Many great thinkers have researched and analysed the phenomenon of colour – a universal aesthetic category – from antiquity to our days. Thus there are many different theories and teachings studying the physical-anatomic mechanism of the formation and perception of colours, focused on the philosophical, artistic or symbolic point of view. At the same time colours are used by art-people as an instrument, sometimes unconscious device of self-expression. Thus the phenomenon of colour – with its complexity, depth and diversity – is presented in the works of art not theoretically but practically.

Colour must be considered as an inseparable and organic element, having its important function not only of painting and architecture, the spheres most closely connected to colour, but of belles-lettres as well. A colour is an indispensable element of the artistic world of any literary work.

This study builds upon the above-mentioned tradition by analysing the phenomenon of colour, its various functions in the poetry of Pindar, one of the greatest authors of Antiquity.

Both in odes and fragments of Pindar I identified approximately 60 words associated with colour and classified them into three groups:

1) Words showing any concrete colour. e.g. ἀργυρός, ἀργυνόεις, λευκαμβής, λευκός (white), γλαυκός (bluish green or grey), γλαυκόχρως (grey), ἐρυθρός (red), ἑρμής, ἑρμικτής (saffron-coloured), κιτίνες (dark blue), λευκὸν (white over), μέλας (black), ξανθός (yellow of various shades), παμπόρφυρος (all purple), πάγχρυσος (all-golden), πολύχρυσος (rich in gold), πορφύρεος, φοίνικισα (purple), φοινίκεος (purple-red), χλωρός (greenish-yellow).

2) Composite words describing both the object and its colour. e.g. ἡβλέφαρος (violet-eyed), ἱππόκαμος, ἱππόκαμος (with violet locks), κελαινεγχής (with black, i.e. bloody spear), κελαινώπις (black-faced), κελαινεφής (shrouded in black clouds), κελαινώπις (swarthy), λευκόπολος (with white horses), λευκόλευκος (white-armed), μελαμφύλλος (black-leaved), μελανελεχής (black-walled), ξανθόκόμις (fair, golden-haired), φοίνικάνθεμος (with purple flowers), φοίνικόκροκος (of purple woof), φοίνικόστεξα (ruddy-footed), φοίνικόροδος (red with roses), φοίνικοστερόπας (hurling red lightning).

3) Words showing not the colour itself, but provoking its association in the reader’s mind. For instance, in stating that an object is of gold or silver, not only material (metal) is imagined, but also its colour – golden or silver as well. The metals – gold and silver – and their colours are inseparably connected to each other. Accordingly, the words related to gold and silver considered as indirectly showing the colour of the object are, for example, ἀργυρός (of silver), ἀργυρός (to cover with silver), ἀργυρόπτεξα (silver-footed or -sandalled), χρύσεος (of gold), χρυσάλακτος (with distaff of gold), χρυσάμπυξ (with fillet or frontlet of gold), χρυσάμπυξ (with reins of gold), χρυσάμπυξ (with or in car of gold), χρυσάμπυξ (with shield of gold), χρύσωμ (with sword of gold), χρυσόθρονος (with

1 Let us remember the thoughts of Alcmaeon and Empedocles, Democritus and Theophrastus, Plato, Aristotle and Plinius, Newton and Goethe, R. Steiner, H. Wagner and other famous thinkers.
2 For the vocabulary of Pindar see: Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis, Pars I, Epinicia, Post Brunonem Snell, Editit Hiericus Maehler, BSB B. G. Teubner Verlagsgesellschaft, 1984; Rumpel Ioannes, Lexicon Pindaricum, Lipsiae, In Aedibus B. G. Teubneri, MDCCCLXXXIII.
3 For English equivalents of Greek words and English translation of Pindar see: Liddell M. G. and Scott R. (ed.), A Greek-English Lexicon, Oxford, 1961; The Odes of Pindar Including the Principal Fragments (With an introduction and an English translation by sir John Sandys), London, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MCMLXVIII.
4 This word is met only once, in a geographical name: “Red Sec” (πόλης ἐρμήν) – Py. IV 251.)
thron of gold), χρυσόκερος, χρυσόκερος (with horn of gold), Χρυσόκομας (golden haired), χρυσόπεπλος, χρυσοχῖταν (with robe of gold), χρυσόραπας (with wand of gold), δυναφέρος (dark, black).

Pindar's range of colours is quite varied. Twelve colours can be identified in his odes and fragments: white, black, red, purple (purple-red), dark-blue, bluish green, grey, saffron, golden-yellow, greenish-yellow, golden, silver. And they are expressed by approximately sixty various terms. Nine of them (ιοτόκαμος, μελαντείχης, παμπόρφυρος, φοινίκαθεμός, φοινικόρρος, φοινικότεις, φοινικόρρος, χρυσοχαίτα, χρυσόπεπλος) are found in Pindar's poetry. The most frequently used colour terms are λευκὸς (16 times), ξαθός (13 times) and μέλας (10 times). The following frequency of colour use has been calculated: golden (59 times), white and black (18 times), purple and golden-yellow (15 times), silver (7 times), violet (4 times), saffron and greenish-yellow (3 times), dark-blue (twice), red, bluish green and grey (once).

Upon analysis, I found that the colours have different functions in Pindar's works. Namely, some colours - black, dark-blue, white, grey and red - are used as epithets showing the real colour of the objects, without any metaphoric or symbolic meaning.

It cannot be said that Pindar is distinguished by originality, when choosing colour as an epithet, showing us original interrelation between the colour and object. In the examples cited below the poet is more descriptive, ascribing real, visible and noted colour to each object. But this conclusion is applied only to a small portion of the colours used by Pindar.

Black can symbolically mean destruction, humiliation, misfortune, grief and mourning. Such traditional understanding of this colour is reflected in these metaphoric epithets: "black murder" (μέλαινα φάτνα - Is. VII 50 (VIII 55)), "black (dark) death" (μέλαινος θανάτος - Py. XI 56), "black darkness" (κελαυνεφέλει δέ σκότει - fr. 142 (106), 3), "black-leaved (dark-leaved) heights of Aetna" (Αἴτης μελαμφύλλοις κορυφαῖς - Py. I 27). "The black darkness" can be metaphorically understood as "death"; and by the "black-leaved heights of Aetna" something terrible, disastrous and destructive is meant.

The plains of Libya are mentioned as "mantled by the black (dark) cloud" (κελαυνεφέλεως πε­δίων - Py. IV 52), but this phrase is metaphorically understood and it is considered that the fertility of Libyan earth is meant here. As the plains are "mantled by the black clouds", it rains frequently and hence the earth is fertile.

The association of black with murder, death, darkness, natural phenomena is quite logical and at the same time a traditional, well-known artistic device. To the colour black is also attributed absolutely unexpected and extraordinary meaning as well. In Pindar's works it metaphorically means "fertile", which can be considered as an original poetic vision of the poet.

In one of the fragments the word-combination "black heart" is used. As the poet says, "the God sending gladness to the person, to his black heart knocks at first" (οὕτων θεὸς ἀνδρὸς χάριν πέμψας, τάρος μέλαιναν κραδίαν ἐστιφέλεξεν - fr. 225 (247).


8 For example, Pindar associates the black with the earth, cheek, face, night and in this case the colour reflects the empirical reality and reproduces the real colour of the things. E.g. χῖνα μέλαιναν - black (dark) earth (Oi. IX 50), μέλαιναν ἄρομαν - (Ne. IX 39), μέλαιναν γένεσιν - black (dusky) cheek (Oi. I 70 (68), μελανίσθησαν Κόλχους - swarthy Colchis (Py. IV 212), μελανίσθησαν κυστίδος, δυναφέρας κυστίδος - black night (fr. 130 (95), fr. 142 (106)).

Grey is associated with olives (γαλακτόρροι κόμην ἔλαιος - Ol. III 13) and the bluish green or grey with snakes (γαλακτόρροι χάλκιες - Ol. VIII 37). A flame is red (φοινικά φῶς - Py. I 24) and the earth - dark blue (κοκυίες χόνδρος - fr. 87 (58), 4, λόγια κοκυίες - Ol. VI 40). Milk, ivory and a column are white (λευκὸ ὄλυμπο - Ne. III 77, λευκὸν γῆλατί - fr. 166 (147), 2, λευκὸν ὄλυμπο - Ne. VII 78, στάλεν λευκοστέραν - Ne. IV 81), and the head of the personage - Melissus of Thebes - is wreathed with myrtle white (κελαυνεθέα κάρα μύρτως - Is. III 87 (IV 69)).

9 On the symbolism of black see: Cooper J. C., Lexicon Alter Symbole (Translated from English), VEB E. A. Seemann Verlag, Leipzig, 1986, p. 52.
“The black heart” can be understood in different ways, proceeding from the varied symbolical meanings of the colour. In this case “black” can mean the desperate, suffering, worried, melancholic or humiliated heart. Black has obviously negative meaning here, but what does it specifically mean? The answer to this question can be found in Pindar’s poetry itself. According to another fragment, “someone who does not swell with desire has a black heart” (fr. 123 (88), 4). Hence we can suppose that “black” metaphorically implies the heart without desire, passion and love also in the fragment cited above (fr. 225 (247)). And the happiness or joy sent by the god to the people, and knocking to their “black heart” must be regarded as love, desire, though this is not concretised in the text survived to us.

The use of black with such unexpected, original metaphoric meaning (fr. 123 (88), 4, fr. 225 (247)), such “play on the colour”, to my opinion, can be considered as a splendid artistic device used by Pindar.

In Pindar, colour oversteps the limits not only of simple epithet but of more complex and important artistic device, metaphoric epithet as well. A colour is quite often used as a certain, sometimes hidden symbol, the understanding of which helps us to make deeper analysis of the text and to discover Pindar’s versatile implications. I will try to show on which principles are chosen the colours in Pindar’s works; what do the colours show or hint at?

The fixed-epithets originating from the epic tradition, namely, from the Homeric epoch and usually hinting at features of personages are frequently implied by Pindar. The symbolism of the colours can be the constituting elements of such fixed-epithets.

Black is associated with death, blood, war, earth and the underworld. That’s why Ares, the god of war, according to tradition, is illustrated by Pindar with the spear become black by blood (κέλαυγενχεῖ τ’ Ἀρεί _ Ne. X 84), and the dwelling of Persephone, the goddess of the underworld, is black-walled (μελαντείχεα δόμων Φερεσφόινας – Ol. XIV 20).

In the first Pythian ode Pindar applies to the golden lyre, that by the wisdom of Apollo and Muses makes the god of war, Ares, to set aside his rude spears and sends to sleep the eagle on the sceptre of Zeus, shedding the black cloud over his head (see: Py. I 11-13). The symbolical meaning of “black cloud” (κέλαυνότιν νεφέλαν – Py. I 7) is quite evident here.

First of all, let us remember that according to ancient Greek mythology, Apollo is the shepherd and the clouds are his herd.11 In the Pythian ode, the cloud can be regarded as the instrument of Apollo, but one question arises here. Why is the cloud black? It seems strange that in the Pythian ode, the colour with its mainly negative meaning is referring to Apollo, the founder of Pythian games.

We could think that by ascribing a black colour to Apollo, Pindar intended to hint at the ambivalence of this god, not only at his goodness and purity, but also at his destructive and shady side. In this ode, however, Apollo is presented by his positive features, as a protector of the Muses, musicians and music and one of his attributes — the cloud — is only sending to sleep.12 Thus, we can not expect a negative attitude to Apollo here. To my mind, “the black cloud” is used by Pindar as a symbolic hint of Apollo and, on the other hand, as a metaphor of rendering asleep. And sleeping is naturally associated with black.

White is implied by Pindar as an epithet both of horses and the hands (arms) of the goddesses (λευκόπτος, λευκόλενος).

White expresses transcendental perfection and divinity.13 At the same time, in the context of the peculiarities of colour perception in Antiquity, this colour means something light and bright as well.14 The term λευκός initially meant “bright” and later received the meaning of colour.15 Hence it is quite logical that according to tradition the hands of the goddesses are associated with white-bright (λευκόκος).16 But how can the fact be explained that this “divine” colour is also the attribute of horses? Does it hint only at their real colour or has it symbolic meaning as well?

The antique tradition associates a white horse with Apollo and Poseidon. White, “the colour of transcendental and divine perfection”, is quite logically chosen for horses, the attributes of these gods.

Does Pindar associate the white horses with Apollo and Poseidon as well? In Pindar we see the Mycenians, Tyndaridae and Cadmeans, Jason’s forefathers and the daughter of Demeter riding on their

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11 Cooper J. C., op. cit., p. 215.
12 Comp. Herodotus, VIII 36.
13 On the symbolism of black see: Cooper J. C., op. cit., p. 52.
14 Comp. the treatise of Democritus “On Colours”; also see: Лосев А. Ф., Принципы античного цветоведения, in: История античной эстетики, М. 1963.
16 See: Py. III 98, fr. 29 (5), 6, Py. IX 17.
white horses (λευκίττων Μυκηναίων - fr. 202 (216), λευκόπολων Τυνδαρίδων - Py. I 66, λευκίττων Καθεδείων μετοικήσας ἄγγαν - Py. IX 83, λευκίττων δόμους - Py. IV 117, λευκίττου τε θυγατρός - Ol. VI 95).

Though Pindar never indicates the relation of Apollo, Poseidon and white horses directly, to my mind, this interrelation is meant. Following I. Rumpel’s and other researchers’ points of view, we could consider that white horses are attributes of nobility and royalty, but if we remember that the white horses are found in Pindar’s Pythian odes, a particular hint at the founder of the Pythian games will be quite obvious here.

In one fragment of Pindar only three words have survived: λευκίττου τε θυγατρός - Ol. VI 95, it may be a hint referring to Poseidon, from whom the goddess gave birth to the horse Areion.

The variety of Pindar’s poetic vision and thinking is illustrated by the fact that the same colour can have different, sometimes unexpected functions. For example, in the ninth Nemean ode we see white smoke (λευκάθια καπνών - Ne. IX 23) rising from the corpses of shot soldiers. In this context “white” has nothing in common with its symbolic discuss and, to my opinion, can be understood here as a colour of death.

Zeus is described as “hurling purple-red lightning” (Δία τε φωικοκαστερόπαν - Ol. IX 6). In this case purple-red (φωικόκεος) can be understood as a traditional symbol of fire, flame, supernatural force, though this colour symbolises the honour and power of emperor and king mainly, points to the aristocratic origin and royal authority of personages.

In the eleventh Nemean ode, sung in honour of Aristagoras, on his entering on office as President of the Council of the island Tenedos and in the fourth Pythian ode, dedicated to Arcesilas, the king of Cyrene, purple is pointing out the royalty of these personages. Aristagoras is binding his hair with purple garlands (ἀνθησάμενος τε κόμιαν ἐν πορφυρώσ ἔρευσα - Ne. XI 28), and Arcesilas is rejoiced after his victory as the prime of spring with purple flowers (φωικοκαθέμου ἤρως ἄκμα - Py. IV 64).

In the forth Pythian ode, Pelias illicitly takes property from Aeson, Jason’s father and little Jason, in purple swaddling-clothes (σπαργάνως ἐν πορφυρώσ - Py. IV 114) is sent to Cheiron. The purple swaddling-clothes must be an indication of the aristocratic origin of Jason. “The purple wings” of Zetes and Callias, Argonauts, the son of Boreas and Oreithya (Ὀρειθυα), daughter of Erechtheus, the king of Athens have the same meaning (σπεράδων πορφυρώσ - Py. IV 183).

In the third and fourth Isthmian odes, dedicated to Melissus of Thebes, the purple colour, namely, the purple rose, symbolises the happiness and joy caused by the victory and return of lost glory. Melissus of Thebes lost four members of the family in the war and the Isthmian and Nemean victories restored the honour of the family. These events are implied in the passage: “after the wintry gloom of many-hued months, hath the ground, as it were, blossomed anew with ruddy roses” (vvv XELΜΕΠΛΟΥ ΜΙΤΟΚΑΛΩΥ ἡματτα (O<j>ov xewv WΤΕ <pΟΛVLΚΟΛΕΟLV av011crEV p680LS" - Is. III 36 (IV 18)). “The wintry gloom” symbolises defeat and lost glory, and “the ground blossomed anew with ruddy roses” - the joy, victory and achieved fame.

The red roses adorning the meadows of afterlife (φωικοκαθέμους λευκώψεσι - fr. 129 (95), 2) are the symbols of joy, beauty and eternal spring. Taking into consideration that the mysteries promised the afterlife blessedness to its participants, and a red rose was an attribute of Dionysus, we can suppose that “the meadows with red roses” implies the mysteries of Dionysus.

In Pindar ruddy-footed Demeter (φωικόκότεταμ Δάματρα - Ol. VI 94), the purple zone of Evadne, the daughter of Nymph Pitane (φωικόκροκον ὄων - Ol. VI 39), and purple-red chamber of Horae (φωικόκος ἁλάμα ου - fr. 75 (45), 14) are illustrated. Why does Pindar associate this colour (purple-red) with these personages? What common feature of Demeter, Evadne and Horae makes Pindar to refer the same colour to them?

17 “Χειλίττων dicuntur utpote nobiles et principes, quos constat candidis esse equis usos” (see: Rumpel I., op. cit., p. 272-273)
18 About Poseidon, the Lord of the Deep and oracles see: Burkert W., Greek Religion, Archaic and Classic (Translated from German), Basil Blackwell, 1985, p. 139.
19 Comp. Apollod., II 6, 8.
20 Different interpretations and such unusual understanding of “white” see in: Cooper J. C., op. cit., pp. 49-53.
21 Translated by J. Sandys (see: The Odes of Pindar, op. cit., p. 463).
22 On the symbolic of red colour and red rose see: Cooper J. C., op. cit., pp. 51, 150-151.
It is quite natural that purple-red as a colour of ripe corn is attributed to Demeter, the goddess of fertility, and a relationship to the fertility can be observed in other personages as well. Nymphs, the goddesses of nature’s vital and fertilising forces, and Horae, the goddesses of seasons, nature’s vital forces and crop are somehow related to fertility. Purple-red as a colour hinting at fertility is presented in Pindar. Besides this, Horae – as the daughters of Zeus and Themis, the goddess of law and justice – keep order in human life, conditioning its natural, regular development. Hence purple can be referred to Horae as a colour symbolising law and justice as well.

Yellow (ξανθός) is a colour of human and animal hair (“fair, golden, auburn”), of different things, mainly, made of gold (“golden”) in all ancient Greek poetry and in Pindar as well.

Achilles, Menelaus, Athena, Charites and Danaï are golden-haired (ξανθός ἄλευς – Ne. III 43, ξανθός Μενέλας – Ne. VII 28, ξανθός Αδάναν – fr. 34 (9), Ne. X 7, ξανθάς Χάρισσαν – Ne. V 54, ξανθοκομαῖν Δαναιῶν – Ne. IX 17), and the hair of the bulls and lion is auburn-coloured (βοῶν ξανθός ἀγέλας – Py. IV 149, Py. IV 225, ξανθός λέων – fr. 237 (261)).

To my mind, the term ξανθός not only shows the empirical golden-yellow, but is somehow performing a function of gold and golden with their symbolic meaning as well. To such conclusion I am led by the phrase of Pindar, where ξανθός is attributed to the cloud by which Zeus sent gold (πολύν χρυσῶν) to the people, e. g. “[Zeus] caused a yellow (golden) cloud to draw nigh to them and rained on them abundant gold” (κείνος ὁ μὲν ξανθῶν ἄγαγον νεφέλαιν πολὺν ἴδε χρυσῶν – Ol. VII 49).

ξανθός is connecting, uniting the Earth and Heaven like χρυσός. It is not coincidence that ξανθός (as “golden”) is the hair of the distinguished personages, of the heroes protected by the gods and of the Olympians themselves.

It is not accidental that Iamus, the son of Evadne and Apollo and future oracle, “hidden amidst the rushes and in the boundless brake, with its dainty form steeped in the golden and deep-purple light of pansies” (ἐὰν ξανθαῖς καὶ παμπορφυρίωσις ἀκτίσι πελερήμων ἀβρόν σώμα – Ol. VI 55). Golden and purple, colours symbolising the fire and attributed to Iamus, supposedly imply the skill of fire-prophecying of this personage.

From the Homeric epoch, greenish-yellow (χλωρός) is attributed to plants and implies not only the colour, but a particular force of them that can be observed in Pindar as well. In one fragment the well-known history of the struggle between Centaurs and Lapithae is related. The Centaurs having lost all hope to win, buried Ceneus by the enormous branches of the tree. Ceneus won by the greenish-yellow pine-tree is described by Pindar (6 ΟΕ ΥΧΛΑΙΟΤΑΣ ΕΥΣΕ ΑΠΟΤΕΛΕΣ – fr. 167 (148)). In my opinion, the colour (χλωρός) is used here not only to show the real colour of the tree, but also to hint at its unnatural force as well. This observation is supported by another example found in Pindar. The poet compares the increasing of cippus with the growing of the tree with greenish-yellow branches. “The glorious deeds are growing as the tree with greenish-yellow branches” (ἄστει δ᾽ ἀρετὰ χλωράιν ξέροις ὑς ὅτε ἐκνύον – Ne. VIII 40). The peculiar features and force of the colour (χλωρός) is evidently implicated here.

Based on analysis of Plato’s “Timaeus”, the scientific literature underlines that ξανθός differs from χλωρός, but there are some examples found in Pindar where the colours have the same function. They show the colour of plants and have a specific ritual meaning as well. Namely, ξανθός (golden-yellow) is attributed to the pine-trees (ὑπὸ ξανθαίοι πεύκαις – fr. 79 (48), 5) and the tears of frankincense in the temple of Peitho (τὰς χλωράς λιβάνου ξανθὰ δάκρη – fr. 122 (87), 3).

According to European tradition, saffron – a flower and colour – symbolises selflessness, disinterestedness, obedience, love and magic. Saffron is a flower of the sun, found in the cult of Dionysos as well. In his festivals, women dressed in saffron-coloured cloths participate.29

23 It is worth mentioning that this colour (rubicundus) is associated Cerera, the goddess of fertility in Virgil too (Boeckhio alisqueJudicibus ob segetis matura colorem, ut ap. Verg. Ge. I 297 seges matura est rubicunda Ceres; aut ob pedes ab artificibus minio pictos, ut at Winkelmann. Hist. art. III p. 23) (see: Rumpel I., op. cit., p. 474).
24 Let us remember their names: the goddess of growth (Ἀξιά), the goddess of increase (Θωλλω), the goddess of ripe fruit (Καρπώ).
26 This is a colour of various shades, frequently with a tinge of red, brown, auburn (see: Liddell-Scott, op. cit., p. 1187).
28 Translated by J. Sandys (see: The Odes of Pindar, op. cit., p. 75).
29 See examples cited above.
30 Chantraine P., op. cit., IV - 2, pp. 1261-1265.
31 Comp. Apoll. Rhod. I 57-64.
In the fourth Pythian ode, Jason setting his hand to the task given to him by Aeetes, "flung off his saffron robe" (κρόκωτόν ρίψας 'Ιάσων εἴμα - Py. IV 232). In this case the saffron robe of the hero, having taught to the lore of suppliant incantations by Aphrodite and having the antidotes against sore pains given to him by enamoured Medea, can be regarded as a hint at the love and magic, as their symbol and the precondition of Jason's victory (λιτὰς ἐπαισδας - Py. IV 215-217; σῶν δὲ έλαιω φαρμακικώστασι' αντίτομα στερεάν δήσαν - Py. IV 220-223). Jason, wearing the saffron robe, is in touch with love and magic; that is why he can not be won. Jason "quaileld not before the fire; but seizing the plough, and binding the necks of the oxen in the harness irresistible, and ever thrusting the unwearied goad into their strong-ribbed frame, the stalwart hero accomplished the allotted measure of his task" (Py. IV 232-238).

A saffron colour is used by Pindar in other places too. In the first Nemean ode Hera saw Hercules, "laid in his saffron swathing-bands" (κροκωτόν ἁγγαγαν ἕγκατέβα - Ne. I 38). What can be meant by saffron in this case?

Hercules is a powerful helper initiated at Eleusis, both the god and hero, uniting the Earth with the Heaven. Gods and heroes form two separate groups and the wall which separates them is impermeable: no god is a hero, and no hero becomes god; only Dionysos and Heracles are able to defy this principle and transfer in the range of god.

The initiation of Heracles at Eleusis protected him from the dangers of the underworld. "But the power inherent in Heracles leaves even Eleusis behind".

Hercules has broken the terrors of death and has become the prototype for the most daring hopes for an afterlife. He is a model for the common man who may hope that after a life of drudgery, and through that very life, he too may enter into the company of the gods and attain the highest of mysteries.

Proceeding from the above, it is evident that "the saffron swathing-bands" of Heracles imply the relation of the hero with the mysteries, Dionysos and his cult. In this context "the saffron" obviously symbolises the relationship with the mysteries of Dionysos. This colour is a mystery-symbol in another fragment of Pindar, according to which a saffron-coloured cloth is an element of the Daphnephoria festival, dedicated to Apollo (fr. 94 b).

The Muses, Aphrodite and Evadne are associated with violet, a symbol of kindness, beauty, moderateness and temperance, in all Greek poetry and in Pindar too. Namely, violet-haired Muses, Evadne and violet-eyed Aphrodite are presented in his works (ἱστολόκαμων Μοισαίων (Py. I 1), ἱστολόκολοι Μοίσαιος (Is. VI (VII) 23, ἱστόλοκον Εὐάδαν (Ol. VI 30), ἱστόλεφαρον Ἀφροδήτην (fr. 307 (113)).

The epithets connected with viola are frequently used in the Greek poetry, but association of Evadne with violet can not be considered as an echo of the tradition only. The mention of the violet hair of Evadne (ἱστόλοκον <ἴον) and the poison (ίος) in the same context, must be regarded as an indication on the name of oracle Iamus (Ἰαμος), the son of Evadne and Apollo. "The violet hair" of Evadne and the "poison" can be a poetic attempt of etymologising of Iamus' name. That is, the colour has two functions here: on the one hand to describe the woman and make her a visual image, and on the other hand to hint at the name of the personage.

Gold and silver – the sun and moon, the male and female principles – are two aspects determining cosmic reality. Consequently, golden and silver colours are very important symbols. Golden, connecting the Earth with the Heaven, symbolizes divine force, eternity, god, as a undiminning light, the highest values, majesty and brightness. In comparison with gold, silver is less divine and sacred.
Phenomenon of Colour in the Poetry of Pindar

According to Pindar, “gold is a child of Zeus; neither moth nor rust devoureth it; but the mind of man is devoured by this supreme possession” (fr. 222). Hence in Pindar everything good, divine and eternal is associated with gold.42

In Pindar only the attributes of the different gods, goddesses, kings and heroes, the things related to the prophecy and Olympic games are described as gold or golden.43 Regarding the colour of silver, in comparison with gold, it is attributed to the divine world, although used more rarely.44

Only a few examples can be cited where gold and golden are not attributed to the gods and goddesses, kings and heroes, oracles and Olympic games. In spite of this, they symbolically hint at something divine and eternal.

For instance, in the plains of the blessed – where those purified by just life are living after death – the golden fruit is ripening, that is, eternity has reigned (KapTTo'is - j3E~pt06s- - fr. 129 (95), 3). As Pindar says, a foundation of his odes is gold, metaphorically meaning that the basis of his poetry is divine and eternal (KEKpoTT)Tm XPOOEa Kpl)TTLS' lepa'icrtv ciOL6a'is- - fr. 194 (206)).

Underlining the importance of any event, personage or geographical point, hyperbolising or associating divinity to them, Pindar also implies gold or golden. That is why Thebe with the shield of gold and golden tunic, Cyrene with the throne of gold, the golden palaces and chambers of Libya are presented in his works (χρύσαςπις Θήβα - Is. I 1, χρυσοχτϊων Θήβα - fr. 195 (207), χρυσοθρόνου Κυράνας - Py. IV 260, χρυσέοις δόμοις - Py. IX 56, θαλάμῳ πολυχρύσῳ - Py. IX 69).

As my research uncovered, colours are never used by Pindar without artistic intention, specific symbolism or implication. I also noted some peculiarities of colour perception, functioning as an important artistic device.

Some passages I found important not only for the symbolism and implications, but for the artistic expressiveness of the colours used in them. By using colours, Pindar sometimes makes impressive and picturesque visual icons which magnify the impression of the reader. For example, the poet describes “the golden-yellow tears of greenish-yellow frankincense” in the temple of Peitho (τις χρωμάς λιβάνου ξαθά δάκρη - fr. 122 (87), 3). In one line consisting from four words, two colour terms are presented and a certain gradation of colours is expressed: green - yellow - golden. At the same time the excess of yellow tone is evident here. By intensification of this colour the visual effect is increased. Such intensification of colour can be compared with a method of alliteration, i.e. occurrence of the same letter or sound in one line consisting from four words, two colour terms are presented and a certain gradation of colours is expressed: green - yellow - golden. At the same time the excess of yellow tone is evident here. By intensification of this colour the visual effect is increased. Such intensification of colour can be compared with a method of alliteration, i.e. occurrence of the same letter or sound in

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42 I refrain from analysing of two wrong-survived fragments of Pindar where the “gold” is mentioned but its meaning and function is uncertain (χρυσέοις ἄλεσθε - fr. 223 (244), χρύσας Κηλπίδεις - fr. 53 (25)).

43 In Pindar there are presented: the gold eagle of Zeus, the gold snow (χρυσέων αἰετῶν - Py. IV 4, χρυσάσας γνώβαι καιον - Ol. VII 34), the gold horse of Poseidon (χρυσάσας ἄμφως - Ol. I 42 (41), ἄμφως χρυσάς - Ol. VIII 51), the gold plectrum, lyre, glen of Apollo (χρυσάς πλεκτρῳ - Ne. V 24, χρύσας δόμῳ - Py. II 1, πολυχρύσῳ κάτω - Py. VI 8), golden-haired Apollo with the bow and sword of gold (χρυσάσας, χρυσάσας ἄπολλων - Ol. VI 41, Ol. VII 32, Py. II 16, χρυσάς κόμως Λοξών - Is. VI (VII) 49, χρυσάσας ἄπολλων - Ol. XIV 11, χρυσάσας δέονν - Py. V 104), Orpheus with the sword of gold (χρυσάσας Ὀρφεα - fr. 139), Leto, Amphitrite, Melia, the Nereides with the distaff of gold (χρυσαλλάκτος - fr. 139, 1, cf. Ne. VI 41 (36), Ol. VI 104, fr. 29 (5), Ne. V 36), Hermes with the wand of gold (χρυσάσας Ἐρμῆ - Py. IV 178), Hera with throne of gold (χρυσάσας Ἰταν - Ne. I 37), Nike, Muse, the Nereides of gold (χρυσάσας Νικᾶς - Is. II 26, χρυσάσας Μοιαν - Is. VII (VIII) 5, χρυσάσας Νημηδᾶς - Ne. VII 7, χρυσάσας παιδές Θημίτου - Ol. XIII 8), one of the Fates, Lachesis, the Muses, the Horse with the fillet or frontlet of gold (χρυσάσας - Ol. VII 64, Py. III 89, Is. II 1, fr. 30 (6), 6, Ol. XIII 65), the gold bows of Artemis (χρυσάσας τόξους - Py. III 9), the deer with golden horns, dedicated to Artemis by Tatygete, the daughter of Atlas (χρυσακέρας ἔλαιον - Ol. III 29), Demeter with the reins of gold (χρυσακέρας - fr. 37 (12)), Menosyne with the robe of gold (χρυσάριττον Μηνοσύνης - Is. V (VI) 75), gold-crowned Hebe, the daughter of Zeus and Hera, the gold-crowned contests (χρυσοστέφανο, χρυσοστέφανον Ἑβε - Is. VI 157, χρυσοστέφανων ἄθλων - Ol. VIII 1), the golden goats of the Muses and the golden sweet buy (Laurus Nobilis) (μύλω γχρυσώ - fr. 288 (121), δακτὺς τε χρυσέας - Py. X 40), Pythia, oracle of gold (χρυσάς κλυ­τόμας - fr. 90 (60), 2), the golden tripods (χρυσάς τριτόδων - Py. XI 4), the golden light of the sun (χρυσάς θεόν - Py. IV 144), Mena, Castor, Aeciae (the descendents of Aeacus, the son of Zeus and Aegina) in the golden coach (χρυσάριττον Μήνα - Ol. III 19, χρυσάριττον Ἀκταίον - Is. V 19), the golden olive and its leaves (χρυσάς έλαιόν - Ol. XI 13, φύλλως ἔλαιαν χρυσάς - Ne. I 17), Aias with the golden arms (χρυσάς ἔπλων - Ne. VIII 27), the golden palaces and halls of the Heaven (χρυσάσας δομαίς - Ne. VIII 88, Is. III 78 (IV 69), πολυχρύσως δομαί - Py. IV 53, πολυχρύσως φάλαινας - fr. 221 (242), 2), the golden thrones of the kings (χρυσάσας έδρως - Py. III 94), the golden fleece (χρυσάς θεούς - Py. IV 231, πάξαρους νίκας - Py. IV 68), the golden bowl (by which the people begged to the gods for help) (χρυσάς φαλάν - Py. IV 193, φάλαν πάξαρου - Ol. VII 4)).

44 e. g. silver-footed Aphrodite (ἀργυρόπος - Ἀφροδίτα - Py. IX 19), Apollo with the silver bow (ἀργυρόπος τόξω - Ol. IX 32), the Muses of silver (ἀργυρόπος Μοίσας - fr. 287 (120)), the silver pitcher of Evadne, the daughter of Nymph Pitane (καλτίς Ἀφροδίτα - Ol. VI 4), the drinking horn of silver from which the Centaurs are drinking wine (ἀργυρό σκάρφω - fr. 166 (147), 3), the silver cups symbolising the victory in the Nemean games (ἀργυράδεσσα - Is. IX 51, ἀργυρώθρε­τις φάλαξι - Ne. X 43), the “silvered”, that is, sweet odes of Terpsichore (ἀργυρωθέσις άνδραι - Is. II 8).
at the beginning of two or more words in succession. By the intensification of sound, the acoustic effect is achieved, while the intensification of colour intensifies the visual effect. Both the intensification of sound and colour must be regarded as an important, expressive artistic device. Proceeding from the above stated premise, a new term — an alliteration of a colour — can be introduced.

Some passages of Pindar are distinguished by a great number of colours. To my mind, not only a separate colour but even a combination of colours can have some artistic or mental importance, a certain symbolism. To my observation, in each passage of Pindar different groups of colours can be mentioned. e. g. red and white; black and red; black, white and golden; silver, purple, dark-blue, golden, violet and golden-yellow.

Athena with dark she gives a golden bridle to Glaucus — the son of Sisyphus and king of Corinth — slept in darkness and tells him to sacrifice a white bull (Etherial Aolida basileie; ãγε φιλτρον τὸς ἐπειτοι δέκευ, καὶ Δαμαίῳ καὶ δραίῳ ἀργυρίᾳ πατρί δείξων, κυάναγις ἐν ὥρφαν κυκλισούσι οἱ παρθένοι τόσα εἰπεῖν ἐνδέειν [Palais] — Ol. XIII. 67-72). In this passage two scenes on condition can be distinguished: 1) Athena appears to Glaucus 2) and she gives advice to him. In the first scene black and in the second one white and golden are figured as, that, to my mind, can not be coincidence. Before the appearance of the goddess Glaucus is presented "in black colour", in sleep and darkness, as it were, in ignorance and despair. The appearance of Athena makes a sudden change in the life of Glaucus that is symbolised by white and golden, colours of divinity, truth and eternity.

Six colours — silver, purple, dark-blue, golden, violet and golden-yellow — are used in six lines of the sixth Olympian ode and, as I have indicated above, each colour has a certain symbolical meaning. Evadne laid down her purple zone and her silver pitcher, and in the dark-blue brake gave birth to a boy inspired of heaven... golden-haired Apollo sent to her aid the goddess of birth and the Fates... the body of Iamus is steeped in the golden and the deep-purple light of pansies (α ὁ φυλικόκροκοι ζωίων καταθηκαμένα κάλπηδα τ' ἀργυρέαν λόχιαν ὑπὸ κυάνας τίκτε θεόφρον κύκορον, τὰ μὲν ὁ χρυσόκομος πραγμήν τ' Ἐλείθυαν παρέστασα' ἐν τε Μοίρας... ὡς ξανθαῖς καὶ παμπορφύροις ἀκτίσι βεβρεγμένοι άβρον σώμα — Ol. VI. 39-42, 55-56).

As I mentioned above, even the combination of colours can have some symbolic meaning. To my opinion, it is not coincidence that in one fragment of Pindar Demeter is characterised by two colours: purple and white (φοινίκόποταν ἀμφέπει Δάματρα λευκόππου τε θυατρός ἑρταν — Ol. VI. 95). If we remember that red and white mentioned together are symbols of death,45 we can suppose that these two colours — attributed to Demeter in the same context — implicate the mystery-understanding of death.

Pindar describes the surroundings of Aetna. Its purple-red flame and black-leafed heights (φοινίσσα κυλινδομένα φλόγε... Ἀπίστας ἐν μελαμφύλοις δέστεται κορυφαίς καὶ πέδω — Py. I 24, 27) By the combination of red and black, by their contrast both visual and emotional effect is attained. A multi-coloured and consequently more impressive, visual icon is created while at the same time the reader is led over terror and despair, because both black and red are understood in this context by their negative features.

The research of the phenomenon of colour and the peculiarities of its perception in Pindar's poetry showed me that the colours have three main functions in the works of this great poet. The colours can be used: 1) as an epithet of different personages and things, based on empirical experience; 2) as a traditional or original metaphoric epithet; 3) as a certain symbol.

Colours are used by Pindar as an important artistic device; by the intensification, that is, "alliteration" or combination of colours the poet creates visual icons and increases the impressiveness of each phrase or passage. On the one hand colours are found in a traditional context, but on the other hand absolutely new, original and unexpected meaning is given to them.

Pindar never uses colours without any function, as an accidental and simple adornment. When choosing colour, the poet always takes into consideration traditional symbolism and peculiarity of colour perception in Antiquity. A colour is frequently used as a certain symbol or hint; and can be some kind of key for discovering the implications of various passages, an important device for better and deeper understanding of Pindar's many-sided poetry.

The peculiarities of colour perception in Pindar are additional evidences of original way of thinking, excellent artistic imagination and skills of this poet.

45 See: Cooper J. C., op. cit., pp. 51-52.