Connotations
Vol. 27 (2018)

"[M]emories and similes laid side by side": The Paratactic Poetics of Alice Oswald's *Memorial*[1*]

LENA LINNE AND BURKHARD NIEDERHOFF

1. Introduction

In 2011, the English poet Alice Oswald published *Memorial*: *An Excavation of the Iliad*. As the subtitle indicates, the poem is an adaptation of Homer's epic. However, it is a very selective one: *Memorial* comprises about 1,500 verses, a mere tenth of the more than 15,000 verses of the *Iliad*. What Oswald leaves underground in her excavation of the *Iliad* is what many would consider its most essential feature: the plot. Achilles' argument with Agamemnon, his wrath and withdrawal from the fighting, the tide of war turning in favour of the Trojans, Patroclus' return to the battlefield and his death at the hands of Hector, Achilles' revenge for his friend's death, and the eventual subsiding of his wrath when he releases Hector's corpse to Priam—no reader would be able to reconstruct this chain of events from Oswald's adaptation. *Memorial* "is a translation of the *Iliad*'s atmosphere, not its story" (1), as the poet states in her preface.

What Oswald does excavate are two components of the *Iliad*. When a warrior is killed, Homer often stops the narrative to give a brief portrait of the victim, providing information about his family, place of origin, occupation, and character traits. Oswald focuses on these passages, which we will refer to as "obituaries," in keeping with the title *Memorial* and her suggestion that the poem is "a kind of oral cemetery—in the aftermath of the Trojan War, an attempt to remember people's names and lives without the use of writing" (2). The

*For debates inspired by this article, please check the *Connotations* website at <http://www.connotations.de/debate/the-poetics-alice-oswalds-memorial/>.

second element that Oswald takes from the *Iliad* is the so-called epic or extended simile. From the roughly 200 similes of this type in the *Iliad*,[2] she selects 76; she places these after the obituaries and repeats them, as in the following passage, chosen for its brevity:

> DEICOON the Trojan
> Was too eager too heroic
> He found praise yes
> But also death
>
> Like snow falls quickly from god to the ground
> When the north wind blows down the heavens
>
> Like snow falls quickly from god to the ground
> When the north wind blows down the heavens (23)

The main part of the poem (13-72) follows this pattern; it consists of a series of obituaries, each of which is accompanied by a repeated simile. In the opening pages that precede the main part (5-12), Oswald lists the names of the warriors who die in the *Iliad*, from Protesilaus, who is killed as he leaps from his ship, to Hector, who loses his life in single combat with Achilles. This enumeration is reminiscent of the war memorials that list the soldiers fallen in the two world wars of the twentieth century. The final section (73-84) contains a sequence of eleven similes which are not interrupted by any further obituaries and of which only the very last is repeated. Thus, the overall structure of *Memorial* resembles a triptych; the initial list of the fallen warriors and the final group of independent similes flank the central section consisting of obituaries followed by repeated similes.

As pointed out, Oswald's version of the *Iliad* is highly selective. But how closely does she follow the original in the passages that she selects? We have referred to *Memorial* as an "adaptation"; Oswald herself uses the term "translation" in her preface. She qualifies this term, however, by saying that only the similes are translations, while the obituaries are "paraphrases." Moreover, she admits that her approach to translation is "irreverent" and describes it as follows: "I work closely with the Greek, but instead of carrying the words over

into English, I use them as openings through which to see what Homer was looking at. I write through the Greek, not from it—aiming for translucence rather than translation" (2). This translucent rendering of Homer's text results in a version of the *Iliad* which is halfway between a free translation and a close adaptation. *Memorial* eludes a terminological label; the examples analysed in the third part of our essay will give the reader a more precise sense of how close Oswald's text is to the original.

Perhaps the most challenging and puzzling feature of Oswald's rewriting of the *Iliad* is the decontextualisation of its similes. In the *Iliad*, the similes illustrate a particular point in the narrative, and the reader is given signposts that clarify their import, as in the following passage that describes the Greek army leaving their camp and entering the battlefield:

> As when the snowflakes fly *thick* from Zeus, driven cold under the blast of the north wind, child of the clear air, *so thick* was the mass of the bright-shining helmets moving out from the ships then [...]. (19.357-60; emphasis added)[3]

The simile marker at the end of the vehicle, the word *so*, and the repetition of "thick" help the reader identify the ground or *tertium comparationis* that connects vehicle and tenor; it is the profusion of the snowflakes that Homer attributes to the Greek army.[4] As seen above, Oswald transplants this simile from its original context in Book 19 to the obituary of Deicoon, who dies in Book 5 of the *Iliad*, and she does not give the reader much help in finding a link between tenor and vehicle. The simile marker at the end of the vehicle is conspicuous by its absence; the simile marker at the beginning, the word *like*, is used in a puzzling manner, leaving the connection between tenor and vehicle unexplained.

The example of Deicoon and the snowflakes is representative. With one exception, the similes in *Memorial* are lifted from their original context and placed in the new context of an obituary,[5] where their meaning remains, at least at first sight, opaque. In which way does the

snow driven down from the sky by the north wind resemble Deicoon? More generally, in which way do the transplanted similes cohere with their new contexts in *Memorial*? This is the question we will discuss in the present essay. It is apposite at this point to invoke the topic of the conference at which our reading was first presented: "Self-Imposed Fetters: The Productivity of Formal and Thematic Restrictions." *Memorial* provides a good example of this topic in that Oswald imposes formidable fetters or difficulties on herself. By omitting Homer's plot, she decontextualises the obituaries and the similes, which lose the coherence that they have in the *Iliad*. She is thus faced with the task of producing a new kind of coherence, of connecting obituaries and similes that are not at all related in the original—a task not rendered any easier by her commitment to translating or paraphrasing the original, i.e. by staying close to its text. Nevertheless, we think that she masters this task, forging new connections between similes and obituaries which are a crucial feature of her challenging and fascinating poem. The difficulty proves productive; the disruption of the old coherence engenders a new one. Carolin Hahnemann, one of the few critics who have written on *Memorial* so far,[6] states that it "constitutes an act of creation by reduction" (28). More precisely, it constitutes an act of creation by decontextualisation and recontextualisation.

2. Oswald's Paratactic Poetics

In the opening chapter of *Mimesis*, Erich Auerbach remarks that there is no background in Homer's narrative. To illustrate his point, Auerbach discusses the boar hunt in which Odysseus is injured when, as a young man, he pays a visit to his grandfather Autolycus. The episode is told in Book 19 of the *Odyssey*, to explain the scar by which Eurycleia recognises the hero after his return to Ithaca. Other storytellers would background this episode, subordinating it to the principal plot-line by summarising it briefly or by justifying it as a memory of Odysseus. Homer does not. All the parts of his story are treated in the same fashion; they are placed in the foreground, dwelt upon with

equal care and attention, and presented with the same amount of detail (see *Mimesis* 5-9).

In an interview given in 2013, Oswald argues in a similar vein. She points out that the syntax and the structure of Homer's narrative are paratactic; clauses and larger narrative units are placed side by side instead of being arranged in a hierarchical order:

> I respond very much to Homer's syntax, which seems to me unlike a complicated English sentence which will have a kind of hierarchy of sub-clauses and main clause. With Homer, every clause feels equally placed, connected by "ands" and "buts," all kind of equal. And I wanted to represent in the form of the poem something of that "side-by-side-ness" that Homer creates in the way his language moves. So rather than have a whole shape spread over the whole poem, I wanted it to have these kind of chopped, side-by-side things. (Jaffa 19)

For Oswald, the structural principle of parataxis is connected with an egalitarian or democratic stance, a stance that explains her omission of the story centred around the hero Achilles and her focus on the obituaries of minor warriors (Oswald 8-9). Oswald also touches upon her paratactic poetics in the preface to *Memorial*. She describes it as a "bipolar poem made of similes and short biographies" and as "a series of memories and similes laid *side by side*: an antiphonal account of man in his world" (1-2; emphasis added).[7] The notion of antiphony is derived from the tradition of lament, which Oswald considers the source of the obituaries in the *Iliad*: "There are accounts of Greek lament in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. When a corpse was laid out, a professional poet (someone like Homer) led the mourning and was antiphonally answered by women offering personal accounts of the deceased" (1).[8] An obituary and its simile would thus form an antiphonal unit, a bipolar and balanced pattern of statement and response.

In an article titled "Parataxis in Homer," James Notopoulos argues along similar lines as Auerbach and Oswald do. He contrasts the paratactic poetics of Homer with the later, Aristotelean poetics governed by the principles of unity, consistency and completeness, which requires that a part is never dispensable and always subordinated to

the whole. Notopoulos explains the paratactic structure of Homer's epics with their closeness to oral poetry, which is indeed the most likely explanation. Oral poets will be more prone to dwell on the parts and endow them with a life of their own. Likewise, consistency is not to be expected to the same degree as in a written work. Oral poets can never go back and revise a passage; nor do they have time to return to a section to make sure that what they are saying now is in complete harmony with what they said earlier. Another factor that works against artistic control and unity is the audience. Unlike writers who compose their work in isolation, oral poets compose and perform at the same time; they contract, expand or digress depending on the responses of their listeners. Moreover, writers have a much greater liberty to fashion their material according to their own intentions. Oral poets, on the other hand, are more traditional. They have to rely on pre-existing building blocks, on verbal formulas and thematic patterns that may not always be consistent with one another.[9] Oswald does not explicitly draw a connection between parataxis and orality, but she does emphasise and cherish the oral nature of Homer's epics. Her preface to *Memorial* expresses the hope that her methods are "compatible with the spirit of oral poetry, which was never stable but always adapting itself to a new audience, as if its language, unlike written language, was still alive and kicking" (2). She has also attempted to breathe the spirit of oral poetry into *Memorial* by reciting it instead of reading it at public literary events.[10]

The paratactic poetics favoured by Oswald presents a problem. The simile as such is not a paratactic device; instead of juxtaposing two phenomena, it subordinates one of them to the other. This is also suggested by the traditional terminology of tenor and vehicle. A vehicle is a means to an end; it serves to characterise the tenor, not vice versa (a similar directionality is implied by Lakoff's terminology of *source* domain and *target* domain). When Homer compares the warriors to snowflakes, he does not juxtapose two phenomena, placing equal emphasis on both of them. He is only interested in the aspect of the snowflakes that may be attributed to the warriors, i.e. their

profusion. That snowflakes are cold, soft to the touch, that they melt when they fall on human skin—all of these and other features are irrelevant. Thus there is clearly a tension between the device of the simile and Oswald's paratactic poetics, a tension that we will have to keep in mind in the following analysis of the connections between obituaries and similes.

3. Obituaries and Similes in *Memorial*

In Book 2 of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon addresses his troops, and his words have a powerful effect:

> [T]he assembly was stirred like the great waves of the sea, in the deep water by Ikaria, when the east wind and the south wind rush down from father Zeus' stormclouds and raise them high. As when the west wind stirs a deep cornfield with its coming, and the standing crop bows its ears in the fury of the blast, so the whole assembly was stirred to movement. The men swarmed cheering to the ships […]. (2.144-50)

The effect of Agamemnon's speech is illustrated with two related similes. It resembles the effect that wind has on the sea, raising huge waves, and the effect that it has on a cornfield, creating wave-like movements. While the waves express the sheer energy and power of the speech, the cornfield suggests the huge number of the listeners. This double simile, which is the second that we encounter in the *Iliad*, becomes the first in *Memorial*, following the opening obituary:

> The first to die was PROTESILAUS
> A focused man who hurried to darkness
> With forty black ships leaving the land behind
> Men sailed with him from those flower-lit cliffs
> Where the grass gives growth to everything
> Pyrasus   Iton   Pteleus   Antron
> He died in mid-air jumping to be first ashore
> There was his house half-built
> His wife rushed out clawing her face
> Podarcus his altogether less impressive brother

Took over command but that was long ago
He's been in the black earth now for thousands of years

Like a wind-murmur
Begins a rumour of waves
One long note getting louder
The water breathes a deep sigh
Like a land-ripple
When the west wind runs through a field
Wishing and searching
Nothing to be found
The corn-stalks shake their green heads (13-14)

As in the example of Deicoon and the snowflakes, the connection between the simile and the obituary is neither obvious nor highlighted by the simile marker. Instead of clarifying the meaning of the simile, the word *like* complicates it by its own ambiguity. It can be read as the equivalent of the introductory marker of a Homeric simile, often rendered with 'as when' in English translations. In this reading, "like" functions as a conjunction that links the final sentence of the obituary with the opening sentence of the simile; "wind-murmur" is the subject, "Begins" a transitive verb, and "a rumour of waves" the direct object. However, another reading is also possible if we consider the passage in its own right, disregarding the conventions of the epic simile. In this reading, "a rumour of waves" becomes the subject, "Begins" an intransitive verb, and "like a wind-murmur" an adverbial expression, with "like" as a preposition. This second reading avoids the subordination of the simile to the obituary, in line with Oswald's paratactic poetics, her description of obituary and simile as a bipolar and balanced structure.

This does not mean, however, that simile and obituary are not at all related. There is a *tertium comparationis* of sorts, the idea of a commencement: "The *first* to die"; "*Begins* a rumour of waves." What also begins at this point is the "wind-murmur" of the poem itself, which comes alive after the inert list of names in the opening pages. The simile thus acquires a self-reflexive dimension. In its original context in the *Iliad*, it stresses, after all, the power of words, and Oswald keeps

this reference alive by describing the wind and its effect in terms of human speech: "wind-*murmur*," "*rumour* of waves," "breathes a deep *sigh*." There is also a kind of dialogue between the wind on the one hand and the sea and the cornfield on the other—as if the wind is saying, "What about Protesilaus?", to which the waves respond with a deep sigh, and the cornstalks by shaking their heads, indicating that the wind is searching for a man who can no longer be found. This dialogue is almost like the lament that Oswald evokes in her preface, the pattern of statement and response shared by the poet and the women in their joint commemoration of a man fallen in battle. Thus the double simile is self-reflexive in a very specific sense. It suggests how we should read this very simile and those that follow in *Memorial*: not as subordinated passages, as vehicles illustrating a tenor, but as responses in a balanced, antiphonal pattern.

In the introduction, we touched upon the question whether *Memorial* is a translation or an adaptation. The obituary of Protesilaus and the ensuing simile provide characteristic examples of the liberties that Oswald takes in rendering the *Iliad*, especially when it comes to endowing a simile with meaning in the new context to which it is transplanted. In Homer's version of the wind simile, for instance, the idea of a commencement is absent; Oswald adds this idea to establish the *tertium comparationis* with the obituary of Protesilaus, the first of the Greek warriors to land and to die on the shores of Troy. Likewise, the "wind-*murmur*" and the other metaphors related to human speech are lacking in Homer's text; Oswald inserts them to emphasise the self-reflexive dimension of the simile. Another obvious addition concerns the time that has gone by since the burial of Protesilaus. Homer mentions him in the so-called catalogue of ships in Book 2: "Those who held Phylake and Pyrasos full of flowers, the precinct of Demeter, and Iton the mother of flocks, and Antron by the sea and the deep meadows of Pteleos, these were led by the warrior Protesilaos, while he lived: but by then the black earth held him under" (2.695-99). In *Memorial*, "[h]e's been in the black earth now for thousands of years," which changes the point of view from the time of the action, in which

Protesilaus has only been buried for nine years, to the twenty-first century. A similar note is struck in the final obituary. Hector leaves the battlefield for a brief visit to his family "[t]o stand in full armour in the doorway / Like a man rushing in leaving his motorbike running" (72). However, such anachronisms are few and far between. Despite the evident liberties that Oswald takes with Homer's text, one does not get the sense that she considers it as mere raw material to be used and shaped *ad libitum*. She seems to be pulled in different directions by two forces that are equally strong: on the one hand, a commitment to Homer's text and to a faithful rendering of its details; on the other hand, the need to refashion the decontextualised passages so as to provide them with meaning and coherence in their new contexts.

In our introductory example, the snowflakes driven by the north wind, Oswald moves a simile from an army marching into battle to a warrior killed in action. This is a frequent pattern: similes are transferred from the beginning or the middle of the fighting to its end, from a victorious or successful warrior to a defeated victim. This shift affects not only the direction of the transfer and the choice of the tenor, i.e. the new context to which a simile is transplanted. It sometimes also affects the vehicle, the way it is rewritten to respond to the new tenor. Consider the following example, which revolves around a hunting scene and features both a predator (the equivalent of a victorious warrior) and its prey (the equivalent of a victim). It is taken from the encounter between Achilles and Hector in Book 22 of the *Iliad*:

> And swift Achilleus kept driving Hektor on with his relentless pursuit. As when a dog has started the fawn of a deer from its lair in the mountains, and chases it on through the hollows and the glens: even if it takes to cover and crouches hidden under a bush, the dog smells out its track and runs on unerringly until he finds it. So Hektor could not throw off the swift-footed son of Peleus. (22.188-93)

Clearly, the predator corresponds to Achilles and the prey to Hector. The beginning of the vehicle zooms in on the predator and, hence, on Achilles: "As when a dog [...]." The beginning of the tenor, however, comes as a surprise because it shifts the focus to Hector and, hence, to

the prey. The simile is of a special type, which has been described as "multiplied" or "double-headed"; the two simile markers do not work in unison but highlight different aspects of a complex analogy.[11] The shift of focus, in this case from predator to prey, serves Oswald as a springboard for her adaptation of the simile. She transplants it to the deaths of Diores and Pirous, which occur in Book 4 of the *Iliad*, and emphasises the prey:

> Like through the jointed grass
> The long-stemmed deer
> Almost vanishes
> But a hound has already found her flattened tracks
> And he's running through the fields towards her (17)

Not only does Oswald detach the simile from a combat scene and move it to a double obituary, she also alters its focus in that she begins with the prey: "Like […] / The long-stemmed deer" replaces "As when a dog." While the simile in the *Iliad* focuses our attention on the attacker and his unflagging pursuit, the simile in *Memorial* puts the emphasis on the victim.[12]

In Book 16 of the *Iliad*, Patroclus is shedding tears because his comrades are losing their lives, while Achilles, who is still smouldering with resentment at his treatment by Agamemnon, persists in staying away from the battle. Adding insult to inaction, he compares his friend to a little girl:

> "Why are you all in tears, Patroklos, like a little girl running along by her mother and demanding to be carried, pulling at her dress and holding her back as she tries to hurry on, and looking up at her tearfully until she picks her up? That is what you look like, Patroklos, with these soft tears falling." (16.7-11)

The simile follows the typical pattern of Homer's similes. After describing the little girl's behaviour in detail, it ends with a line that reinforces the connection between tenor and vehicle: Patroclus and the girl are both crying for reasons that seem trivial to Achilles. Os-

wald seizes upon this simile and transfers it from a hero who is about to enter the fight to a minor warrior who will fight no more:

> SCAMANDRIUS the hunter
> Knew every deer in the woods
> He used to hear the voice of Artemis
> Calling out to him in the lunar
> No man's land of the mountains
> She taught him to track her animals
> But impartial death has killed the killer
> Now Artemis with all her arrows can't help him up
> His accurate firing arm is useless
> Menelaus stabbed him
> One spear-thrust through the shoulders
> And the point came out through the ribs
> His father was Strophius
>
> Like when a mother is rushing
> And a little girl clings to her clothes
> Wants help wants arms
> Won't let her walk
> Like staring up at that tower of adulthood
> Wanting to be light again
> Wanting this whole problem of living to be lifted
> And carried on a hip (18-19)

As usual, Oswald does not highlight the connection between obituary and simile. At first sight, the *tertium comparationis* is obscure: what does a hunter who is stabbed to death on a battlefield have in common with a little girl who wishes to be carried by her mother? However, a closer look reveals several connections. The relationship between Artemis and her protégé Scamandrius corresponds to the relationship between mother and daughter. Embedded in this basic analogy, there is a more precise similarity, the idea of the stronger partner in the relationship lifting the weaker from the ground.[13] In order to solve a serious "problem of living" and "to be light again," the weaker is dependent on the support of the stronger. Finally, obituary and simile are linked by verbal repetitions: Scamandrius needs

Artemis to "*help* him up" just as the little girl "[w]ants *help*" from her mother; and the mother's "arms" echo Scamandrius' "firing arm."

However, the relationship between obituary and simile is characterised not only by connections but also by contrasts. Some of these are hidden inside the very connections—in words or expressions that apply both to Scamandrius and to the girl but have very different meanings for the two. Take a phrase like "this whole problem of living." In Scamandrius' world, this refers to the problem of living or not living at all; in the world of the little girl, it is a comic exaggeration reflecting the girl's limited perspective—the problem is most likely nothing more than a bruise or a broken toy. "Wants help wants arms" is similarly ambiguous. For Scamandrius, "arms" are weapons, associated with injury and death; for the girl, they refer to her mother's limbs, associated with protection and life. Scamandrius "wants help" in the sense of *lacking* it, while the little girl *wishes for* help—and will presumably obtain it (in the *Iliad*, the girl is finally picked up by her mother). While Scamandrius is beyond anybody's—even a goddess's—help, the girl's problems can be solved, and her life, which has only just begun, will go on. The motifs of defeat and death in the obituary are thus contrasted with the motifs of success and survival in the simile. This is in keeping with Oswald's paratactic poetics: the similes do not illustrate the obituaries but respond to them.

Our next simile resembles the previous one in that it also evokes a feminine, domestic world. Its original context is the protracted fighting at the wall that surrounds the Greek camp. The battle is drawn: "[T]he sides held even like the scales a careful spinning-woman holds, lifting the beam with the weight and the wool on either side, so she can earn a meagre provision for her children. So the battle was strained taut and level between them" (12.433-36). Oswald transfers the simile to the obituary of Acamas, who dies in Book 6:

> ACAMAS a massive man best fighter in Thrace
> Came over the choppy tides of the Hellespont
> And almost instantly took a blow on his helmet
> The spear pressed through to his skull

> Tipped with darkness
> It was Ajax who stopped him
>
> Like that slow-motion moment
> When a woman weighs the wool
> Her poor old spider hands
> Work all night spinning a living for her children
> And then she stops
> She soothes the scales to a standstill (25-26)

The most obvious link between the simile and the obituary is indicated by the verb *stop*, which occurs in both. The woman's work ceases; Acamas' life comes to an end. Besides, the darkness of the night in which the woman sits up alone corresponds to the darkness that overwhelms the dying warrior. The simile also contains a mythological allusion that applies to the obituary. "[S]pinning a living" means earning a livelihood, but it also evokes the Three Fates, who are responsible for spinning and cutting the thread of a person's life. When the woman stops "spinning a *living*," Acamas' thread is cut. Perhaps there is even a causal connection. A woman working all night to support her family could be a widow who has lost her husband in a war.

As in the previous simile, however, contrasts are just as important as connections. The "massive man" on the battlefield is set in opposition to the woman's "spider hands," and the abrupt manner in which Ajax "stopped" his opponent contrasts with the careful way in which the woman "soothes the scales to a standstill." The extraordinary events on the battlefield are juxtaposed with a scene of daily routine, male destruction with female work, the aggression against the enemy with a mother's care for her children. Again, death is counterbalanced by survival. While Acamas' life is irrevocably lost, the woman will pick up her work on the next day. The spinning wheel will turn again, providing bread for the children, who, like the little girl in the previous simile, guarantee the continuation of life.

The following simile is not taken from the domestic but from the natural world. However, the contrast with the obituary is again striking:

> ILIONEUS an only child ran out of luck
> He always wore that well-off look
> His parents had a sheep farm
> They didn't think he would die
> But a spear stuck through his eye
> He sat down backwards
> Trying to snatch back the light
> With stretched out hands
>
> Like oak trees swerving out of the hills
> And setting their faces to the wind
> Day after day being practically lifted away
> They are lashed to the earth
> And never let go
> Gripping on darkness (52-53)

In its original context, the simile characterises the strength and resilience shown by Polypoites and Leonteus, who distinguish themselves in the defence of the wall around the Greek camp.

> These two took their stand in front of the tall gates like high-topped oak-trees in the mountains, which stand firm against wind and rain for all their days, fast-fixed by their great roots stretching down. So these two, confident in the strength of their hands, stood firm against the onrush of the huge Asios and would not turn to flight. (12.131-36)

The recontextualisation of the simile brings about the usual shifts: from the preparatory or middle stage of the fighting to its end, from the victorious or successful to the defeated warrior, and from an analogy that is clearly signposted by a simile marker to a much more tenuous link that the readers are left to discover by themselves. In this case, the link would appear to consist in the idea of grasping something intangible. The trees are "[g]ripping on darkness," which means that their roots are holding on to the lightless soil, "the *black* earth" in which Protesilaus and many another fighter have been buried. Ili-

oneus is "[t]rying to snatch back the light," i.e. the life that is flooding from his body. Needless to say, this is a doomed endeavour. Instead of seizing light, Ilioneus will be "gripping on darkness" like the oaks.[14]

If Ilioneus and the oaks are both "gripping on darkness," they are doing so in very different ways. The phrase has two meanings that are diametrically opposed: death for the man, life for the trees. The resemblance that connects obituary and simile only serves to highlight the contrast between the two, a contrast that is further enhanced by other features of the two passages. Ilioneus comes from a pastoral world, in which death did not seem an option. As the only son of wealthy parents, he has enjoyed a privileged and protected existence, which leaves him completely unprepared for the clash of arms. He seems out of place on the battlefield: weak, ineffectual and with a touch of the ridiculous in the actions that he performs at the moment of his death. The oaks, on the other hand, are surrounded by a hostile mountain environment; their daily battle with the elements has made them sturdy and strong. This is emphasised by a telling ambiguity in the phrase "lashed to the ground": the trees are *beaten down* to the earth by the mountain storms, but they defy these storms because they are *tied down* to the earth by their strong roots.

The contrast between the themes of death and survival that we have found in a number of examples is underpinned by a grammatical contrast. The obituaries are constructed around a unique event, the killing of a warrior, which is narrated in the past tense: "It was Ajax who *stopped* him." The similes, on the contrary, revolve around recurrent events; they are written in a present tense which is essentially iterative. Routine and repetition rule the domestic, agricultural and natural worlds in which the similes are set. The spinning-wheels turn every night, little girls cling to their mothers' skirts on a regular basis, cornfields move like waves whenever there is a strong breeze, and the mountain oaks "set [...] their faces to the wind / day after day." This "day after day," this reliable recurrence of actions and events, is an essential feature of survival, of the strength and continuity of life that

counterbalances the deaths narrated in the obituaries. Perhaps this insistence on survival and continuity follows, in a paradoxical manner, from the central goal of *Memorial*, the project of commemorating the dead. Memorials are *about* the dead but *for* the living. The memory of the dead can only remain alive in the minds of the survivors.

The final obituary in *Memorial*, too long to be quoted in full, is about Hector. It is accompanied by the following simile:

> Like leaves who could write a history of leaves
> The wind blows their ghosts to the ground
> And the spring breathes new leaf into the woods
> Thousands of names thousands of leaves
> When you remember them remember this
> Dead bodies are their lineage
> Which matter no more than the leaves (73)

Like Hector, the leaves die. Their ghosts are blown "to the ground," following Hector's bones that were "returned to the ground" in the preceding obituary (72). However, the simile is less about one man, however exceptional he might be, than about all of the warriors who have lost their lives in the poem. The opening line of the obituary states that Hector "died *like everyone else*" (71; emphasis added), and the subject of the simile is in the plural, not in the singular: "Thousands of names thousands of leaves."

Like the "wind-murmur" simile, which follows the first obituary, the leaves simile, which follows the final one, has a self-reflexive dimension. Referring as it does to writing a history and remembering names, it has a bearing on the commemoration of the dead. The relevance of memory and history is also suggested by the original context of the simile, the dialogue between Diomedes and Glaucos in Book 6 of the *Iliad*. When they meet on the battlefield, Diomedes asks his opponent for an account of his ancestors, to make sure that he is not fighting the descendant of a god. Glaucos responds with the leaves simile to suggest the futility of remembering one's parentage:

> "Great-hearted son of Tydeus, why do you ask of my birth? The generation of men is just like that of leaves. The wind scatters one year's leaves on the ground, but the forest burgeons and puts out others, as the season of spring comes round. So it is with men: one generation grows on, and another is passing away." (6.145-49)

Somewhat surprisingly after this beginning, Glaucos proceeds to tell the story of his descent in great detail and with an unexpected result. The two warriors turn out to be guest-friends because of an amicable meeting between their grandfathers; they vow not to fight each other and exchange their armour in token of their friendship. The episode is strangely ambivalent in its attitude to commemorating the dead. In the introductory leaves simile, Glaucos strikes a sceptical note, but he immediately belies his scepticism with a detailed account of his ancestors, which, moreover, might be the means of saving his life—taking on Diomedes at this point would not be a good idea; in his *aristeia* in Book 5, which precedes the encounter, Diomedes has been invincible.

A similar ambivalence informs Oswald's version of the simile. On the one hand, it celebrates the idea of commemoration. Humans are "leaves who could write a history of leaves," i.e. mortal beings who transcend their mortality by recording their lives. In the context of writing, the word "leaves" evokes the pages of a book just as much as the foliage of a tree, and the "lineage" of the leaves in the penultimate line suggests the lines of the written or printed page. It may even contain a shadowy allusion to the "immortal lines" that keep alive the memory of the poet's friend after his death in Shakespeare's "Sonnet 18" (a poem that also shares the motif of breath as a source of life with Oswald's simile). On the other hand, Oswald's simile also casts doubt on the idea of commemoration, undermining the declared project of *Memorial* with a surprising scepticism. Given Oswald's views on orality and literacy, writing may not be the antidote against mortality and time that it is in some of Shakespeare's sonnets. The principal vehicle of scepticism is the image of the leaf, which runs counter to the idea of history. A history, especially a written one, is cultural, while Oswald's leaves belong to nature. A history is based on durable

records and documents. Oswald's leaves are short-lived; they turn into ghosts almost immediately and are blown to, and merge with, the ground so that no trace of their existence remains behind. Perhaps the meaning of "leave" as in "leave-taking" also comes into play here. Most importantly, a history is unique and specific, relating the facts of a particular person or period. Oswald's leaves are uniform. Significantly, she does not write that "spring breathes new *leaves* into the woods," as one might expect. She replaces the plural with the singular "leaf," suggesting the near-homophone "life" and transforming the leaves into a homogenous mass or force—a stage in a seasonal cycle, not an actor in a history. "[A] history of leaves," it would appear, is almost like an oxymoron. If this is the case, "who" in the first line should not be read as a relative pronoun but as an interrogative pronoun that introduces a rhetorical question. This question interrupts the simile right at the beginning in the manner of an anacoluthon: "Like leaves—who could write a history of leaves?" The implied answer would be "nobody."

"Like leaves […]" is followed by ten additional similes without any further obituaries. The very last simile reads as follows:

> Like when god throws a star
> And everyone looks up
> To see that whip of sparks
> And then it's gone (83-84)

In the *Iliad*, the simile occurs in Book 4, in which Zeus sends his daughter Athene to the Trojan battlefield. In her descent, she either transforms herself into a shooting star or looks like one to the assembled armies (4.73-80). The elements of the simile suggest a world beyond time and transience: two immortal gods as well as a star, a traditional image of permanence and constancy. But for all its beauty and brilliance, the simile describes something extremely short-lived. Like the simile of the leaves, which follows Hector's obituary, the simile of the shooting star contains a sceptical comment on the entire poem and on its attempt to create a memorial for the men fallen at

Troy. In the cosmic scheme of things, the simile suggests, Hector is a mere "whip of sparks," just like Homer's and Oswald's attempt to commemorate him in verse. The poem's final word about human life and human memory is: "And then it's gone."

4. Homer's Paratactic Poetics

In the preceding analysis, we have repeatedly compared the similes in *Memorial* with their original versions in the *Iliad*. We may thus have created the impression that the two are very different. Homer's similes, we may have implied, are unlike Oswald's in being hypotactic rather than paratactic; they subordinate the vehicle to the tenor by means of grounds that are clearly highlighted by simile markers. This conclusion, however, would be far from the truth. In the final section of this essay, we would like to argue that some of the paratactic features that we have found in Oswald's similes are already present in Homer's. After all, Oswald's paratactic poetics is not a modern concept that she brings to her adaptation of the *Iliad*; it is based on qualities that she discerns in Homer's text.

The first point to be made about Homer's similes is that the vehicle is subordinated to the tenor only to a limited extent. Admittedly, the simile markers usually highlight a point that connects the two, but the vehicle mostly develops and expands far beyond that point. Excess is an essential feature of Homer's similes. When Achilles sarcastically compares Patroclus to a little girl, the ground of the comparison is that both are shedding tears for trivial reasons. But he elaborates on the basic idea with a series of details that have no bearing on Patroclus whatsoever: that the girl is running after her mother, that the mother is hurrying on, that the girl pulls at her mother's dress, that she clamours to be picked up and carried etc. If all of these details had an equivalent in the situation of Patroclus, we would be in the realm of allegory, a "continua μεταφορὰ" in the concise definition given by Quintilian (9.2.46, see also 8.6.44). But the Homeric simile does not create a continuous parallel between vehicle and tenor; the former

emancipates itself from the latter and develops a life of its own.[15] Arguably, Homer's similes agree with Oswald's in their essential structure. The vehicles represent a complex event or situation with many details; only one or at best a few of these can be applied to the tenor. Homer's similes differ from Oswald's only in the way the structure is presented to the reader. While Homer emphasises the connections between vehicle and tenor by means of simile markers, Oswald prefers to hide or veil them, leaving the simile markers dangling in the air. She thus highlights a lack of connections which, however, is no less true of Homer's similes than of her own.

For a number of Oswald's similes we have claimed that contrast is just as important as connection and resemblance. Ilioneus' ineptness is juxtaposed with the tenacity of the oak trees, the massiveness of Ajax and Acamas with the "spider hands" of the spinning-woman. Again, Oswald builds on foundations laid by Homer. As Mark Edwards states in the instructive chapter on similes in his study of the *Iliad*, "occasionally it seems that a simile that does not parallel the narrative intentionally develops a strong contrast with it, attracting the audience's attention by a kind of shock effect" (106).[16] The extraordinary simile of the spinning-woman weighing her wool creates just as much of a contrast in the *Iliad* as it does in *Memorial*. Homer also uses it in a battle context, placing an image of delicacy and poise in the midst of clamour, destruction and violence.

While most of Homer's similes are excessive and some contrastive, a few are downright contradictory. A famous example is the simile of the wolves that describes the Myrmidons who, after their long absence from the fighting, are preparing to re-enter the battle with Patroclus. "They gathered like wolves, eaters of raw flesh, their hearts full of boundless fury" (16.156-55). So far, so fitting. But in the further development of the simile it emerges that the wolves have pulled down a stag, filled their bellies, and are belching blood. A glutted wolf seems a poor parallel for a war-hungry man, a problem that has been much debated in Homer scholarship. Critics have either condemned the simile or attempted to explain away the inconsistency.

Stephen Nimis reviews these criticisms and explanations, and provides a sophisticated solution of the problem himself (23-42) which is based on the observation that elsewhere in Homer warriors preparing for battle observe the ritual of a civilised meal including prayer and sacrifice. The effect of the wolf simile, Nimis argues, depends on this convention. The devouring of the stag is a grim parody of a civilised meal and thus furnishes an oblique comment on the situation, in particular on Achilles. Still in the grip of wrath and resentment, he is not yet in a state to rejoin his allies and to share in a civilised meal; thus the return of the Myrmidons to the Greek army is, for the time being, a doomed enterprise. Nimis's interpretation of the wolf simile is in the spirit of a paratactic poetics (although he does not use the term). He does not read the simile in terms of hierarchy, of a vehicle subordinated to a tenor, but in terms of balance, as an independent, complex poetic response to a situation described in the narrative.

In the second section of this essay, we argued, following Notopoulos, that the paratactic features of Homer's poems stem from their closeness to oral poetry. Whether this claim also applies to the paratactic features of his similes is a moot point. Some scholars argue that the language of the similes is less formulaic than that of other passages and that their content is highly original, grounded in personal experience. Edwards writes that "[i]t is hard not to think that in these long similes one can see the personal eye and thought of the poet" (103). Catherine Addison argues that an extended or expanded simile is much more likely in a written than in an oral poem (506-07). Other scholars, however, emphasise the conventional and formulaic elements in the similes that point towards orality. Scott, for instance, claims that the hundreds of similes in Homer are based on a limited set of so-called *similemes*, complex patterns of events or situations (a lion hunting its prey, wind blowing on land or sea, trees falling or standing firm), which the poet adapts, more or less rigorously (often less), to a moment in his narrative.[17] If this is true, Homer and Oswald are in a very similar position as far as their treatment of the similes is concerned. They do not compose the similes from scratch. Instead,

they begin by choosing from a limited number of options (the similemes in the case of Homer, the roughly 200 similes of the *Iliad* in the case of Oswald) and adapt these to the needs of their narrative. In doing so, however, they do not fully subordinate the vehicle to its tenor in the narrative context; the vehicle maintains a life of its own.

By way of conclusion to this essay, we would like to analyse a simile from the *Iliad* in some detail. Using the critical lenses developed in our reading of Oswald's poem, we will focus on its paratactic features. The simile describes a crucial moment in the final episode, which is about Hector's burial. Initially, Achilles refuses to grant this honour to his enemy. After killing Hector, he does not release his body. Instead he mutilates it and leaves it to dogs and birds. Eventually, Hector's father Priam decides to take the risk of appealing to Achilles in person. This appeal brings about the final peripety. Achilles gives up the wrath that has so disastrously determined his actions ever since the quarrel with Agamemnon, and releases Hector's body. The moment described by the simile is Priam's entry into Achilles' tent:

> Huge Priam came in unseen, and moving close to him took Achilleus' knees in his arms and kissed his hands, those terrible, murderous hands, which had killed many of his sons. As when a man is held fast by blind folly—he kills a man in his own country, and then comes to another land, to a rich man's house, and amazement takes those who see his entry. So Achilleus was amazed when he saw godlike Priam, and the others too were amazed, and looked at each other. (24.477-84)

The simile gives a condensed version of a motif that recurs throughout the *Iliad*: a man kills a friend or relative in anger, leaves his home and travels to a foreign country, where he finds refuge in a new family. The most prominent and elaborate example of the motif is Patroclus (23.83-90), but he is by no means the only one.[18] Oswald places the simile after the obituary of Epigeus, another example of the motif (62-63). For once, the connection between vehicle and tenor is obvious in *Memorial*—in fact, far more obvious than in the *Iliad*. Admittedly, Homer follows his standard practice of using the simile marker to

point out a connection, in this case the amazement caused by the entry of Priam and the homicide. However, other aspects of the simile seem irrelevant to Priam's mission or even at odds with it. A man who is driven by a blind folly to kill a friend or relative does not provide a good parallel for a father who is risking his life to give a proper burial to his son. As in the simile of the glutted wolves, the vehicle seems to clash with the tenor. However, a closer scrutiny reveals that the simile provides a highly pertinent response to a crucial moment in the narrative.

Homer's commentators have pointed out that the simile of the expatriate homicide inverts the situation between Priam and Achilles. "[T]here is a reversal of roles here," writes M. Willcock, "for the man who has come is innocent of any violent deed; while the killer is the man sitting among his followers" (317). This is a point we would like to pursue. Achilles resembles the homicide in many ways. He is also driven by a "blind folly," the wrath or anger that seizes him during his quarrel with Agamemnon in Book 1. (Oswald sees this resemblance as well. In her version of the simile, she renders the homicide's ἄτη πυκινὴ [24.480], "blind folly" in Hammond's translation, as "anger" [63], thus drawing a link between Achilles and the homicide.[19]) Achilles does not literally kill a friend or a relative, but he is on the point of drawing his sword during his quarrel with Agamemnon and only kept from murder by the interference of Athene (1.188-218). After the quarrel, he begins a campaign against his allies, absenting himself from the battle and lobbying the gods through his mother Thetis to support the enemy. Thus he is responsible for the death of many of his comrades, including that of his closest companion Patroclus. The reversal of roles goes far beyond the mere fact that Achilles has recently killed a man, while Priam has not. The crucial point here is a murderous folly directed against one's own friends or allies.

The simile describes a man on a threshold. The narrative has also arrived at a threshold, at a moment of crisis or decision. Achilles will have to decide whether to grant Priam's request, just as the rich man will have to decide whether to welcome the homicide. The reversal of

roles in the simile foreshadows the reversal in the action, the final peripety that is about to occur. The simile also foreshadows Achilles' change of mind. It displaces the role of Achilles, of the man ruled by wrath, to another person; the simile thus frees him, as it were, from the passion that has kept him from releasing Hector's body. Most importantly, the reversal of roles in the simile implies that the man on the threshold is like Achilles himself. The amazement felt by Achilles is the amazement of a man who recognises the common ground between himself and his enemy. This common ground is also emphasised in the dialogue that follows the simile. Priam compares himself to Achilles' father Peleus, and Achilles affirms the parallel. He foresees that Peleus, too, will have to mourn the death of a son who will lose his life on the battlefield of Troy. The encounter between Achilles and Priam, which is perhaps the true climax of the *Iliad*, is very far from epic splendour and glory. Instead, it emphasises mortality, grief and loss. So does *Memorial*. In this respect, as in many others, Oswald's poem is faithful to the spirit of its great original.

Ruhr-Universität
Bochum

NOTES

[1]This essay is based on a talk we presented at the 14th International *Connotations* Symposium "Self-Imposed Fetters: The Productivity of Formal and Thematic Restrictions" in 2017. We would like to thank Matthias Bauer, who initially suggested the topic of the symposium (see Bauer), and the participants, who made helpful comments on our talk. Thanks are also due to Manuel Baumbach, Maik Goth, Frank Kearful, Anton Kurenbach, Theodor Lindken, Svenja Schürmann and the two anonymous *Connotations* readers for their criticisms of previous drafts of the essay.

[2]Edwards points out that there are about 200 epic or extended similes in the *Iliad*, as opposed to roughly 40 in the *Odyssey* (102). Edwards's numbers are based on a distinction between extended and short similes ("like a lion," "like a god," etc.), which is contested by other scholars. Scott argues that there is no clear-cut distinction between two types but a scale from basic to fully elaborated similes (18-31).

[3]References to the *Iliad* are to the prose translation by Hammond, references to the Greek original to the Oxford Classical Texts edition by Monro and Allen.

[4]Hammond's repetition of "thick" corresponds to the repetition of a form of ταρφύς in the Greek original. We owe the term *simile marker* to Ben-Porat, who provides a thorough structural analysis of the so-called "double-headed" or "multiplied" epic simile, an example of which will be discussed below. We have decided to stick to the traditional terminology of tenor and vehicle, which was introduced by I. A. Richards in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (96). Admittedly, when it comes to analysing metaphors, these terms are problematic. In metaphors that do not take the form "a (tenor) is b (vehicle)," it is often difficult to identify the tenor. In such cases, terminological pairs like *source domain* and *target domain* (Lakoff) or the German *bildspendender Bereich* and *bildempfangender Bereich* (Weinrich) are more helpful. But in the analysis of similes, which usually take the form "a (tenor) is like b (vehicle)," the identification of the tenor does not pose a problem. In addition, Richards's pair is stylistically much less cumbersome than the alternatives.

[5]The exception is the death of Gorgythion, whose head drops like the calyx of a poppy weighed down by rain (*Iliad* 8.306-08, *Memorial* 32-33). In another case, Oswald attaches the simile to a different warrior but retains the original meaning of the simile. Homer's Imbrios, who sinks down when stabbed by Teukros, is compared to an ash-tree which falls to the ground when hewn by axes (13.177-81). Oswald transfers it to the obituary of Promachus, who, like Imbrios, drops to the ground at the moment of his death (52).

[6]Relating *Memorial* to contemporary war memorials, Hahnemann reads the poem as an egalitarian, feminist and pacifist approach to the *Iliad*. She also provides a useful appendix in which she identifies the passages in the *Iliad* from which the similes in *Memorial* are taken. Other critics who have discussed *Memorial* in some detail are Harrop, Farrier and Pestell. Inspired by one of Oswald's public recitations, Harrop discusses the relation between *Memorial* and oral poetry as well as the related topics of speech and silence; Farrier links *Memorial* to the Anthropocene and to a "poetics of haunted time"; Pestell analyses the relationship between the natural, the human and the divine (219-20).

[7]See Thacker for a brief discussion of the "paratactic relationship between clauses" which Oswald discerns in Homer and uses as a model in her own poetry (105-06). The focus of Thacker's essay is on Oswald's earlier collections.

[8]Oswald here probably refers to the funerals of Hector and Achilles in the final books of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, respectively. In neither is the lament for the dead shared by a poet and women precisely as Oswald describes it; her account seems to be influenced by the antiphonal structure of her own poem. By the way, we do not wish to carry the idea of antiphony so far as to attribute the two components of *Memorial* to different voices, e.g. the obituaries to the women and the similes to the poet (or vice versa). Neither the preface nor the poem offers enough evidence for that.

[9]See also Lord's classical comparison of Homer with 20th-century oral poets, *The Singer of Tales*; Lord argues that the perception of inconsistency or, to use Horace's words, of "Homer nodding," results from applying literary standards to oral poetry (10-12, 94-98, 152).

[10]For instance at the Walberberg Conference 2012 in Berlin, where I (B. Niederhoff) was present. Admittedly, the recital of a work that is first written and then learnt by heart is not the same thing as an oral poem. Oral poets do not recite a finished work because such a work does not exist. They compose as they perform, and the work, instead of being ever fixed or finished, changes with each new performance.

[11]See Ben-Porat on this type of simile.

[12]Other vehicles which rely on the same shift from predator to prey feature, for instance, a deer killed by dogs and eaten by a lion (*Memorial* 47-48, *Iliad* 11.473-84) and bird families attacked by an eagle (*Memorial* 55, *Iliad* 15.690-94).

[13]Oswald pointed out this connection to me (B. Niederhoff) when I talked to her after her recital of *Memorial* at the Walberberg Conference.

[14]The metaphorical link between Ilioneus and the trees is a good example of the two forces at work in *Memorial*, the fidelity to Homer's text and the need to refashion the recontextualised passages. Homer, of course, does not create any connections, metaphorical or otherwise, between the oak simile and the obituary of Ilioneus; after all, the two passages are about 1700 verses apart in the *Iliad*. The link is constructed by Oswald to endow the transplanted simile with meaning in its new context. However, the link is not gratuitous. In constructing it, Oswald seizes upon characteristic details in Homer's text: "Ilioneus sank down stretching out both his arms" (14.495-96); the oaks "are fast-fixed by their great roots stretching down" (12.134). It is a coincidence, by the way, that Hammond uses the same verb "stretching" in both passages. The Greek original, which Oswald uses, features different terms: a form of πετάννυμι for Ilioneus (14.495) and a form of διηνεκής for the trees (12.134).

[15]This excess has become a hallmark of the epic simile in general. It is pointed out, for instance, by Samuel Johnson in the following observation on John Milton: "But he does not confine himself within the limits of rigorous comparison: his great excellence is amplitude, and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimension which the occasion required. Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope and all the wonders which the telescope discovers" (708). Leaving aside Satan and the telescope, the comment also applies to the author of the *Iliad* and many another epic poet. On the excessive or expansive quality of the epic simile, see Addison (498-504).

[16]Similar points about contrast or difference being an effect of Homer's similes are made by Minchin (41) and Scott (32-33).

[17]See Scott (14-41). Notopoulos, "Homeric Similes," and Ready also make a case for the oral nature of Homer's similes.

[18]Further instances are listed by Richardson (175). In his analysis of the simile, Buxton points out the connection to Patroclus and argues, as we also do below, that the simile suggests the common ground between Achilles and Priam (153-55).

[19]For an analysis of the central theme of Achilles' anger, see Latacz (89-101).

WORKS CITED

Addison, Catherine. "'So Stretched Out Huge in Length': Reading the Extended Simile." *Style* 35 (2001): 498-516.

Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur*. Bern: Francke, 1946.

Bauer, Matthias. "Self-Imposed Fetters: The Productivity of Formal and Thematic Restrictions." *Connotations: A Journal for Critical Debate* 27 (2018): 1-18. http://www.connotations.de/article/matthias-bauer-self-imposed-fetters-the-productivity-of-formal-and-thematic-restrictions/

Ben-Porat, Ziva. "Poetics of the Homeric Simile and the Theory of (Poetic) Simile." *Poetics Today* 13 (1992): 737-69.

Buxton, Richard. "Similes and Other Likenesses." *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*. Ed. Robert Fowler. Cambridge: CUP, 2004. 139-55.

Edwards, Mark W. *Homer: Poet of the* Iliad. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987.

Farrier, David. "'Like a Stone': Ecology, *Enargeia*, and Ethical Time in Alice Oswald's *Memorial*." *Environmental Humaniti*es 4 (2014): 1-18.

Hahnemann, Carolin. "Book of Paper, Book of Stone: An Exploration of Alice Oswald's *Memorial*." *Arion* 22 (2014): 1-32.

Harrop, Stephe. "Speech, Silence and Epic Performance: Alice Oswald's *Memorial*." *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 8 (2013): 79-91.

Homer. *Homeri Opera: Iliadis Libri*. Ed. David B. Monro and Thomas W. Allen. 3rd ed. 2 vols. Scriptorum Classicorum Bibliotheca Oxoniensis. Oxford: Clarendon, 1920.

Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. and introd. Martin Hammond. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin, 1987.

Jaffa, Naomi. "A Conversation with Alice Oswald." *Brick* 90 (2013): 17-20.

Johnson, Samuel. *Samuel Johnson*. Ed. Donald Greene. The Oxford Authors. Oxford: OUP, 1984.

Lakoff, George. "The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor." *Metaphor and Thought*. Ed. Andrew Ortony. 2nd ed. Cambridge: CUP, 1993. 202-51.

Latacz, Joachim. *Homer: Der Erste Dichter des Abendlands*. Düsseldorf: Artemis und Winkler, 2003.

Lord, Albert B. *The Singer of Tales.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1971.

Minchin, Elizabeth. "Similes in Homer: Image, Mind's Eye, and Memory." *Speaking Volumes: Orality and Literacy in the Greek and Roman World*. Ed. Janet Watson. Leiden: Brill, 2001. 25-52.

Nimis, Stephen A. *Narrative Semiotics in the Epic Tradition: The Simile.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1987.

Notopoulos, James A. "Homeric Similes in the Light of Oral Poetry." *Classical Journal* 52 (1957): 323-28.

Notopoulos, James A. "Parataxis in Homer: A New Approach to Homeric Literary Criticism." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 80 (1949): 1-23.

Oswald, Alice. *Memorial: An Excavation of the* Iliad. London: Faber and Faber, 2011.

Pestell, Ben. "Poetic Re-enchantment in an Age of Crisis: Mortal and Divine Worlds in the Poetry of Alice Oswald." *Myths in Crisis: The Crisis of Myth*. Ed. José Manuel Losada and Antonella Lipscomb. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2015. 213-21.

Quintilian. *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*. Trans. H. E. Butler. 4 vols. Loeb Classical Library. London: Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1920-22.

Ready, Jonathan L. "Comparative Perspectives on the Composition of the Homeric Simile." *Orality, Literacy and Performance in the Ancient World*. Ed. Elizabeth Minchin. Leiden: Brill, 2012. 55-87.

Richards, I. A. *Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Oxford: OUP, 1965.

Richardson, Nicholas. *Volume VI: Books 21-24*. Cambridge: CUP, 1993. Vol. 6 of *The* Iliad*: A Commentary*. Gen. ed. G. S. Kirk. 6 vols. 1985-93.

Scott, William C. *The Artistry of the Homeric Simile*. Hanover, NH: UP of New England, 2009.

Thacker, Jack. "The Thing in the Gap-Stone Style: Alice Oswald's Acoustic Arrangements." *Cambridge Quarterly* 44 (2015): 103-18.

Weinrich, Harald. "Semantik der kühnen Metapher." *Sprache in Texten*. Stuttgart: Klett, 1976. 295-316.

Willcock, M. M. *The* Iliad *of Homer: Books XIII-XXIV*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1984.