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The Flowing Colour of Religious Μέλι and its Transformed Metaphorical Function in Homer

Yukiko Saito

... .. τοῖσι δὲ Νέστωρ
ἡδυεπὴς ἀνόρουσε λιγὺς Πυλίων ἀγορητής,
τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδὴ· (Il. 1. 247-249)
Then there rose among them Nestor the sweet-spoken, the clear-voiced speaker of Pylos: from his tongue the words flowed sweeter than honey.

Introduction: Colour as Sensory Experience

Can we define the colour of honey? Yellow? Or, gold? How about in antiquity then? Homer curiously connects μέλι ('honey') with the adjective χλωρός, which is generally rendered as 'greenish-yellow,' 'light-green,' 'pale-green,' and so on,⁽¹⁾ twice in *Il.* 11. 631 (μέλι χλωρόν) and *Od.* 10. 234 (μέλι χλωρόν). It is puzzling. Can honey, which usually tastes sweet, be greenish-yellow? Rather, the more apt angle that should be questioned would be: what is the definition of 'greenish-yellow' anyway?

* * *

This paper attempts to explore the significant but peculiar aspects of μέλι in Homer, primarily through colour/light-in-mind cognitive reading. It could be claimed that colour-descriptive words are simply ornamental additions, a consequence of the metrical rules that Homer employs.⁽²⁾ However, my standpoint is different; there must be some intention and purpose when the poet chooses his words. As Gage suggests that "More than other formal characteristics, colour has seemed to most of us to speak directly and unambiguously,"⁽³⁾ investigating colour has profound potential for illuminating how the ancients viewed their world. The function or/and recognition of colour is not only intriguing but also extremely intricate. The term of χλωρός is no exception. It encompasses a broad range of green-yellow-ish hues.⁽⁴⁾ According to Berlin and Kay's influential study on basic colour terms, green appears at the stage of III or IV (colours at the stage III and IV are either green or yellow), after black and white at stage I and red at stage II.⁽⁵⁾ To my surprise, χλωρός is considered as "[yellow]" in their volume, even though "green, yellow tints" are regarded for the χλωρός (p. 70). Substantial criticism against this universality of the process of how basic colours appeared has been discussed. Nevertheless, at least it is reasonable to recognise that green or green-ish shade is one of the most essential, basic colours.

Also, besides the colour-related definitions, *χλωρός* means 'fresh' or 'young,' which presumably is the original meaning and is linked to water imagery.⁽⁶⁾ One of the reasons that *χλωρός* is usually translated as green is its etymological relation to *χλόη* ('the first green shoot of plants') that is associated with moisture and a watery state. Doubtlessly the ancients did perceive the world in their own way, and it is most likely that they matched colour terms to what they saw in nature. According to Pastoreau, "The ancient Greeks surely saw green quite well, but their opportunities for naming this color in writing were probably limited or not particularly noteworthy. Green may have been mentioned daily in speaking but more rarely in writing. ... they [studies on the Greeks' relationship with color] confirm that the Greeks not only saw colors perfectly but also had a very pronounced taste for vivid, contrasting hues."⁽⁷⁾ We must note that how the Greeks saw the world then and how they named colour terms are different matters. Further, their way of describing colours is different from ours. In this respect, Deutscher has well demonstrated that languages, cultures, generations, and various factors influence differences in how we see, perceive, recognise, and express the world.⁽⁸⁾ Butler & Purves' edited volume on synaesthesia also delivers critical viewpoints concerning sensory connections.⁽⁹⁾ Colour is co-involved with sound, taste, smell, and so forth, and "is not a thing in itself, and even less is it a phenomenon that is only relevant to vision: it is also perceived in tandem with other sensory information."⁽¹⁰⁾

In Western culture, greenness, which we, at least I myself, assume characterises fresh, hopeful, and positive imagery like green-ish plants sprouted in spring, also represents negative aspects such as jealousy or fear. Symbolically, green in the Western world is associated with something unstable⁽¹¹⁾ so its connotations can be either/both positive or/and negative. Countless shades of green on leaves are indeed difficult to name individually, which is the precise characteristic of this colour-related term, *χλωρός*, i.e., instability. As far as I know, however, the mysteriously interconnected attributes of greenish colour expressions that are related to *μέλι*, and their metaphorical function have never been thoroughly addressed. Thus, the co-woven pivotal role(s) of its colours or hues is yet to be uncovered, which also evidences particular significance in society.

Methodological Notes

Three steps are set to seek an unseen nexus of *μέλι*, intending to develop my previous examination on *χλωρός* in the *Iliad*.⁽¹²⁾ The method is (i) to look at every presentation of *μέλι* and *μέλι*-related terms in Homer, (ii) to analyse their referents and examine how those terms are organised within their contexts, then (iii) to elucidate the subtle, religiously-involved, co-interrelationship between honey and bees in Homer, combined with colour-related hues and its metaphorical functions involving the illumination of *χλωρός*. My approach is to visualise and/or sense Homeric scenes, epistemologically. By shedding light on *μέλι* and other compound terms, I extract previously undiscovered threads that illuminate the veiled attributes of bees and honey along with its motion of flowing-like colours as well as the poet's sophisticated, elaborate arrangement of visualising his colour world. My aim is to post a new, fresh angle about thinking

of texts as kinetic design.

Before moving onto the analysis of μέλι, let us take a brief view on the quintessential, fundamental importance of honey and bees in antiquity.

1. Classical Significance of Bees and Honey

Honey itself was valued greatly in antiquity, as noted in Pliny's *Natural History* 11. 11, for instance. Bees collect honey (*mella*), which according to Pliny is the sweetest (*dulcissimum*), the finest (*subtilissimum*) and the most wholesome (*saluberrimum*) substance.⁽¹³⁾ It is clear that even in those early times honey was known for its health-promoting attributes, and was also used for medical treatments, some of which are still practiced today. Athenaeus mentioned that Democritus prolonged his life as necessary only by consuming honey (*The Learned Banqueters* Book 2. 26). Honey is produced by bees, which were a subject of curiosity in antiquity, thus ancient writers referred ubiquitously to bees' biological systems, lives, and so on.⁽¹⁴⁾ The reproduction of bees was mysterious; Aristotle, for example, mentions that bees could generate without copulation (*Generation of Animals* 759a).⁽¹⁵⁾

Noticeably, the flowing sweetness of honey is customarily connected with the eloquent smoothness of oratory as seen in the description of Nestor's words in *Iliad* 1 as quoted above. Poets, singers, and sages were often associated with bees, and the fact that poets recognised their poems or even themselves as 'honey-voiced' was frequently mentioned in antiquity, too.⁽¹⁶⁾ Fontana states that honey, as "a source of inspiration for artists, poets and prophets, made it seem to be of divine origin, able to produce eloquent words of wisdom."⁽¹⁷⁾ According to Tresidder, honey is "The food of gods and immortals, seers and poets — a symbol of purity, inspiration, eloquence, the divine Word and God-given blessings. Honey was a principal source of sugar in the ancient world, and had valued medicinal properties. It was also the basis of mead, a sacred beverage in many cultures, equated with the ambrosia of the gods."⁽¹⁸⁾ Very beguilingly, Pliny knows that bees alighted on Plato's lips, as an infant, portending an eloquent voice (*Natural History* 11. 55)⁽¹⁹⁾. Lucretius describes readers feeding on golden (*aureus*) words like bees sipping from flowers (*On the Nature of Things* 3. 1-13). No wonder why bees or their buzz and honey connote something essentially prevalent through classical times, related to skilful arrangement of words. What the poets tell is regarded as true, like bees as they cull the sweets from honey-dropping founts in Muses' gardens (Plato *Ion* 534a-b)⁽²⁰⁾ and it is acknowledged that bees could share some divine intelligence (Virgil *Georgics* 4. 219-221). In Classical treatises, honey often is served as an offering to deities; Medea tells Jason to provide honey to the goddess Hecate, to achieve his goal (Apollonius *Argonautica* 3. 1035-1036). The implication of bees unquestionably embraces sublime dignity, being related to religious matters, in their ordered, efficient society.⁽²¹⁾

Being associated with the religious sense, 'bee' embodies a dual aspect — good or bad, in that they are small and seemingly innocuous, whereas they are dangerous due to their stings, which can cause much suffering.⁽²²⁾ Aelianos describes celebrated bees as copper-coloured (ἀπὲρ οὗν ἄδονται χαλκοειδεῖς) but notes that they could inflict the most grievous pain with their stings (*On Animals* 17. 35). Xenophon mentions honey's poisonous aspect; the Greek soldiers who ate

honey suffered from vomiting and diarrhoea, and so on. Those who ate a little became as if drunk, while those who ate a great amount appeared to become crazy, even dying in some cases (*Anabasis* 4. 8. 20-21). The sweetness of honey can put you on the road to destruction.

Lastly, as a happier episode, the story of the birth of Zeus that is linked with honey and bees calls for special attention. Diodorus (*The Library of History* 5. 70. 3-5) tells us that Zeus is raised by the Nymphs at Mt. Ida, who nurture him with a mixture of honey and milk following his birth (αὐται δὲ μέλι καὶ γάλα μίγνυσθαι τὸ παιδίον ἔθρεψαν ...). After Zeus is grown, wishing to preserve the memory of his close association with bees, Zeus changes their colours from copper (χάλκεος) to shining gold (χρυσοειδής). Thus, honey, which bees produce, along with a representation of dual connotations, is nutritious enough to raise a god, which indicates its intimate association with divinity as well as the poet's elaborate composition.

2. Μέλι and its Metaphorical Representation in Homer

In the *Iliad*, μέλι occurs four times (1. 249, 11. 631, 18. 109, and 23. 170) and in the *Odyssey*, three times (10. 234, 20. 69, and 24. 68). Compound words such as μελιγδής ('honey-sweet') and μελίφρων ('honey-hearted') also appear. μελιγδής occurs nine times in the *Iliad* (4. 346, 6. 258, 10. 495, 10. 569, 10. 579, 12. 320, 17. 17, 18. 545, and 18. 568) and 13 times in the *Odyssey* (3. 46, 6. 90, 9. 94, 9. 208, 11. 100, 11. 203, 12. 48, 14. 78, 16. 52, 18. 151, 18. 426, 19. 551, and 21. 293). In the case of μελίφρων, six times in the *Iliad* (2. 34, 6. 264, 8. 188, 8. 506, 8. 546, and 24. 284) and five times in the *Odyssey* (7. 182, 10. 356, 13. 53, 15. 148, and 24. 489). μελίγηρυς occurs once at *Od.* 12. 187. μέλισσα ('bee') is seen three times at *Il.* 2. 87, *Il.* 12. 167, and *Od.* 13. 106. The referents are: ἄγρωστις ('grass'), γλυκός ('sweet'), ἐρυθρός ('red'), θυμός ('soul'), καρπός ('fruit'), καταλείβω ('trickle down'), κηρός ('bees-wax'), νόστος ('return'), οἶνος ('wine'), ὄψ ('voice'), πυρός ('wheat'), σῖτος ('food'), ὕπνος ('sleep'), and χλωρός. For μέλισσα, ἀδινός ('close,' 'thick') is applied. There are two proper names; Meliboia (Μελίβοια) and Melite (Μελίτη).⁽²³⁾ They seem entangled (please see the Appendix I below) and let us view these scenes individually.

2-1: Brightly Pleasurable, Sacred Sweetness

The taste of honey's sweetness provides the sense of pleasure, and it is nutritious, allowing living creatures to live healthily, as in the case of Democritus' extended life, mentioned above. Including Nestor's sweeter-than-honey words in *Iliad* 1 as seen above, they are supposed to have a bright, positive effect. In Homer, there are some notable scenes referring to pleasurable sweetness. For example, in *Iliad* 6, Hekabe suggests that Hektor should drink honey-sweet wine (μελιγδέα οἶνον, 258) in order to encourage him and give him power to fight. Honey-wine is provided with a meal⁽²⁴⁾ and often offered to gods as libation.⁽²⁵⁾ Strikingly, a drink of honey and milk (μελίκρητον) is the first offering to the shades during libations (*Od.* 10. 516-520). There, Circe instructs Odysseus how to make offerings to the shades. After the sweet drink of milk and honey (μελίκρητόν, 519), sweet wine (ἡδέϊ οἶνον, 519), water (ὕδατι, 520), and white barley (ἄλφιτα λευκά, 520) are offered. In fact, the offering of honey is a longer-standing custom than that of

wine.⁽²⁶⁾ The drink of μελίκρητον is offered first before wine, which hints at honey's crucial importance in their religious practice. It should taste sweet and according to Fontana, "Together with milk, honey symbolizes the abundance of the Promised Land of the Jews. Because of its preservative and aphrodisiac qualities, it stands for immortality of fertility."⁽²⁷⁾ The implicated connotations within honey are likely a mingling of both positive and negative aspects of sweetness. Further, honey is used for the cremation during funerals where life and death are in a way mingled and transferred. Agamemnon, already deceased when he appears in the *Odyssey*, recalls the time when they cremated Achilles' body:

καίεο δ' ἔν τ' ἐσθῆτι θεῶν καὶ ἀλείφατι πολλῷ
καὶ μέλιτι γλυκερῷ· πολλοὶ δ' ἦρωες Ἀχαιοὶ
τεύχεσιν ἐρρώσαντο πυρὴν πέρι καιομένοιο,
πεζοὶ θ' ἱππῆές τε· πολὺς δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς ὀρώρει.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ σε φλόξ ἦνυσεν Ἥφαίστοιο,
ἦῶθεν δὴ τοι λέγομεν λεῦκ' ὅστέ', Ἀχίλλεῦ,
οἶνω ἐν ἀκρήτῳ καὶ ἀλείφατι. ... (Od. 24, 67-73).

You were burned in the clothing of the gods, and abundant ointment and sweet honey, while many Achaian heroes moved in armor about the pyre where you were burning, with horses and on foot, and a great clamoring rose up. But after the flame of Hephaistos had consumed you utterly, then at dawn we gathered your white bones, Achilles, together with unmixed wine and unguents.

Achilleus' dead body is burned, covered by sweet honey (μέλιτι γλυκερῷ, 68) and ointment, then the gleaming brightness of fire (πυρὴν πέρι καιομένοιο, 69) is narrated.⁽²⁸⁾ A frightful scene is depicted: the pyre burns fiercely and collapses, with many men milling around it, generating a wild clamour (πολὺς δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς ὀρώρει, 70). Combining bright light, chaotic sounds, and rapid movements as such ῥώομαι (69, 'to move with speed,' 'violence'), the poet's language generates a fearful sense of awe. Both visual and aural effects are effectively coordinated. The brightness denotes not only positive but also negative imagery as well. The usage of honey for the funeral demonstrates its religious significance and its fluidity suggests an association with the journey to the other world. In this respect, the fact that honey allocated for the funeral scene in order to cover the dead body signifies its religious connection with life and death — ambivalent instability, i.e., positive and negative aspects.

Two other remarkable examples should be mentioned. One is when Odysseus prepares the honeyed drink, μελιτδέα οἶνον (Od. 9. 208), for his cunning trick when he and his men are attacking Polyphemos (Od. 9. 208-211). It is a special drink given by Maron and it is impossible to resist drinking it. This sweet wine works spectacularly well; Polyphemos soon falls into a deep sleep (Od. 9. 371-373). The honey-sweet wine tastes very good, even when it is mixed with twenty measures of water,⁽²⁹⁾ as Polyphemos drinks a full measure three times and then sleeps

soundly. Its smell is divinely sweet (*Od.* 9. 210-211; ὁδμή δ' ἡδεῖα ἀπὸ κρητῆρος ὁδῶδει, / θεσπεσίη). This provides for us, i.e., the viewers, the imagery of the possible danger presented by sweet, pleasurable drinks. Only here the colour-related term ἐρυθρός, which is usually rendered as red, is applied to the wine, emphasising the drink's effect and vividly intensifying subsequent scenes. While Polyphemos is sleeping, Odysseus and his men successfully attack the monster, giving him terrible pain by jabbing a sharpened, heated pike of olive wood into his eye. The spouting of blood is symbolically foreshadowed by the redness of ἐρυθρός that describes the sweet wine. Arranging the expression of sweet wine, the poet manoeuvres the image control within his story; ἐρυθρός and the bloody surge. A message is conveyed; that which is too enjoyable to refuse might bring negative outcomes after all. The other example is Circe's handling of a mysterious drink in *Od.* 10. 233-236. The meal that Circe prepares is τυρός ('cheese'), ἄλφιτον ('barley'), and μέλι (honey) with the attachment of χλωρός,⁽³⁰⁾ mixed with Pramneian wine, to which she adds φάρμακον, her magical drug that makes men forget their home land. Honey that is mingled with wine helps to trick men. Again, the poisonous aspect of pleasurable sweetness of honey-drink is illustrated. Men are eager to taste what Circe serves, without knowing what it actually is. As a consequence, they are trapped. The scene delineates how the sweetness of honey-drink together with wine, can be devised for devious purposes.

On the other hand, this mixture is associated with ineffable, religious matters, which is why Hekabe, desperately hoping for her husband's return, provides wine to Priam when he is going to visit Achilles' camp in the last book of the *Iliad*. The honey-hearted (μελίφρων, *Il.* 24. 284) wine used as a libation to Zeus. Priam is taking a great risk to visit the man who killed his son Hektor. Like Circe's drink above, the negative, alarming aspect of honey could be culled from the expression, even though it is attractive, to some extent. In other words, a honey-related substance can positively be involved in trickery, or deception. The honey-sweet (μελίγηρυς) singing of the Sirens,⁽³¹⁾ which is in fact a trick concocted to deceive men, is a good example:

οὐ γάρ πώ τις τῆδε παρήλασε νηὶ μελαίνῃ,
 πρίν γ' ἡμέων μελίγηρυν ἀπὸ στομάτων ὄπ' ἀκοῦσαι,
 ἀλλ' ὅ γε τερπόμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδώς. (*Od.* 12. 186-188)
 for no one else has ever sailed past this place in his black ship
 until he has listened to the honey-sweet voice that issues
 from our lips; then goes on, well pleased, knowing more than ever
 he did;

The Sirens' song is enchanting, but you will be in deadly trouble if you actually hear it. Odysseus and his men manage to escape the Sirens' devious melodies by putting bees-wax, κηρός (*Od.* 12. 48), into their ears, following Circe's instructions, even though only Odysseus, who commands his men to tie him securely to the mast, listens to the Siren's song. In short, enticing honey-related voices are blocked by plugs made from bees-wax. One particular string should be pinned down here. Honey-sweetness, which is enjoyable, tricks or deceives. However, such effects can be prevented or silenced by κηρός, which comes from bees. The function of malicious honey-

sweetness is affected and stopped only by its very own original derivation, which elicits distinguishing and awesome features of bees and honey, μέλι. One more noteworthy presentation that signifies the linking of honey with divinity is the description of bees in a sacred cave (*Od.* 13. 105-112). Bees store honey there; ἔνθα δ' ἔπειτα τιθαιβώσσουσι μέλισσαι (*Od.* 13. 106) and Nymphs weave the webs of true-purple (ἀλιπόρφυρος⁽³²⁾), which provides a wonder to look at.⁽³³⁾ The cave has two entrances and it is impossible for mortals to enter the second one because it is specifically for immortals, which implies the divine-related connections that bees and honey possess. Furthermore, the water there is ever-flowing, ἀένναος (*Od.* 13. 109), which links the consistent motion of bees and non-stopping flowing of honey.

2-2: Too Sweet? — Dark, Dangerous Sweetness

Pleasure is but one removal from pain. If you enjoy a pleasure too greatly, then it can become fiercely dangerous. This is demonstrated within two bee-related similes in book 2 and 12 in the *Iliad*. The poet describes active and brave actions by bees that would fatally injure warriors, which connects the dual aspect of honey. In the speech of Asios, one of the Trojans, wasps or bees that fight to defend their young are likened to the Achaian heroes, Polypoites and Leonteus, who fight bravely in front of the gate (*Il.* 12. 165-172). The bravery of wasps and bees (μέλισσα, 167) is depicted as they fight fearlessly. Intriguingly, the poet assigned the term of αἰόλος ('rapid-moving,' 'flashing,' etc.) for wasps (σφήξ). In book 2, the scene where the Achaians gather for the battle is likened to a mass of bees that keep emerging from a hollow in a rock (*Il.* 2. 87-89). Those bees' (μέλισσα, 87) busyness does illustrate the bravery of the Achaian men, who are preparing for the coming battle. The poet effectively portrays the image of nature including flowers, the sounds of flying bees and their movements, in vivid contrast with the battle that is in progress. Within this picture, small bees are buzzing, a sound that can be in fact charming. However, they are able to inflict pain with their stings nonetheless. That scene connects the double sense of sweetness of the honey that bees produce, i.e., sweetness and pain. Those insects are small, but their society is well organised and their orderly action can be fast, strong, and effective, which mirrors the human society to a certain degree. The poet skilfully employs this description of bees, presenting the dual characteristic that bees epitomise. Sweetness could be highly dangerous, especially if/when the sweetness is too great. That could be one of the poet's intended messages.

Hektor says that he might lose his fighting powers if he drinks the honey-sweet wine (*Il.* 6. 264), so he refuses to drink it.⁽³⁴⁾ Antinoös admits that having too much honeyed wine hurts one (*Od.* 21. 293-294), explaining Eurytion's episode in his speech. An outstanding description that involves honey is expressed by Achilles:

ὥς ἔρις ἔκ τε θεῶν ἔκ τ' ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλοιτο
καὶ χόλος, ὃς τ' ἐφάρκε πολύφρονά περ χαλεπῆναι,
ὃς τε πολὺ γλυκίων μέλιτος καταλειβομένοιο
ἀνδρῶν ἐν στήθεσιν ἀέξεται ἥντε καπνός·

ὥς ἐμὲ νῦν ἐχόλωσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων. (*Il.* 18. 107-111)

oh, that quarrels should vanish from gods and men, and resentment, which drives even a man of good sense to anger! It is far sweeter to men than trickling honey, and swells to fill their hearts like smoke — such is the anger that Agamemnon, lord of men, has caused me now.

Within his reply to Thetis, Achilles expresses his wish to die, αὐτίκα τεθναίην (*Il.* 18. 98). It is vital to notice that his anger is described as being far sweeter than honey, swelling to fill men's hearts like smoke. This scene is distinctively unique because this is the only case where something that is sweeter than honey is illustrated with an obvious negative phase, along with an emotion; anger.⁽³⁵⁾ The elements of anger, sweetness, and bees/honey are unusually channelled, embracing negative senses. I should like to post a crucial assumption here, that the poet deliberately intends to distinguish Achilles, the main character of the *Iliad*, by having him alone make this perplexing sensory experience.⁽³⁶⁾ Further, the fact that the flowing movement of honey is linked with the emotional sense, i.e., Achilles' raised anger.⁽³⁷⁾ Its motion metaphorically takes an important part; not only the taste but also the movement of flowing honey contextually matches the increasing (and decreasing later on) sense of anger, emphasising the strength of the emotional sense. The alarming, or warning effect of sweet honey is drawn out; the verb καταλείβω ('trickle down,' 'pour down') enhances the cloaked function of μέλι, which reveals a clearly negative aspect of honey, despite its sweetness.

The honey-sweet fruit of the lotus (μελιθόα καρπὸν, *Od.* 9. 94) also provides a good example. The fruit is notoriously famous for promoting lassitude and obliviousness. It is delicious, but highly intoxicating, making everything blissfully forgettable and non-existent. Besides, a honey-sweet life seems often to be stolen. For instance, the 'sweetness of life' (μελιθόα θυμὸν, *Il.* 10. 495) is stripped from the king Rhesos while he is asleep.⁽³⁸⁾ Too sweet is no good after all. It can pivot upon highly problematic situations. The poet delivers a crystal-clear message that pleasure can be dangerous, which remains true today.

2-3: Mysteriously Flowing Sweetness with Dual and Religious Importance

Overall, the drink of μελίκρητον is profoundly invaluable. As referred above, μελίκρητον is the first offering of libations to the shades in the nether world (*Od.* 10. 519 and *Od.* 11. 27; πρῶτα μελικρήτω, μετέπειτα δὲ ἡδέϊ οἶνω), which signifies that the mixture of honey and milk is substantially important for their religious practices. In the very early era, honey, in the form of mead, was the only intoxicant substance known before wine was discovered. Furthermore, bees store their honey inside the immortal sacred cave of Naiades (*Od.* 13. 106) as above. Willcock insightfully comments on *Il.* 23. 170 (ἐν δ' ἐτίθει μέλιτος καὶ ἀλείφατος ἀμφιφορῆας) when Achilles provides two-handled jars of honey and oils as the part of the funeral process, as "Honey and oil are provisions for the journey."⁽³⁹⁾ This allows us to construct a captivating, religious-related imagery channelled formation of co-involved honey-sweet-flowing. The movement of the stream or the liquid and its mutability lead us to metaphorically envisage the cryptic journey to the other world, or an unknown destination. These mingled imageries could also evoke a different

awareness of the usually negatively-perceived inevitability of death as well.

The two-fold connotation of positiveness and negativeness, light and dark, manifests its vagueness and unstableness, i.e., there is no absolute clarity or stability like flowing motion, such as in the case of incomprehensible words uttered by some deities at consultations through oracles. The moving liquid of honey and its luminous hues are hereby connected with the divine mystification.

3. Honey with Χλωρός and its Illumination

Now, what about the interconnection between honey and its colour adjective, *χλωρός*? The term appears six times in the *Iliad* and 11 times in the *Odyssey*. μέλι is applied twice as mentioned above, δέος ('fear') is applied five times in the *Iliad* (7. 479, 8. 77, 10. 376, 15. 4, and 17. 67) and six times in the *Odyssey* (11. 43, 11. 633, 12. 243, 22. 42, 24. 450, and 24. 533). Bush (ῥώψ) is described as *χλωρός* once (*Od.* 16. 47), olive-wooded (ἐλαῖνος), twice in the *Odyssey* (9. 320 and 9. 379).⁽⁴⁰⁾ Also, the proper name of Chloris (Χλωρίς), who is surpassingly lovely and to whom Neleus was once married, appears in *Od.* 11. 281. The derivative *χλωρηίς* occurs with nightingale (ἠηδών) in *Od.* 19. 518.⁽⁴¹⁾ The combination between *χλωρός* and δέος, which the direct translation would be 'green-yellow fear,' sounds exceptionally strange among other referents. Can fear be green? This expression occurs 11 times in total in Homer and *χλωρός* applies to δέος most frequently, which indicates that the combination is not so uncommon, at least in Homer. However, again we should be reminded that *χλωρός* does not solely indicate the green colour that we imagine today.

Under careful examination, Irwin suggests that the basic meaning of *χλωρός* is 'liquid' or 'moist,' which is related to youth and life.⁽⁴²⁾ I am inclined to combine this into an alluring link with the sweet honey that bees produce; the feature of liquidness that *χλωρός* connotes inside could also metaphorically evolve a growing journey, a sort of various transferring process. It is not impossible to envisage that the travel on a river or a voyage across the sea, considering the paralleled correspondence with the watery, fluid implication of *χλωρός*. Moreover, Edgeworth is agreeable; "If *χλωρός* is not a color term for Homer, then Homer never refers to honey's color, confining himself to references to its taste."⁽⁴³⁾ This satisfies the question of why *χλωρός* applies to honey, but how about δέος? Following up Edgeworth's suggestion that Homer's *χλωρόν δέος* requires further study, I should like to add my view; motion. Russo et al. comment on the expression as "fear which makes one turn pale," admitting the infamous vagueness of Greek colour-terms.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Paleness of a face would not create a positive impression among viewers, present-day readers, either. It would not certainly be in very vivid colour hues. Rather, some negative sense is betokened by such pale hues, which viewers — characters, observers, and modern readers included - perceive some weakened emotion. When many dead men appear, Odysseus is terrified and *χλωρός* fear takes hold of him (*Od.* 11. 43 and 633). When Zeus thunders with terrible sounds, *χλωρός* fear seizes men (*Il.* 7. 479 and *Il.* 8. 77). When Athene shouts, telling men of Ithaka to hold back from fighting, their faces become *χλωρός* and they follow the goddess' instruction (*Od.* 24. 533).⁽⁴⁵⁾ If you are threatened, you feel and perceive the sense of fear, colour changes as the blood is running on your face, including your lips or cheeks that are usually

construed as reddish. It is as if the blood drains from your face. Possibly *χλωρός*, which is supposed to cover the broad ranges of green-yellowish hues that transfers emotional feelings between positiveness and negativeness, displays the state of a person's sensory experience on her/his skin when feeling frightened. In this sense, there is no outlandishness in using *χλωρός* for *δέος*. That is, the unstable state with the double overtone that *χλωρός* connotes, being impossible to define which — positive or negative, light or dark, is to be realised as an essentially important key.

On remarkable viewpoint should be irradiated; an etymological route indicates the link of *χλωρός* with brightness.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Bright light is symbolically connected with 'life,' or 'hope,' which is normally opposed to 'death' that means the non-existent light. That is, as I have addressed elsewhere, light and darkness (i.e., light and the absence of light) are two sides of the same coin. It is plausible to comprehend that brightness, entailing both positive and negative senses, has characterised the religious significance since antiquity and in a way indispensable for its deeply long-established connection with *μέλι* (honey) and bees that also existed from the very early era, having been regarded as sacred. One of the attributes attached to bees is 'illumination,' due to the association with beewax candles.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Beeswax candles create a bright flame; an interconnection between bees, honey, and light is to be deciphered. Consequently, it is not unrealistic that the term *χλωρός*, which has a connotation of brightness underneath, is associated with *μέλι*, in order to convey the sacred sense of religious operations in Homer, who no doubt was grounded in earlier cultic conceptions and practices. Let us view the scene where Hekamede prepares a meal for Nestor and Eurymedon in the *Iliad*. The combination of *μέλι χλωρόν*, translated as 'fresh honey' in Hammond, is used as a part of the meal:

ἥ σφωῖν πρῶτον μὲν ἐπιτροῖηλε τράπεζαν
καλὴν κυανόπεζαν εὖξοον, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῆς
χάλκειον κάνεον, ἐπὶ δὲ κρόμμον ποτῶ ὄψον,
ἣ δὲ μέλι χλωρόν, παρὰ δ' ἀλφίτου ἱεροῦ ἀκτὴν,
παρ δὲ δέπας περικαλλές, ὃ οἴκοθεν ἦγ' ὁ γεραίός,
χρυσείοις ἥλοισι πεπαρμένον· οὗτα δ' αὐτοῦ
τέσσαρ' ἔσαν, δοιαί δὲ πελειάδες ἀμφὶς ἕκαστον
χρύσειαι νεμέθοντο, δύο δ' ὑπὸ πυθμένες ἦσαν. (II. 11. 628-635).

She first moved up a table for them, a beautiful polished table with feet of dark blue enamel, and on it she placed a bronze dish with an onion as accompaniment for the drink, and fresh honey, and beside it bread of sacred barley-meal. Next a most beautiful cup, which the old man had brought from home — it was studded with rivets of gold, and there were four handles to it; on each handle a pair of golden doves was feeding, one on either side: and there were two supports below.

This scene is narrated before Nestor persuades Patroklos to visit Achilles. A gorgeous table-setting with a variety of vivid, colour-related expressions is visualised; a lovely (*καλός*, 629) table with steel-blue feet (*κυανόπεζα*, 629), well-polished (*εὖξοος*, 629), a bronze (*χάλκειος*, 630) basket, an

onion for a relish, a drink (ποτός), honey with χλωρός (631), barley-meal (ἄλφιτον), a beautiful (περικαλλής, 632) cup, with gold (χρύσεος, 633) rivets, and two golden (χρύσεος, 635) doves attached to it. Brightness can be elucidated within this scene — polished, cyan-blue (?), bronze, gold, and fresh (or green-yellow?). Those men must be important to be served in such a manner. Honey with χλωρός is employed as one of the well-regarded items, to welcome guests. That is why the poet, who recognises the importance of the scene, embellishes his narrative with those colour-related presentations. They are indeed effective in creating more beautiful visual effects, as perceived and experienced by viewers. Concerning the ambiguous state of χλωρός and its bright side that is linked with the contrastive duality between life and death, μέλι and χλωρός are well suited to each other, both contextually and cognitively. The colour hue of χλωρός (if ever colour at all) portrays light or lighting hue, not the specific chromatic phenomena. Visualising the possible shining streaming sparkle that characteristically reflects the flowing, sweet honey directs viewers including ourselves, to visualise the lighter hues, in terms of the conception of freshness and liquid, together with the sacred sense of μέλι, which also entangles its mystifying double connotation.

What is more, its state of motion, which is supposed to be fluid and shining or fresh-looking to some extent, symbolically represents the eloquence of composing words. χλωρός or/and μέλι are neither accurately fixed as one colour, nor concrete. They do not need to be, either. This is then appropriately conformed to religious practices such as divine revelation. These kinds of solemn and perhaps smooth words were (and still are) authorised as prophetic authorities, and are conclusively associated with the role of μέλι that is intimately connected with sacred divine matters. The fact that its brightness, which ensembles ceaseless movement along with duality, emblematically manifests double uncertainty. Are the divine oracle's words positive, or negative? That is our choice to decide. They let us determine or imagine our own path; life is what we make of it.

Recognising that bees and honey are highly regarded religiously, the poet who perceives both the bright hue on the surface of honey and its dual connotation of unstableness arranges χλωρός for μέλι, enlightening the valued status of honey and bees. I should like to propose that, corresponding with the movement of the mythically shining liquid on μέλι, which unmasks the intensely sacred sense for viewers' experience, words are composed and built up with their contexts in mind. The poet appreciates the colour-hues and shades of χλωρός that brightens or dims the surface of the honey and its refined link with brightness, including its texture and taste. Both the motion of the flowing liquid that is rephrased as unstableness, and its sweetness, are figuratively organised by the poet, in correspondence with its quintessentially valuable aspect of religious practice in his time and before, and afterwards. Thus, the ambiguous instability of χλωρός well matches the duality of positiveness and negativeness contained within the metaphorically transformed brightness, which is attributed to religious μέλι. As bees that produce honey are also respected as divine-related, the duality of bees' symbolism is also accommodated. Whether green, yellow, or whatever, χλωρός, which connotes the sense of religious ambiguousness, contributes to the effect. The brightness, being connoted within χλωρός that is conclusively ambivalent, is ultimately mysterious as well. It can direct us to experience

some hope, but is simultaneously potentially alarming.

Conclusion: The Incandescent Flowing

The unforeseen thread, within which those three factors — *χλωρός*, honey and bees — are convolutedly woven through the dual connotation, is synchronised. This view also reveals that the ancient Greeks at least in the Homeric time were interested in light and darkness. The elaborate sense underneath the terms was pursued even then. In short, not only simply expressing the object but also seeking the real, true sense of it, which is hidden inside, was delved into, while the poet was composing his story.

The encapsulation of my viewpoint is on the move as much as *χλωρός* itself. The discovery of the significance of honey and bee tags through the transformed function centralised upon 'brightness,' which connotes unstable two-fold states of light and absence-of-light, including positive and negative senses, and which is associated with the tactful implications that *χλωρός* represents, corresponding with the wide range of hues that parallel various incorporeal aspects. Light signifies hope, usually, whereas it can be alarming or portentous, causing non-positive senses. There, the multifaceted, knotty interconnection between sweet honey, its colour, or brightness, and the poet's aesthetic skills of composing his story within the recognition of religious importance has been partly distilled. The poet is conveying a philosophical message, which edifies us even at this very moment. At the very last, I would like to conclude with a slight modification of Pastoureaux's final sentences⁽⁴⁸⁾:

The pure sweetness no longer stops the eye. It is too effervescent to do that. It clarifies and obscures the view, disturbs the mind, confuses the senses. Too much sweetness can finally drive you mad.

Appendix I: Uses of Μέλι and Μέλι-related Terms in Homer

[Μέλι]

greenish-yellow (χλωρός) – [Il. 11. 631] [Od. 10. 234]
trickling down (καταλείβω: only Pass. Part) – [Il. 18. 109]
sweet (γλυκύς) – [Od. 20. 69] [Od. 24. 68]

[Μέλι-related terms]

The states of human beings:

soul (θυμός) – [Il. 10. 495] [Il. 17. 17] [Od. 11. 203]
sleep (ὕπνος) – [Il. 2. 34] [Od. 19. 551]
voice (ὄψ) – [Od. 12. 187]

Natural environments:

grass (ἄγρωστις) – [Od. 6. 90]
bees-wax (κηρός) – [Od. 12. 48]

Food and drink:

fruit (καρπός) – [Il. 18. 568] [Od. 9. 94]
wine (οἶνος) – [Il. 4. 346] [Il. 6. 258] [Il. 6. 264] [Il. 8. 506] [Il. 8. 546] [Il. 10. 579]
[Il. 12. 320] [Il. 18. 545] [Il. 24. 284]
[Od. 3. 46] [Od. 7. 182] [Od. 9. 208] [Od. 10. 356] [Od. 13. 53] [Od. 14. 78]
[Od. 15. 148] [Od. 16. 52] [Od. 18. 151] [Od. 18. 426] [Od. 21. 293]
wheat (πυρός) – [Il. 8. 188] [Il. 10. 569]
food (σῖτος) – [Od. 24. 489]

Colour:

red (ἐρυθρός) – [Od. 9. 208]

Action:

return (νόστος) – [Od. 11. 100]

Proper Names:

Meliboia (μελίβρομος) – [Il. 2. 717]
Melite (μελιτηρός) – [Il. 18. 42]

[Μέλισσα]

thick, crowded (ἄδινός) – [Il. 2. 87]

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*For the text, I mainly referred to the TLG Texts and PHI Latin Corpus, Prendergast's concordance (1983) and Dunbar (2011), Tebben's concordance (1998 for the *Iliad* and 1994 for the *Odyssey*), Kirk's commentary on the *Iliad* (1985-1993), and Heubeck, et al (eds.)'s commentary on the *Odyssey* (1991-1992). English translations for Homer, including names, come from Hammond (1987) and Lattimore (2007 [1st 1967]), unless otherwise stated. This paper is the revised and developed version of the paper I sent to one European journal in December 2019; unfortunately, the publishing process was terminated due to the Covid-19 situation. This is supported by JSPS KAKENHI 17K02608.

- (1) E.g., *LSJ* 1996, 1995; Autenrieth 1998, 331; Cunliffe 1963, 420; Chantraine 1999, 1264-1265; *CGL* 2021, 1503. Perhaps ξανθός ('yellow,' 'gold') would be more appropriate for the colour of honey in modern sense as I myself perceive, but no ξανθός applies to μέλι in Homer.
- (2) The study on the Homeric repetition has been immense and the idea of the colour-blindness in Homer and ancients starts from Gladstone (1858, 457-499). As I have written elsewhere in my previous works, I omit this scholarly history in this paper.
- (3) Gage 1993, 7.
- (4) E.g., Wallace 1927, 10 and 65 ("of a color ranging from yellow to bright green"); Kober 1932, 111-114; Vivante 1982, 125. Vivante points the 'flouring,' 'blossoming' implication of green, related to χλωρός, which, as Vivante also admits, is not at all generalised in 'green.'
- (5) Berlin & Kay 1999, 1-23. For Homeric Greek, however, they deem only four colour terms, replying on Capell's work (*Studies in Socio-Linguistics*, 1966) at pp. 70-71, which is not entirely reliable, either.
- (6) See Onians 1951, 177. n. 9. On this topic, see also Sassi 2017. Etymologically, it seems that χλωρός comes from *gelhi-* (PIE) that has a link with the meaning of 'grow' or flourish'; Skeat 1882, 243; Kroonen 2013, 174. Beekes (2010, 1638-1639) usefully argues the original root of χλωρός, admitting its semantic connection with *glora* ('sparkle' or so), though the connection is not strong. See also Frisk 1970, 1104-1105. Cunningham (1886)'s review on Keersmaecker's work (*Le Sens des Couleurs chez Homère*, 1885) is noteworthy, as the author's comment on the semantic connection of χλωρός with vigorous is slightly eccentric, focusing on the syllable ι with vigor, ἰφι in Ancient Greek, *vi* (Latin), etc., are in fact connected with *might* (English), but the syllable ι appears in many other terms that express some weakness as well.
- (7) Pastoreau 2014, 19.
- (8) Deutscher 2011.
- (9) Butler & Purves (eds.) 2013. Especially Bradley's chapter (pp. 127-140) on the indispensable functions of colour is useful for this paper. Within the series of volumes of *The Senses in Antiquity*, Smell (ed. by Bradley 2015), Sight (ed. by Squire 2016), Taste (ed. by Rudolph 2018), Touch (ed. by Purves 2018), Sound (ed. by Butler & Nooter 2019), have been published. See also Stanford 1972, 47-62.
- (10) Pastoreau 2010, 11.
- (11) Pastoreau 2010, 97; Fontana 2001, 67. Pastoreau (2014, 14-35) is good to know the history of green during the Greek and Roman eras. See also St. Clair 2016.
- (12) Saito 2011.
- (13) Pliny gives much space on discussing bees and the qualities of honey in his treatise, variously, especially in book 11; e.g., white honey (*album mel*) and gold honey (*coloris aurei*) are mentioned (11. 38); dead bees which are kept indoors during the winter, exposed to the spring sunshine, and kept warm by hot fig-wood ashes, can be rejuvenated (11. 69)! Cf. Ovid *Fasti* 1. 362-380 on the ox-born bee.
- (14) Investigations into the mysteries of bees are vast, but Ransome (2004)'s seminal contribution on the

- sacred bees is a landmark. See also Cook (1895) for the sacred bees closely associated with birth and death. Davies & Kathirithamby (1986, esp. 47-83) and Beavis (1988, esp. 187-198) are helpful for general information on bees. See Frisch 1953 (esp. Chapter 9) and Frisch 1971 (esp. pp. 1-34) for the colour-sense of bees. Cf. Douglas 1928, chapter 4 (Creeping Things), most recently updated in 2009. During “the Dark [Covid-19] Age” of the process of this paper after the submission in 2019, Toomey’s dissertation on the association between the bee and the poet was done in 2021, thus some passages were deleted from my original version. Carlson’s PhD dissertation (2015) focused on the bee’s symbolism nicely summarises its important prevalence, but I slightly disagree with the idea of connection of bees with females.
- (15) See also *History of Animals* 553a17ff, passim. Aristotle discusses much about bees’ ecology as well.
- (16) E.g., Hesiod *Theogony* 75-84 and 93-97; the Muses pour honeyed dew upon his tongue and gentle words come from his mouth. See also Cook 1895, 7-8; Kirk (vol. I) 1985, 79; Davies & Kathirithamby 1986, 71-72; Pulleyn 2000, 194; Ransome 2004, 104-105.
- (17) Fontana 2010, 148.
- (18) Tresidder 1997, 104.
- (19) See Wright 1906, 141-142, esp., n. 4 for Plato’s eloquent words affected by bees.
- (20) Plato mentions bees for a number of times in his work, e.g., *Republic* 552Cff, though the different terms (e.g., κηφήν) to describe the insect should be kept in mind. See Tarrant 1946, 33-34.
- (21) Fontana 2010, 85. Since it was believed that bees reproduced asexually, one of their symbols was chastity. In Christianity, bees were the symbol of the Virgin Mary. The system of their well-organised society also represents efficiency, or order, too. Their liquids are thus linked with wisdom or inspiration, which can be magical, hence connected with the words that the poet or orator speaks, like a vessel of honeyed words, accordingly. See also Hesiod *Theogony* 594-599; Hesiod *Works and Days* 304-306 for bees’ industriousness within their society.
- (22) Tresidder 1997, 22; Ferber 1999, 21-23.
- (23) Μελίτη (Melite) is probably related to μέλι; Edwards (vol. V) 1991, 149. On the linguistic connection of μέλι with Old English or other form within Western areas, see Davies & Kathirithamby 1986, 47; Ransome 2004, 192-193. There is the term of μελίχλωρος (‘yellow or pale as honey’) in ancient Greek, which can be found as a rather dark shade; Kober 1932, 67. The term does not occur in Homer, however.
- (24) Agamemnon criticises Odysseus and Menestheus for being lazy, recalling that they ate meat and drank the honey-sweet wine as much as possible in the past (*Il.* 4. 346). The Trojans prepare for their meal (*Il.* 8. 506 and 546). In Sarpedon’s speech, it is said that kings in Lycia drink honey-sweet wine (*Il.* 12. 320). Ploughmen take honey-sweet wine during their field work at *Il.* 18. 545 (the shield of Achilles).
- (25) *Il.* 10. 579, *Od.* 3. 46 (μελιηδέος οἶνον here is a secondary development from the old formula μελιηδέα οἶνον; (Heubeck, et al. 1991(vol. I), 163), *Od.* 15. 148, and *Od.* 18. 151. For an important ritual pattern, see also Russo, et al. (vol. III), 1992, 57.
- (26) See Heubeck & Hoekstra’s (1992 (vol. II), 71) comment on religious offering; “The poet thus combines very ancient conceptions drawn from different spheres to create something quite new, which can have had no precedent in earlier epic.” Originally, sacrifices were performed with sobriety mostly, thus the libations were made with water. Later, it was replaced by honey (μελίσπονδα) that bees produce, third by oil, fourth and last by wine (Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Animal Food* 2. 20). Cf. Pliny interestingly mentions that reconciliation could be affected by some milk or water sweetened with honey; *Natural History* 11. 58.
- (27) Fontana 2001, 106. For the ritual use of honey and milk, see Cook 1895, 21-22; Ransome 2004, 275-284; Nayik et al., 2014, 5-7.

- (28) Russo, et al. 1992 (vol. III), 368 for the ritual offering of honey and oil for the dead.
- (29) It was common that wine was mixed with water in antiquity, which is seen in Homer as well: *Il.* 8. 188, *Od.* 7. 182, *Od.* 10. 356, *Od.* 13. 53, *Od.* 14. 78 and *Od.* 16. 52, and *Od.* 18. 426. On the ratio of mixing wine with water, see Heubeck & Hoekstra, 1992 (vol. II), 26.
- (30) Curiously 'amber honey' in Fitzgerald (1996, 184).
- (31) See Heubeck & Hoekstra 1992 (vol. II), 128. Although deeper digging is needed to be awaited, one of meanings of μέλος is 'music,' 'melody,' or 'tune,' which should have a clear connection with μέλι.
- (32) This is another convoluting colour-related term that is difficult to define. It compounds ἄλς with πορφύρα, hence it means 'sea-purple,' or so.
- (33) The phrase of θαῦμα ἰδεῖσθαι (*Od.* 13. 108) occurs elsewhere in Homer. θαῦμα and other related terms are keywords for the examination of sensory-experience, and I shall reserve this topic for the future.
- (34) Kirk (1990 (vol. II), 196) claims that "Hektor uses any available excuse, since he is in a hurry," with which I disagree. In my humble opinion, the poet intends to denote the simple effect of the honey-wine.
- (35) Edwards (1991 (vol. V), 161) comments that this comparison is special, because χάλος is "usually words of peace and reconciliation which are 'sweeter than honey.'"
- (36) Rutherford 2019, 118.
- (37) The flowing movement is what "Homer sees in the life of the psychic substances that are inside the breasts of men"; Clarke 1999, 92-93. Rutherford (2019, 118) also takes the idea of the participation of the flow of dropping honey into the interesting simile, including the sound effect. Coray (2018, 59) comments on the striking thread between sweet, honey, anger, and gall, as "a hint of the oxymoron "sweet-bitter'." See also Moulton 1979, 285. Heist (2016)'s comparative research on bee similes between the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* analyses the difference of the poets' intention when using bee similes, which reflects on human communities. This viewpoint could be much expanded.
- (38) In *Iliad* 17, Euphorbos threatens Menelaos that he might take Menelaos' sweetness of life (*Il.* 17. 17) but is killed by Menelaos. Edwards comments that μελιγδής is usually of wine or food, but metaphorically in this μελιγδέα θυμόν formula; Edwards 1991 (vol. V), 64. In *Odyssey* 11, Odysseus' mother Antikleia tells that her longing for Odysseus took the sweetness of life from her (11. 203). See also the other occurrences of 'sweet sleep' (*Il.* 2. 34 and *Od.* 19. 551) that can be negative because they are narrated as something that may be taken away.
- (39) Willcock 2000, 301.
- (40) Heubeck & Hoekstra 1992 (vol. II), 31 and 33-34. Olive-wood is interestingly described as still χλωρός, even though it is heated by fire. I believe that χλωρός here indicates various green-yellowish colours, not 'green' solely.
- (41) Some claims that χλωρήϊς has the same meaning with χλωρός, but a nightingale is not exactly green in reality. Linguistically, χλωρήϊς can be something related to greenery; Russo, et al., 1992 (vol. III), 100-101. In Mulvany (1901, 68), the female Chloris, Χλωρίς, is separated from χλωρός, and taken as 'loud,' which I find puzzling.
- (42) Irwin 1974, 31-78.
- (43) Edgeworth 1992, 252.
- (44) Russo, et al. 1992 (vol. III), 228. They are giving examples explained by Stanford such as sallow Mediterranean complexions turn 'sicky green' when alarmed, Nordic types turn chalk white and blacks turn ash grey, which are hardly convincing. Kober states that Greek poets did not observe colours carefully; Kober 1934, 189-191.
- (45) Other presentations are: The faces of men of Ithaka turn χλωρός with fear in *Od.* 24. 450. Dolon's face

becomes *χλωρός* with fear because he is scared of Odysseus and Diomedes (*Il.* 10. 376). *Il.* 15. 4 shows the frightened Trojan's face attached with *χλωρός* on the battlefield. This expression is also applied to Odysseus and his men when they are passing through Skylla and Charybdis (*Od.* 12. 243) and to the Penelope's suitors when Odysseus reveals himself (*Od.* 22. 42). Only the case at *Il.* 17. 67 is located in the simile.

(46) Irwin 1974, 32-33; 'glow' stands, coming from *glo-*. See footnote no. 6 above.

(47) Tressider 1997, 22.

(48) Pastoureau 2001, 91.