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TRUTH AND GENRE IN PINDAR*

By convention epinician poetry claims to be both obligatory¹ and truthful,² yet in the intersection of obligation and truth lies a seeming paradox: the poet presents his poetry as commissioned by a patron but also claims to be unbiased enough to convey the truth. In Slater's interpretation Pindar³ reconciles this paradox by casting his relationship to the patron as one of guest-friendship: when he declares himself a guest-friend of the victor, he agrees to the obligation 'a) not to be envious of his *xenos* and b) to speak well of him. The argumentation is: *Xenia* excludes envy, I am a *xenos*, therefore I am not envious and consequently praise honestly'.⁴ Slater observes that envy may foster bias against the patron, but the problem of pro-patron bias remains: does the poet's friendship with and obligation to his patron produce praise at the expense of truth?

I will argue that Pindar resolves this potential conflict by making the case that truth and praise not only complement but also mutually reinforce one another. Furthermore, he presents his praise as truthful not only in spite of his obligation to the victor but even *because* of it, and thus fulfills his encomiastic duties while making a genuine claim to veracity. Pindar's dual devotion to truth and praise is articulated by his use of *alêtheia* in contexts where he discusses poetry and poetic obligation, whether in reference to the victor's achievements or in his mythical digressions. In the following pages I will briefly discuss the history of *alêtheia* and examine how Pindar broadens its applications for use in his praise agenda. I will then examine personifications of *alêtheia* in Pindar's odes, which show how the poet simultaneously shapes *alêtheia* to his epinician agenda while still speaking of a truth external to and independent of his poetry. As I will demonstrate,

* Thanks are owed to Peter Smith, James O'Hara, Sharon James, and Owen Goslin for reading and commenting on drafts of this article, and to the editor John Wilkins and the anonymous referee of *Classical Quarterly* for their helpful and challenging suggestions.

¹ See E.L. Bundy, *Studia Pindarica* (Berkeley, 1986 = 1962), 10–11, on 'the necessity or propriety that determines the relationship between song and merit'. Bundy cites μισθός, χρήσις, χρή, χρέος, πρέπει, τέθμιον, τεθμός, όφείλω, πρόσφορος and καιρός as examples of terms marking the obligation of epinician poetry.

² L. Pratt, *Lying and Poetry from Homer to Pindar* (Ann Arbor, 1993), 115.

³ In using the name 'Pindar', I refer, of course, to the persona of the epinician poet presented in the odes and to the corpus of his works, and not to the historical author. See M. Lefkowitz, *First-Person Fictions: Pindar's Poetic 'I'* (Oxford, 1991) and A.D. Morrison, *The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry* (Cambridge, 2007), esp. 36–102, for a comprehensive discussion of this persona.

⁴ W.J. Slater, 'Pindar and hypothekai', *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Boiotian Antiquities* (Montreal, 1979), 79–82, at 80. On the convention of guest-friendship in Pindar, see Bundy (n. 1), 24–6; W.H. Race, *Pindar* (Boston, 1986), 90–1; T.K. Hubbard, *The Pindaric Mind: A Study of Logical Structure in Early Greek Poetry* (Leiden, 1985), 156–62; and L. Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise* (Ithaca, NY, 1991), 135–59. For a definition of guest-friendship in general, see G. Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge, 1987), 10: 'For analytical purposes ritualised friendship [i.e., *xenia*] is here defined as a bond of solidarity manifesting itself in an exchange of goods and services between individuals originating from separate social units.'

the poet incorporates truth into his relationship to the victor by making *alêtheia/alêthês* part of their reciprocal obligation, thus providing a context for truth within epinician poetry while still alluding to its existence outside of its epinician context. I will subsequently examine *Olympian* 1 to argue that Pindar balances poetry's persuasive artistry with a critical attitude toward falsehood and deception and ultimately equates praise with truth. These observations will culminate in and inform a reading of *Nemean* 7, where Pindar presents a compelling case that this equivalence between truth and praise is a function of the poet's obligation to laud his patron. Pindar claims encomiastic poetry accommodates truthful discourse more readily than other poetic agendas and takes a critical attitude to poets who do not serve this purpose.⁵ His criticism is partly based on an implicit contrast between epinician and other types of poetry, specifically Homer's, which irresponsibly privileges audience reaction over accurate praise.

ALÊTHEIA

LSJ notes that in Homer *alêtheia* is used only in the sense of 'opposite to a lie';⁶ thus, Homeric *alêtheia* has largely to do with spoken utterances.⁷ Although the epic context may indicate a desire for sincerity or authenticity, these senses do not inhere in the word *alêtheia* itself.⁸ Hesiod uses *alêtheia/alêthês* more diversely to characterize speakers as well as their utterances. Post-Homeric uses demonstrate its opposition to mere appearance, hence designating reality or a speaker's tendency to express what he believes (truthfulness or sincerity).⁹ The evolution of *alêtheia* has largely to do with the ambiguity of its etymology: the *lêthê*-root negated by *alêtheia* has been taken to refer either to persons ('forgetfulness') or things ('hiddenness') and therefore has both a subjective and an objective dimension.¹⁰ Whether *alêtheia* negates *λανθάνομαι* ('I forget') or

⁵ Cf. B. Gentili, 'Verità e accordo contrattuale (σύνθεσις) in Pindaro, fr. 205 Sn.-Maehl.', *JCS* 6 (1981), 215–20, at 219. Gentili, apropos of fr. 205, concludes that the poet–patron relationship does not preclude an absolute respect for truth but welcomes silence over unpleasant truths. I would argue more forcefully for Pindar's truthful stance, since he presents epinician as an inherently more truthful genre because of the relationship between poet and patron.

⁶ See W. Luther, *Wahrheit, Licht und Erkenntnis in der griechischen Philosophie bis Demokrit* (Bonn, 1966), 30–40, for more on Homeric truth, particularly its visual aspects.

⁷ Cf. C.G. Starr, 'Ideas of truth in Early Greece', *PP* 23 (1968), 348–59, at 349 and T. Cole, 'Archaic truth', *QUCC* 42 (1983), 7–28, at 9, who observe that *alêtheia/alêthês* in Homer refers to spoken truths. It seems commonplace to think of truth as something spoken: cf. P. Lamarque and S.H. Olsen, *Truth, Fiction, and Literature: A Philosophical Perspective* (Oxford, 1994), 6–8, who note that Aristotle's dictum on truth at *Metaph.* 1011b25–8 ('to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true') similarly implies 'that truth is a property of *sayings* or *something said*' (8). But such a conception of truth, unlike Pindar's, does not take into account unspoken qualities of truth such as trust or reliability.

⁸ Cf. A.W.H. Adkins, 'Truth, κόσμος, and ἀρετή in the Homeric poems', *CQ* 22 (1972), 5–18. Adkins examines Homeric situations of truth-telling and concludes that pleasantness, indicated by phrases like *κατὰ κόσμον*, is a more valued component of truthful speech than *alêtheia* and may even denote truthfulness or veracity. One example Adkins cites is Odysseus' praise of Demodocus' song in *Od.* 8.487–91.

⁹ Cf. B. Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness* (Princeton, 2002), 11, where he identifies Accuracy and Sincerity as 'the two basic virtues of truth ... you do the best you can to acquire true beliefs, and what you say reveals what you believe'.

¹⁰ Cole (n. 7), 7–8, summarizes the argument of B. Snell, 'ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ', *WJA* 1 (1975), 9–17 thus: '... the *lêthê* excluded by *a-lêtheia* is something found in persons rather than things: forgetfulness rather than hiddenness or being forgotten'. By contrast, T. Krischer, 'ΕΤΥΜΟΣ und ΑΛΗΘΗΣ', *Philologus* 109 (1965), 161–74, argues that the perspective of the speaker inheres in ἀληθής,

λανθάνω ('I escape notice') is a subject of much debate, but in some part depends on the type of poetry in which it appears. As D. Cairns has pointed out, *alētheia* usually negates λανθάνω in epinician poetry, where *alētheia* often refers to the persistence of something in memory and its disclosure in 'the immortal poetic tradition'.¹¹

In addition to its complex associations with memory or memorialization, Pindaric *alētheia* (Doric ἀλάθεια) represents a wide range of meaning that is not addressed by Slater's simple definition 'truth'.¹² As Komornicka explains in her extensive word studies,¹³ Pindaric *alētheia* has at least eight main aspects, which include reality and authenticity, and thus encompasses a significantly broader range than in earlier poetry.¹⁴ Unlike his predecessors and contemporaries, Pindar speaks of truth outside of contexts of verbal accuracy and personal disposition; he proposes a reality that is antecedent and external to its verbal accounts¹⁵ and uses the adjective *alēthēs* to convey both accuracy and sincerity,¹⁶ both of which are part and parcel of his epinician purpose. These two applications need not be mutually exclusive since *alēthēs* tends to be used in contexts where Pindar claims to speak the truth, thus suggesting his disposition towards true reportage. For example, when he expresses his hope that his 'true words' will help him evade Boeotian stereotype (ἀρχαῖον ὄνειδος ἀλαθέσιν | λόγοις εἰ φεύγομεν,

which describes an utterance devoid of (the speaker's) forgetting. Cf. M. Detienne, *The Masters of Truth in Ancient Greece*, tr. J. Lloyd (New York, 1996), 64–5; and E. Heitsch, 'Wahrheit als Erinnerung', *Hermes* 91 (1963), 36–52.

¹¹ D. Cairns, *Bacchylides: Five Epinician Odes* (Cambridge, 2010), on 3.96–8 (pp. 214–15). See also Cairns on Bacchyl. 5.187–90 (pp. 245–6), 9.85 (p. 264), and 13.199–209 (pp. 326–7); D. Bremer, *Licht und Dunkel in der frühgriechischen Dichtung* (Bonn, 1976), 161 n. 144; E. Heitsch, 'Die nicht-philosophische ἀλήθεια', *Hermes* 90 (1962), 24–33; and L. Woodbury, 'Truth and the song: Bacchylides 3.96–98', *Phoenix* 23 (1969), 331–5.

¹² W.J. Slater (ed.), *Lexicon to Pindar* (Berlin, 1969), s.v. ἀλάθεια.

¹³ A.M. Komornicka, 'Quelques remarques sur la notion d'ΑΛΑΘΕΙΑ et de ΨΕΥΔΟΣ chez Pindare', *Eos* 60 (1972), 235–53; ead., *Étude sur Pindare et la lyrique archaïque grecque: Termes désignant le vrai et le faux* (Lodz, 1979); and ead., 'Termes déterminant le vrai et le faux chez Pindare', in E.G. Schmidt (ed.), *Aischylos und Pindar: Studien zu Werk und Nachwirkung* (Berlin, 1981), 81–9.

¹⁴ As Komornicka (n. 13 [1979]), 252–3 notes, '1) le réel, 2) l'authentique, 3) l'essentiel ... 4) le vrai dans toute oeuvre poétique qui s'appuie sur l'imitation de la réalité (opposé à fiction pure), 5) le vrai sur le plan moral de la véricité (sincère, véridique, fidèle) par rapport à l'homme, à ses paroles et à ses actes et par rapport à la divinité, 6) le vrai c'est-à-dire ce qui est propre, correct (right, appropriate), 7) le vrai, ce qui est vérifiable, ce qui se laisse prouver par rapport ... 8) le vraisemblable' are all aspects of *alētheia* in Pindar.

¹⁵ e.g. *Ol.* 7.68–9 (τελευταίην δὲ λόγων κορυφαί | ἐν ἀλαθείᾳ πετοῖσα, 'the chief points of the words fell in with truth and were brought to completion') and *Isthm.* 2.9–11 (νῦν δ' ἐφήτη <τὸ> πάργειον φυλάξαι | ῥῆμ' ἀλαθείας <-> ἀγγίστα βαινῶν, 'χρήματα, χρήματ' ἀνήρ' ὅς φά κτεάνων θ' ἄμα λειφθεῖς καὶ φίλων, 'and now she bids us to guard the Argive's saying which comes closest to truth: "Money, money is man", says he who is bereft of both possessions and friends').

¹⁶ Accordingly, the adjective ἀληθής describes both statements (or metaphors for statements) and speakers' dispositions, thus meaning both 'true' and 'truthful'. Pindar applies the adjective once to the herald's shout as a 'true witness' (ἀλαθής τέ μοι | ἔξορκος ἐπέσσειται ἐξηκοντάκι δὴ ἀμφοτέρωθεν | ἀδύγλωσσοσ βοᾷ κάρυκος ἐσλοῦ, 'the sweet-tongued shout of the good herald, indeed heard sixty times from both places, as a true witness under oath will lend weight to me', *Ol.* 13.98–100), which demonstrates the first application of ἀληθής to the accuracy of a report. By contrast, when Pindar describes his mind as ἀληθής (ἀλαθεῖ νόω, *Ol.* 2.92), he applies ἀληθής to his disposition rather than to his report.

My translation of ἐπέσσειται in *Ol.* 13.99 follows Slater (n. 12), s.v. ἐπειμι; alternatively, 'vouches for' in F. Nisetich (tr.), *Pindar's Victory Songs* (Baltimore, 1980), or 'my true witness under oath shall be the noble herald's ...' in W.H. Race (ed. and tr.), *Pindar. Olympian Odes. Pythian Odes. Nemean Odes. Isthmian Odes. Fragments*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1997).

Βοιωτίαν ὄν, ‘if we flee with true words the old reproach “Boeotian pig”’, *Ol.* 6.89–90), he claims both that his words are true and, implicitly, that he is truthful.

While Pindar’s priority is to praise his patron, he nevertheless validates his praise by appropriating truth as something specific to his epinician purpose. When he invokes Olympia in *Olympian* 8, he stresses the importance of truth to his particular task and situates it within a larger obligation:

Μᾶτερ ὦ χρυσοστεφάνων ἀέθλων, Οὐλυμπία,
 δέσποινα ἄλαθείας, ἵνα μάντιες ἄνδρες
 ἐμπύροις τεκμαιρόμενοι παραπειρώνται Διὸς ἀργικεραύνου,
 εἴ τιν’ ἔχει λόγον ἀνθρώπων πέρι
 μαιομένων μεγάλην
 ἀρετὴν θυμῷ λαβεῖν,
 τῶν δὲ μόχθων ἀμνησιάν·
 ἀνεταὶ δὲ πρὸς χάριν εὐσεβίας ἀνδρῶν λιταῖς. (1–8)

O mother of the golden-crowned games, Olympia, *mistress of truth*, where men who are seers examine burnt offerings and test Zeus of the bright thunderbolt, to see if he has any word concerning mortals who are striving in their hearts to gain a great success and respite from their toils; but men’s prayers are fulfilled in return for piety.

The truth sought by seers at Olympia involves the outcome of athletic contests, which will be determined by Zeus.¹⁷ By identifying Olympia as a place of truth and qualifying this truth as concerned with athletic ability, the poet contextualizes *alêtheia* and explains its relevance to his poetry. He introduces the Olympic victory of his *laudandus* as a manifestation of truth, thus aligning the story of the *laudandus* with truth and communicating his devotion to this truth simultaneously. This passage demonstrates how Pindaric *alêtheia* combines objective truth with his subjective obligations, for the term here primarily designates ‘how something actually turns out to be’¹⁸ but also conveys its specific context of athletic competition and Pindar’s praise duties within that context.

TRUTH PERSONIFIED

Such considerations of the athletic, occasional context of Pindar’s poetry and its laudatory aims can help shed light on his more unusual uses of *alêtheia*, particularly in its personified forms in *Olympian* 10 and fragment 205. Personifications of *alêtheia*, which both broadly encompass reality and entail praise and obligation, reveal its multiple applications in epinician poetry.¹⁹ In the two passages where Pindar invokes personified Truth, he declares his dual obligations to accuracy and to his patron. The first passage I will consider is a fragment quoted by Stobaeus:²⁰

¹⁷ Cf. Komornicka (n. 13 [1972]), 238 and Slater (n. 12), s.v. δέσποινα, who posit that Olympia’s epithet stems from the function of Olympic games as the true proof of athletic ability.

¹⁸ See W.H. Race, *Style and Rhetoric in Pindar’s Odes* (Atlanta, 1990), 144: ‘[T]his ἀλάθεια denotes “how something actually turns out to be”, a sense it *always* has in Pindar.’ Cf. Adkins (n. 8), who argues in part that Homeric *alêtheia* is not very different from a modern conception of truth.

¹⁹ In the light of its expression of obligation and reference to ἀρετή, both of which I will discuss later, I will assume that fr. 205 is from an epinician poem. Cf. B. MacLachlan, *The Age of Grace: Charis in Early Greek Poetry* (Princeton, 1993), 101–2, who includes fr. 205 in her discussion of epinician poetry and Gentili (n. 5), whose comparisons between fr. 205 and several of Pindar’s epinician odes suggest a similar assumption.

²⁰ Stob. *Ecl.* 3.11.18 (3.432 Wachsmuth–Henze).

Ἀρχὰ μεγάλας ἀρετᾶς,
 ὄνασσο' Ἀλάθεια, μὴ πταισῆς ἐμάν
 σύνθεσιν τραχεῖ ποτὶ ψεύδει. (fr. 205)

Beginning of great excellence, Queen Truth, do not cause my good faith to stumble against rough falsehood.

By invoking Alatheia, Pindar suggests that this passage has been composed with the aid of, and thus *in obligation to*, divine Truth. He adopts the stance of a truth-teller by expressing reverence for a goddess who embodies truth and will therefore aid his truthfulness.²¹

He explains his choice to invoke Alatheia by claiming that she is the beginning of great achievement, *μεγάλας ἀρετᾶς*, which probably refers to athletic achievement and its subsequent poetic praise or to some mythical event that validates the athletic victory.²² The term *σύνθεσις* presents a problem of clarity and has been variously interpreted 'my good faith',²³ 'pledge',²⁴ and as a reference to the poet's commission for composing a victory ode.²⁵ At least two possible meanings consequently emerge: *σύνθεσις* refers either to the poet's promise to produce an ode or to the ode itself as a particular object of pledge. Alatheia, then, is both a testament to the poet's reliability in keeping his obligations and an assurance that the words of the poem are true, and thus works on two levels, to ensure the composition of the promised poem and to guarantee its veracity.²⁶

Moreover, in requesting protection from Alatheia against falsehood (*ψεύδει*), Pindar ascribes agency to her and emphasizes the power she wields over his *σύνθεσις*. By personifying *alêtheia* in this way, Pindar situates truth as his mistress; she is controlled by neither the poet nor the Muses, unlike in Hesiod, *Theogony* 26–8, where the Muses' caprices determine the veracity of their utterances (*ποιμένεες ἄγραυλοι, κάκ' ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶον, | ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, | ἴδμεν δ' εἴτ' ἐθέλωμεν ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι*). In this inversion of the Hesiodic model, Pindar makes his own poetry distinct in its truth-telling function, a theme that appears in several other odes.²⁷ Attribution of agency to inanimate concepts is well attested in Pindar²⁸ and illuminates the striking degree to which he differs from other poets

²¹ Cf. MacLachlan (n. 19), 101: 'As *alatheia* served the sovereign Olympia in proving/revealing victors (*Ol.* 8.1–2), so the poet serves the queen *Alatheia* in giving an accurate testimony of the victory event.'

²² Lack of context obscures the meaning of the phrase, but similar language in *Ol.* 8.6–7 (*μεγάλαν ἀρετάν*), *Ol.* 11.6 (*πιστὸν ὄρκιον μεγάλας ἀρεταῖς*) and *Nem.* 1.8–9 (*ἀρχαὶ δὲ βέβληνται θεῶν | κείνου σὺν ἀνδρὸς δαίμονιας ἀρεταῖς*) supports what I have proposed above. On *areta* and poetry, see G. Norwood, *Pindar* (Berkeley, 1945), 49: '[Pindar] uses [ἀρετά] both of excellence and of the success won thereby'. Cf. Race (n. 4), 64: '[S]ong needs deeds to celebrate, and success needs song to make the ἀρετά last.'

²³ Slater (n. 12), s.v. *σύνθεσις*.

²⁴ L.R. Farnell, *The Works of Pindar: Translated, with Literary and Critical Commentaries*, Vol. 2 (London, 1932), 452.

²⁵ MacLachlan (n. 19), 101; Gentili (n. 5), 219–20.

²⁶ Pindar is known for his double meanings, particularly in his gnomes. For example, see *Nem.* 10.54, where the gnome (*καὶ μὲν θεῶν πιστὸν γένος, 'and indeed, the race of gods is trusty'*) refers back to Tyndaridae's historically favourable treatment of the victor's family (10.49–54), while also anticipating the theme of loyalty that pervades the rest of the poem.

²⁷ See my discussion of *Olympian* 1 and *Nemean* 7 below.

²⁸ For example, Pindar makes *chronos* the active subject of a verb in *Nem.* 1.46, *Pae.* 2.27, *Ol.* 6.97, *Ol.* 10.8, *Nem.* 4.43, and fr. 159. For further discussion see D.E. Gerber, 'What time can do', *TAPhA* 93 (1962), 30–3; P. Vivante, 'On time in Pindar', *Arethusa* 5 (1972), 107–31; A.M.

previous or contemporary, of whom only Parmenides and Bacchylides also personify *alêtheia*.

In Parmenides *alêtheia* personified appears in a passage in which the speaker has been brought to a goddess who instructs, among other things:

χρεὼ δέ σε πάντα πυθέσθαι
ἤμὲν Ἀληθείης εὐκυκλέος²⁹ ἄτρεμέζ ἦτορ
ἠδὲ βροτῶν δόξας, ταῖς οὐκ ἔνι πίστις ἀληθίης. (fr. 1.28–30)

It is proper that you should learn all things, both *the unshaken heart of well-rounded Truth*, and the opinions of mortals, in which there is no true reliance.

This conception of *alêtheia* shares some similarities with Pindar's. For example, the speaker of Parmenides' poem has been conveyed to this goddess by the daughters of the Sun, who have abandoned their houses of night for the light (1.9–11). Aletheie's associations with light evoke *alatheia* in *Nemean* 7.25, where it is depicted as something visible and appears within an ode that emphasizes oppositions between light and darkness, sight and sound, as I will discuss below.³⁰ The distinction between *alêtheia* and mortal opinion (βροτῶν δόξα) resembles Pindar's opposition between 'the true account' and the utterances of mortals in *Olympian* 1.28 (ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καὶ πού τι καὶ βροτῶν φάτις ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον δεδαδαλμένοι ψεῦδες ποικίλοις ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι), which will be the focus of the next section. Both poets express a distrust of mortal opinion or utterance and claim a preference for *alêtheia*. In the Parmenidean fragment, however, knowledge of both *alêtheia* and *doxa* is prescribed, while Pindar does not assert the necessity of obtaining mortal knowledge.³¹ Furthermore, Aletheie is a passive entity and thus not on the same level as Pindar's Alatheia. Although Aletheie's possession of a heart (ἦτορ) qualifies her as a personification, she, along with *doxa*, is something to be learned, in contrast to the active role Pindar's Alatheia takes. Moreover, the 'unmoved' or 'calm' (ἄτρεμέζ) heart of Parmenides' Aletheie suggests immutability, whereas Pindar's 'true account' in *Olympian* 1.28 is defined in accordance with favourable depiction of the gods (1.35) and thus does not strongly preclude variability.

Komornicka, 'La notion du temps chez Pindare. Divers emplois et aspects du terme χρόνος', *Eos* 64 (1976), 5–15; and A. Tati, 'On the meaning of χρόνος in Pindar's *Nemean* 1.46', *Mnemosyne* 61 (2008), 120–9. For a philosophical approach to time in Pindar, see M. Theunissen, *Pindar. Menschenlos und Wende der Zeit* (Munich, 2000).

²⁹ Following the DK text. Others give εὐπειθέος (G. Jameson, 'Well-rounded truth and circular thought in Parmenides', *Phronesis* 3 [1958], 15–30, at 26; K. Deichgräber, *Parmenides' Auffahrt zur Göttin des Rechts. Untersuchungen zum Prooimion seines Lehrgedichts* [Mainz, 1958], 22; H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums* [Munich, 1962], 402 n. 11), asserting that it is more appropriate to the context and complements ἄτρεμέζ (A.H. Coxon, *The Fragments of Parmenides* [Las Vegas, 2009], 284) or εὐφειγγέος (Proclus). Those who prefer εὐκυκλέος cite *lectio difficilior*, argue that Simplicius' text is the best source for Parmenides (L. Tarán, *Parmenides. A Text with Translation, Commentary, and Critical Essays* [Princeton, 1965], 16) and observe that 'the image of roundedness has a rich precedent in the Zoroastrian concept of Truth as associated with roundedness, radiance, and consuming fire' (M.J. Henn, *Parmenides of Elea. A Verse Translation with Interpretive Essays and Commentary to the Text* [Westport, 2003], 118).

³⁰ For the visual aspect of Parmenidean *alêtheiê*, see M. Heidegger, *Parmenides*, tr. A. Schuwer and R. Rojcewicz (Bloomington, 1992), 10–16. See also Luther (n. 6), 90–5.

³¹ For further discussion of δόξα in Parmenides, see D. Papadis, 'The concept of truth in Parmenides', *RPhA* 23 (2005), 77–96.

In Bacchylides Alatheia appears as a more active personification than in Parmenides:

Ἀλάθεια θεῶν ὁμόπολις
μόνα θεοῖς συνδιαιωμένα. (fr. 57)

Truth alone, inhabiting the same city as the gods

ἀ δ' ἀλαθεία φιλεῖ
νικᾶν. (13.204–5)

The truth loves to be victorious.

In the first example Alatheia critically differs from Pindar's Truth in that she is merely associated with the gods but is not one of them, and she does not demonstrate the capacity for agency that we see in Pindar, fragment 205. Moreover, even without the full context it is clear that Alatheia in the Bacchylides fragment lacks the degree of *syn-tactical* proximity to poetry or poetic obligation that is present in the Pindaric fragment. In the second example, the degree to which Alatheia is even personified is in question; in Bacchylidean contexts, *alêtheia* here as elsewhere (see, for example, 3.96, 5.187–90, 8.19–21, 9.85–7) represents a primarily rhetorical and encomiastic truth designating praise and commemoration of a victory and does not hint at the broader claims of veracity that Pindaric *alêtheia* often does. The link between praise and truth, the very epic nature of *alêtheia*, is very clear in Bacchylides. As Burnett notes,

Praise gave the kind of conspicuousness that kept a thing from being hidden; praise showed that a deed was unforgotten and belonged to the company of unforgotten events that filled the memory of man, and so it proved that a thing was 'true' where truth meant consecration by memory.³²

Burnett even goes so far as to translate *alêtheia* in 13.204 as 'remembering praise'.³³ Pindar's Alatheia, by contrast, not only designates the praise of the poet, she also represents a prominent, defining feature of the contractual relationship between the poet and his *laudandus* and exerts control over the content of his poem.

While interpretation of fragment 205 is hindered by its fragmentary nature, the other Pindaric personification of *alêtheia* appears in a complete ode and confirms what fragment 205 suggests:

Τὸν Ὀλυμπιονίκαν ἀνάγνωτέ μοι
Ἀρχεστράτου παῖδα, πόθι φρενός
ἐμάς γέγραπται· γλυκὺ γὰρ αὐτῷ μέλος ὀφείλων ἐπιλέλαθ'· ὦ Μοῖσ',
ἀλλὰ σὺ καὶ θυγάτηρ
Ἀλάθεια Διός, ὀρθῶ χερὶ
ἐρύκετον ψευδέων
ἐνιπᾶν ἀλιτόξενον. (Olympian 10.1–6)

Read me³⁴ the name of the Olympic victor, the son of Arcestratus, where it has been written in my mind, for owing him a sweet song, I have forgotten. O Muse, you and the daughter of Zeus,

³² A.P. Burnett, *The Art of Bacchylides* (Cambridge, MA, 1985), 44.

³³ Burnett (n. 32), 89.

³⁴ On ἀνάγνωτε, see G. Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore, 1990), 171: '... the image of reading out loud can even serve as the metaphor for the composition itself. Moreover, the image of writing here conveys the fixity of the composition in the mind of the composer'; W.J. Verdenius (ed.), *Commentaries on Pindar. Volume 2, Olympian Odes 1, 10,*

Truth, with a correcting hand ward off from me the charge that I harm a guest-friend with broken promises.

Just as in fragment 205, the poet invokes divine Truth and gives her the dual function of presiding over his obligation to the victor and ensuring the accuracy of his words, as indicated by the juxtaposition of truth and falsehood (ψευδέων, 5). He expresses his regret for neglecting his duties to the victor Hagesidamus and invokes the Muse and Alatheia to rectify his mistakes.³⁵ As Kromer observes,

by helping him to compose the song, [the Muse and Alatheia] will bring about the realization of the action prescribed by the contract. If the poet keeps his promise he will be freed from 'the reproach of lying', for his pledge will be seen in retrospect to have predicted a real event. It will become 'true'.³⁶

The 'real event' to which Kromer refers is, of course, the composition of the present ode, which validates the poet's as yet unfulfilled promise of one.

The wordplay between ἐπιέλαθ' and Ἀλάθεια brings out the opposition between truth and forgetfulness, but a number of additional oppositions further define *alêtheia* and preclude a simple equation between truth and memory.³⁷ The poet also requests the Muse and Alatheia to vindicate him from charges of violating a guest-friendship³⁸ and presents an opposition between Alatheia and lies (ψευδέων, that is, promises that he does not keep³⁹) as a contrast between fulfilled oaths and empty assurances, thereby underscoring the connection between truth and obligation in his poetry. This concern about *xenia* situates the ode in the world of epinician poetry, where poet and patron have a relationship of obligatory yet willing reciprocity, and the poet's use of the Muse and Alatheia to ensure and validate this relationship is unprecedented. Alatheia's placement in an interpersonal relationship of any sort is an innovation that has only one precedent, in Mimnermus (ἀληθειη δὲ παρέστω | σοὶ καὶ ἐμοί, πάντων χρῆμα δικαιοτάτων, 'let the truth be present between you and me, the most just possession of all', fr. 8.1–2). Her connection to *xenia* helps shed light on the designation

11, *Nemean 11, Isthmian 2* (Leiden, 1988), 55, who collects the various scholarly conjectures about the addressee of ἀνάγκωρε, concluding that 'the imperative is used "absolutely" and has rhetorical force'; Hubbard (n. 4), 67, who says the imperative is addressed to the audience; and G. Kromer, 'The value of time in Pindar's *Olympian 10*', *Hermes* 104 (1976), 420–36, at 423, who speculates that the addressees are 'someone else'.

³⁵ Lines 1–3 are usually taken as a reference to the poet's composition of *Olympians* 1, 2 and 3.

³⁶ Kromer (n. 34), 422.

³⁷ Cf. Pratt (n. 2), 119: 'Here Pindar clearly plays on a notion of *alêtheia* as a kind of forgetting. But this passage does not make truth synonymous with memory, for Pindar also opposes lies (*pseudea*) to truth here.'

³⁸ Furthermore, the Muse more than Alatheia is an aid to memory. Cf. the Muse's role in other odes as the daughter of Mnemosyne (*Isthm.* 6.74–5) who 'loves to remind' (*Nem.* 1.12; cf. *Pae.* 14.35).

For the respective roles of the Muse and Alatheia, see B.L. Gildersleeve (ed.), *Pindar. The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (New York, 1885), 214: 'Memory is to find the place and Truth is to discharge the debt'; P.J. Nassen, 'A literary study of Pindar's *Olympian 10*', *TAPhA* 105 (1975), 219–40, at 223: 'While he invokes the Muse for inspiration, he will rely on Truth, who is the daughter of mighty Zeus, for endorsement of the claims which he is about to make regarding the victor and his city'; Verdenius (n. 34), 56: 'The help of the Muse sufficiently guarantees the poet's truthfulness ... but in the present case, where sincerity of his promise to the victor might be doubted, the assistance of *Alêtheia* provides extra security.'

For truth and memory in praise poetry, see Detienne (n. 10), 47–9.

³⁹ The *pseudea* here are usually taken to refer to promises (i.e. by the poet to produce an ode) that, when broken, have the appearance of falsehood. See Gildersleeve (n. 38), 214; Kromer (n. 34), 422; and Pratt (n. 2), 119–20.

‘daughter of Zeus’ (θυγάτηρ Ἀλάθεια Διός, *Ol.* 10.3–4) since Zeus is the patron god of the guest-host relationship.

By constructing Truth as a goddess that governs his poetic obligation as well as his accuracy, Pindar depicts himself as beholden to the truth while also maintaining his obligation to praise. He is further able to reconcile the two potentially opposing obligations to truth and praise by combining the rhetoric of contractual duties (ὀφείλων, 3; ἀλιτόξενον, 6; χρέος, 8, τόκος, 9), with the language of ungrudging friendship, even using the term *charis* (φίλαν ... ἐς χάριν, 12), which Leslie Kurke asserts ‘designates a *willing* and precious reciprocal exchange’ (emphasis mine).⁴⁰ The emphasis on willingness in relationships of obligation recurs when Pindar reminds Hagesidamus to give thanks to his trainer (χάριν, 17), just as Patroclus did to Achilles.⁴¹ By asking Alatheia in particular to guide this friendship, Pindar infuses loyalty into his relationship with his patron while authenticating the content of his ode.⁴²

The embedded myth of Heracles and Augeas presents a corruption of this relationship and shows the importance of Alatheia’s governance of *xenia*. By withholding payment from Heracles (λάτριον ... μισθόν, 29), Augeas undermines the guest-host relationship through deception (ξενπατάς, 34); these characterizations recall the monetary language the poet uses of his relationship to his patron (τόκος, 9), the earlier charge of harming a guest-friend (ἀλιτόξενον, 6), and the invocation to Truth to remedy his lapses. As Detienne notes, Pindar’s poetic contemporaries were beginning to make a conscious choice between *alētheia* and *apatē*,⁴³ a choice that is reflected in the contrasting depictions of Augeas and the poet: the former cheats his guest-friend, while the latter balks at charges of doing so. Like the poet and his patron, Heracles and Augeas are *xenoi* whose relationship is premised on payment in good faith and suffers in the absence thereof.

Pindar continues to reinforce this model of guest-friendship by faulting Augeas not only for failing to pay but also for his *unwillingness* to do so, in stark contrast to Heracles’ willingness to perform the task: ὡς Αὐγέα λάτριον | ἄεκονθ’ ἐκὼν μισθὸν ὑπέρβιον | πρόσσοιτο (‘so that [Heracles], a *willing* man, might exact his payment for service from Augeas, *unwilling* and *powerful*’, 28–30). This sentiment again recalls the spirit of willingness with which Pindar has defined his own relationship with his patron (φίλαν ... ἐς χάριν, 12). The adjective ὑπέρβιον, here describing Augeas, echoes an earlier characterization of Heracles (τράπε δὲ Κύκνεια Μάχα καὶ ὑπέρβιον Ἡρακλέα, ‘the battle with Kyknos turned back even *powerful* Heracles’, 15) and emphasizes the symmetry of the guest–host relationship while further indicting

⁴⁰ Kurke (n. 4), 67. For a discussion of epicinian *charis*, see MacLachlan (n. 19), 87–123, where she discusses *charis* in epicinian poetry as the gratification of the victor.

⁴¹ Cf. N. Nicholson, ‘The truth of pederasty: a supplement to Foucault’s genealogy of the relation between truth and desire in Ancient Greece’, *Intertexts* 2.1 (1998), 26–45, at 28, who similarly notes the personal tone of Pindar’s truth-telling rhetoric, focussing on the pederastic imagery of the odes: ‘... any suggestion ... that this truth is the production of a disinterested eyewitness is belied by the strongly pederastic flavor of Pindar’s epicinian poetry ... [In *Ol.* 10.99–105] Pindar’s testimony is, as Pratt observes, validated by his status as an eyewitness (*eidon*, ‘I saw’), but this is not the testimony of a dispassionate observer. Far from being the truth of a modern court, Pindar’s truth is implicated in his adoption of a pederastic persona.’

⁴² Cf. Adkins (n. 8), 17, on truth-telling in Homer: ‘Truth-telling – the telling of desired, useful truths, at all events – is to be expected only from φίλοι, those who are for one reason or another within the same co-operative group; and even there it is only to be told when ἀρετή and status-considerations do not forbid it.’

⁴³ Detienne (n. 10), 107–34.

Augeas for his mistreatment of an equal.⁴⁴ Likewise, the wordplay in ἀέκονθ' ἐκόν underscores the expected parity and the actual disparity between Heracles' and Augeas' dispositions by adapting instances of polyptoton that emphasize reciprocity (for example, φιλέων φιλέοντ', ἄγων ἄγοντα προφρῶνως, *Pyth.* 10.66; οἴκοθεν οἴκαδε, *Ol.* 7.4). The evocation of such phrases elucidates both the symmetrical reciprocity expected of a guest and host and the failure of Augeas to fulfill this expectation. Augeas is the archetypal corrupted guest-friend who is unwilling to keep promises to a friend of equal stature and whom Pindar hopes not to emulate.

Through Augeas Pindar illustrates a broader commitment to *xenia*, the obligations of which are not only between guest and host but also, and more importantly, to the gods who govern this system of hospitality. It is in this respect that Pindar further connects the mythical digression to the invocation to Alatheia. Augeas' disregard of *xenia* results in the destruction of his homeland and his death at the hands of Heracles (*Ol.* 10.34–42), who later establishes a precinct for Zeus in Augeas' former kingdom (43–5). The establishment of this sacred precinct is the ultimate response to Augeas' guest-cheating and signals the triumph not only of his cheated guest Heracles, but also of Zeus, the god whom Augeas offends and whose role as overseer of *xenia* has been established since the initial invocation to his daughter Alatheia.

Likewise, while the poet's duties are ostensibly to his patron first and foremost, his invocation to Truth implies an obligation partly to her, thus opening the possibility of obligations other than those to the *laudandus*.⁴⁵ Later in the ode he names Zeus as his motivation for singing: ἀγῶνα δ' ἐξάριετον ἀεῖσαι θέμιτες ὄρσαν Διός ('The ordinances of Zeus prompt me to sing the choice contest', 24).⁴⁶ His obligation to his patron is set by divine rule (θέμιτες) governed by Zeus himself and is therefore part of a duty larger than the reciprocity between poet and *laudandus*, since failure to uphold this obligation is tantamount to defiance of Zeus. This structure of obligation reinforces the opening of the ode, where Pindar calls on Alatheia as Zeus' daughter to oversee his poetic and personal responsibilities. Alatheia presides over the poet's many interconnected obligations, to the victor and to Zeus, while validating the content of his ode. By showing the interconnectedness between truth, praise and obligation that drives epinician poetry, fragment 205 and *Olympian* 10 highlight the delicate balance between the dual obligations to praise and to truth that Pindar maintains. His personification of truth as the overseer of his duties creates a poetic framework in which he can fulfill

⁴⁴ Note also that ὑπέρβιος appears in the odes only in *Ol.* 10.

⁴⁵ Cf. MacLachlan (n. 19), 101, who senses a similar servile tone toward Alatheia in fr. 205: 'As *alatheia* served the sovereign Olympia in proving/revealing victors (*Ol.* 8.1–2), so the poet serves the queen Alatheia in giving an accurate testimony of the victory event.'

⁴⁶ *Ol.* 8.21–30 lays out the specific relationships between Zeus, *xenia*, and *themis*: ἐνθα σότερα | Διός ξενίου | πάρεδρος ἀσκειται Θέμις | ἐξοχ' ἀνθρώπων. ὅ τι γὰρ πολὺ καὶ πολλὰ ῥέπη, | ὄρθῳ διακρίναι φρενὶ μὴ παρὰ καιρὸν | δυσπαλές· τεθμός δέ τις ἀθανάτων καὶ τάνδ' ἄλιερκέα χάραν | παντοδαποῖσιν ὑπέστασε ξένοισι | κίονα δαιμονίαν – | ὁ δ' ἐπαντέλλων χρόνος | τοῦτο πρᾶσσω μὴ κάμοι – | Δωριεὶ λαῶ ταμειομένην ἐξ Αἰακοῦ ('[Aegina,] where Saviour Themis, the partner of Zeus Xenios is honoured more than among other men. For when much swings in the balance in many directions, it is difficult to judge appropriately with a straight mind. Some ordinance of the gods set even this sea-girt land beneath strangers of all kinds as a divine pillar – and may time as it rises up not weary of doing this – a land kept in trust for the Dorian people from the time of Aeacus'). Themis personified is the associate of Zeus Xenios. These lines highlight the duality of *xenia* as a system instituted by gods for men, whose careful observation of *xenia*-relationships constitutes service to the gods Themis and Zeus.

his duty to produce a praise poem while precluding any charges of bias towards his patron, thus presenting a true account.

TRUTH AND PRAISE: *OLYMPIAN* 1

In *Olympian* 1 Pindar presents a further argument that truth and praise are not only complementary but even analogous to one another by depicting truth in parallel with piety. Both praise and piety present the poet with potentially conflicting obligations that he must negotiate: Pindar must avoid offending the gods or losing the goodwill of his patron, yet his poem will be ineffective and unbelievable if it appears to worship or praise blindly without adhering to the truth. In this ode he uses *alētheia* in myth to inform his praise of his patron. He employs the myth of Tantalus and Pelops to make a case for piety and truth working in tandem, which in turn has implications for the outer praise narrative. He denies the traditional account of Tantalus slaughtering Pelops and feeding him to the gods and instead avers that Pelops was abducted by a besotted Poseidon. Pindar claims that the traditional myth has been shaped by the mortal tendency to believe what is pleasant:

ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καὶ πού τι καὶ βροτῶν φάτις ὑπὲρ
 τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον
 δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεῦδεσι ποικίλοις ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι·
 Χάρις δ', ἅπερ ἅπαντα τεύχει τὰ μείλιχα θνατοῖς,
 ἐπιφέρουσα τιμὰν καὶ ἄπιστον ἐμήσατο πιστὸν
 ἔμμεναι τὸ πολλάκις·
 ἄμέρα δ' ἐπίλοιποι
 μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι.

(*Olympian* 1.28–34)

Indeed, there are many wonders, and somehow the speeches of mortals, stories, have been embellished *beyond the true account* and *deceive with intricate falsities*; for Charis, who provides mortals with all pleasant things, often renders the incredible credible by bringing honour. But days to come are the wisest witnesses.

The contrast here between various mortal communications and the ‘true account’ is underscored by the plurality of falsehoods as opposed to the singularity of truth. These falsehoods are not necessarily intentional so much as accidental, resulting from the overuse of elaborate embellishment (δεδαιδαλμένοι, 29), which has the potential to be misperceived.⁴⁷ The credibility of such exaggerations lies in the power of Charis, which here represents poetry’s charms.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ I should note that Pindar attributes the false Pelops myth to two distinct parties: here he faults his poetic predecessors for embellishment to the point of falsehood, which I argue is not necessarily intentional; later, however, Pindar does charge intentional falsehood, but this time on the part of Pelops’ envious neighbours (46–51).

⁴⁸ Cf. Gildersleeve (n. 38), 132 *ad* 30: ‘Χάρις: the charm of poetry’; G. Kirkwood (ed.), *Selections from Pindar. Edited with an Introduction and Commentary* (Chico, 1982), 52: ‘Here the context indicates that χάρις is specifically the charm of song, as it often is in Pindar’; S. Instone (ed.), *Selected Odes: Olympian One, Pythian Nine, Nemean Two and Three, Isthmian One* (Warminster, 1996), 101 *ad* 30: ‘The charm or grace that makes poetry sweet’; Verdenius (n. 34), 20 *ad* 30: ‘Χάρις: “charm” is an indispensable but ambivalent element in poetry.’ Kurke’s assertion that *charis* always designates a willing, reciprocal exchange complements this particular instance of *charis*: its charms are part of a poem’s gift to its subject and its audience (n. 4, 67). Cf. Nagy (n. 34), 198, who describes *charis* as ‘a beautiful and pleasurable reciprocity that is simultaneously material and transcendent in nature’.

These lines present a problem since they criticize falsehood while also praising poetic skill, which is a potential catalyst for falsehood. Pindar does not lay blame squarely on any particular party for creating falsehood, instead presenting *pseudos* as a faulty perception rather than an intentional lie. He describes falsehood as a misapprehension that can be attributed as much to an audience's willingness to believe as to a poet's desire to deceive, and presents a general explanation of human credulity, focussing on both the generation and perception of falsities.⁴⁹ As Gerber notes, 'Even though Pindar is critical of the false tales recorded by earlier poets, he is at the same time praising the power of poetry to make "the unbelievable believable"'.⁵⁰ Indeed, Pindar provides little explicit assurance that his own poetry does not also espouse persuasion and artistry at the expense of truth, and some have interpreted these lines as taking a playful, even non-committal attitude to the truth. But he assures us implicitly that his poetry fundamentally differs from that of others; by stressing the singularity of the true account with the definite article τόν (28), he communicates his ability to discern what is true from what is false. Furthermore, his explanation of how poetry elicits belief demonstrates an intricate awareness both of poetry's rhetorical powers and his intention not to capitalize on them for untruthful ends.

The next sentence provides further suggestions about Pindar's perceived role: ἔστι δ' ἄνδρῳ φάμεν ἑοικὸς ἀμφὶ δαμνόνων καλὰ μείων γὰρ αἰτία ('It is fitting for a man to say good things about the gods, for the blame is less', 35). His rather blunt statement of his motivations seems to conflict with his earlier reverence for truth, yet both concerns govern his poetry and are connected by the interceding aphorism about the revelatory effects of time (ἀμέρα δ' ἐπίλοιποι | μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι, 33–4). The conjoining of these two concerns has a number of implications, the foremost of which is that a true account is ultimately controlled by the gods it portrays, since Pindar expresses the dual concerns of providing a true account while simultaneously pleasing the gods. Line 35 has been interpreted as Pindar's unwillingness to privilege truth-telling above piety,⁵¹ but his criticism of inaccuracy in other poetry makes it unlikely that he would risk such a criticism of his own. Rather, he asserts that his own account is both true and pious, thus implying that truth coincides with what is appropriate to say about the gods.⁵² Pindar thus allows for embellishment of a myth whose particulars matter less than that the depiction generally favours the gods.⁵³ His subsequent rejection

⁴⁹ As many scholars have argued, *pseudos* can refer to fiction in the sense of an authorial creation that seems feasible but is known not to have happened. The extent to which the concept of fiction existed during this period is a matter of some debate. For further discussion see M. Finkelberg, *The Birth of Literary Fiction in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 1998); C. Gill and T.P. Wiseman (edd.), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* (Exeter, 1993); D. Konstan, 'The invention of fiction', in R. F. Hock, J.B. Chance and J. Perkins (edd.), *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative* (Atlanta, 1998), 3–17; N.J. Lowe, 'Comic plots and the invention of fiction', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (edd.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes: Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (London, 2000), 259–72; and W. Rösler, 'Entdeckung der Fiktionalität in der Antike', *Poetica* 12 (1980), 283–319. On these lines in particular, see G.M. Ledbetter, *Poetics before Plato* (Princeton, 2003), 68–70, who argues that 'Pindar decidedly lacks any notion of poetic fiction' (69).

⁵⁰ D.E. Gerber (ed.), *Pindar's Olympian One: A Commentary* (Toronto, 1982), 59. Cf. Pratt (n. 2), 124.

⁵¹ Pratt (n. 2), 126: 'Here again Pindar does not justify his refusal to speak ill of the gods by appealing to the truth or to what the gods deserve.'

⁵² Cf. Ledbetter (n. 49), 70: 'in the divine realm, what is morally appropriate coincides with what is true'.

⁵³ Such a definition, of course, may not satisfy a modern sensibility of truth, which, at a minimum should be '(1) independent of belief; (2) immutable; and (3) public' (L. Kleiman and S. Lewis,

of slander is superficially motivated by self-interest (ἐμοὶ δ' ἄπορα γαστρίμαργον μακάρων τιν' εἰπεῖν· ἀφίσταμαι | ἀκέρδεια λέλογγεν θαμινὰ κακαγόρους, 'It is useless for me to say one of the blessed gods is gluttonous – I stand aloof. Lack of gain is often allotted to slanderers', 52–3), but this statement must be read in the light of this earlier passage that conjoins truth and praise, thus precluding possible tension between the two.⁵⁴

This construction of truth and piety lends credibility to the poet's praise of the *laudandus*, since he establishes that his concerns about blame (35) or poverty (53) are not the sole motivations for his poetry; rather, such concerns keep his poetry in line with truth, at least as he has defined it. This definition may not be altogether believable or satisfactory to modern readers,⁵⁵ but it is one that allows for poetic obligation to coincide with truthful reporting. These juxtaposed claims of truth and piety have implications for Pindar's similar declaration of loyalty to his *laudandus* Hieron, since they suggest that loyalty to one's subject provides a basis for a true account. The poet's admonishments about Charis, ψεῦδος and embellishment reflect a consciousness of poetry's persuasiveness and assure us that his poem will not employ them to the same effect. He is consequently able to characterize his own ode as an embellishment of Hieron's qualities with no loss of credibility:

ἐμέ δὲ στεφανῶσαι
 κείνον ἰπίῳ νόμῳ
 Αἰολῆϊδι μολπῆ
 χρῆ· πέποιθα δὲ ξένον
 μὴ τιν' ἄμφοτέρα καλῶν τε ἴδριν ἅμα καὶ δύναμιν κυριώτερον
 τῶν γε νῦν κλυταῖσι δαίδαλωσέμεν ὕμνων πτυχαῖς. (100–5)

I must crown that man with a horse-tune in Aeolic song. I trust that there is no host alive today to embellish with glorious folds of songs who is both acquainted with good things and more authoritative in power.

The language recalls his characterization of deceptive stories (δεδαίδαλμένοι, 28), but his poetry fundamentally differs in that it is informed by poetry's powers and its aims. Because he is mindful of *charis* and its effects and he composes poetry with a concern

Philosophy: An Introduction Through Literature [St. Paul, 1992], 92). Pindar's account, particularly juxtaposed against his expressed fears of retribution, does not draw authority from any source other than his own belief, nor is it publicly acknowledged as truth.

Pindar's assertions in *Olympian* 1, however, arguably conform to the second criterion. A statement that is true only for a particular context can be considered immutable, if it is stipulated that the statement must be understood within its context. Thus, however much wiggle room Pindar allows himself to change his account elsewhere, its iteration here is considered immutably true for the context in which it appears.

⁵⁴ Pratt (n. 2), 126–7 cites this passage as well as *Ol.* 9.35–41 and *Nem.* 5.14–17 as further evidence that Pindar values tact and appropriateness above truth. At *Ol.* 9.35–41 Pindar asserts that to slander the gods is hateful and inappropriate (*παρὰ καρὸν*, *Ol.* 9.38), which I would argue reinforces my interpretation of *Ol.* 1.28–35: Pindar construes piety and truth-telling as complementary and uses the language of tact (*εὐικός, καρὸς*) to bridge the potential gap between the two. As for *Nem.* 5.14–17, where Pindar ostensibly shies from telling the 'exact truth' (*ἀλάθει* 'ἀτρεκής', *Nem.* 5.17) about Peleus and Telamon's murder of Phocus, his allusions to this deed are sufficiently clear to recall the story without providing full narration; thus, in this passage too the poet makes a show of tactfulness while still communicating discomforting truths.

⁵⁵ Indeed, Pratt discusses the problems of Pindar's claims in *Ol.* 1 and argues, along with Gerber (n. 50), 59–60, that Pindar's praise of poetry's power to persuade, albeit by deception (1.28–32) suggests that his own poetry could be persuasive but untrue. I interpret the passage differently, as I do not think that Pindar questions the accuracy of his own poetry but rather that he creates a context in which truth and praise can coexist.

for his patrons, Pindar is safe from the *pseudea* that riddle other accounts. Whereas false accounts are created and propagated by those who are not similarly conscious of poetry's effects nor loyal to their subject, Pindar openly expresses his obligations to his patron Hieron (χρή, 103; ξένον, 103) just as he has to the gods (ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὶ φάμεν εὐκοδὸς ἀμφὶ δαμόνων καλά· μείων γὰρ αἰτία, 35), obligations that will keep his poetry grounded and centred on its epinician purpose rather than distracted by aesthetic concerns.

Olympian 1 gives us insight into the character of *alêtheia* in epinician poetry and how the genre fashions a distinctive means for representing the truth. I have argued that *alêtheia* informs the poet's duty to his subject matter and that his statements about poetry intertwine truth with obligation and reconcile – indeed, even equate – the two. *Olympian* 1 presents a Pindaric notion of truthfulness that balances external reality – that is, an empirically verifiable circumstance or event – with internal, subjective concerns by claiming that a true account must take into consideration one's obligation to one's subject. In his praise Pindar combines the two aspects of epinician truth-telling, reality and obligation, thus lending authority to his praise poetry, for he declares his devotion to the patron while mitigating his bias, incorporating both devotion and objectivity in his poetic programme.

REALITY AND POETRY: NEMEAN 7

While *Olympian* 1 posits truth and praise as complementary and in some way even equivalent concepts, *Nemean* 7 presents a similar relationship between truth and praise by expressing the duty of all poetry to represent reality and proposing epinician as the genre best suited to this purpose. As in the previously discussed poems, *alêtheia* in *Nemean* 7 designates events and the poet's duty to relay them. The poet avoids ostensible bias and validates his truth-telling claims partly by couching his obligation to the victor within a greater one to represent the truth. The poet makes numerous claims to truth (68–9, 77–9), all the while openly expressing his own role as helper to the *laudandus* (33–4, 61, 75–6). He is able to reconcile his obligation to the victor with his truth-telling rhetoric by making the case that the poet's obligation to the *laudandus* coincides with the obligation to truth that should inform all poetry.

Nemean 7 begins with an invocation to Eleithyia as the goddess who enables human existence, which is described in terms of light and darkness (ἄνευ σέθεν | οὐ φάος, οὐ μέλαιναν δρακέντες εὐφρόναν | τεὰν ἀδελφεὰν ἐλάχομεν ἀγλαόγυιον Ἥβαν, 'without you, we do not look upon light nor black night, nor do we gain the lot of your beautiful-limbed sister Hebe', 2–4).⁵⁶ The language of vision proves to be pervasive in the poem and anticipates what the poet will say about the effect and duties of poetry in relation to truth. For example, the poet later describes poetry as an illuminative phenomenon:

εἰ δὲ τύχη τις ἔρδων, μελίφρον' αἰτίαν
 ῥοοῖσι Μοισᾶν ἐνέβαλε· ταὶ μεγάλαι γὰρ ἄλκαι

⁵⁶ See D.C. Young, 'Pindar *Nemean* 7: some preliminary remarks (vv. 1–20)', *TAPhA* 101 (1970), 633–43, for the function of Eleithyia in *Nemean* 7. Young argues that the opening of this ode is a typically Pindaric type whereby the poet introduces a universal human experience before moving to the specific case of the *laudandus*.

σκότον πολὺν ὕμνων ἔχοντι δεόμεναι·
 ἔργοις δὲ καλοῖς ἔσοπτρον ἴσαμεν ἐνὶ σὺν τρόπῳ,
 εἰ Μναμοσύνας ἕκατι λιπαράμπυκος
 εὔρηται {τις} ἄποινα μόχθων κλυταῖς ἐπέων ἀοιδαῖς. (11–16)

If someone happens to do well, he throws a honey-minded cause into the streams of the Muses, for great deeds of courage have much darkness when they lack songs. We know of a mirror for good deeds in one way, if someone finds recompense for toils in the famous songs of poetry because of Mnemosyne with her bright headband.

The alignment of poetry with light and its absence with darkness is reminiscent of the associations between light and truth in Parmenides and hints at the statements about truth and memory that will appear later in the poem. The images of light and darkness, initially designating day and night, recur as metaphors for knowledge and the lack thereof.

As Pindar delineates familiar relationships between poetry, accomplishment and memory, he describes how athletic accomplishment relies on poetry for its glorification.⁵⁷ As recompense afforded to accomplished athletes (ἄποινα, 16), poetry is an act not only of memorialization but also of obligation,⁵⁸ without which notable deeds effectively cease to exist. This idea of poetry as memory recalls *alêtheia*'s etymology and points up the poet's duty to the *laudandus*. The opening lines describe the universality of birth and existence, which poetry then has the pivotal role of memorializing through accurate representation. When Pindar later describes blame as dark (σκοτεινόν, 61), he recalls this obfuscation that poetry ought to prevent. The invocation to Eleithyia and the image of a mirror point to two distinct but intertwined truths about poetry, that it is at once an act of creation by the poet and an obligatory act of reflection on a deed already performed.

As both something new and a representation of something old, poetry must balance its novelty with its accuracy. This sentiment is echoed in *Nemean* 8:

πολλὰ γὰρ πολλῶ λέλεκται, νεαρὰ δ' ἐξευρόντα δόμεν βασάνῳ
 ἐς ἔλεγχον, ἅπας κίνδυνος· ὄψον δὲ λόγοι φθονεροῖσιν,
 ἀπειται δ' ἐσλῶν ἀεὶ, χειρόνεσσι δ' οὐκ ἐρίζει. (20–2)

For many things have been said in many ways, and discovering new things to put to the touchstone for testing is wholly dangerous, since words are relish to the envious, and envy always grabs hold of good men, but does not contend with lesser men.

Here the poet employs the metaphor of the touchstone, which implies that his praise is verifiable.⁵⁹ He presents accurate reporting in terms of risk rather than obligation and underscores the laudability of the victor by suggesting that his susceptibility to attack by envious people marks his membership among the good (ἐσλῶν, 22). Pindar thus constructs a situation in which praise and truthful rhetoric are synonymous, for if envy comes only to men who are *esloi*, the attacks of envy are actually proof of a man's laudability.

⁵⁷ Many scholars discuss the relationship between poetry and memory, e.g. Bundy (n. 1); Kurke (n. 4); Detienne (n. 10), 48–9; and Pratt (n. 2), 115–29.

⁵⁸ On ἄποινα, see Kurke (n. 4), 108–34 and M.I. Finley, *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece* (New York, 1981), 241.

⁵⁹ For a discussion of the touchstone metaphor in Greek literature, see P. duBois, *Torture and Truth* (New York, 1991), 9–34.

This dual conception of poetry as both creative and reflective medium⁶⁰ lies at the heart of Pindar's subsequent criticism of Homer, whose inflation of Odysseus' heroism is deemed deceitful and noxious:

ἐγὼ δὲ πλέον' ἔλπομαι
 λόγον Ὀδυσσεός ἢ πάθαν διὰ τὸν ἄδυεπῆ γενέσθ' Ὀμηρον·
 ἐπεὶ ψεύδεσσι οἱ ποτανῶ <τε> μαχανῶ
 σεμνὸν ἔπεστί τι· σοφία δὲ κλέπτει παράγοισα μύθοις, τυφλὸν δ' ἔχει
 ἦτορ ὄμιλος ἀνδρῶν ὁ πλείστος, εἰ γὰρ ἦν
 ἔ τὰν ἀλάθειαν ἰδέμεν, οὐ κεν ὄπλων χολωθεῖς
 ὁ καρτερὸς Αἴας ἔπαξε διὰ φρενῶν
 λευρὸν ξίφος.

(Nemean 7.20–7)

I expect that Odysseus' story has become greater than his experience on account of sweet-talking Homer, since something majestic lies upon his falsehoods and his soaring resourcefulness. Skill deceives, misleading with stories. The majority of men have a blind heart, for if they had been able to see the truth, mighty Ajax, angered over the arms, would not have fixed a smooth sword through his heart.

Homer has not failed in the creative aspect of poetry, as his skill with words is demonstrable and laudable (ἀδυεπῆ, 21; ποτανῶ τε μαχανῶ, 22; σεμνόν, 23),⁶¹ but the aesthetic quality of his poetry distracts the audience from the truth and thus fails in its reflective duty by presenting Odysseus in a manner disproportionate to his experiences (πλέον' ... λόγον Ὀδυσσεός ἢ πάθαν, 21). Pindar's praise of Homer's creativity in terms of speech (λόγον, ἀδυεπῆ, 21) contrasts with the visual language surrounding Ajax (τυφλόν, 23; ἰδέμεν, 25) and points up the disparity between the verbal account and truth in Homer's poetry.⁶² Furthermore, the discrepancy between Odysseus' experience and its account (λόγον ... ἢ πάθαν, 21) conflicts with the prescribed symmetry between deeds and their reportage evoked by the image of the mirror (14). Pindar criticizes Homer for lacking such symmetry, which he himself has presented as the duty of poetry. His opening lines prescribe a combination of creation and representation in poetry, a combination he deems absent in Homer.

Pindar's criticism suggests indirection rather than actual lying since *pseudos* (as at *Olympian* 1.29) can designate a number of things, for example, a perceiver's misapprehension, a speaker's intentional deception, fiction,⁶³ or some combination of these meanings.⁶⁴ In any case, Pindar faults Homer for not producing a narrative that

⁶⁰ This conception of poetry anticipates what eventually becomes a commonplace about literature in general, that it has both an imaginative and a mimetic dimension. See Lamarque and Olsen (n. 7), 261–7 for further reflections on this literary convention.

⁶¹ Cf. Pratt (n. 2), 127, who entertains the possibility that 'Pindar here slyly praises Homer's ability to confer more fame on Odysseus than he deserved as a positive attribute of poetry, a quality that a patron might well appreciate'.

⁶² Cf. Nagy (n. 34), 422–3: '[Pindar's] tradition ... puts a strong emphasis on its association with the visual metaphor, as distinct from the auditory metaphor that marks the Homeric tradition, and an equally strong emphasis on the truth-value of local traditions grounded in cult, as distinct from the synthetic complexities attributed to Homer.'

⁶³ Cf. Race (n. 16), 73. See also n. 49 above for discussion of fiction in ancient literature.

⁶⁴ The ambiguous focalization of terms like *pseudos* – does it refer to the speaker's intentional deception or simply the listener's misapprehension? – does not mean the speaker is absolved from blame. As Bernard Williams observes, patently true statements still have the potential to deceive by producing a misapprehensive disposition in the hearer. If a person goes through another's mail then claims, 'someone has been opening your mail', he does not lie, but he does falsely suggest a culprit other than himself. This scenario demonstrates that deception includes any communication

accurately relays events. He seems at first to distinguish between Homer's account of Odysseus (λόγον Ὀδυσσεός, 21) and the truth (τὰν ἀλάθειαν, 25), thus pointing out an instance in which poetry has shaped memory falsely. His comments on deceptive skill (σοφία δὲ κλέπτει παρὰ γοῖσα μύθοις, 23) and the blindness of men (τυφλὸν δ' ἔχει | ἦτορ ὄμιλος ἀνδρῶν ὁ πλεῖστος, 23–4) are directed to an audience external to but familiar with Homer's poetry, but the next sentence (εἰ γὰρ ... λευρὸν ξίφος, 24–7) indicates an internal audience. The aphorism about blindness blends Homer's audience with Ajax's,⁶⁵ thus expanding the sphere of relevance for truth and falsehood beyond the confines of the myth. While *alētheia* here designates the reality of Ajax's superiority, its context points to the need for poetry to preserve this reality; it thus refers to an objective reality as well as the poet's duty to the truth. As a poet, Pindar serves to highlight truths that will otherwise disappear and to bring praiseworthy events to the attention of his audience so that his victor will not suffer the same fate as Ajax.

Ajax's suicide is the extreme consequence of deception, as we see more clearly in *Nemean* 8:

ἦ τιν' ἀγλωσσον μὲν, ἦτορ δ' ἄλκιμον, λάθρα κατέχει
 ἐν λυγρῷ νείκει· μέγιστον δ' αἰόλω ψεύδει γέρας ἀντέταται.
 κρυφαῖαισι γὰρ ἐν ψάφοις Ὀδυσσῆ Δαναοὶ θεράπευσαν·
 χρυσέων δ' Αἴας στερηθεὶς ὄπλων φόνω πάλαισεν.
 ἦ μὰν ἀνόμοιά γε δάοισιν ἐν θερμῷ χροῖ
 ἔλκεα ῥῆξαν πελεμιζόμενοι
 ὑπ' ἀλεξιμβρότω λόγχα, τὰ μὲν ἀμφ' Ἀχιλεῖ νεοκτόνω,
 ἄλλων τε μόχθων ἐν πολυφθόροις
 ἀμέραις· ἐχθρὰ δ' ἄρα πάρφασις ἦν καὶ πάλαι,
 αἰμύλων μύθων ὁμόφοιτος, δολοφραδῆς, κακοποιὸν ὄνειδος·
 ἃ τὸ μὲν λαμπρὸν βιάται, τῶν δ' ἀφάντων κῦδος ἀντείπει σαθρόν. (24–34)

Yes, oblivion takes hold of someone tongueless but valiant of heart in deadly strife, and the greatest honour is held up to shifty falsehood. For the Danaans devoted themselves to Odysseus in secret ballots, but Ajax, robbed of the golden weapons, wrestled with death. Truly they did not equally strike wounds in the warm bodies of the enemy, as they drove them back with man-assisting spears, both over newly-slain Achilles and in the much-destroying days of other toils. Indeed, there was hateful deception even long ago, the fellow traveller of flattering stories, with treacherous thoughts, a maleficent disgrace, which violates the luminous and upholds the unwholesome renown of those who should not be seen.

This passage ostensibly explains Odysseus' offence in *Nemean* 7.20–7,⁶⁶ but in neither ode does Pindar explicitly name Odysseus as the agent of *pseudos* (25) and *parphasis*

that fosters misapprehension and thereby violates a tacit agreement of trust between speaker and listener. See Williams (n. 9), 96.

⁶⁵ Cf. Pratt (n. 2), 128, who also makes this observation. Pratt notes the ambiguity of the pronoun *oi* in verse 22, taking it, correctly I think, as a reference to Homer rather than Odysseus. See also C. Segal, 'Pindar's *Seventh Nemean*', *TAPhA* 98 (1967), 431–80, at 442, and G. Most, *The Measures of Praise: Structure and Function in Pindar's Second Pythian and Seventh Nemean Odes* (Göttingen, 1985), 150–1, for discussion of the close association between Homer and Odysseus in these lines.

⁶⁶ C. Carey, 'Pindar's *Eighth Nemean* ode', *PCPhS* 22 (1976), 26–41, at 31, points out that Odysseus traditionally has an unfair advantage over Ajax, but his use of deceit is a Pindaric innovation. Cf. A.M. Miller, 'Phthonos and parphasis: the argument of *Nemean* 8.19–34', *GRBS* 23 (1982), 111–20, at 118 and F.J. Nisetich, *Pindar and Homer* (Baltimore, 1989), 22. For the various accounts about Achilles' arms, see Most (n. 65), 153.

Most (n. 65), 150, diverges from the traditional view that *Nem.* 7.20–3 refers to the judgment on Achilles' arms, arguing instead that 'Pindar may be suggesting that Homer, instead of inquiring

(32),⁶⁷ thus focussing not on Odysseus but on the deception itself, which results in the inaccurate bestowal of praise and blame.⁶⁸ Furthermore, such language (ψεύδει, *Nemean* 8.25; πάρφρασις, 32; αἰμύλων μύθων, 33) echoes language describing Homer in *Nemean* 7 (ψεύδεσι, 22; κλέπτει παράγοισαμύθοις, 23) and thus likens Odysseus' rhetoric to untruthful poetry. By understating Odysseus' agency, Pindar generalizes praise as determined largely by an audience susceptible to verbal manipulation. The Greeks misjudge the relative merits of Ajax and Odysseus despite Ajax's clear superiority, the self-evidence of which is emphasized again by the language of vision: Ajax is 'the luminous' (τὸ μὲν λαμπρόν, 34) whereas men like Odysseus are 'the invisible' (τῶν δ' ἀφάντων, 34).⁶⁹ Since the audience is not prone to seeing even obvious truths, the implication is that poets must represent events in accordance with reality, a sentiment that echoes *Nemean* 7, where Pindar similarly presents a contrast between how Ajax was perceived and what he actually did, terming the latter situation 'the truth' (τὰν ἀλάθειαν, 25).

Although Pindar here criticizes Homer, in *Isthmian* 4.37–9 Homer is lauded for duly glorifying Ajax.⁷⁰ The earlier image of the mirror (*Nemean* 7.14) suggests that these divergent attitudes result from Homer's inconsistency in preserving the symmetry between poetry and reality, since he praises appropriately in some cases but not in others. His glorification of Odysseus is disproportionate to the reality and thus diminishes the credibility of his praise. A possible cause of this inconsistency is that his primary concern is not praise but art, so his poetry shows no particular allegiance to his subject or to the truth.

By contrast Pindar identifies his own praise in terms of the obligations of *xenia*:

ξείνός εἰμι· σκοτεινὸν ἀπέχων νόγον,
 ὕδατος ὅτε ῥοὰς φίλον ἐς ἄνδρ' ἄγων
 κλέος ἐτήτυμον αἰνέσω· ποτίφορος δ' ἀγαθοῖσι μισθὸς οὗτος.
 ἐὼν δ' ἐγγὺς Ἀχαιῶς οὐ μέμψεται μ' ἄνήρ
 Ἴονίας ὑπὲρ ἄλλος οἰκέων, καὶ προξενία πέποιθ', ἔν τε δαμόταις
 ὄμματι δέρκομαι λαμπρόν, οὐχ ὑπερβαλῶν,
 βίαια πάντ' ἐκ ποδὸς ἐρύσασαι. (Nemean 7.61–7)

I am a *guest-friend*. Holding off dark blame, I will praise, leading genuine fame like streams of water to a man who is my *friend*, for this is suitable *payment* for good men. An Achaean man

whether Odysseus' narrative was truthful or not, simply repeated Odysseus' report in his own words'. Although I do not go as far as Most does, I do see merit in his idea that Pindar merges Homer's and Odysseus' characteristics here.

⁶⁷ Cf. Most (n. 65), 152: 'Pindar is careful here [in *Nem.* 7] and elsewhere to avoid making the explicit claim that Achilles' arms were awarded to Odysseus only because Odysseus deceived and cheated the Greeks.'

⁶⁸ Cf. Most (n. 65), 152 n. 78: 'Only in two other places [other than *Nem.* 7.23–7] does Pindar allude to the ὄπλων κρίσις. In *I.* 4.35–36, the blame is explicitly given to the entire Greek army rather than to one individual. In *N.* 8, Ajax's defeat is attributed to the envious, who grasp the noble but have no quarrel with the ignoble (21–22): as the subsequent comparison between Odysseus and Ajax makes clear (28–32), these enviers cannot be Odysseus (for Pindar nowhere refers to someone who was χεῖρῶν than Odysseus) but instead only the Greek army, who grasped the noble Ajax but had no quarrel with the lesser Odysseus.'

⁶⁹ Cf. Bremer (n. 11), 307.

⁷⁰ See E. Fitch, 'Pindar and Homer', *CPh* 19 (1924), 57–65 and Nisetich (n. 66) for an explanation of the body of texts encapsulated by Pindar's use of the name 'Homer'. Nisetich (n. 66), 9–23 argues that Pindar's varying attitudes towards Homer stem from the varying contexts and occasions in which the various odes were composed. Perhaps so, but I would also add that Pindar finds certain aspects of Homer more laudable than others.

being nearby, dwelling over the Ionian Sea, will not blame me. I trust in *hospitality*, and among townsmen my gaze is bright since I do not overstep the mark and I have removed all things forced from my path.

The comparison of his poetry to streams of water (ῥοός, 62) recalls his earlier reference to the Muses' streams (ῥοοῖσι, 12) and verbally links Pindar's praise with the responsibility of poetry to reflect reality. Pindar also repeats the metaphor of light to emphasize his own mental clarity (ὄμματι δέρκομαι λαμπρόν, 66), thus alluding to the prescriptive opening of the ode and to the digression about Ajax.⁷¹ As in *Olympian* 10.3–12, Pindar borrows imagery from the various spheres of guest–host obligation, friendship and monetary exchange (μισθός, 63) to characterize his relationship to his patron and to emphasize the fulfilment of his obligation to the *laudandus*.⁷² He praises his patron (here, the victor's father Thearion) as a friend (φίλον, 62) but makes it clear that this friendship is couched in *xenia* (ξείνος, 61; προξενία, 65⁷³), which obliges the praise poet to protect his patron from blame (ἀπέχων ψόγον, 61). This obligation does not preclude the accuracy of his praise,⁷⁴ which the poet describes as 'genuine' (ἐτήτυμον), thus asserting both sincerity and accuracy.⁷⁵

The key difference between Pindar and Homer, then, is that Pindar's poetry reflects an obligation to his subject and to reality. This obligation is comparable to his stance of piety toward the gods in *Olympian* 1.28–35, where he expresses obligation and accuracy as joint and complementary concerns. In *Nemean* 7 he presents a more convincing argument that poetry unrestrained by obligation cannot properly reflect reality. His criticism of Homer suggests that a truthful account is born of a relationship of obligation between poet and patron, absent in Homer's poetry, and adheres to praise that accurately reflects the *kleos* of the *laudandus*. Leslie Kurke has argued that Pindar's description of poet–patron guest–friendship involves reciprocity tantamount to equality;⁷⁶ I would add that *Nemean* 7 goes a step further to propose a parallel parity between poetry and its subject matter. At least two levels of obligation are outlined in *Nemean* 7: there is an obligation to reflect deeds accurately since poetry is their only 'mirror', the *sole* means for knowledge of great deeds (ἔργοις δὲ καλοῖς ἔσοπτρον ἴσαμεν ἐνὶ σὺν τρόπῳ, 14), and there is the obligation that the poet has to his patron–host. Finally, Pindar takes the argument further to propose, surprisingly, that praise poetry, because its purpose is most closely tied to such obligations, is the genre best suited to communicating the truth. His promise not to 'overstep the mark' (ὑπερβαλόν, 66) recalls his concern for symmetry between event and record, which Homer, in presenting a λόγος that exceeds Odysseus' πάθα (21), has failed to achieve.

⁷¹ On the associations between light, truth and poetry in Pindar, see Bremer (n. 11), 296–314, esp. 301–14.

⁷² Cf. Kurke (n. 4), 93, who relies on Bourdieu to argue that this metaphor of payment does not suggest an impersonal monetary exchange; rather, the values of the archaic guest–host relationship continue in Pindar's time, even though the language has broadened to reflect the increased use of real rather than symbolic currency.

⁷³ Cf. *Pyth.* 10.64 (πέποιθα ξενία) and *Ol.* 1.103 (πέποιθα δὲ ξένον).

⁷⁴ Cf. Kurke (n. 4), 136 (citing Slater [n. 4], 80), who argues: 'The bond of *xenia* authenticates the poet's encomium, but it also participates in a precise social context.'

⁷⁵ Cf. C. Carey, *A Commentary on Five Odes of Pindar: Pythian 2, Pythian 9, Nemean 1, Nemean 7, Isthmian 8* (New York, 1981), 159 on κλέος ἐτήτυμον: 'ἐτήτυμον emphasizes the truth of Pindar's words (in contrast to Homer and ὄμιλος ἀνδρῶν ὁ πλεῖστος).'

⁷⁶ See Kurke (n. 4), 140–1, where she discusses *Ol.* 1.103–5 and *Pyth.* 10.63–5. Both passages mention guest–friendship in a way similar to *Nem.* 7.65 (προξενία πέποιθ').

CONCLUSION

Examination of the various contexts for *alêtheia* in Pindar's poetry reveals a much more complex and nuanced range of relevance than its lexical definition 'truth' might suggest. Pindar situates *alêtheia* within the genre of epinician poetry, thus infusing truth with a sense of obligation; *alêtheia* embodies the poet's promise to present an ode of praise but also his duty to produce an accurate representation of events, that is, a duty to the truth. Moreover, the poet contends that praise poetry, bound by its duties to the *laudandus*, is inherently more truthful than poetry driven by aesthetic concerns. Personifications of Alatheia in fragment 205 and *Olympian* 10 establish a connection between poetic obligation and truth while *Olympian* 1 and *Nemean* 7 reflect Pindar's criticism of poets who are not bound to a programme of accurate representation. What this criticism suggests is that a poet's obligation to the patron must be associated with truth but, perhaps counter-intuitively, poetry composed outside the bounds of this obligation potentially yields falsehood and deception. The primary contrast between Pindar and Homer is one of *xenia*, which is the specific hallmark of epinician poetry: as a guest-friend to the *laudandus*, Pindar is able to provide a more accurate and balanced account than a poet who does not observe such constraints of obligation.

Taking note of the broader ways in which Pindar uses terms for truth and falsehood allows for fuller comprehension of his poetic aims. When he invokes the goddess of truth (*Olympian* 10.4, fragment 205), he refers to accuracy both in his poetry and in his promise to the *laudandus*. He incorporates truth into the relationship with his patron, thus verging on a notion of truth that approaches sincerity without abandoning accuracy. He explicitly puts forth praise as his purpose, yet he suggests that inaccurate praise is invalid and even takes measures to define truth in terms of the spirit of praise and obligation that pervades epinician poetry. The implications of this argument are twofold: thematic elements in Pindar cannot be adequately examined without full consciousness of the epinician genre and how he defines it; furthermore, a study of Pindar's epinician aims should take into account his treatment of truth and falsehood and how these concepts reinforce his aims.

Pindar conveys the impression that his commitment to praising the victor will yield a true account and that his commitment to the *laudandus* is part of a broader commitment to truth. While it has been observed that Pindar presents truth-telling as the purpose of poetry,⁷⁷ what has gone unnoticed is how Pindar employs the various epinician aspects of obligation and reciprocity to put forth an aesthetic that not only balances truth and praise but equates them and presents praise as a mode uniquely suited to presenting the truth.

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⁷⁷ A. Ortega, 'Poesía y verdad en Píndaro', *Helmantica* 21 (1970), 353–72.