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PINDARIC KLEOS

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Artykuł porusza kwestię funkcjonowania pojęcia sławy - kleos - w *Odach zwycięskich* Pindara. Pierwszym problemem jest stosunek pomiędzy kleos Pindara a kleos epickim, w szczególności Homeryckim. Staram się odpowiedzieć na pytanie, dlaczego Pindar w bardzo ograniczony sposób korzystał z motywów pochodzących z *Iliady* i *Odysei*, natomiast bardzo często sięgał do poezji cyklicznej. Przeprowadzam dokładną analizę ostatnich wersów trzeciej *Ody Pytyjskiej* w świetle Homeryckiej koncepcji kleos oraz bardzo archaicznej formuły poetyckiej *kleos aphthiton*. Następnie rozważam relację Pindara z wcześniejszymi poetami lirycznymi, głównie na podstawie fragmentów z Ibykosa 282a (S151), *Elegii Platejskiej* Symonidesa, krótko wspominając Stezychora. Staram się pokazać jak koncepcje kleos w tradycji poetyckiej wpłynęły na Pindara.

Słowa klucze: Pindar, poezja grecka, tradycja poetycka, kleos.

In this article I am going to look at the mechanics of Pindaric κλέος. In many of his odes, *Olympian 1* being a prime example, Pindar was often at pains to renounce the poetic tradition and establish his own authority. However, in terms of conferring glory onto his subject he seems to rely heavily on mythological tradition. In the first part, I shall scrutinise the function of κλέος originating from the epic as a means of praise for the victors. Secondly, I shall look at Pindar's relationship to lyric encomiastic tradition, especially Ibycus, Simonides and briefly Stesichorus and their take on κλέος in poetry. There are several remark and observations which have to be made before I move on to the discussion. We are not sure about the appropriation of authorship of the cyclic poems in the early fifth century. Although there is no clear evidence, it is quite plausible that all of them were thought to be composed by Homer and that is what Pindar regarded them as[1]. Furthermore, it is notable that out of forty five Pindar's victory odes, only in four

[1] Possible mixture of Homeric and cyclic themes can be found in Pindar, *Nemean* 3.59–64; *vide* W. Burkert, *The Making of Homer in the Sixth Century BC: Rhapsodes versus Stesichorus*, [in:] *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his world*, ed. A. Belloli, J. Paul Getty Museum, Santa Monica 1987, p. 45–46 and notes for attribution of the *Thebais* and the „tragedy of Ajax" to Homer respectively by Kallinos and Pindar.

of them events of the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* are one of the main themes[2]. This astonishing rejection of Homeric poems, as we know them, and frequent references to the cyclic poetry call for an explanation.

I would like to start with an attempt to explain why Homeric poems, that is the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, attract so little attention from Pindar, while being the most influential pieces of literature in Greek culture. The answer lies in the different focus on κλέος. In the *Iliad* the whole plot revolves around Achilles' commitment not being recognised and honoured. The tragedy of Achilles is that he decided to sacrifice his life to attain κλέος, of which he was then deprived. The *Odyssey* is even more difficult to fit in the standard, traditional epic model, as κλέος is not really its main focus. Thus it is rather difficult for Pindar to reuse poems where heroes do not get κλέος for their heroic deeds in a straightforward manner. Instead, he prefers the cyclic poems. For example he is particularly fond of the story of the fight between Achilles and Memnon, which is not a part of the *Iliad*[3]. The main means of conferring κλέος on the *laudandi* is to associate their victory with the heroic deeds of mythological heroes. This is based on a simpler model of epic poetry, where the poet immortalises a hero by means of poetry as a compensation for him constantly risking his life fighting and performing heroic deeds[4]. This model is expanded in Pindar's poetry by adding an element of victorious athletes. Pindar praises both the heroes of the epic past and the contemporary victors. The way to really praise the *laudandi* is to elevate them to the level of the epic heroes by drawing parallels between the two worlds. By doing this, Pindar extends already existing, now reinforced, κλέος from the epic heroes onto his subjects. However, that does not mean that Pindar has just abandoned Homer completely as too complicated to use. Part of this article is focusing on the relationship between the lyric poets and Homer and Pindar's place in the big picture. As I am going to show, Pindar's poetics and attitude towards epic has been mostly shaped by his lyric predecessors, but it is ultimately Homer that everyone goes back to and relates to.

Another issue which is worth looking at is the concept of immortality in epic and in Pindar's epinician odes. Using Currie's vocabulary the concept of immortality as presented in Homer's poems is „exclusive", meaning that it can only be obtained through poetry and its κλέος. This matter is slightly more complicated in the victory odes, which apart from the „exclusive" Homeric model (*vide Nemean* 6.28f.[5]), sometimes suggest the „inclusive" notion of immortality, which

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[2] Pindar, *Isthmian* 5; *Nemean* 3, 7; *Olympian* 8.

[3] Idem, *Pythian* 6.32; *Nemean* 3.63, 6.50; *Isthmian* 5.41, 8.54.

[4] B. Currie, *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005, p. 71.

[5] ἄγε, Μοῖσα, οὖρον ἐπέων εὐκλέα παροιχομένων γὰρ ἀνέρων ἀοιδαὶ καὶ λόγοι τὰ καλὰ σφιν ἔργ᾽ ἐκόμισαν. „Come, Muse, direct to that house a glorious wind of verse, because when men are dead and gone, songs and words preserve for them their noble deeds" (*Olympian Odes, Pythian Odes, Nemean Odes, Isthmian Odes, Fragments*, ed. and trans. W.H. Race, Harvard University Press, London 1997.

could be acquired through religious cult and τιμή. One example is *Olympian 1* where through a series of analogous expressions or sounds in corresponding lines (22 and 78, 14 and 91, 22 and 91, 23 and 93–4) describing Pelops and Hieron, it could be suggested that the cult of Pelops is to be projected onto Hieron as a victor at Olympia and a founder of Aetna[6]. Although I am not completely convinced that one of Pindar's objectives was to literally immortalise victorious athletes by creating their cult, in this particular example there is a distant possibility for such a claim to be valid. After all, the tradition of cults of a polis' founder was quite widespread in the Greek world and Pindar could encourage it through analogies to mythical Pelops[7].

Now I would like to discuss six closing lines of Pindar's *Pythian* 3.110–5, as they contain several very interesting and important points and concepts:

> εἰ δέ μοι πλοῦτον θεὸς ἁβρὸν ὀρέξαι,
> ἐλπίδ᾽ ἔχω κλέος εὑρέσθαι κεν ὑψηλὸν πρόσω.
> Νέστορα καὶ Λύκιον Σαρπηδόν᾽, ἀνθρώπων φάτις,
> ἐξ ἐπέων κελαδεννῶν, τέκτονες οἷα σοφοὶ
> ἅρμοσαν, γιγνώσκομεν. ἁ δ᾽ ἀρετὰ κλειναῖς ἀοιδαῖς
> χρονία τελέθει, παύροις δὲ πράξαθ᾽ εὐμαρές.
>
> And if a god should grant me luxurious wealth,
> I hope that I may win lofty fame hereafter.
> We know of Nestor and Lycian Sarpedon, still the talk of men,
> from such echoing verses as wise craftsmen
> constructed. Excellence endures in glorious songs
> for a long time. But few can win them easily[8]

I am going to consider lines 110–1 separately first. It is crucial to note a very close association of wealth and κλέος in this passage. These two lines do not speak of poetry or heroism, it is simple *glory hereafter* as an effect of a certain god granting Pindar wealth. Such materialistic aspect of κλέος could be surprising if one thinks primarily about the *Iliad* 9.413, where materialistic possessions and long life are contrasted with κλέος ἄφθιτον, gained probably thanks to epic poetry, although no explicit mention of poetry is made. Κλέος ἄφθιτον is widely accepted as a very old poetic formula, cognate with Sanskrit *śravaḥ … akṣitam* both in etymology and basic meaning – undying, unwithering fame[9]. However, as Edwin Floyd has rightly remarked, a more specific meaning of this formula is quite different in the *RigVeda* and in the *Iliad*. Having conducted a survey of all instanced of this phrase in Greek language, he notices that Homer's usage is rather innovative in the notion of gaining

[6] *Ibidem*, p. 75.

[7] J. McGlew, *Tyranny and Political Culture in Ancient Greece*, Cornell University Press, London 1993, p. 14–51.

[8] *Olympian Odes…*, v. 1, p. 263.

[9] R. Martin, *The Language of Heroes*, Cornell University Press, London 1989, p. 182–183.

κλέος ἄφθιτον by means of poetry. In the majority of other sources the formula is used to ask a god for wealth and well-being with no hint of a hope for posthumous fame, similarly to older by *circum* 700 years RigVeda[10]. In light of this evidence, I read κλέος ἱ πρόσω as semantically equivalent to κλέος ἄφθιτον and as a reference to this old, traditional, rather materialistic meaning of κλέος.

However, lines 112–5 clearly talk about immortality attained by the epic heroes thanks to poetry. I deem it important to note that in this context Nestor and Sarpedon should not be taken as strictly Homeric heroes, but rather as characters belonging to the whole epic tradition, which is indicated by the plural of τέκτονες – craftsmen, poets. The last lines are a nod towards the entire epic corpus, which accommodated all sorts of heroes, both Greek – Nestor and foreign – Sarpedon, which can have a more contemporary meaning, because Hieron for whom the ode had been composed was a tyrant of Sicilian Syracuse which was located away from the mainland Greece. Pindar indicates that his poetry is supposed to do similar things as epic, that is to create and preserve κλέος of his subjects by means of poetry. The pivotal difference is that Pindar reuses and reworks epic κλέος which makes him far more persuasive, as relying on already established poetic authority.

The whole picture, however, is even more interesting. Κλειναὶ ἀοιδαί – *glorious songs* bring in the element of personal κλέος of Pindar and his poetry and underline the necessity of poetry's good quality to fulfil its function effectively. It is quite an interesting view on Pindaric poetics in relation to κλέος. If poetry itself is not glorious, it cannot give any glory to anyone, thus bad poetry is no poetry. Those six closing lines of *Pythian 3* incorporate all kinds of and meanings of κλέος: materialistic traditional aspect, glory through poetry with a notion of immortality and a close relationship between poet's personal κλέος and that of the *laudandus.*

Proceeding, it is necessary to consider also the influence of lyric, encomiastic poetic tradition on Pindar's treatment of κλέος. Pindar himself points to the ancestry of the victory odes and the encomiastic tradition:

> ἦν γε μὰν ἐπικώμιος ὕμνος
> δὴ πάλαι καὶ πρὶν γενέσθαι τὰν Ἀδράστου τάν τε Καδμείων ἔριν.
>
> Yes, truly the hymn of victory existed long ago,
> even before that strife arose between Adrastos and the Kadmeians[11].

This short passage tells a great deal about the relationship between lyric and epic. Firstly, it positions encomiastic lyric as older and thus more authoritative than epic poetry. Apart from being an extraordinary metapoetic and self-conscious pro-

[10] E. Floyd, *Kleos aphthiton: An Indo-European Perspective on Early Greek Poetry*, „Glotta" 58 (1980), p. 133–157.

[11] Pindar, *Nemean* 8.50–51; *Olympian Odes…*

to-generic remark, it touches upon significant aspect of the relationship between past and present. Unlike epic κλέος, which concerns only the past, Pindar's lyric song links the past and the present, heroes with men[12]. This crucial difference also highlights the importance of traditional lyric paradigm in opposition to epic models.

This passage also shows how difficult it is to establish clearly Pindar's relationship with the poetic tradition. His own poetic voice is interfering and creating a poetic past for himself. It is impossible to determine whether Pindar is actually referring to some specific authors or tradition of performance, or simply inventing his poetic roots and authority. The latter is a safer and a more probable option. The poetic voice is establishing his link with the past *ad hoc* and brings in an element of exemplarity. Just as Pindar looks back at earlier encomiastic poets, in future next generations are supposed to look back at him. One can also argue that in this respect it is actually not so different from the concept of epic exemplarity, which not only recounts the deeds of past heroes, but also provides examples of behaviour for the present and the future. This intervention of author's personal voice has its roots in lyric or ultimately in Homeric poetry, depending how we want to see the relationship between the two. Ibycus' poem S.151 which I am discussing below is a perfect example of this phenomenon.

Ibycus' fr. 282a (S.151) was written for Polycrates of Samos, presumably when he was still a boy and did not exercise political power. I am going to focus on lines 47–48 which close the poem and bear particular significance for my argument[13]:

> Τοῖς μὲν πέδα κάλλεος αἰέν,
> καὶ σύ, Πο<υ>λύκρατες, κλέος ἄφθιτον ἐξεῖς
> ὡς κατ᾽ ἀοιδὰν καὶ ἐμὸν κλέος.
>
> Among them you too Polycrates,
> will have immortal glory for beauty forever,
> as according to my song and fame[14].

This is probably the most explicit expression of the dependence of subject's glory on poet's personal κλέος in Greek literature. Moreover, it is the first time when the formula κλέος ἄφθιτον directly and unambiguously refers to fame and glory granted by poetry[15]. The purposeful repetition of κλέος emphasises

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[12] G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, London 1990, p. 192–193.

[13] E. Bowie, *Epinicians and 'patrons'*, [in:] *Reading the Victory Ode*, edd. P. Agócs, C. Carey and R. Rawles, Camridge University Press, Cambridge 2012, p. 85.

[14] C. Wilkinson, *The Lyric of Ibycus: Introduction, Text and Commentary*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2012, p. 50–53.

[15] E. Floyd, *op. cit.*, p. 151; although in *Iliad* 9 poetry is implied, Achilles does not specify it at any point.

the relationship between the two. The usage of κατά is also significant, because it highlights the variation between the genitive κάλλεος and preposition κατ᾽ ἀοιδάν. While Polycrates is supposed to be glorious because of his beauty, for Ibycus his poetry is both the reason and the subject of his fame[16].

Not only the last lines are so interesting. The whole poem is parading stock epic vocabulary, displaying the resources of poet's art and inspiration, rather than putting them to their proper use. This show of poetic abundance is closely linked with the overall purpose of this poem to express the promise of literary immortality[17]. All the Homeric epithets: Agamemnon Βασιλεὺς ἀγὸς ἀνδρῶν, πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς, μέγας Τελαμώνιος ἀλκιμος Αἴας are to be read as if in inverted commas, as a living proof of the power of poetry[18]. The whole poem operates on two levels: „descriptive" focusing on mythological past and epic heroes and „self-referential" laying emphasis on narrator's own discourse and authoritative *praeteritio*[19].

Due to our rather scarce knowledge of archaic Greek lyric, it is impossible to say to what extent this passage was exceptional. Nevertheless, as we have seen in the case of *Pythian* 3, the influence of such concepts on Pindar is very strong. However, it is worth asking if it would ever be possible without scarce, but existent, instances in Homer, where the poet or the internal narrator comments on his own poetry and κλέος, as in the *Iliad* 2.246–248, 6.354–358 or in the *Odyssey* 9.19–20. The answer depends on our view of the relationship between the epic and the lyric tradition. Although the answer may vary from „very dependent" to „rather independent", a poem like S.151 definitely points to the former. The distinctively epic vocabulary, the force and power of poetic κλέος and the ability of the poetic voice to get in the way of the narration ultimately comes from Homer. Comparing the Homeric passages with Ibycus and Pindar, for example *Pythian* 1.90–94, clearly shows an evolution and a development of the individual power of the poetic voice and its ability to become a fitting, integral part of the narration, which is not that obvious in Homer.

It is interesting and important to compare Pindar and another lyric poet – Simonides and his *Plataea Elegy* in respect to the treatment of epic κλέος for his subjects. Simonides creates a very curious rapport with Homer, constructing the speaking persona through divergence from him and highlighting differences between the two types of κλέος:

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[16] L. Woodbury, *Ibycus and Polycrates*, „Phoenix" 39.3 (1985), p. 204–205.

[17] *Ibidem*, p.198–199.

[18] J. Barron, *Ibycus: To Polycrates*, „Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies",16 (1969), p. 135.

[19] G. Hutchinson, *Greek lyric poetry: a commentary on selected large pieces: Alcman, Stesichorus, Sappho, Alcaeus, Ibycus, Anacreon, Simonides, Bacchylides, Pindar, Sophocles, Euripides*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, p. 236.

οἷσιν ἐπ̂ ἀθά]νατον κέχυται κλέος ἀν[δρὸς] ἥκετι
ὅς παρ̂ ἰοπ]λοκάμων δέξατο Πιερίδ[ων

… (on whom im)mortal glory has been poured thanks to a man (who) received from the (violet-wr)eathed Muses of Pieria…[20]

Homeric κλέος is immortal thanks to the Muse. The word κλέος appears in the hexameter line in the fourth foot, which is its standard place in the Homeric epics. Αθανατος is an attributive adjective, synonymous to Homeric αφθιτος, but never used of κλέος or even inanimate nouns by Homer[21]. However, κλέος for the contemporary subjects is constructed quite differently:

ἵνα τις [μνή]σεται ὕ[στερον αὖ
ἀνδρῶ]ν, οἵ Σπάρτ[η δούλιον ἦμ]αρ
] ἀμυν[ ] . . [ ]ω[
οὐδ̂ ἀρε]τῆς ἐλάθ[οντο]ν οὐρανομ[ήκ]ης,
καὶ κλέος ἀ]νθρώπων [ἔσσετ]αι ἀθάνατο<ν>.

so that someone l(ater re)call (the m)en who for Sparta…(Nor did they for)get their (vir)tue… (fame) reaching the heavens (and glory) of men (will) be immortal…[22]

Homeric vocabulary of κλέος is applied in a non-Homeric way: ἀθάνατος again with an inanimate noun, but is used in a predicative function, ουρανομηκης is found only once in Homer and describing a tree[23]. The word κλέος is located in the pentameter – non-epic – line, in the first foot, which is very unusual, having occurred only once in hexameter poetry[24]. Although Simonides draws on the κλέος of Homeric heroes and vocabulary, all these disparities underline a different paradigm for the self-presentation of the speaker and the referent for his praise. The metrical position of ἀθάνατος evokes Tyrtaeus 12.27–32 W. What is more important, for Tyrtaeus κλέος is realised through collective memory of a community rather than through means of poetry, like in Homer. We can see its influence in the *Plataea Elegy*, where at no point κλέος for the fallen soldiers is supposed to depend on the Muse, like in the case of Homeric heroes[25].

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[20] Simonides, *Plataea Elegy* 15–16, ed. and trans. D. Sider, [in:] D. Boedeker, D. Sider, *The New Simonides*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, p. 18–20.

[21] E. Stehle, *A Bard of the Iron Age and His Auxiliary Muse*, [in:] D. Boedeker, D. Sider, *op. cit.*, p. 115–116.

[22] Simonides, *Plataea Elegy* 24–28, [in:] D. Boedeker, D. Sider, *op. cit*.

[23] Homer, *Odyssey* 5.239.

[24] Idem, *Iliad* 5.172; E.Stehle, *op. cit.*, p. 114–116.

[25] E. Stehle, *op. cit.*, p. 116–118.

I see Simonides as negotiating poetic ground between the epic – Homer and the lyric – Tyrtaeus. He recognises that he needs the power of epic for the κλέος to work, hence the Homeric language. However, at the same time his own poetic voice articulates itself a lot more strongly due to the lyric character of the poem and all the stylistic features and possible allusions to Tyrtaeus pointed out above. Although Pindar might seem to be doing something similar in general terms, there are some significant differences. Pindar does not use Homeric language in such a blatant way. His relationship with the epic is a lot more subtle and veiled. In most cases instead of reworking the language he adapts the epic narrative and uses it for his own epinician purposes. If we think chronologically about Homer, Ibycus, Simonides and Pindar it is clear that each of the lyric poets built their own relationship with the tradition basing on the achievements of their predecessors. Pindar, coming at the end of this line, being very conscious about it, made the very best of the development of poetry before him. His attitude towards poetic tradition is most refined and subtle, but obscure and complicated at the same time.

The analysis could not be complete without briefly mentioning Stesichorus, one of the most influential lyric poetics of archaic Greece. He represented, most probably, a new genre, if this term can even be used, in Greek literature which was a long mythic-epic narrative in a lyric form. The mode of performance is quite unclear and controversial, since some scholars like Martin West or Bruno Gentili opt for a kitharodic solo performance, while others, like Walter Burkert, lean towards choral performance due to the triadic structure: *strophe*, *antistrophos*, *epodos*, which probably has its origins in dance. Although full of Homeric language, Stesichorus' poetry reworks and readapts it into new form of performance and thus gives precedence and examples to Ibycus, Simonides and Pindar how to effectively engage with Homer and epic in general[26].

All of this has direct importance for my consideration of Pindar. In the end, despite the big debt of Pindaric poetry to epic, lyric encomiastic tradition and its poetics are far closer to him. Some scholars are at pains to underline the independence of lyric tradition from epic and especially Homeric tradition[27]. Regardless of the validity of such claims, it has to be recognised that Pindar has been shaped by his lyric predecessors even more than by any epic poetry. Although epic κλέος is essential in order to establish a connection between the heroic past and the victorious present, it is clear that the lyric tradition, as demonstrated by Ibycus and Simonides, has a wide array of means to rework it, fuse with purely encomiastic elements and use very effectively for its own purposes. Pindaric poetry, as an end product of this tradition, is able to fully benefit from this heritage.

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[26] W. Burkert, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

[27] G. Nagy, *op. cit.*; M. West, *Indo-European Poetry and Myth*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007.