

Handout for Paper (May 27, 2020)
 [Lucretian Similes]
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 Similes Versus Analogies in Lucretius

1 Definitions:

A. An **analogy** is a factual comparison or concrete example that supports or illustrates an abstract word or general principle, often part of a series:

“Clouds make a **noise** like **canvas awning** or **paper** being torn or a **garment** hung on a line” (*DRN* VI.108-15 abbreviated).

B. A **simile** is a figurative comparison that could be removed with little or no logical effect, usually from a different subject area and not part of a series.

“As [*prothesis*] **hounds** [*vehicle*] very often find by their scent the leaf-hidden resting-place of the mountain-ranging quarry . . . so [*apothesis*] will **you** [*tenor*] be able to see one thing after another in such matters. (*DRN* 1.404-09)

C. A simple **comparison** is a statement that expresses a similarity or difference, usually introduced by a *prothesis* (‘like’, ‘as’, ‘than’):

Bk 4.1211 By means of the mother’s seed [**children**] **are born like their mothers.** (**similes** matrum)

D. **Figurative language** refers to language that uses words in ways that deviate from their literal interpretation to achieve a more complex or powerful effect.

2 Passages:

A- *DRN* VI.102-107: (translation based on *Loeb Classical Library* edition by W. H. D. Rouse-M. F. Smith, 1975)

a+b Besides **clouds** can neither be made of so dense a body as **stone**
 c+d **and wood**, nor again so thin as **mist and smoke**; for then they
 e must either fall thrust down by their dead weight, like **stones**, or
 f like **smoke**, be unable to hold together or contain cold snow and showers of hail.

2.B- *Aeneid* 10.264-66 (#4 in Bk 10 according to my catalogue):

clamorem ad sidera tollunt

Dardanidae [tenor] e muris, . . .

264 *quales* [prothesis] sub nubibus atris
Strymoniae dant signa *grues* [vehicle] atque aethera tranant
cum sonitu, fugiuntque Notos clamore secundo.

C- *Eclogue* 5.32 Vitis ut arboribus decori est, ut vitibus uvae,
(Mopsus) ut gregibus tauri, segetes ut pinguibus arvis,
34 tu decus omne tuis.

45 Tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta,
(Menalcas) quale sopor fessis in gramine, quale per aestum
dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo.

3 Tabulations: Similes and Analogies in *DRN* of Lucretius

3 similes in Bk I + 9 analogies. 4 similes in Bk II + 7 analogies.
10 similes in Bk III + 28 “ . 9 similes in Bk IV + 24 analogies.
2 similes in Bk V + 26 “ . 4 similes in Bk VI + 41 analogies.
Total: 32 similes + 135 analogies = 167.

4 Bibliography:

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