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THE SWAN'S RED-DIPPED FOOT: EURIPIDES, *ION* 161–9

Euripides is just plain wrong about swans:

> Shared details of the Mute's and Whooper's appearance were accurately noted by many writers: webbed feet … long neck … and a white colour … that some called hoary … Euripides, however, simply blundered when he gave his Swans red feet (*Ion* 163), and not black.[1]

As a matter of ornithology, Arnott is right: the swan's foot is black; but as a matter of rhetoric, Euripides' swan is red-footed for good reason.

This will become apparent through an analysis of this passage in its context (161–9):[2]

> ὅδε πρὸς θυμέλας ἄλλος ἐρέσσει
> κύκνος· οὐκ ἄλλᾳ φοινικοβαφῆ
> πόδα κινήσεις;
> οὐδέν σ᾽ ἁ φόρμιγξ ἁ Φοίβου
> σύμμολπος τόξων ῥύσαιτ᾽ ἄν.
> πάραγε πτέρυγας·
> λίμνας ἐπίβα τᾶς Δηλιάδος·
> αἰμάξεις, εἰ μὴ πείσῃ,
> τὰς καλλιφθόγγους ᾠδάς.

[1] W.G. Arnott, *Birds in the Ancient World from A to Z* (London and New York, 2007), 122. And earlier, in his 'Electra's musical swan', in *Studi in Onore di Adelmo Barigazzi* (Rome, 1984), 27–31, at 29, Arnott remarks, 'Euripides elsewhere proves himself to have been a poor observer of swans; in the *Ion* (v. 163) he mistakenly assigns them bright red feet'. And in his 'Some bird notes on Aristophanes' *Birds*', in H.D. Jocelyn and H. Hurt (edd.), *Tria Lustra: Essays and Notes Presented to John Pinsent Founder and Editor of Liverpool Classical Monthly by Some of its Contributors on the Occasion of the 150*th *Issue* (Liverpool, 1993), 127–34, at 127, Arnott again notes, 'I have certainly found no trace in Aristophanes of that sort of ornithological howler committed by Euripides at *Ion* 161ff., where a swan is given red feet.' And once more, in his 'Realism in the *Ion*: response to Lee' in M.S. Silk (ed.), *Tragedy and the Tragic: Greek Theatre and Beyond* (Oxford, 1996), 110–18, at 116, Arnott states categorically, 'And all European swans have black, not red, feet'. K.H. Lee, *Euripides: Ion* (Warminster, 1997), 175, referring to this last mentioned article, understands Arnott to mean that 'this detail [the swan's allegedly red foot] (like the swan's singing) serves simply ornamental purposes'. If 'ornamental purposes' may be supposed to subsume rhetorical ones, then Lee and I are in agreement. But Arnott nowhere says this nor implies as much, and in fact, characterizes Euripides' application of this epithet as a 'slip' (116); a 'slip', I will argue, only from the ornithological, not the rhetorical, perspective.

[2] I follow J. Diggle, *Euripidis Fabulae Tomus II* (Oxford, 1981), 313, with the following exceptions: (i) 162: φοινικοβαφῆ (Nauck), instead of the φοινικοφαῆ of the paradosis; (ii) 168: αἰμάξεις, keeping the MS reading where Diggle accepts Nauck's emendation of αἰάξεις. I defend my choices below.

Here toward the temple wings another,
a swan! Take your red-dipped foot
and go elsewhere!
The lyre of Apollo
That accompanies your song cannot save you from my bow!
Fly off to somewhere else!
Alight upon the lake at Delos!
You will bloody your beautiful songs if you do not obey![3]

In trying to shoo away a swan from the sacred offerings outside Apollo's temple at Delphi, Ion indignantly asks: 'Won't you move your red-dipped foot somewhere else?' Why describe the swan's foot as 'red-dipped'? In his commentary A.S. Owen cites as a parallel φοινικοσκελεῖς (1207), used to describe the feet of doves.[4] Although this accurately describes the colour of doves' feet, it does not, as we have seen, those of swans.[5] The problematic red-footed swan still remains.

But perhaps an even more fundamental question is, just what word do the Greeks use to describe what in English we would call 'red'? The modern discussion of ancient Greek colour terms goes at least as far back as Goethe. But it was the British prime minister and Homeric scholar William Gladstone who, after analysing the Homeric concept of colour, concluded that there were only eight colour terms, and that these should all be understood as describing things in terms of luminosity instead of chromaticity.[6] Of Gladstone's eight colour terms, three would fall under our category of 'red': ἐρυθρός, πορφύρεος and φοινίκεος/φοινικόεις/φοινικοῦς. Gladstone's Homeric list was expanded by Maurice Platnauer whose corpus ranges from Homer to Xenophon. His red group, however, includes four additional words for 'red': δαφοινός, μίλτος, ῥοδόεις and οἴνωψ.[7] In conclusion,

[3] Translation adapted from D. Kovacs, *Euripides: Trojan Women; Iphigenia Among the Taurians; Ion* (Cambridge, 1999), 335.

[4] A.S. Owen, *Euripides: Ion* (Oxford, 1939), 80.

[5] Whether Euripides' κῶμος πελειῶν (1197) refers to the Rock Dove (*Columba livia*) or, more likely, the Feral Pigeon, in either case both have feet that are best described as 'red' or 'purplish-red.' See Arnott (n.1, 2007), 170.

[6] W.E. Gladstone, 'Homer's perceptions and use of colour', in *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1858), 457–99. For a succinct summary and critique of Gladstone's findings, see J. Lyons, 'The vocabulary of color with particular reference to ancient Greek and classical Latin', in A. Borg (ed.), *The Language of Color in the Mediterranean: An Anthology on Linguistic and Ethnographic Aspects of Color Terms* (Stockholm, 1999), 38–75. And for the history of colour terms in classical scholarship, see E. Irwin, *Colour Terms in Greek Poetry* (Toronto, 1974), 3–17; P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Studies in Greek Colour Terminology, Volume 1: GLAUKOS* (Leiden, 1981), 1–6; H. Stulz, *Die Farbe Purpur im frühen Griechentum: Beobachtet in der Literatur und in der Bildenden Kunst* (Stuttgart, 1990), 15–24; L. Villard, 'Préface', in *Couleurs et vision dans l'antiquité classique* (Rouen, 2002), 5–6; J. Clarke, *Imagery of Colour and Shining in Catullus, Propertius and Horace* (New York, 2003), 5–6; M.M. Sassi, 'Il problema della definizione antica del colore, fra storia e antropolgia', in S. Beta and M.M. Sassi (edd.), *I colori nel mondo antico: esperienze linguistiche e quadri simbolici* (Florence, 2003), 12–15; L. James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford, 1996), 47–8; and now most fully, M. Bradley, *Colour and Meaning in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 2009), 12–30.

[7] M. Platnauer, 'Greek colour-perception', *CQ* 15 (1921), 153–62, at 158. See also Irwin (n. 6), 201, where under the category 'red-yellow' are included: ξανθός, κροκό(πεπλος), ἐρυθρός, φοινικόεις, φοῖνιξ, μιλτο(πάρηος) and πορφύρεος. Irwin concludes: 'the hue of reds and yellows made more impact on the early Greeks than that of blues and greens'. See now also G. Raina, 'Considerazioni sul vocabulario greco del colore', in Beta and Sassi (n. 6), 28, who includes additionally under the 'red' rubric: πορφύρεος/πορφυροειδής, ἁλουργής, φοίνιος, αἱματόεις, καρύκινος and μιλτώδης; and James (n. 6), 49–52.

Platnauer notes: '… many objects which do not, as we should think, vary much in colour in their different manifestations receive many different colour epithets – e.g. blood is κελαινός, μέλας, φοινικοῦς, ἐρυθρός, and πορφύρεος'.[8] Platnauer explains this as follows:

> What seems to have caught the eye and arrested the attention of the Greeks is not so much the qualitative as the quantitative difference between colours. Black and white are 'colours', and colours are accounted as shades between these extremes. It follows from this that no real distinction was made between chromatic and achromatic; for it is lustre or superficial effect that struck the Greeks and not what we call colour or tint.[9]

In other words, the two words κελαινός and μέλας, traditionally translated as 'black', are rather best translated as 'dark' when used to describe blood.[10] That leaves us with three words for red when describing the colour of blood: φοινικοῦς, ἐρυθρός and πορφύρεος. What, if any, is the difference between these terms, whether or not they are used to describe blood? I here quote at length John Lyons's summary:

> Let us grant, then, that Ancient Greek had words for red, green and yellow. The first problem is that it had more than one word for both red and green, none of which is obviously a context-independent level-1 word: i.e., a more general word to which the others are, in all contexts, subordinate (or hyponymous), as *scarlet* and *crimson* are subordinate to *red* in English. Most classicists, if asked, would probably say that the basic, or general word for red is *eruthros* and that such words as *phoinikeos* and *porphureos* are indeed subordinate to it, exactly as *crimson* and *scarlet* are subordinate to red in English. This view is not wholly erroneous. There are indeed certain passages in which *phoinikeos* is used with a more specific meaning in explicit or implicit contrast with *eruthros*. But there are others, notably in Aristotle, where it is used to refer to what he identifies as one of the four most basic colors; and there are some passages, in certain authors, in which it alternates with *porphureos*. Although there are passages, then, in which *phoinikeos* or *porphureos* have a more specific meaning than *eruthros*, there are others where they do not. And this is in accord with the principle that I introduced in relation to the words for black and white: induction of a narrower context-dependent meaning by contrast with what is in other contexts a synonym. Any one of these three words can be used to refer more generally to what we can reasonably assume to be BK-red.[11]

[8] Platnauer (n. 7), 162. See also Gladstone (n. 6), 487; Irwin (n. 6), 4 n. 3.

[9] Platnauer (n. 7), 162. And cf. Gladstone (n. 6), 458; Lyons (n. 6), 48.

[10] Irwin (n. 6), 202 remarks, 'Moreover, it seems true that colours which are low in value (dark) are likely to be described in terms of value rather than hue. Homer, for example, occasionally calls blood and wine dark (μέλας), although elsewhere he describes them as red … Our conclusion then, is that there was a marked tendency among the early Greeks to emphasize value at the expense of hue.' Or, as C. Rowe notes in 'Conceptions of colour and colour symbolism in the ancient world', *Eranos* 41 (1972), 327–64, at 334: 'the commonest epithet [for blood] is μέλας, "black", "dark" (presumably in origin an epithet of *dried* blood, but then transferred for formulaic reasons to freshly spilled blood).'

[11] Lyons (n. 6), 49. 'BK-' in 'BK-red' refers to the Berlin and Kay hypothesis regarding colour terminology, first adduced in their ground-breaking monograph, B. Berlin and P. Kay, *Basic Color Terms* (Berkeley, 1969). For a critique of Lyons's view see P. Kay, 'The emergence of basic color lexicons hypothesis: a comment on "The vocabulary of color with particular reference to ancient Greek and classical Latin" by John Lyons', in Borg (n. 6), 78–80. And for a critique of the BK hypothesis, see now M. Clarke, 'The semantics of colour in the early Greek word-hoard', in L. Cleland and K. Stears (edd.), *Colour in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford, 2004), 131–9. Lyons's findings regarding the essential synonymity of the colours ἐρυθρός, πορφύρεος and φοινικοῦς are reaffirmed by R. McLaury, 'Basic color terms:

According to Lyons, then, ἐρυθρός, πορφύρεος and φοινίκεος can be used interchangeably to designate the colour red.[12] What I would like to suggest in the following is this: even with Lyons's main point granted, the possibility remains, as Lyons himself points out, that 'There are indeed certain passages in which *phoinikeos* is used with a more specific meaning in explicit or implicit contrast with *eruthros*'. And this problematic passage from Euripides' *Ion* is, I suggest, precisely a case in point.[13]

As Handschur remarks regarding epic usage of φοινικόεις:

> Die Adjektivbildung φοινικόεις hat dagegen öfter die Bedeutung 'blutrot', so, wenn *Il.* 23.716–717 eine blutige Strieme [σμώδιγγες … αἵματι φοινικόεσσαι], *Asp.* 194 der blutbespritzt im Kampfe wütende Kriegsgott geschildert wird [Hes. *Sc.* 192–194: Ἄρης … αἵματι φοινικόεις]. An der letztgenannten Stelle eignet dem Farbwort jener Gefühlswert des Schreckens, der sonst Kennzeichen der *φοινη-Ableitungen ist. Da die übrigen Stellen keinen weiteren Beleg für einen derartigen Gebrauch bieten, kann man annehmen, daß diese Verwendungsart sekundär war, wie ja δαφοινός später dem Gefühlswert von φοῖνιξ und αἶθοψ angenähert wurde.[14]

Although the connotation 'blood-red' of the adjective φοινικόεις may be secondary in these passages, that connotation derives not only from its immediate context (αἷμα), but also from its close association with its possible etymon φοινός, 'blood-red' (e.g. *Il.* 16.159; *Od.* 18.97). As Beekes remarks apropos of φοινός:

> Without convincing etymology. Connected with φόνος 'murder' already in antiquity, but this is unconvincing semantically and morphologically (suffix *–io-*). The word was associated with φόνος early on, so that it came to be interpreted as a variant of it. Perhaps the [ethnonym] Φοίνικες is related to φόνος … Traditionally, it was assumed that 'purple' got its name from the Φοίνικες, as the 'Phoenician color'; yet, various scholars have claimed the reverse, viz. that φοῖνιξ 'purple, red color' was primary, whence Φοίνικες 'the red (land), the land of purple'. Others have assumed that Φοίνικες was an (oriental) loanword. If one does not want to separate φοῖνιξ and Φοίνικες from φοινός, the only remaining

twenty-five years after', in Borg (n. 6), 27: 'Triple coextension is common … it is a chain of dominant-to-recessive and recessive-to-ultrarecessive relations in which each pair constitutes a frame. The Ancient Greek coextensive triplets, such as *eruthros*, *porphureos*, and *phoinkeos*, may have harbored the same kind of difference between lesser and greater (or unmarked and marked) contextualization as is seen among the modern pairs, although the Greek distinction may have been exceedingly subtle.' And cf. James (n. 6), 49.

[12] For a discussion of these 'red' words in epic, see E. Handschur, *Die Farb- und Glanzwörter bei Homer und Hesiod, in den homerischen Hymnen und den Fragmenten des epischen Kyklos* (Vienna, 1970), 115–33. See Rowe (n. 10), 357 for the symbolism of 'red' and its strong associations with blood. And for a discussion of the affective connotations of πορφύρεος – in particular, its associations with blood – see Irwin (n. 6), 18–19 n. 31; A. Fountoulakis, 'The colours of desire and death: colour terms in Bion's *Epitaph on Adonis*', in Cleland and Stears (n. 11), 113–14; J.D. Reed, *Bion of Smyrna: The Fragments and the* Adonis (Cambridge, 1997), 197, 212–13.

[13] For an interesting discussion of abstract colour terms, in particular 'red' and 'green', in both Latin and Greek, see Gell. *NA* 2.26. And for analysis of this passage, see U. Eco, 'How culture conditions the colours we see', in M. Blonsky (ed.), *On Signs* (Baltimore, 1985), 158–9, 171–3; Bradley (n. 6), 229–33, especially 230 n. 6 for bibliography on this particular passage.

[14] Handschur (n. 12), 125–6. And in her glossary of Greek colour terms James (n. 6), 51 describes φοῖνιξ as follows: 'Red, purple, according to LSJ and M [C. Mugler, *Dictionnaire historique de la terminologie optique des grecs* (Paris, 1964)] which both derive it from ὁ Φοῖνιξ, the Phoenician, the Phoenicians being considered the first users and discovers of it. Possibly derived from φοινός, slaughter. Used of cattle, fire, dates, the date-palm and rye grass.'

possibility is to interpret poetic φοινός (with δαφοινός, and φοίνιος,) as a back-formation, which is difficult, but not impossible.[15]

Despite the unlikelihood, then, that φοινός and φόνος are actually etymologically related, it is their close association in the popular ancient mind that is relevant here. So, just as φοινός could connote murder, gore and blood, primarily in contexts of warfare and violence,[16] so too, in similar contexts, could the adjective φοινίκεος and its numerous derivatives.

A contextual reading of this passage from the *Ion*, then, should go some way toward elucidating Euripides' choice of φοινικοβαφῆ to describe the swan's foot. I suggest that the problem may be resolved by reading the passage rhetorically rather than ornithologically. Ion's threat at 168–9 that the swan 'will bloody (αἱμάξεις) [its] beautiful songs unless [it] obey[s]' is an instance of synaesthesia, 'a blending or confusion of different kinds of sense-impression, in which one type of sensation is referred to in terms more appropriate to another'.[17] Here sight and sound are commingled, the sonority of the swan's beautiful songs unexpectedly and dramatically described visually as a result of Ion's threat: becoming bloodied. Owen remarks upon this passage: 'The expression is imaginative, and one is loath to alter it, though it is difficult. B[ayfield] parallels from phrases like μηκύνειν βοάν, where the verb really contains two predications; so "you will utter, and that amid blood".'[18] And as Kevin Lee rightly notes on this passage:

> The simple fact is that Euripides *has* used an illogical combination of words and has done so deliberately. At the expense of logic, however, he has used a form of expression which, without being unintelligible, stresses in its conciseness only the important aspects of the image concerned. Euripides is appealing primarily not to the reason of his audience, but to their *sense-perceptions* [my emphasis]. The passage is concerned chiefly with two things: the beautiful sounds of the swan and the unpleasant appearance of blood which will mar these sounds. These are the things which impress an observer and so these are the things which Euripides emphasizes. He does this by placing them in a simple verb-object structure. The fact that the verb cannot be logically joined to the object is unimportant for Euripides and, we can safely assume, for his audience.[19]

[15] R. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (Leiden and Boston, 2010), 1584–5. See also P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque: histoire des mots* (Paris, 1968), 1217–20; H. Frisk, *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1970), 2.1033–4; id., *Griechisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1972), 3.188. See also É. Boisacq, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris, 1938), 1032–3; G.C. Papanastassiou, *Compléments au dictionnaire étymologique du grec ancien de Pierre Chantraine (Λ–Ω)* (Thessalonika, 1994), 97–8. And for discussion of the disputed etymological connection between these words, see M.C. Astour, 'The origin of the terms "Canaan," "Phoenician," and "Purple"', *JNES* 24 (1965), 348–9; P. Chantraine, 'À propos du nom des Phéniciens et des noms de la pourpre', *StudClas* 14 (1972), 7–15; J.C. Billigmeier, 'Origins of the Greek word phoinix' *Talanta* 8–9 (1977), 1–4.

[16] See also Chantraine (n. 15, 1968), 1220 and id. (n. 15, 1972), 8–9; Rowe (n. 10), 1974, 338.

[17] C. Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford, 1991), 221. And cf. M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Fort Worth, 1999[7]), 315, who defines literary synaesthesia as 'descriptions of one kind of sensation in terms of another; color is attributed to sounds, odor to colors, sound to odors, and so on'. For synaesthesia in Greek literature, see e.g. W.B. Stanford, *Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice* (New York, 1972), 43, 47–62; Irwin (n. 6), 19–22, 199–200, 210–13.

[18] Owen (n. 4), 81.

[19] K.H. Lee, 'Two illogical expressions in Euripides', *CR* 19 (1969), 13–14, at 14.

Lee's characterization of this rhetorical device as 'illogical' notwithstanding, it is, rather, a particularly illuminating instance of synaesthesia. Moreover, although accepting Nauck's emendation of αἰάξεις for αἱμάξεις in his text and translation of this play ('You will turn your sweet-toned notes to cries of woe if you don't listen!', 57), in his commentary Lee reiterates his defence of the manuscript reading (against Diggle's acceptance of Nauck's emendation) by citing Kraus who similarly defends the paradosis and describes the emendation αἰάξεις as a 'banalization'.[20] In support of a poet's licence to use synaesthesia – what he also calls 'internsensal metaphor' – Stanford instances a passage from Aeschylus and another from Euripides.[21] The Aeschylean passage is *Persae* 395, σάλπιγξ δ' ἀϋτῇ πάντ' ἐκεῖν' ἐπέφλεγεν ('And the trumpet with its blare inflamed all that area');[22] the Euripidean passage *Phoenissae* 1377, ἐπεὶ δ' ἀνήφθη πυρσὸς ὡς Τυρσηνικῆς | σάλπιγγος ἠχή[23] ('And like a torch the sound of the Etruscan trumpet ignited').[24] As a further example of such synaesthetic imagery I would like to adduce these lines from Euripides' *Ion*. By superimposing the optics of Ion's threat upon the acoustics of the swan's song, Euripides synaesthetically evokes the colour red, the colour of blood.[25]

By accounting for this imaginative expression in terms of synaesthesia, we are now prepared to explain – again rhetorically – the problematic red-footed swan. To do so I suggest invoking the rhetorical tropes catachresis and hypallage. Consider the former to be the generic and the latter to be the specific trope. Catachresis, 'the misapplication of a word … or the extension of a word's meaning in a surprising but strictly illogical metaphor',[26] is a broad enough category in which to locate this usage initially. But the use of the adjective 'red-dipped' to describe the swan's

[20] Lee (n. 1), 175–6. Walther Kraus, 'Textkritische Erwägungen zu Euripides' *Ion*', *WS* 102 (1989), 35–110, at 37.

[21] Stanford (n. 17), 57. See also id., *Aeschylus in his Style* (Dublin, 1942), 106–10.

[22] Translated by A.F. Garvie, *Aeschylus: Persae* (Oxford 2009), 193, who also remarks: 'This is a fine example of "synaesthetic imagery", in which one sense-perception is described in terms of another (cf. e.g. *Sept*. 103 κτύπον δέδορκα, "I see a noise") … Usually, the transference is from hearing to seeing, the keenest of the senses. The trumpet-blare was so loud that it was almost as though its vibrations could be seen. Cf. *Sept*. 286 λόγους … φλέγειν, S. *OT* 186 παιὼν δὲ λάμπει, 473–5, E. *Phoen*. 1377 ἀνήφθη (Diggle) πυρσὸς ὡς Τυρσηνικῆς σάλπιγγος ἠχή, P. *Ol*. 9.21–2 μαλεραῖς ἐπιφλέγων ἀοιδαῖς, Bacchyl. fr. 4.80, V. *Aen*. 10.895 *clamore incendunt caelum*.'

[23] In his edition, D.J. Mastronarde, *Euripides: Phoenissae* (Cambridge, 1994), 534 adopts Diggle's emendation, noting: 'The comparison of a sound to a flash of fire or light is traditional in Greek poetry … Only with his emendation ἀνήφθη does the synaesthesia have full force. With transmitted ἀφείθη the image depends weakly on ὡς and the verb is at best a different metaphor ("let go" rather than "emit") and at worst colourless.'

[24] My translation.

[25] On the capacity of a word like αἱμάττω to evoke the idea of a colour, see Clarke (n. 6), 7–8, who includes not only colour terms themselves, but also 'implicit' colour words. At 11–12 n. 17 she remarks: 'It is the case, however, that some words seem more chromatic than others: *sanguis*, for instance, can be considered more strongly chromatic than *puer* or *villa*. The chromatic value of a word can also be affected by the context in which it appears; if it is on its own it usually has less chromatic impact than when it forms part of a colour cluster, for the presence of other colour words alerts the reader to its chromatic potential. Although there must always be some degree of subjectivity in the process, certain general rules can be applied to determining the implicit colour words in a poem. A word can usually be considered an implicit colour term if it is frequently associated with a particular colour adjective … or if it echoes another, stronger colour word in the passage.' I am suggesting that the verb αἱμάττω is one such 'implict' colour word, and that together with φοινικοβαφῆ it forms part of a 'colour cluster'.

[26] Baldick (n. 17), 31.

foot has been so extended as to constitute a particular case of hypallage, where 'an epithet is transferred from the more appropriate to the less appropriate of two nouns.'[27] In other words, by having Ion describe the swan's foot as φοινικοβαφῆ, 'red-dipped' in 162–3, Euripides is hypallactically anticipating the potential outcome of Ion's threat, not explicitly voiced until 168–9.[28]

But an immediate objection to this reading comes to mind. Between the mention of the swan's red-dipped foot and that of the bloodied beautiful songs, five lines consisting of three separate sentences intervene. Can such an extended instance of hypallage be sustained? Within the immediate context of those lines, it would seem unlikely; but within the broader context of Ion's monody, I believe it can. As Lee notes, 'the monody is regularly used to express high emotion', and it is particularly in the last thirty lines (153–83) – the passage where the three birds suddenly appear and interrupt him at his pious labours – that Ion expresses himself most vehemently.[29] These lines open (153) with the extra-metrum reduplicated cry ἔα ἔα, signalling primarily Ion's surprise and secondarily his displeasure at this unexpected avian invasion, particularly since he has just finished purifying the temple with water from the Castalian spring (144–53).[30] Seeing them flying down from their nests on Parnassus, Ion first orders them away from the coping stones and the golden temple itself. He next makes a bold threat (157–9):

> μάρψω σ' αὖ τόξοις, ὦ Ζηνὸς
> κῆρυξ, ὀρνίθων γαμφηλαῖς
> ἰσχὺν νικῶν.
>
> My bow will bring you down as well, herald
> of Zeus, although your beak
> routs the strength of other birds![31]

Despite the eagle being Zeus's messenger, Ion is clearly determined to keep it off his freshly cleaned temple, even if that means wounding or killing it. As Lee

[27] Baldick (n. 17), 103.

[28] The idea that a reference to a colour can foreshadow a coming event has also been noted by R.J. Edgeworth, *The Colors of the* Aeneid (New York, 1992), 52, who, in commenting on the use of the adjective *sanguineus* to describe Aeneas' cuirass, remarks: 'Obviously the breastplate is red in color, certainly not "blood covered" as it is fresh from Vulcan's forge; the choice of adjective foreshadows the blood that will be shed upon it.' See further ibid. 52–4, 161–3. And as Eco (n. 13), 171–3 remarks a propos of a discussion of Latin colour terms: 'In other words, [Latin poets] were not interested in pigments but in perceptual effects due to combined action of light, surfaces, the nature and purposes of objects. The sword can be *fulva* as jasper *because the poet sees the red of the blood it may spill* [my emphasis].' Eco further adds (173), 'The names of colours, taken in themselves, have no precise chromatic content: they must be viewed within the general context of many interacting semiotic systems'. Cf. Clarke (n. 11), 133.

[29] Lee (n. 1), 168. And as Lee further notes (171), 'Ion's monody is one of the most memorable in Eur[ipides] because of its charming naiveté and the deep attachment to Apollo it expresses. That so much emotional energy and verbal pyrotechnics are linked with the most mundane tasks is certainly not tragic.'

[30] As Lee (n. 1), 174 rightly remarks, 'The birds are, of course, imaginary (cf. Taplin *Stagecraft* 34)'. For the reduplicated use of the interjection ἔα to denote surprise or displeasure, see LSJ s.v. And see also H. Perdicoyianni-Paléologue, 'The interjections in Greek tragedy', *QUCC* 70 (2002), 49–88, at 73–4 and 85, who allows this interjection to denote only surprise, not displeasure. But given what follows, in particular, Ion's repeated used of this phrase at 170 when a third unidentified bird arrives, it is clear that he is not merely shocked but now rather indignant.

[31] Translated by Kovacs (n. 3), 335.

(n. 1, 175) notes, '*μάρπτω* describes determined action that has a violent intent (cf. *Alc*. 847, 1142, *Hec*. 1061) or simply means business (cf. *Pha*. 172)'. In no uncertain terms, then, Ion explicitly threatens Zeus's eagle with bodily harm should it dare alight on Apollo's temple. Just as he finishes threatening the eagle, there next appears the swan with red-dipped foot (161–3). And having boldly threatened to shoot down Zeus's eagle, he also has no qualms with similarly threatening Apollo's swan (164–5):

> *οὐδέν σ' ἁ φόρμιγξ ἁ Φοίβου*
> *σύμμολπος τόξων ῥύσαιτ' ἄν.*
>
> The lyre of Apollo
> that accompanies your song cannot save you from my bow![32]

But he here offers the swan a way out, first by ordering it simply to fly away, and second, by suggesting precisely where it should go: to the lake at Delos. It is at this point, however, that Ion returns to intimidation by uttering his synaesthesic threat: 'You will bloody your beautiful songs unless you obey.' Viewed then from within the broader context of these penultimate lines of Ion's monody, the sudden and potentially befouling presence of the eagle and the swan have so riled him that, their particular cultic associations with Zeus and Apollo notwithstanding, and despite the inevitable bloodshed that would itself besmirch the very temple he has worked so hard to cleanse, Ion is quite prepared to shoot to kill. As Lee notes, 'Even violence to the birds may be justified by the service of the god who nurtures him'.[33] So, although five lines intervene between the mention of the swan's red-dipped foot and its bloodied but beautiful songs, I suggest that this instance of hypallage is facilitated by the entire tenor of the passage. Ion's exclamation of indignant surprise at the birds' arrival is soon followed by his threat to shoot the eagle, demonstrating clearly his intent to shed blood if necessary. The violence implicit in this threat then spills over into his description of the swan whose foot he describes as 'red-dipped', is further sustained by his suggestion that Apollo's lyre cannot defend the swan against Ion's bow and arrows, and is clinched by his overt suggestion that the swan 'will bloody' its beautiful songs should it fail to heed him.[34]

Yet for all Ion's bluster and menace, his sacrilegious threats ultimately come to nothing (179–83):

[32] Translated by Kovacs (n. 3), 335.

[33] Lee (n. 1), 176. And later in the play (519–25), when Xuthus tries to embrace Ion, the latter threatens to shoot him with his arrows (*οὐκ ἀπαλλάξῃ, πρὶν εἴσω τόξα πλευμόνων λαβεῖν;* 524). See further O. Taplin, *Greek Tragedy in Action* (New York, 2003²), 136–8.

[34] And Ion's threats of violence do not stop with the eagle and swan. A third, unidentified bird immediately appears, whose presence is again signalled by his cry of *ἔα ἔα* (170), indicating once more his emotionally overwrought state. And just as with the other two, he not only threatens to use his bow and arrows to keep this bird at bay (*ψαλμοί σ' εἴρξουσιν τόξων*, 173) but also, as with the swan, offers the bird a way out by suggesting it head off to the streams of Alpheus or the grove on the Isthmus (174–6). Ion's bold words are predicated upon his overriding concern to prevent these birds from befouling the offerings and Apollo's temple (177–8). As Lee (n. 1), 174 astutely remarks: 'Ion's obsession with purity is related to the need for even distasteful violence; brightness, shining grandeur are to be sought after, but they may come at a price.' To put the argument more tendentiously, with the birds' unanticipated and unwanted arrival, Ion's blood is up and he is now seeing red.

κτείνειν δ' ὑμᾶς αἰδοῦμαι
τοὺς θεῶν ἀγγέλλοντας φήμας
θνατοῖς· οἷς δ' ἔγκειμαι μόχθοις
Φοίβῳ δουλεύσω κοὐ λήξω
τοὺς βόσκοντας θεραπεύων.

Yet I hesitate to kill you,
who convey the gods' words
to mortals. But I shall duly perform
the tasks I am devoted to for Phoebus and never cease
serving him who feeds me.[35]

Torn between his reverence for these birds as messengers of the gods, and his pious obligations to the god who looks after him, Ion is saved from having to carry out his threats by the birds' departure.[36] But as his final words make clear, his was no empty menace: had the birds not flown away, he was fully prepared to shoot to kill.[37]

Ion's violent threatening of the birds with his bow and arrows carries with it the implicit threat of bloodshed, first foreshadowed by the hypallactic adjective φοινικοβαφῆ, and then made explicit by the verb αἱμάττειν, 'make bloody', used synaesthetically to conflate sight with sound and so conjure the colour red. Ion's initial threat is so obliquely phrased ('Won't you move your red-dipped foot somewhere else?') that its full implications cannot be grasped until he concludes his synaesthesic threat ('You will bloody your beautiful songs if you do not obey').

This strong association between blood (αἷμα) and a particular shade of red (φοῖνιξ) also appears in Book 4 of the *Iliad* where Athena convinces Pandarus to shoot an arrow at Menelaus thereby breaking the truce between Greeks and Trojans (93–126). Yet Athena herself deliberately deflects the arrow so that it only superficially wounds Menelaus (127–140). In an extended seven-line simile, Menelaus' blood-stained thighs, legs and ankles are compared to scarlet-stained ivory (141–7):

ὡς δ' ὅτε τίς τ' ἐλέφαντα γυνὴ φοίνικι μιήνῃ
Μηονὶς ἠὲ Κάειρα παρήϊον ἔμμεναι ἵππων·
κεῖται δ' ἐν θαλάμῳ, πολέες τέ μιν ἠρήσαντο
ἵππῆες φορέειν, βασιλῆϊ δὲ κεῖται ἄγαλμα,

[35] Translated by Kovacs (n. 3), 337.

[36] From the fact that Ion never does shoot, we may infer that the birds have flown away. A.H. Sommerstein, in his 'Violence in Greek drama', in *The Tangled Ways of Zeus, and Other Studies in and around Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 2010), 30–46, at 35 n.17, contending that there is a dramatic convention that no humans or animals may be shown being killed on stage, suggests that the birds Ion threatens to shoot were not visible to the audience.

[37] See M. Kaimio, *Physical Contact in Greek Tragedy: A Study of Stage Conventions* (Helsinki, 1988), 67–8: 'It may be noted that in almost all these cases where violence is threatened but not carried out, the threats are accompanied by very brutal words – the opponents speak of killing, of smashing the other's head bloody etc.' See also id., 'Violence in Greek tragedy', in T. Viljamaa, A. Timonen and C. Krötzl (edd.), *Crudelitas: The Politics of Cruelty in the Ancient and Medieval World* (Vienna, 1992), 28–40. On implicit and explicit violence in Greek drama, see further Sommerstein (n. 36), 44–5; R.G. Tetstall, 'Violence on the Greek stage', *Euphrosyne* 1 (1957), 213–16; Kaimio (1988), 62–78; S. Goldhill, 'Violence in Greek tragedy', in J. Redmond (ed.), *Violence in Drama* (Cambridge, 1991), 15–33; A. Ercolani, 'Gewalt in der Griechischen Tragödie', in G. Fischer and S. Moraw (edd.), *Die andere Seite der Klassik: Gewalt im 5. und 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Stuttgart, 2005), 89–101.

ἀμφότερον κόσμός θ' ἵππῳ ἐλατῆρί τε κῦδος·
τοῖοί τοι, Μενέλαε, μιάνθην αἵματι μηροὶ
εὐφυέες κνῆμαί τε ἴδὲ σφυρὰ κάλ' ὑπένερθεν.

As when some Maeonian woman or Carian with scarlet
colours ivory, to make it a cheek piece for horses;
it lies away in an inner room, and many a rider
longs to have it, but it is laid up to be a king's treasure,
two things, to be the beauty of the horse, the pride of the horseman:
so, Menelaus, your shapely thighs were stained with the colour
of blood, and your legs also and the ankles beneath them.[38]

Although the blood that flows from Menelaus' arrow wound is twice described outside of the simile proper as 'dark' or 'black',[39] the simile itself works by comparing his flowing blood to the scarlet dye *φοῖνιξ*, thus making explicit the close poetic association between the colour *φοῖνιξ* and the colour of blood, an association further enhanced by the fact that both dye and blood stain whatever they come into contact with (*μιήνῃ*, 141; *μιάνθην*, 146). As Kirk comments, 'Menelaos' thighs and legs become stained with blood as an ivory cheek-piece for a horse is stained with purple by an Asiatic craftswoman: one of the most striking and unusual of the Iliadic similes'.[40] And Homer further underscores this sharp contrast of red on white by describing Pandarus' violent and bellicose attack by means of a serenely domestic image.[41] Thus in a seven-line simile Homer intimately links the colour *φοῖνιξ* with the colour of blood in a context of violence precipitated by Athena's urging Pandarus to shoot an arrow at Menelaus, an act not merely threatened, but actually carried out.

But whereas Homer uses an extended simile to highlight the close connection between the colour red and the colour of blood, Euripides avails himself rather of catachresis, hypallage and synaesthesia. And while Homer relieves the martial backdrop with a 'peaceful' simile, Euripides disrupts a quiet domestic scene with rhetorical tropes that highlight the violence implicit in Ion's words. Homer's elaborate simile carefully describes how the blood flows from the wound beneath Menelaus' corselet: flowing first down his thighs, then down along his shins, and finally trickling on down to his ankles. Such a deliberate description also allows us to envision the horse's ivory cheek-piece as the red dye also drips on down. Euripides' technique is far more oblique. He starts with the threat of violence by implying that the swan's foot will become 'red-dipped'. It is not until five lines later that we understand precisely how this will happen: Ion will 'bloody his beautiful songs'. The image conjured is that of Ion's arrow piercing the swan's

[38] Translation slightly adapted from Richmond Lattimore, *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago, 1951), 117.

[39] *αὐτίκα δ' ἔρρεεν αἷμα κελαινεφὲς ἐξ ὠτειλῆς*, 140; *ὡς εἶδεν μέλαν αἷμα καταρρέον ἐξ ὠτειλῆς*, 149.

[40] G.S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary: Volume I: Books 1–4* (Cambridge 1985), 345. See also M. Mueller, *The Iliad* (London, 1984), 108.

[41] As W.C. Scott, *The Oral Nature of the Homeric Simile* (Leiden, 1974), 107 notes: 'Since most similes follow the traditional practice and harmonize with their contexts, those which contrast must have been all the more effective. However, a good craftsman elicits all possible power from his tools; the potential which the simile of peaceful nature had in describing a peaceful scene intensified even more powerfully by contrast the violence of a war scene.' See further ibid.112–13.

beak as it sings, allowing us to imagine how the blood courses first from its beak, then down its ivory-white neck and chest, and finally on down to its feet, only now becoming truly 'red-dipped'. So, whereas Homer straightforwardly describes the blood dripping down to Menelaus' ankle in three consecutive movements, Euripides indirectly alludes to bloodshed via the hypallactic adjective *φοινικοβαφῆ*, the image of the blood dripping all the way down to the swan's foot only coming fully into view once he has completed his synaesthetic image. But while Homer's simile carefully describes the tangible result of an actual arrow wound, Euripides' rhetorical flourish obliquely describes the hypothetical outcome of Ion's insolent threat. As noted above, since the Homeric simile is enhanced by the idea that blood, like dye, stains whatever it comes into contact with, Homer uses the same verb to describe the effect of both. Noting the verb's unprecedented usage at 141, Kirk remarks:

> *μιαίνω* meaning 'stain' in a purely technical sense is a virtually unparalleled use of a word of which the basic meaning is 'the impairment of a thing's form or integrity' (Parker, *Miasma* 3); it must surely be determined by 'stained with blood' in the resumption at 146.[42]

If Kirk is correct, then what is the Greek word for 'stain' in a purely technical sense? It is *βάπτω*, which means both 'dip' and 'dye'.[43] In other words, had Homer not been so concerned to underscore 'the outrage of defiling' Menelaus,[44] he might very well have used the more purely technical verb *βάπτω*, a verb, moreover, also used by the tragedians in contexts of violence to mean 'dip so as to dye or stain with blood'. So, for example, Mastronarde, in a note on Euripides' *Phoenissae* 1578–9 (*χαλκόροτον δὲ λαβοῦσα νεκρῶν πάρα φάσγανον εἴσω | σαρκὸς ἔβαψεν*, 'Taking the bronze-beaten sword from the dead | she plunged it into her body'[45]) comments, 'the ambiguous metaphor *ξίφος* (vel sim.) *βάπτειν* = "dip and moisten / dye one's sword" is affected by tragedy (*Prom*. 863, *Aj*. 95); allusive association of the verb or of *βαφή* with shedding of blood is obvious in *Choe*. 1011, *Ag*. 239, and presumably latent in *Ag*. 612'.[46]

I have emphasized the tragic usage of the verb *βάπτειν* or the noun *βαφή* in contexts of bloodshed so as to substantiate my preference for Nauck's emendation of *φοινικοβαφῆ*, 'red-dipped'. The paradosis gives the compound adjective *φοινικοφαῆ*, a *hapax legomenon* translated by LSJ as 'ruddy-glancing'. Not disputing its initial stem, Nauck replaces its second to read the better-attested *φοινικοβαφῆ* of which there are seven other attestations, all from later writers.[47] In his first letter, Philostratus refers to the chitons worn by the Lacedaemonians as follows:

[42] Kirk (n. 40), 346.
[43] See LSJ s.v. *βάπτω*.
[44] Kirk (n. 40), 347.
[45] Translated by D. Kovacs, *Euripides: Helen; Phoenician Women; Orestes* (Cambridge, 2002), 373.
[46] Mastronarde (n. 23), 589.
[47] Ach. Tat. 8.13.1.5; Artem. 2.3.44; Philostr. *Ep*. 1.3.1–4, 1.36.6–7; Hld. 3.3.5.3, 10.25.2.8; Synesius, *Or. de reg*. 16.40.

οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι φοινικοβαφεῖς ἐνεδύοντο χιτῶνας, ἢ ἵνα ἐκπλήττωσι τοὺς ἐναντίους τῷ φοβερῷ τῆς χροιᾶς, ἢ ἵνα ἀγνοῶσι τὸ αἷμα τῇ κοινωνίᾳ τῆς βαφῆς.[48]

The Lacedaemonians used to wear red-dyed chitons, either so that they might frighten their enemies because of its colour, or so that their enemies might not recognize the blood because of its similarity in colour to the red dye.[49]

Both Philostratus' use of the adjective *φοινικοβαφῆ*, rather than another word for 'red', and his alternate suggestion for the Lacedaemonians' preference for this particular colour tally nicely with my argument for accepting Nauck's emendation. It is even possible, if one allows that Euripides wrote *φοινικοβαφῆ* rather than *φοινικοφαῆ*, that his usage may have influenced Philostratus' choice in this passage.[50] And in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, when Dicaeopolis offers to put his head on the butcher's block to show that what he is saying is right, the Chorus responds, *εἰπέ μοι· τί φειδόμεσθα τῶν λίθων, ὦ δημόται, | μὴ οὐ καταξαίνειν τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον εἰς φοινικίδα;* (Ar. *Ach*. 319–20), 'Tell me, fellow demesmen, why are we hoarding our stones, instead of shredding this man till he looks like a scarlet cloak?'[51] Noting that 'card' is a well-established metaphor for 'lacerate', Sommerstein adds, 'this metaphor from the field of clothes-making is appropriately complemented by the comparison of the victim's bloodied body to the red military cloak worn by officers (*Peace* 1173–6)[52] and Spartans (*Lys*. 1140, Xen. *Lac*. 11.3, Arist. Fr. 542)'.[53] And Douglas Olson, after similarly noting the reference to a 'crimson robe', adds, '… the chorus' basic point is simply that Dik[aiopolis] will be reduced to a bloody (*φοίνιος*) mess'.[54]

We have seen, then, that the stem *φοινικο-* and its congeners, referring in a variety of compounds to anything deep red, purple or crimson in colour,[55] is especially appropriate in a context of violence or warfare as a descriptor of blood.[56] Thus Aristophanes, by referring to a scarlet robe in a scene where violence is implicit, presumes that the connotations of 'bloody' cannot be missed. Thus too Euripides, in a context insinuating violence, uses the compound adjective *φοινικοβαφῆ*, whose first member not only denotes the colour red but also connotes that its source is blood, while its second member further implies that the swan will have its foot dyed with its own blood should it disobey Ion's commands.[57] The major differ-

[48] Philostr. *Ep*. 1.3.1–4. And cf. *Ep*. 1.36.6–7, *εἰ δὲ φοινικοβαφῆ, φοβεῖς, ὡς ῥέοντος ἐκεῖθεν ποθεν αἵματος*.

[49] My translation.

[50] And for a discussion of *φοινικοβαφής* in both Artemidorus and Philostratus, see D. Kasprzyk, in his 'Les couleurs du rêve chez Artémidore', in Villard (n. 6), 129–52, at 138–9 and 142–5.

[51] Translated by A.H. Sommerstein, *The Comedies of Aristophanes, vol. 1: The Acharnians* (Warminster, 1980), 69.

[52] See further A.H. Sommerstein, *Aristophanes: Peace* (Oxford, 2005), 148 and 189. S.D. Olson, *Aristophanes: Peace* (Oxford, 1998), 132 and 291–2.

[53] Sommerstein (n. 51), 170.

[54] S.D. Olson, *Aristophanes: Acharnians* (Oxford, 2002), 161. See also 108, and cf. Ar. *Ach*. sch. ad loc.

[55] See e.g. LSJ s.vv. *φοινήεις*, *φοινίκεος*, *φοινικόεις*, *φοῖνιξ* (B.1), *φοίνιος*, *φοινίσσω*.

[56] So, e.g. *σμώδιγγες … αἵματι φοινικόεσσαι*, *Il*. 23.716–7; *Ἄρης … αἵματι φοινικόεις*, Hes. *Sc*. 192–4; *φοίνιον αἷμα*, *Od*. 18.97; *φοινισσομένην αἵματι παρθένον*, Eur. *Hec*. 151.

[57] Cf. S. Stewart, 'The "blues" of Aratus', in M.A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit and G.C. Wakker (edd.), *Beyond the Canon* (Leuven, 2006), 319–44, who argues convincingly that the colour terms *γλαυκός* and *κυάνεος* (322) '… throughout their history … denoted shades of blue, and of

ence between these two passages is that while Aristophanes' implicit comparison is rhetorically straightforward, Euripides' is rhetorically complex, just as is the Homeric passage relative to the Euripidean. Exploiting the tropes of synaesthesia, catachresis and hypallage, Euripides creates an elaborate image that fails to be properly understood unless context and rhetoric are taken into account. Once they are, there is very good reason to adopt Nauck's emendation of φοινικοβαφῆ for φοινικοφαῆ, and equally good reason not to adopt his emendation of αἰάξεις for αἱμάξεις.[58] So although Euripides may have 'blundered' ornithologically, he has triumphed rhetorically, creating a visually arresting image of a swan with 'red-dipped' foot.

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emotion'. In the case of κυάνεος, Stewart argues (327) 'From Homer down to the 2nd century *kyan*-words were compounded of two central and inalienable ingredients: a dark, darkly-shining blue, and a poetic "affect" of *threat*'. I would suggest that Euripides evokes a comparable affective component by describing the swan's foot as 'red-dipped'.

[58] Although Owen (n.4) ad loc. is very much attracted to Nauck's emendation, which he elegantly translates, 'I will turn your lovely song into a wail of woe', he wisely decides against its adoption.

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