

The purpose of my presentation is to address some interpretative difficulties posed by *Nemean* 4. 13-22. The passage runs as follows:

‘And if your father (*sos patēr*) Timokritos | were still warmed by the blazing sun, often would he have | played an elaborate tune on the lyre, and, relying on | this song (*tōide melei klitheis*), would have celebrated his triumphant son (*huion* Bergk: *humnon* codd.) | for bringing (*pempsanta*) a wreath of crowns from Kleonai’s games | and from shining, | famous Athens, and because in seven-gated Thebes | beside the glorious tomb of Amphitryon | the Kadmeians gladly crowned him (*nin*) with flowers, | on account of Aigina’ (trans. W. H. Race).

It is generally believed that these lines provide an important piece of evidence for reperformance of Pindar’s odes after their premiere. My contention, however, is that nothing in the passage cited above suggests that Timokritos’ singing involves a reprise of Pindar’s ode. On the contrary, the text more naturally suggests that Timokritos’ song is not *Nemean* 4, although the phrase *tōide melei klitheis* (v. 14) must still be taken to imply at least some kind of affinity between the two.

I start from the matters of text. (1) The word *humnon* (v. 15, i.e. ‘he would have sung a victory song ... which had sent a cluster of crowns’) has been unanimously replaced with Bergk’s *huion* on the grounds that: (a) a song sending victory crowns is nonsense; (b) another third person reference to the victor must intervene between ‘your father’ (v. 13) and ‘crowned him’ (v. 22) to smooth the transition. (2) Finding no parallels to the idea of one poet ‘leaning upon’ the song of another, most scholars think that *tōide melei klitheis* equals *tautēi tēi ōidēi prosklinas heauton* (schol., i.e. ‘having applied himself to this song’ i.e. *Nemean* 4) and speculate about the possible contexts of epinician reperformance (e.g. Currie, 55-63). None of these arguments, however, holds much water: (1) (a) *humnon* ... *pempsanta* means not ‘song which had sent’ but ‘song which had conveyed the crowns’ (LSJ III 1 s.v. *pempō*), a crucial difference; (b) fluctuations between second and third person references to the *laudandus* are familiar in Pindar (e.g. *Nemean* 3. 74-76, 5. 41-46). (2) Med.-pass. of *klinō* + dat. in the sense ‘to be devoted to’ is not attested elsewhere, hence a separate entry in LSJ (s.v. II 6), which apparently follows the scholion.

If our text is *thama ke tōide melei klitheis* | *humnon keladēse kallinikon*, the assumption that the victor’s father would have performed *Nemean* 4 over and over again is difficult to uphold; *humnos kallinikos* is conceived as bringing victory crowns from a number of venues (i.e. Nemea, Athens, and Thebes), which seems to imply songs performed on different occasions. Further, I argue that the phrase *tōide melei klitheis* is best understood as an architectural metaphor suggesting that Timokritos would have imitated the music and the words of *Nemean* 4. The assumption, if correct, adds a new and interesting dimension to the stalemated debate concerning the isometric *Isthmians* 3 and 4 and also contributes to the discussion of the relationship between Bacch. fr. *20B (Snell-Maehler) and Pind. fr. 124 ab (Snell-Maehler). Considering my interpretation of *Nemean* 4. 13-22, it seems possible that the phenomenon of metrical affinity/identity between a number of poems enjoyed a wider currency in the song culture of Pindar’s day.

Works Cited

- Currie, B., ‘Reperformance Scenarios for Pindar’s Odes’ in C.J. Mackie (ed.), *Oral Performance and Its Context* (Leiden, 2004), 46-69.
Race, W. H. *Pindar. Nemean Odes. Isthmian Odes. Fragments*, Loeb, vol. ii. (Cambridge, Mass., 1997)