’, in J. Wilkins and R. Nadeau (edd.), *A Companion to Food in the Ancient World* (Malden and Oxford, 2015), 265–72, at 267.

boorish stories his father believes suitable for high-class *symposia* and enjoins him to shift to a new topic:<sup>9</sup>

Bd.	παῦ' ἀλλὰ δευρὶ κατακλινεῖς προσμάνθανε ξυμποτικὸς εἶναι καὶ ξυνουσιαστικὸς.	1208
Φι.	πῶς οὖν κατακλινῶ; φράζ' ἀνύσας.	1210
Bd.	εὐσχημόνως.	
Φι.	ὡδὶ κελεύεις κατακλινῆναι;	
Bd.	μηδαμῶς.	
Φι.	πῶς δαί;	
Bd.	τὰ γόνατ' ἔκτεινε, καὶ γυμναστικῶς ὑγρὸν χύτλασον σεαυτὸν ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν. ἔπειτ' ἐπαίνεσόν τι τῶν χαλκωμάτων, ὄροφῆν θέασαι, κρεκάδι' ἀύλης θαύμασον.	1215

Bd. Stop: rather, reclined here, learn in addition how to be sympotic and sociable.

Ph. How then am I to recline? Show me quickly.

Bd. Elegantly.

Ph. Is this how you bid me to recline?

Bd. Not at all.

Ph. How then?

Bd. Stretch out your knees and pour yourself like an athlete, liquid-like, on the coverlets. Then praise one of the bronze [vessels], gaze at the ceiling, marvel at the tapestries of the hall.

Bdelycleon's use of the adjective ξυμποτικὸς (1209) to describe the set of behaviours he intends to teach his father leaves no doubt that one is to imagine a *symposion*. The discussion of bronze vases (χαλκωμάτων, 1214) and tapestries (κρεκάδι', 1215)—both costly—indicates that Philocleon is being taught how to comport himself in a luxurious *symposion*, and the description of a hall (αύλης, 1215) with a ceiling (ὄροφῆν, 1215) suggests that the wealthy *symposion* envisioned by Bdelycleon is to take place in a large indoor space (analogous to those that serve as the settings for the *Symposia* of Plato and Xenophon), furthering the impression of wealth.<sup>10</sup> For the present argument, the fundamental question is whether Philocleon is a complete novice at reclining while drinking or only at doing so in high society, and it is argued here that the latter is the case. The topic of reclining is introduced obliquely through Bdelycleon's direction in lines 1208–9: 'reclined here, learn in addition how to be sympotic and sociable'. Reclining is mentioned matter-of-factly as a participle (κατακλινεῖς, 1208) that establishes the circumstances for the primary learning objective, which is 'how to be sympotic and sociable' (1209) in conversation (1214–15) and in the game of *skolion* (as becomes apparent in the following section, 1219–49). The discussion of reclining is considerably briefer than the discussion of other aspects of proper sympotic behaviour, a comparative brevity that supports the view that Bdelycleon is not thinking of reclining as one of the primary learning objectives. In contrast to the six-line discussion of reclining (1208–13), 52 lines had been devoted to an initial lesson on clothing suitable for an elite *symposion* (1122–73), 34 lines were dedicated to a lesson on polite conversation (1174–207) and 31 lines will be occupied with the subject of playing *skolion* (1219–49). Furthermore, upon

<sup>9</sup> Greek text for all Aristophanes passages as given in N.G. Wilson, *Aristophanis Fabulae* (Oxford, 2007); translations are mine.

<sup>10</sup> Noted also by Pütz (n. 2), 89–90.

being told to recline, Philocleon simply asks ‘how then am I to recline?’ (πῶς οὖν κατακλινῶ, 1210). This is not a question that indicates surprise or alarm at the thought of reclining, but rather a desire to know if there is a particular manner in which he should recline.<sup>11</sup> His son indicates in a single word that he should recline elegantly (εὐσχημόνως, 1210). This is a brief answer that seems to presuppose basic familiarity with the practice of reclined drinking: if Philocleon were entirely unfamiliar with the custom, one would perhaps expect a set of more rudimentary instructions and a series of jokes centring on his utter helplessness, but the audience is not treated to, for example, humour centring on Philocleon objecting that he lies down to sleep rather than to drink, jokes about Philocleon lying flat on his back with his mouth open as though expecting wine to be poured into it, or clowning involving Philocleon leaning on the wrong elbow. Philocleon then reclines in a clumsy and humorous manner, with the adverb ὡδί (1211) drawing attention to the specific (and inelegant) way in which he does so.<sup>12</sup> When Philocleon requests elaboration about his errors (1212), Bdelycleon does not offer corrections on rudimentary aspects but instead provides instruction on finer points such as the grace of motion for settling into position (‘stretch out your knees and pour yourself like an athlete, liquid-like, on the coverlets’, τὰ γόνατ’ ἔκτεινε, καὶ γυμναστικῶς | ὑγρὸν χύτλασον σεαυτὸν ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν, 1212–13).<sup>13</sup> Philocleon’s request for clarification and the response he receives both suggest that he did not need a primer on reclining while drinking, but on the finer points of doing so in the graceful and gentlemanly fashion appropriate to the social setting of an elite *symposion*.

#### ΑΝΥΣΑΣ AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HASTE

There is further evidence in this passage that Philocleon has prior familiarity with reclined conviviality and therefore views this portion of his sympotic education as a simple preliminary to be dispensed with swiftly. When he asks how he should recline, he instructs Bdelycleon to hurry up and show him (φράζ’ ἀνύσας, 1210). The participle ἀνύσας implies haste and is commonly found in the Aristophanic corpus in the sense of ‘hurry up and . . .’.<sup>14</sup> This implication of haste may be understood in two different ways, both with ample comparanda in the extant Aristophanic corpus. One possibility is that Philocleon views the lesson in reclining as a preliminary with which he is eager to dispense.<sup>15</sup> This interpretation would be consistent with the present argument that the

<sup>11</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 5.179b discusses this passage ambiguously, saying that Bdelycleon teaches his father ὡς δεῖ κατακλινέσθαι, a phrase that could either be interpreted as ‘how one must recline’ or ‘that one must recline’ depending on whether one views ὡς in the passage as an adverb of manner or as a conjunction. The former option is consistent with the present argument.

<sup>12</sup> D. MacDowell (ed.), *Aristophanes: Wasps* (Oxford, 1971), on 1211 suggests that Philocleon clumsily throws himself on the ground, though Z.P. Biles and S.D. Olson (edd.), *Aristophanes: Wasps* (Oxford, 2015), 436 on 1208–48 indicate that a *klinē* is brought out for use as a prop during the scene. See below for the argument that the latter interpretation should be preferred based on the vocabulary employed in the passage and the wealth of the *symposion* for which Philocleon is being prepared.

<sup>13</sup> Biles and Olson (n. 12), 437 on 1212–13 believe that Bdelycleon joins his father on the prop *klinē* as he offers these suggestions, arguing that the instructions (particularly straightening the knees) make little sense as pointers for how to initially transition from standing to reclining on a couch. They suggest instead that Bdelycleon is stressing how to arrange oneself on a *klinē* and that Philocleon’s largest mistake seems to have been keeping his legs curled up incorrectly.

<sup>14</sup> Biles and Olson (n. 12), 91 on 30, 436–7 on 1210.

<sup>15</sup> For examples of ἀνύω in the sense of the hasty completion of an activity that the speaker views as a trivial preliminary or an annoyance to be dispensed with swiftly, see *Nub.* 181, 506, 635, 1253; *Vesp.* 1158, 1162, 1168; *Pax* 275, 872; *Lys.* 920; *Thesm.* 255; *Ran.* 609, 649; *Ecll.* 1058; *Plut.* 974. As an illustrative example, consider *Pax* 871–2: Trygaeus has been informed that his wedding will soon be

scene is brief and the lesson cursory because the old man is no novice at reclining while drinking. Alternately, the participle could suggest that Philocleon is eager to hear the lesson and earnestly desires to learn, possibly because he is unaccustomed to reclining while drinking (or because he knows that the wealthy are particularly snooty about the matter).<sup>16</sup> This interpretation would undercut the present argument by suggesting that Philocleon is unfamiliar with reclined conviviality. *ἀνύω* appears 34 times in the extant Aristophanic corpus, nearly evenly divided between these two senses.<sup>17</sup> The use of the word in *Wasps* 1210 could therefore suggest either that Philocleon views his instruction in reclining as a trivial prerequisite to be hastily completed so that he can move on to lessons on matters with which he is less familiar, or that he urgently desires instruction on reclining because he lacks knowledge of this aspect of sympotic behaviour.

Fortunately, forms of the verb *ἀνύω* appear three times in close proximity to *Wasps* 1210 (at 1158, 1162 and 1168), and this clustering helps to resolve the seeming ambiguity. These three uses of *ἀνύω*, all within 52 lines of the form *ἀνύσας* at 1210, are all found in the same scene, in which Bdelycleon attempts to teach his father how to walk in fancy shoes (Λακωνικά) as part of his sympotic education.<sup>18</sup> As will be seen, in all three of those passages, *ἀνύω* expresses Bdelycleon's expectation that putting on the shoes should be a trivial preliminary matter and his growing impatience that Philocleon has not yet completed that simple task. This pronounced clustering of forms of *ἀνύω* in the same sense—implying haste in dispensing with a trivial activity before moving on to more important matters—argues in favour of viewing *ἀνύσας* in the same way when it appears shortly thereafter in the discussion of reclining. From lines 1157 until 1168, Bdelycleon attempts to dress his father in fancy Laconian shoes to accompany the fancy Persian cloak he had given him in the previous lines; once the shoes are on, Bdelycleon begins teaching his father how to move elegantly in them. Philocleon is unexpectedly resistant to putting on the shoes because of a patriotic aversion to all things 'Laconian', and Bdelycleon grows impatient with his father's objections. There is the distinct impression that Bdelycleon views putting on the shoes as a trivial preliminary to his

ready; nothing is missing except Trygaeus himself. Very eager to consummate his marriage, he desires to swiftly send Festival to the Boule so that he can get on with the festivities (*ἀποδόμεν τήνδε τὴν Θεορίαν | ἀνύσαντε τῇ βουλῇ*). Giving Festival to the Boule is not his primary concern but an impediment to the consummation of his wedding. The participle *ἀνύσαντε* conveys his impatience with this impediment and his eagerness to dispense with it so that he can get on with his wedding.

<sup>16</sup> For examples of *ἀνύω* in the sense of the hasty completion of an activity viewed as desirable from the speaker's perspective, see *Ach.* 570–1; *Eq.* 71, 119, 1107; *Vesp.* 30, 202, 398, 847; *Av.* 241; *Lys.* 438; *Ran.* 1171; *Plut.* 349, 413, 648. As an illustrative example, consider *Ach.* 571, when the hemichorus of Achaeans rhetorically seeks aid in chastising Dicaeopolis: 'let someone help quickly!' (*βοηθῆσαίτω τις ἀνύσας*). The hemichorus has a pressing and earnest desire for aid, and the participle *ἀνύσας* conveys that sense of urgency.

<sup>17</sup> In addition to the examples cited in the previous two notes, forms of *ἀνύω* are found in four other passages, though with other senses: *Plut.* 229 (haste in contrast to delay), 607 (haste in contrast to delay), 196 (obtaining something, possibly in a hasty manner—a textual issue complicates the interpretation), and fr. 2.1 K.–A. (insufficient context to determine the sense of the word).

<sup>18</sup> As discussed by N. Sekunda, 'Laconian shoes with Roman senatorial laces', in W.G. Cavanagh, C. Gallou and M. Georgiadis (edd.), *Sparta and Laconia: From Prehistory to Pre-Modern* (London, 2009), 253–9, at 253–4, there are in fact two types of footwear described as Laconian in the extant Greek sources: functional marching shoes and more fashionable ones. Though Sekunda seems inclined to interpret the Λακωνικά of this passage as the simple shoes, they are better understood as the fashionable ones, sharply contrasted with Philocleon's more utilitarian ἐμβάδες in vv. 1157–8. This interpretation is more in keeping with the contrasts that the passage draws between workaday and elaborate attire, and it is favoured by L.M. Stone, *Costume in Aristophanic Comedy* (New York, 1981), 225–7; Biles and Olson (n. 12), 120 on 103–5, and 423–4 on 1157–8; and G. Compton-Engle, *Costume in the Comedies of Aristophanes* (Cambridge, 2015), 65–71.

intended lesson on graceful strutting; each time he uses a form of the verb *ἀνύω* in these lines, he conveys his belief that putting on the shoes should be a very simple matter. He introduces the topic by instructing his father, ‘Come now—take off those damned boots, and hurry up and put on these here Laconian [shoes]’ (ἄγε νυν ὑπολύου τὰς καταράτους ἐμβάδας, | τασδὶ δ’ ἀνύσας ὑποδοῦ σὺ τὰς Λακωνικάς, 1157–8). The old and unassuming boots should come off, the Λακωνικάι should go on, and the whole process should take no time at all. Though Bdelycleon evidently has disdain for his father’s ‘damned boots’, he is not yet frustrated with the pace of events, as the subject of footwear has just been broached; there is, however, a sense that this step—changing shoes—should not take much time or require any special instruction. After Philocleon objects to the shoes, however, Bdelycleon begins to lose his patience: ‘Put [your foot] into [the Laconian shoes], man, and stride powerfully—and with haste—onto Laconian [land]!’ (ἔνθεξ ποτ’, ὦ τῶν, κάποβαν’ ἐρρωμένως | εἰς τὴν Λακωνικὴν ἀνύσας, 1161–2). These lines are spoken as Bdelycleon (or a mute slave) helps Philocleon put on the first of the Laconian shoes, and Bdelycleon seems irritated that the theoretically trivial process of putting on the shoes is only half completed.<sup>19</sup> Bdelycleon plainly expected that he would already be discussing elegant strutting: putting on the shoes should have been a trivial preliminary rather than a point of contestation, as there has been no indication that the Λακωνικάι are particularly difficult to put on. When the process continues for several more lines, Bdelycleon again uses a form of *ἀνύω* to express his frustration at the slow pace of events: ‘Hurry up putting on the shoes! Now then, stepping forth like this—wealthily and in a luxurious manner—strut’ (ἄνυσόν ποθ’ ὑποδησάμενος· εἶτα πλουσίως | ὡδι προβάς τρυφερόν τι διασαλακῶνισον, 1168–9). The moment the shoes are on, he begins the long-delayed actual lesson: how to strut in them.

Lines 1158–68 employ forms of *ἀνύω* three times within 11 lines, a density otherwise unparalleled in the Aristophanic corpus. The force of this clustering is to express Bdelycleon’s rising impatience that the trivial task of putting on the shoes is taking so long and that he has not yet been able to begin his lesson on how to strut elegantly in them. When *ἀνύσας* appears again in the same scene (1210), as the same people begin to discuss the topic of reclining, it probably conveys the same basic meaning: the expectation that a simple preliminary activity will be swiftly completed.<sup>20</sup> This understanding is fully consistent both with Bdelycleon’s one-word answer (*εὐσχημόνως*, 1210) to his father’s initial inquiry about whether he should recline in any particular way and with the hasty pace at which the two finish discussing how to recline and move on to lengthier instruction on what one should do and discuss while reclining. *ἀνύσας* therefore heightens the rapidity of the exchange and indicates that reclining is viewed as a simple matter that can and should be addressed swiftly, consistent with the argument that Philocleon has prior familiarity with the practice of reclined conviviality.

<sup>19</sup> Biles and Olson (n. 12), 424–5 on 1161–3 discuss the humour of this exchange and note that there is ambiguity in Bdelycleon’s instructions: though Philocleon interprets his son to be saying *εἰς τὴν Λακωνικὴν* [land], Bdelycleon might simply intend *εἰς τὴν Λακωνικὴν* [shoe] to refer to the shoe that Philocleon is putting on. Philocleon’s interpretation is assumed in the translation given above. In either case, the present argument about haste is little changed.

<sup>20</sup> Pütz (n. 2), 95 asserts to the contrary that *ἀνύω* in 1210 indicates that Philocleon ‘cannot wait to hear how he should recline’, consistent with the other sense of the word discussed above (the hasty completion of an activity viewed as desirable from the speaker’s perspective), though she does not discuss the word in detail.

THE EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR LOWER-COST *SYMPOSIA*

Further discussion of the role which reclining plays in Philocleon's sympotic education requires brief consideration of the history and significance of reclined conviviality in the Greek world. There is ample and well-known evidence that symposiasts typically enjoyed their wine while reclining, sometimes on elaborate and costly *klinai* and sometimes on the ground, often with the aid of less costly cushions.<sup>21</sup> There is general, albeit not complete, consensus that reclined (as opposed to seated) conviviality spread to the Greek world in the eighth or seventh century when the elite of Archaic Greece adopted the banqueting *klinê* from their Eastern neighbours as a costly status symbol; on-the-ground reclining then developed as a lower-cost alternative.<sup>22</sup> For present purposes, it is sufficient—and generally uncontroversial—to note that banqueting *klinai* were costly pieces of furniture, were ill-suited for purposes other than reclined dining and drinking, functioned as status symbols, and were associated with the *symposia* of the wealthy elite in the Greek-speaking world at least by the late seventh century.<sup>23</sup> Banqueting *klinai* were not outdoor furniture, nor were they particularly portable; a *symposion* using *klinai* therefore required sufficient indoor space to accommodate several *klinai* (typically 7–11), further increasing the threshold of wealth necessary to host such an event. Xenophon's *Symposium* provides a good example: the fabulously wealthy Callias hosts a luxurious indoor *symposion* in his *andrôn* (*Symp.* 1.4, 1.13), a room described as containing seven *klinai* (ἄρκεσει μοι οἶκος ἐπτάκλινος, ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν τῷδε τῷ παιδὶ ἤρκεσε τὸδε τὸ οἶκμα, *Symp.* 2.18).<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Plato's *Symposium* is set inside the

<sup>21</sup> In addition to references in n. 6, see: J.-M. Dentzer, *Le motif du banquet couché dans le Proche-Orient et le monde grec du VII<sup>e</sup> au IV<sup>e</sup> siècle avant J.-C.* (Rome, 1982), *passim*; J. Boardman, 'Symposion furniture', in Murray (n. 1 [1990]), 122–31; Lynch (n. 3), 243–6 and (n. 1), 76–7; E. Baughan, *Couched in Death: Klinai and Identity in Anatolia and Beyond* (Madison, 2013), 21–7 and 217–24; Weçowski (n. 1), 141–9; Corner (n. 1), 237; Nadeau (n. 8), 266–7.

<sup>22</sup> For various proposed routes of transmission, see especially Murray (n. 6 [2016]) proposing Phoenician influence on eighth-century Pithecusae; H. Matthäus, 'Die Idäische Zeus-Grotte auf Kreta: Griechenland und der Vordere Orient im frühen 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.', *AA* (2000), 517–47, at 544–6 proposing eighth-century Crete; Baughan (n. 21), 217–24, proposing the inspiration of the Mermnad Lydian kings. A scholarly minority—best represented by W. Burkert, 'Oriental symposia: contrasts and parallels', in W. Slater (ed.), *Dining in a Classical Context* (Ann Arbor, 1991), 7–24, at 18 and Corner (n. 1), 237—argues to the contrary that reclined banqueting was an indigenous development in the Greek world that emerged in the context of outdoor picnics at sanctuaries. Both camps are in general agreement that the banqueting *klinê* was a costly status symbol of Near Eastern origin.

<sup>23</sup> The realia of banqueting *klinai* and their artistic representations in the Archaic and Classical Greek world are discussed in Baughan (n. 21), 15–86. The banqueting *klinê* is elevated on one end to facilitate the practice of reclining on the left elbow; though convenient for *symposia*, this design choice renders the banquet *klinê* ill-suited for use as a bed and suggests that the furniture item was custom-built for reclined conviviality.

<sup>24</sup> *Andrônes* (architecturally visible beginning in the second half of the fifth century) have been discussed by scholars as domestic rooms designed explicitly to host *symposia* and arranged with *klinai* around the perimeter: e.g. J. Morgan, 'La sociabilité masculine et l'architecture de la maison grecque: l'andrôn revisité', in F. Gherchanoc (ed.), *La maison, lieu de sociabilité* (Paris, 2006), 37–71; Lynch (n. 3), 243–4; L. Nevet, *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2010), 43–62; H.M. Franks, *The World Underfoot: Mosaics and Metaphor in the Greek Symposium* (Oxford and New York, 2018), 29–35. Several factors—such as variability in the architectural footprints of rooms identified as *andrônes* and the possibility that some of them were more multipurpose than generally acknowledged—make it difficult to establish a threshold of wealth necessary to host an indoor *symposion* with *klinai* in fifth-century Athens; see overview in Franks (this note), 30–5. Despite these uncertainties, hosting an indoor *symposion* with *klinai* would have required an individual to possess several costly *klinai* and a home large enough to contain them. It is possible that *klinai* could have been brought temporarily into domestic courtyards, such that one could host a *symposion* on *klinai* without

wealthy Agathon's home; though the dialogue does not explicitly describe the use of *klinai*, the discussion of Alcibiades squeezing between Agathon and Socrates as a third person (213a–b) suggests the use of *klinai*, which typically accommodated two people.

Reclining on the ground, in contrast, requires neither costly *klinai* nor dedicated indoor space. Though some scholars maintain that the practice of reclined dining and drinking was firmly associated with the elite, regardless of what furniture was or was not used, others argue that the less wealthy certainly had the means to enjoy *symposia* while reclined outdoors on the ground and probably did so in emulation of elite *symposia*.<sup>25</sup>

The latter position has archaeological, iconographic and textual support. Archaeologically, the material record of Athens displays a dramatic increase in the number of *kylikes* beginning in the late sixth century; because the wide and shallow *kylix* is particularly well-suited to drinking while in a reclined position (in contrast to vessels such as *skyphoi* and *kantharoi*), the greatly increased prominence of the vessel in the archaeological record probably reflects an increase in the number of Athenians who drank wine while reclining.<sup>26</sup> Iconographically, shifts in sympotic imagery on Athenian painted vases are observed in the late sixth century (roughly contemporary with the increase in the number of *kylikes*) and further suggest the spread of reclined sympotic drinking to a wider range of the social spectrum.<sup>27</sup> Most notably, outdoor *symposia* on the ground become more frequently represented in this time period, and there is a diversification of the activities in which symposiasts are shown to engage.<sup>28</sup> These iconographic shifts may reflect changing Athenian social practice and increased participation of non-elites in *symposia*: the diversification of type-scenes and activities could represent the diverse interests of the new symposiasts, and the growing number of outdoor scenes on the ground could reflect sympotic traditions among those who did not have the wealth for banqueting *klinai* and indoor spaces in which to use them. Textually, Plato offers strong evidence that the Athenian lower classes enjoyed low-cost *symposia* on the ground. *Republic* 2.372b–373a contrasts rustic and luxurious *symposia*: both are described as reclining, though participants in the rustic *symposion* recline on the ground on *sibades*, mattresses made of plant matter (κατακλινέντες ἐπὶ σιβάδων, 372b), whereas the luxurious (τροφῶσαν, 372e) *polis* employs *klinai* for its *symposia* (372d–373a).<sup>29</sup> Similarly, *Protagoras* 347c casually refers to 'the *symposia* of the lowly

having an indoor *andrôn*, as suggested by Lynch (n. 3), 245; even in this case, the host would need the *klinai*, a house large enough to store them and a courtyard large enough to use them.

<sup>25</sup> Reclining as elite: Cooper and Morris (n. 3), 77–9; Murray (n. 3 [1995]), 237; Steiner (n. 3), 348–51. Low-cost *symposia*: see references in n. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Lynch (n. 3), 245; Lynch (n. 1), 170–3; Lynch (n. 8), 532–3.

<sup>27</sup> Dentzer (n. 21), 450; C. Reinsberg, *Ehe, Hetärenum und Knabenliebe im antiken Griechenland* (Munich, 1989), 108; Schäfer (n. 1), 41–68, especially 61–4. Other interpretations of these iconographic shifts are also possible: they might reflect changing elite preferences, as suggested by P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet: histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques* (Rome, 1992), 29–30; exuberant elite display after the expulsion of the Peisistratids, as suggested by Filser (n. 6), 568–9 and 584–5; or the preferences of Etruscan consumers, as suggested by S. Lewis, 'Shifting images: Athenian women in Etruria', in T. Cornell and K. Lomas (edd.), *Gender and Ethnicity in Ancient Italy* (London, 1997), 141–51 and 'Representation and reception: Athenian pottery in its Italian context', in J. Wilkins and E. Herring (edd.), *Inhabiting Symbols: Symbol and Image in the Ancient Mediterranean* (London, 2003), 175–92.

<sup>28</sup> Additional shifts include greater individualization in representations of symposiasts, increased emphasis on the bodily (particularly sexuality and scatological scenes) and a decrease in representations of sympotic scenes that include food and weaponry.

<sup>29</sup> The passage is well known: see J. Wilkins, 'Introduction', in J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Dobson (edd.), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter, 1995), 7–11; J. Davidson, '*Opsophagia*: revolutionary

marketfolk' (τοῖς συμποσίοις τοῖς τῶν φαύλων καὶ ἀγοραίων ἀνθρώπων).<sup>30</sup> While this passage does not address reclining habits, it does offer clear support for the view that *symposia* were not limited to the wealthy. Taken together, the collective force of this material, iconographic and textual evidence strongly suggests that reclined sympotic conviviality on the ground was enjoyed by a wide range of the social spectrum in fifth- and fourth-century Athens, though banqueting *klinai* remained status symbols closely associated with the *symposia* of the wealthy elite.

This historical context allows for further consideration of Philocleon's sympotic education. It has been argued above that the brevity and nature of the instructions provided to Philocleon both suggest that he is not represented as a novice to reclined *symposia* but rather as someone unaccustomed to the particular grace and behaviours that were expected of attendees at a wealthy *symposion*. If reclining on the ground was indeed reasonably widespread through the social spectrum in fifth-century Athens—a proposition based on archaeological, iconographic and textual evidence external to this Aristophanic scene—then it is eminently plausible that Philocleon should be understood as a character whose prior experience of reclined conviviality was on the ground. In this case, what he requires—and what his son provides—is not a general lesson in the fundamentals of reclined conviviality, but a more specific lesson on the elegant use of the specialized and costly banqueting *klinē* in high society.

#### STAGING: ON A *KLINĒ* OR THE GROUND?

The staging of this scene is debated and bears on the plausibility of this argument. Some have asserted that during performances of the play, Philocleon and Bdelycleon would have reclined on the ground without the use of props.<sup>31</sup> The on-the-ground reclining of the sympotically inept Cyclops in Euripides' satyr play *Cyclops* 543 (κλιθητί νύν μοι πλευρὰ θεῖς ἐπὶ χθονός, 'now lie yourself down, placing your flanks upon the ground') offers a parallel. In contrast, others argue that a *klinē* was brought on stage and used for the scene.<sup>32</sup> The scholia provide no help in resolving this question, and both theories are possible. However, three arguments suggest it is more likely that a *klinē* would have been brought on-stage for the scene. First, the demonstrative adverb δευρί in line 1208 is intensified with a deictic iota best explained if Philocleon is being moved to a particular place.<sup>33</sup> Though it is possible that Bdelycleon gestures at a particular spot on the ground to which Philocleon should move, there is no obvious reason why one place on the ground of the stage would be better suited for Philocleon's sympotic education than

eating at Athens', in J. Wilkins, D. Harvey and M. Dobson (edd.), *Food in Antiquity* (Exeter, 1995), 204–13, at 206–7; Davidson (n. 3), 24–5; Topper (n. 1), 30–4.

<sup>30</sup> See also Corner (n. 1), 239 on this passage.

<sup>31</sup> MacDowell (n. 12), on 1211; A.H. Sommerstein (ed.), *Aristophanes: Wasps* (Warminster, 1983), 227 on 1208; Konstantakos (n. 3), 199.

<sup>32</sup> Pütz (n. 2), 89 n. 358; Biles and Olson (n. 12), 436 on 1208–48. See also C.W. Dearden, *The Stage of Aristophanes* (London, 1976), 73 suggesting that an *ekkyklēma* may have been used to bring a *klinē* onto the stage. The scene is staged outdoors, and there is no logical place out from which one can suppose the *klinē* to have been brought. It would be very unusual indeed if Philocleon—whose inexperience with high-class *symposia* is central to the scene—happened to have a banqueting *klinē*, one of the most costly and conspicuous accoutrement of elite *symposia*, in his home. This is a point on which comedic effect probably outweighs logical consistency.

<sup>33</sup> Pütz (n. 2), 89 n. 358.

another, and so the adverb would be peculiar if the reclining occurred on the ground.<sup>34</sup> In contrast, if there is a *klinê* on stage, then the demonstrative adverb with its deictic intensifier makes good sense as a demonstration of a particular location on the *klinê*. Furthermore, the *symposion* for which Philocleon is being prepared is to be a luxurious one: the bronze vessels (*χαλκομάτων*, 1214) and tapestries (*κρεκάδι*, 1215) have been noted above and suggest an opulent setting, and the reference to a ceiling (*ὄροφῆν*, 1215) indicates that it will also be an indoor setting.<sup>35</sup> An opulent and indoor location—alogous to the *andrôn* of Callias in Xenophon's *Symposium* (discussed in the previous section)—is precisely the setting in which *klinai* would be expected. Moving from a standing position to one reclined on the ground requires a different set of motions than moving from a standing position onto an elevated surface such as a *klinê*; if the whole point of the lesson is grace of motion, then it stands to reason that the lesson should occur on a *klinê* in anticipation of successfully participating in a *symposion* on *klinai*. Even practiced ease at reclining on the ground would be of little help for one attempting to gracefully settle onto a *klinê*. Finally, Philocleon is to pour himself on the *strômata* (1213), the coverlets that often covered *klinai*. Though the word could theoretically refer to something spread on the ground, the extant Aristophanic corpus strongly associates *strômata* with *klinai*.<sup>36</sup> It is therefore highly likely that a *klinê* was brought on stage and used during this passage: the adverb *δευρί* makes little sense without a particular thing such as a *klinê* to gesture toward; the context of preparation for a lavish *symposion* that would surely involve *klinai* suggests that any lessons on reclining should involve *klinai*, as the mechanics of elegantly settling onto a banqueting couch are different from the mechanics of settling onto the ground; and in the Aristophanic context, the reference to *strômata* strongly suggests the presence of a *klinê*.

## CONCLUSIONS

Taken together, several factors within *Wasps* 1208–15 suggest that Philocleon is portrayed as a character who has prior familiarity with reclined *symposia*, despite being unprepared for conviviality in the style of high society: the brevity of the passage involving his education in reclining, the oblique way in which the subject of reclining is brought up, the passage's focus on elegance of motion rather than on fundamentals of how to recline and Philocleon's use of the participle *ἀνύσας* as an indication that he himself views the subject as a trivial preliminary that can be swiftly dispensed with. Additional particulars of the passage, such as the reference to *strômata* and the use of the adverb *δευρί*, suggest that a *klinê* was brought on-stage and that the lesson on reclining then centres on the use of this costly piece of furniture. Philocleon is therefore not to be understood as one unaccustomed to the practice of reclined *symposia*, but as one used to reclining on the ground and unsure of how to use the *klinai* of wealthy symposiasts without making a fool of himself. This view is in line with the evidence external to Aristophanes that suggests that non-elites enjoyed *symposia* reclined on the ground with inexpensive ceramic vessels and inexpensive wine, in contrast to elite *symposia*

<sup>34</sup> Konstantakos (n. 3), 199 n. 46 asserts to the contrary that Bdelycleon simply gestures at 'a spot in front of them' on the ground, though he does not offer arguments in support of this position.

<sup>35</sup> Pütz (n. 2), 89–90; Biles and Olson (n. 12), 437–8 on 1214–15.

<sup>36</sup> Biles and Olson (n. 12), 437 on 1212–13 catalogue examples of *strômata* in Aristophanes, noting that the word is used of both sleeping and banqueting *klinai*. In the context of *Wasps* 1208–15, banqueting *klinai* should be the intended association.

involving *klinai*, metal vessels, pricier wine and additional attendants. This interpretation is further supported by the subsequent passage (1219–49), in which Philocleon exhibits virtuosity in the sympotic game *skolion*, as his son observes in 1249 (τουτὶ μὲν ἐπεικῶς σὺ γ' ἐξεπίστασαι, 'this, at any rate, you know suitably').<sup>37</sup> Philocleon's skill with sympotic games bolsters the argument that he was no sympotic novice.

A cursory reading of Philocleon's lesson in reclining (1208–13) and of his broader sympotic education (1122–264) might suggest that the old man was simply unaccustomed to *symposia*, an interpretation in line with the views of those scholars who have asserted that reclined sympotic conviviality was solely the province of the Athenian elite. Upon closer inspection, however, that interpretation becomes untenable. On the contrary, Philocleon rather appears as someone well-versed in playing *skolion* (1219–49) and familiar with the basic practice of reclining to drink (1208–13). The specific education he receives from his son in this passage suggests that he lacked the grace expected at upper-crust *symposia*, particularly when it came to his choice of clothing (1122–73), his topics of conversation (1174–207) and his familiarity with elegantly utilizing costly *klinai* (1208–13). Despite his lack of grace, Philocleon appears neither as a sympotic novice nor as one unaccustomed to reclined conviviality. This interpretation is consistent with the wider Aristophanic corpus, in which characters of multiple social classes often have knowledge of and participate in *symposia*.<sup>38</sup> If, as has been argued, a *klinē* was used as a prop during *Wasps* 1208–15, this staging would support the view that Philocleon is a character familiar with on-the-ground *symposia* but unfamiliar with the use of *klinai* in the *symposia* of the wealthy. This scene from the *Wasps* therefore does not offer evidence that *symposia* were restricted to the wealthy elite of Athens in the fifth century. On the contrary, it bolsters the view that reclined *symposia* were not the sole province of the wealthy elite and that the differences between elite and non-elite *symposia* centred on differences in manners and differences in the paraphernalia used, most notably the custom of reclining on expensive banqueting *klinai* rather than on the ground.

*Boston University*

CHRISTOPHER ELL  
christopher.ryan.ell@gmail.com

<sup>37</sup> Vetta (n. 3); Collins (n. 3), 99–110. The previous passage (1122–207) centres on Bdelycleon's frustration with his father's fashion choice and with his suggested topics of conversation at *symposia*, on the grounds that both are ill-suited for polite society. These criticisms do not bear on the question of Philocleon's familiarity with *symposia* in general: different social groups may well have enjoyed different clothing and different topics of conversation during their *symposia*.

<sup>38</sup> At a more general level, the humour of the *symposion* as a theme of Aristophanic comedy presupposes familiarity with *symposia* on the part of the audience, which included multiple social classes. See A.M. Bowie (n. 2), 3; Fisher (n. 2), 358–60; Wilkins (n. 2), 208; Pütz (n. 2), xii, 96 and 119; Comer (n. 1), 239.