

GREGORY NAZIANZEN'S USAGE OF THE HOMERIC SIMILE

It has been stated that «the simile is Homer's gift to poetry»¹ and that the influence through Virgil of the Homeric similes «has affected the subsequent history of European poetry»². The present study is aiming at examining the degree of truth behind the above statements with regard to the similes used in Gregory's hexameter and elegiac poems³.

The similes of the Homeric epics are generally classed into two categories: 1) the brief formulaic comparisons⁴ which are «simple like the Homeric metaphors»⁵ and a «universal means of expressing thought»⁶; and 2) the typical Homeric simile which is «extended so as to become in itself a little picture or story»⁷. For reasons of mere convenience I follow Lee⁸ in naming the short comparison an Internal (I) and the long simile a Full (F) simile. Each simile consists of two parts: 1) the bare simile, the *παραβολή*, called by Lee 'protasis' and by Fränkel 'Wiesatz', and 2) the *ῶς*-clause (or other similar clause) which Lee calls 'apodosis' —and Fränkel 'Sosatz'⁹— (and does not count it as part of the simile proper). The apodosis is mainly a characteristic of the Full similes and it usually follows the protasis. These are called by Lee 'forward-looking'

1. See S. E. Bassett, *The Poetry of Homer*, Sather Classical Lectures, vol. 15, Berkeley California: University of California Press, 1938, p. 164.

2. See C. M. Bowra, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930, p. 127.

3. The text of the poems is taken from J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 37. For brevity when I refer to them I cite in parenthesis only the number of the colon on which they appear: e.g. *carm.* 1.1.2.19 (403). For the Homeric epics I follow the text of the Oxford edition.

4. See H. Clarke, *Homer's Readers. A historical Introduction to the Iliad and the Odyssey*, London and Toronto: Newark Univ. of Delaware Press, 1981, p. 221.

5. See W. A. Camps, *An Introduction to Homer*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, p. 55.

6. See S. E. Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

7. See W. A. Camps, *op. cit.*, p. 55. For a tripartite classification see e.g. G. P. Shipp, *Studies in the Language of Homer*, second edition, Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1972, p. 79.

8. See D. J. N. Lee, *The Similes of the Iliad and the Odyssey compared*, Melbourne: Melbourne Univ. Press, 1964, p. 3.

9. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

similes. Additionally, we find occasionally 'backward-looking' similes (when the apodosis precedes the protasis) and 'double-facing' similes (when one apodosis precedes and another one follows the same protasis)¹⁰.

In Gregory's hexameter poems there are about twenty-seven I and nineteen F similes; while in his elegiac ones twenty-seven are I and eleven F similes. The length of the Gregorian similes —only of the apodosis— ranges from one foot to ten lines. In Homer it is up to nine lines.

As happens in the Homeric epics, so in the Gregorian the poet sometimes illustrates emphatically the same object/idea by two or more similes presented in rapid succession either to mark particular occasions, or to underline striking moments¹¹. Examples of an accumulation of short comparisons —called by Webster an «induction comparison»¹² are: Greg. Naz. *carm.* 1.1.2.67ff. (Migne, *PG* 37, col. 406), 1.1.4.44f. (*ib.*, 419), 1.2.1.713ff. (576), 1.2.13.1f. (754), 2.1.17.81f. (1267) and 2.1.83.7f. (1429). However, the most elaborate examples are those of massed Full similes which are all found in elegiac poems: *carm.* 2.1.16.66ff. (1259), 2.1.45.2ff. (1353f.) and 2.1.83.17ff. (1429f.) with seven, five and two similes respectively. These successive similes are all well chosen to be appropriate to the context, in opposition to some of the Homeric ones —particularly of the *Iliad*— which have been criticized as monotonous and mechanical and as being rather embellishments for their own sake and not integral to the narrative¹³.

The Internal simile is embedded in the verse beginning at every possible place in the first five feet except at the forbidden 'fourth trochaic' caesura as happens in the Homeric epics¹⁴; while the Full simile usually begins and ends with the verse as again happens in Homer¹⁵.

In form the Gregorian similes may be divided into various categories according to the particles, conjunctions, adjectives etc. by which they are introduced.

10. For examples on this see Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 14f.

11. See R. C. Jebb, *Homer. An Introduction to the Iliad and the Odyssey*, third edition, Glasgow: J. Maclehose, 1888, p. 31, Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 12ff. and T. B. L. Webster, *From Mycenae to Homer*, London: Methuen, 1958, p. 232 and p. 234f.

12. See Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

13. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

14. See S. E. Bassett, The Function of the Homeric Simile, *JAPhA* 52 (1921) 132-147 (p. 135).

15. Some exceptions to this are: Greg. Naz. *carm.* 1.1.2.19f. (Migne, *PG* 37, col. 403), 1.1.7.51f. (*ib.*, 442), 1.1.8.91ff. (453f.), 2.1.19.19f. (1272), 2.1.22.19f. (1282), 2.1.10.5f. (1027) and 2.2.1.159ff. (1463).

1) In Gregory's hexameter and elegiac poems there are three and four Internal similes respectively which all begin with ὡς preceded by a noun or adjective (used nominally): e.g. *carm.* 1.2.12.3 (754): / μύρμηχ' ὡς ὀλίγον¹⁶. This is a very common type of (short) simile in the Homeric epics, although here one finds Full similes too¹⁷.

2) More common in Gregory's poems is the Internal simile with ὡς, or ὥστε (in Homer always ὡς τε¹⁸) followed by a noun. This type is used twelve times in his hexameters and fifteen in his elegiac poems. See e.g. his *carm.* 1.2.12.1 (753): (τί μ') ὡς τροχὸς ἀμφιέλικτος/¹⁹. Apart from the common Internal similes of this type, in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* there are also a few Full similes.

3) a) The use of ὡς or ὥστε with a subject and a verb appears ten times in the hexameter and twice in the elegiac poems, always in Full similes followed by an apodosis with ὡς²⁰: *carm.* 1.2.2.526ff. (620):

ὡς δ' ὄρνιν φοίνικα φάτις θνήσκοντα νεάζειν
 ἐν πυρὶ τικτόμενον, πολλῶν ἐτέων μετὰ κύκλα,
 γηραλέης κονίης ξεῖνον γόνον αὐτογένεθλον,
 ὡς οἳ γε θνήσκοντες ἀεῖζωοι τελέθουσι,
 530 δαιόμενοι πυρόεντι πόθῳ Χριστοῦ Βασιλῆος²¹.

This is also the case in the Homeric epics in which one finds one backward-looking simile (*Od.* 4.535) and one double-facing (*Il.* 17.747ff.). In his similes Gregory always uses either aorist or present indicative, while in the Homeric epics subjunctive is also used according to metrical necessities²².

b) A Full simile, namely *carm.* 1.2.1.503ff. (560), opens with /ἀλλ' ὡς

16. See also *carm.* 1.1.2.52 (405), 1.1.5.4 (424), 2.1.1.498 (1007), 1.2.12.11 (754) and 2.1.45.156 (1364).

17. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 17f. and List B (p. 62ff.) which contains all the Homeric examples of this type as well as of those which follow.

18. But ὥστε in similes is used e.g. in *Apoll. Rhod. Argon.* 2.26, 756, and 3.1373.

19. Other examples are: *carm.* 1.1.2.22, 67, 72 (403, 406), 1.1.3.32 (410), 1.1.7.70, 91 (444, 445), 1.2.2.209, 559 (594, 622), 1.2.29.97f. (891), 1.2.38.4 (967) etc.

20. Exceptions to this are: *carm.* 2.1.19.4f. (1271) and 2.1.1.187ff. (984) in which the apodosis begins with τοῦνεκα and αὐτάρ respectively; and 2.1.19.19f. (1272) and 2.1.22.20f. (1282) which are backward-looking similes.

21. Other examples are: *carm.* 1.1.8.91ff., 122f. (453f., 456), 1.1.9.87f. (463f.), 1.2.1.189ff., 278ff., 511f. (537, 543f., 560), 2.1.1.187ff. (984), 2.1.19.4f., 19f. (1271, 1272), 2.1.22.20f. (1282), 2.1.16.41ff. (1257) and 2.1.50.33ff. (1387f.).

22. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

τις and, in so doing, it resembles four Homeric similes beginning with ἀλλ' ὡς τε (or τ')²³.

4) Another Full backward-looking simile appearing in an elegiac poem, namely *carm.* 2.1.50.17f. (1386), begins with ὡς ἔτε without a verb as happens in a few Homeric similes (*Il.* 2.394ff. and 23.712f.).

5) Six similes (three in hexameter and three in elegiac poems)²⁴ are formed with ὡς δ' ἔτε and a verb in present/aorist indicative, or aorist subjunctive/optative and are all followed by the apodosis ὡς καὶ except *carm.* 2.1.83.17ff. (1429f.). The apodosis in this simile is introduced by τοῖος as happens in two Homeric similes in *Il.* 4.141ff. and 275ff. The forward-looking Full simile of this type is common in the Homeric epics too, although a few examples of backward-looking and double-facing similes are also used²⁵. As happens in the Homeric epics, so in the Gregorian poems the choice of one mood rather than another seems to have no other serious explanation except that of metrical convenience. However, the optative —appearing in *carm.* 2.1.1.616 (1016)— is not used in any Homeric simile of this kind, although it appears in other types²⁶.

6) In Gregory's hexameter poems there is only one Internal simile —*carm.* 1.2.2.579 (624)— which is introduced with ἦσττε— placed at the fifth foot and followed by a single noun. This type of simile is quite common in the Homeric epics, although in the *Iliad* alone some forward-looking or double-facing similes are also used²⁷.

7) An Internal simile introduced with εἰκῶς (without a verb) is used once in a hexameter poem: *carm.* 1.2.1.713ff. (576) and once in an elegiac one: *carm.* 2.1.83.7f. (1429). The former is a triple simile of the type εἰκῶς τινὶ ἢ τινὶ ἢ τινὶ and the latter a double: τινὶ εἰκῶς καὶ τινὶ. This is a very common type of Homeric simile, although there are also double-facing or forward-looking Full similes²⁸.

8) Gregory's hexameters and elegiacs contain each six similes introduced with οἷος (or οἷα used adverbially). Out of these, eight are Internal similes

23. These are: *Il.* 13.703ff., 15.410ff., 690ff. and 17.434f. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 18f.

24. These are: *carm.* 1.1.7.30ff. (441), 2.1.1.529ff., 616ff. (1009f., 1016), 2.1.34.119ff. (1315f.), 2.1.45.271ff. (1372) and 2.1.83.17ff. (1429f.).

25. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

26. See the similes in *Od.* 9.314, *Il.* 2.780, 11.389 which are all introduced with ὡς εἰ and Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

27. See Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 20 and 63.

28. See e.g. *Il.* 5.87ff., 522ff. and 16.259ff., 582f.

(three with οἶα²⁹, three with οἶά τε³⁰, one with οἶον³¹ and one with οἶόν τε³²) and four are Full similes (two forward-looking with the apodosis τοῖος³³, one double-facing of the type: τοῖος... οἶος... ὥς καί³⁴ and another double-facing simile in *carm.* 2.2.1.159ff. (1463)). In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* the most common of these types is the forward-looking Full simile (usually of the type: οἶος... τοῖος), one is a double-facing Full simile (*Il.* 5.554ff.) and three are Internal beginning with οἶά τε³⁵ or οἶόν τε (*Od.* 19.233).

9) Gregory introduces two of his Internal similes with ὁμοῖος (preceded by an adjective or noun as happens in about nine Homeric similes³⁶); and five (four hexameter and one elegiac) with ὁμοῖα (ὁμοῖα), or ὁμοῖον (which are used adverbially and they usually follow a noun or adjective³⁷). There is no such type among the Homeric similes.

10) Gregory uses twice a simile opening with ὁσσάτιον while its apodosis —beginning with τόσσον— precedes³⁸. Most of the Homeric similes of the type: ὄσσοις... τόσσοις are forward-looking similes, one is Internal (*Il.* 2.468) and one is backward-looking as is the present one (*Il.* 15.358f.).

11) In two different places in Gregory's elegiac poetry there are massed similes of the type: οὐ... τόσσον... ὄσσον. The first group of such similes appears in *carm.* 2.1.16.66ff. (1259), it consists of seven similes and has both a preceding (τοῖον) and a following (ὄσσον) apodosis. The other group is found in *carm.* 2.1.45.2ff. (1353f.), it contains five similes and has only a following apodosis (ὄσσον). As has been already observed, similes expressed in the form of a series of negative criteria are uncommon in the Homeric epics³⁹. Yet, two examples of such forward-looking similes appear in *Il.* 14.394ff. and 17.20ff. They both contain a group of three similes.

12) Another irregular type of similes either in the Gregorian or the Homeric poems is that which begins with ἦμος and has a following apodosis

29. See *carm.* 2.1.1.32, 268 (972, 990) and 2.1.45.228 (1369).

30. See *carm.* 2.1.1.559f. (1011), 2.1.45.123 (1362) and 2.2.1.106ff. (1459).

31. See *carm.* 2.1.1.143f. (980).

32. See *carm.* 2.1.45.250 (1371).

33. See *carm.* 1.1.7.1ff. (438f.) and 2.2.1.330 (1475).

34. See *carm.* 2.1.1.56ff. (974).

35. See *Od.* 3.73 and 7.106.

36. These are: *carm.* 2.1.1.94f. (977) and 2.1.17.15 (1263).

37. These are: *carm.* 1.1.8.5 (447), 1.2.2.80, 620 (584, 627), 2.1.1.185 (984) and 2.2.1.61 (1456).

38. See *carm.* 1.1.7.51f. (442) and 2.1.10.6 (1027).

39. See M. Coffey, The Function of the Homeric Simile, *AJPh* 78 (1957) 113-132 (p. 123).

with τῆμος. It is found in *carm.* 1.1.2.19ff. (403) and it may be compared with the simile in *Il.* 11.86ff.

Carm. 2.1.34.193ff. (1324) may be considered as a loose simile. Finally, Gregory has not used some less common openings of the Homeric similes such as: ὡς εἰ (ὡς εἴ τε) with or without a verb, ὡς ὁπότε, ὡς ὅτε without a verb, ὡς δ' ὅταν, (ἐν)αλίγκιος, ἀτάλαντος, εἴκελος (ἔκελος), φή, δέμας and ἴσος⁴⁰.

The next point to discuss is the content of the Gregorian similes in relation to that of the Homeric ones.

As is the case with the Homeric similes, the range of the Gregorian similes is also as wide as the life known to the poet and the various themes used in them are taken from the timeless universal experience⁴¹.

For his similes, Gregory —as does Homer— first draws upon the living world of the animals, fish, birds, plants and trees.

The lion simile, which is one of the most common similes in Homer —Lee records forty-eight such similes⁴²— is used in Gregory's poems five times⁴³. The simile in *carm.* 1.2.1.606 (568): / ὡς τις ἐλαφροτέροισι λέων θήρεσσιν ἐπιστάς. / underlines the superiority of a lion over other less strong animals and may be compared with that in *Il.* 10.485ff.⁴⁴. *Carm.* 2.1.19.19f. (1272): ὥστε λέοντα / πάντοθεν ἀμφυλάουσι⁴⁵ κακοὶ κύνες recalls the theme of dogs (and hunters) attacking lions (or boars) which appears in a number of Homeric similes⁴⁶. The simile in *carm.* 2.1.16.71f. (1259): / οὐδὲ λῖς ἡϋγένειος⁴⁷ (sc. ἔκλαυσε) ἐπακτῆρесси δαμέντας / σκύμνους, (which is one of a group of negative similes) finds its parallel in *Il.* 18.318ff.: / πυκνὰ μάλα στενάχων (sc. Achilles) ὡς τε λῖς ἡϋγένειος / ᾧ ῥά θ' ὑπὸ σκύμνους ἐλαφηβόλος ἀρπάσῃ ἀνήρ / ...⁴⁸. In the simile in *carm.* 2.1.50.17f. (1386) the lion (λίς) is

40. Homeric examples with such openings are given in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 62ff. (List B).

41. See Jebb, *op. cit.*, p. 30, Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 166f., Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 219 and Camps, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

42. See Lee, *op. cit.*, List C (p. 65ff.) where the similes are grouped according to their subject.

43. These are: *carm.* 1.2.1.606 (568), 2.1.1.616ff. (1016), 2.1.19.19f. (1272), 2.1.16.71f. (1259) and 2.1.50.17f. (1386).

44. Cf. also *Il.* 11.383.

45. This verb —if not a corruption— seems to be a *hapax legomenon*, although it is not recorded either in *LSJ* or in Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*.

46. See e.g. *Il.* 8.338ff., 11.292ff., 548ff. and 12.41ff.

47. For λῖς ἡϋγένειος see *Il.* 15.275, 17.109 and 18.318 —the two latter passages are similes— and cf. *Od.* 4.456. On the form λῖς and its origins see the discussion in Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 40-46.

48. Cf. also the simile in *Il.* 17.133ff. in which ἐπακτῆρ is used as in the Gregorian simile.

characterized with the epithet ἄλκιμος which seems to have been used after the characterization of a lion as ἀλκί πεποιθώς in the Homeric similes⁴⁹. Apart from the dog similes mentioned above there is another one in *carm.* 2.1.22.20f. (1282): κύνες δ' ὡς πτώκα λαγῶν⁵⁰ / ἦ κεμάδ' ἀμφίς ἔχουσι referring to dogs surrounding a hare or deer. The simile recalls a similar one in *Il.* 10.360ff.⁵¹.

The beast or boar similes —also common in Homer— are used in *carm.* 2.2.1.61 (1456): θήρεσσιν ὁμοίῃα and 1.2.14.94 (762): ὥστε σύες⁵².

The horse simile —which features five times in Homer— is used once in Gregory's *carm.* 2.1.17.105 (1269): ὡς θοὸν⁵³ ἵππον. Two other similes with πῶλος are found in *carm.* 2.1.1.559ff. (1011) and 2.2.1.106ff. (1459). In the latter simile πῶλος is characterized as ἀεθλοφόρος which is used of ἵππος in two Homeric similes⁵⁴.

Although the cattle similes are common in Homer, Gregory uses them only once in *carm.* 2.1.16.72 (1259): οὐδ' ἀγέλην βουκόλος (sc. ἔκλαυσεν) ὄλλυμένην.

Gregory uses four similes with reptiles: *carm.* 1.1.8.5 (447): ἐρπυστήρ, 2.1.1.235ff. (987f.): πικρὸς ἔχίς, 2.1.1.618ff. (1016): ὄφις and 1.2.1.715 (576): (sc. εὐικότες) / ἦ δολιχῶν ὀφίων σκολιοῖς μηρύμασι γαστρὸς⁵⁵. In the *Iliad* there are only two such similes which, however, both use the word δράκων⁵⁶.

Gregory makes use of similes with fish as does Homer: 1) *carm.* 2.1.1.55ff. (974):

- 55 Τοῖον γὰρ ἐπ' ἀνδράσι λοιγὸν ὑφαίνει,
οἶον ὑπ' εἶδατι χαλκός, ὅτ' ἰχθύσι κῆρα φέρησιν,
οἱ ζῶν ποθέοντες ἐνὶ σπλάγχνοισιν ὄλεθρον
εἴρυσαν ἀπροῖδῃ σφέτερον μόνον ἀμφιχανόντες.
ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ δολόμητις, ἐπεὶ ζόφον ὄντα μιν ἔγνων,
60 ἐσσάμενος χροῶ καλὸν ἐπήλυθε φωτὶ εὐικώς,
αἶκεν πῶς ἀρετὴν ποθέων κακίῃ πελάσαιμι
κλεπτομένου πρὸς ὄλεθρον ἐλαφροτέρωιο νόοιο...

49. See *Il.* 5.299, 17.61, *Od.* 6.130 and cf. *Il.* 13.471.

50. Cf. *Il.* 22.310.

51. Cf. also *Il.* 15.271ff., 579ff. and 22.189ff.

52. See also *carm.* 2.1.45.123 (1362) and 1.1.8.5 (447).

53. In Homer this adjective describes chariots (*Il.* 11.533 = 17.458) but not a horse (which is usually called ὠκός or ἀελλόπους). Yet cf. Apoll. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.86 and 1604.

54. See *Il.* 22.22 and 162.

55. Cf. Nicand. *Ther.* 160 and 265.

56. See *Il.* 3.33ff. and 22.93ff.

The simile refers to the death the hook brings to fish and may be compared to the Homeric one in *Il.* 24.82. 2) *Carm.* 2.1.1.498 (1007) is a simile with a cuttle-fish (σηπίη), 3) *carm.* 1.2.12.11 (754): δελφίς δ' ὡς ἐπὶ χέρσον ἀλίδρομος⁵⁷ is a dolphin simile as is that in *Il.* 21.22ff.⁵⁸, and 4) *carm.* 2.1.16.74 (1259): οὐ (sc. τόσον ἔκλαυσε) πολύπους (sc. ἀφείς) θαλάμην finds its counterpart in the sea-polypus (octopus or cuttle-fish) simile in *Od.* 5.432ff.

Similes with birds and insects are very common in the Homeric epics and they appear also five times in Gregory's poems: 1) *carm.* 1.2.13.1 (754): ὡς πετεργνά/⁵⁹, 2) 2.1.16.73f. (1259): οὐδὲ φιλοξένοιο φυτοῦ καθύπερθε καλιῆν / ὄρνις (sc. ἔκλαυσεν) ἀφείς ἀέκων; 3) 1.2.2.526ff. (620) —the text is cited above p. 14— is a simile which refers to the fabulous bird phoenix and finds no parallel in the Homeric epics, 4) 2.1.16.13 (1251): ὥστε μέλισσαι/⁶⁰ and 5) 2.2.1.159ff. (1463):

Νῦν γε μὲν οἷς τεκέεσσι πατήρ, πτερὸν οἶα νεοσσοῖς
 160 αἰετὸς ὠκυπέτης⁶¹ πλησίον ἰπτάμενος,
 ἰθύνει νεόπηκτον⁶², ὅτ' ἠέρος ἐν λαγόνεσσι
 δινεύοντ' οὐπω θαρσαλέη πτέρυγι,
 πολλὰ μὲν εὐσεβίης παιδεύματα τοῖσιν ὀπάζων,
 οὐπω δ' ἦς ἀρετῆς φέρτερον οὐδὲν ἔχων.

The eagle simile is common in the Homeric epics⁶³.

Finally, in Gregory's poems we find a simile with an ant, one with a bear, and one with a tortoise and a crab⁶⁴. Such animal similes do not occur in Homer⁶⁵.

Gregory —as does Homer— forms similes with trees, plants and flowers. The common Homeric simile with oak trees appears in *carm.* 2.1.1.187ff. (984):

57. Cf. Nonn. *Dionys.* 43.281.

58. Cf. Apoll. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.933ff.

59. A Homeric simile with πετεργνά is found in *Il.* 2.459ff.

60. Homeric similes with bees are found in *Il.* 2.87ff. and 12.167ff. Cf. Apoll. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.879ff. and 2.130ff.

61. In Homer the adjective is used with ἵππος (*Il.* 8.42 = 13.24). With ἵρηξ it is used in Hesiod. *Oper.* 212.

62. Cf. Greg. Naz. *carm.* 1.2.1.378 (550).

63. See e.g. *Il.* 17.674ff., 21.252ff., 22.308ff. and *Od.* 24.538.

64. See *carm.* 1.2.12.3 (754), 2.1.1.616ff. (1016) and 1.2.1.713ff. (576) respectively.

65. For an ant simile see Apoll. Rhod. *Argon.* 4.1452ff.

ὡς δρυὸς ὑψικόμοιο⁶⁶, βίαις ἀνέμων ἐριπούσης
 κλῶνας ἀφαρπάζουσι περισταδὸν ἄλλοθεν ἄλλος,
 ἢ μεγάλην φραγμοῖο διαρραισθέντος ἀλῶν⁶⁷
 190 νηλειῶς τρυγῶσι παρατροχάοντες⁶⁸ ὀδῖται,
 καὶ ὡς δρυμόθεν μονόφορβος⁶⁹ ἐῶ δηλήσατ' ὀδόντι·
 αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ πόνος ἐστὶν ἀγάστωνος.

This simile may be compared to that in *Il.* 14.414ff.⁷⁰. Another Gregorian simile with a πίτυς and a πλατάνιστος uprooted by a stream is found in 2.1.1.529ff. (1009f.) and may be compared to *Il.* 11.492ff.

Similes with roses or grapes appear in Gregory's poetry, yet they are missing from Homer's⁷¹. These are: *carm.* 1.2.2.209 (594): ὡς ῥόδον ἐν στυγερῆσι καὶ ὀξείησιν ἀκάνθαις/, *carm.* 2.1.45.250 (1371): οἷόν τε δροσεραῖς ἐν καλύκεσσι ῥόδον/ and *carm.* 2.1.16.41ff. (1257):

ὡς δὲ βότρυς λιαρῆσιν ὑπ' ἀκτίνεσσι μελαγχθείς,
 οὔτ' ὄμφαξ καθαρῶς ἡρέμα λυόμενος,
 οὔθ' ὄλος ὠριός ἐστι, τὸ μὲν μέλας, ἄλλο δ' ἐρυθρός,
 ἄλλο δ' ἄρ' αἰθαλόεις, ὄμφακα δ' ἄλλο ἔχει.
 45 ὡς οἱ δηριόωντο πεπαινομένης κακότητος,
 ἤδη καὶ ληνοῖς γήθειον εὐρυτέραις.

Finally, there are two similes with plants or parts of them in *carm.* 2.1.34.119ff. (1315f.) and 1.2.2.80 (584) which, too, have no parallel in Homer.

Other similes featuring in both poets are those referring to natural phenomena. Light similes —or metaphors— are a favourite subject in Gregory's poetry as they have a particular philosophico-religious significance⁷². These are:

66. This is a common Homeric epithet of δρυς: see *Il.* 14.398, 23.118, *Od.* 12.357, 14.328 = 19.297 and 9.186.

67. Homeric similes with an orchard appear in *Il.* 5.87ff., 18.57 (= 438) and 21.346ff.

68. The form —if not a corruption— seems to be the poet's own creation instead of παρατροχάζοντες. See Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, s.v. παρατροχάειν and *LSJ* s.v. παρατροχάζειν.

69. Lampe *PGL* s.v. cites this passage and *carm.* 2.1.13.41 (1230) as the only occurrences of the word. See Hesychius s.v.

70. Cf. also those in *Il.* 12.132ff. and 13.389ff.

71. Such similes appear in OT; cf. e.g. *LXX Sir.* 24.14, 17, 39.13 and *Ps.* 127.3.

72. See my dissertation 'The Hymns of Gregory of Nazianzus and their Place in the History of Greek and Early Christian Hymnography' (unpublished Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Leeds, 1984), p. 47 n. 2, 3.

carm. 1.1.2.22 (403), 1.1.3.32 (410), 2.1.83.8 (1429) and 1.1.7.1ff. (438f.):

Οἷη δ' ὑετίοιο κατ' ἠέρος εὐδιόωντος
 ἄντομένη νεφέεσσιν ἀποκρούστοις περιωγαῖς
 ἀκτὶς ἡελίοιο πολύχροον ἶριν ἐλίσσει,
 ἀμφὶ δέ μιν πάντη σελαγίζεταί ἐγγύθεν αἰθῆρ
 5 κύκλοισιν πυκινόισι καὶ ἔκτοθε λυομένοισι·
 τοίη καὶ φαέων πέλεται φύσις ἀκροτάτιο
 φωτὸς ἀποστίλβοντος ἀεὶ νόας ἤσσονας αὐγαῖς.

The latter simile makes reference also to a rainbow and may be thus compared to a rainbow Homeric simile in *Il.* 11.27f. and 17.547ff.

Wind similes —common in the Homeric epics— appear in *carm.* 1.1.7.51f. (442): (μεγάλοι θεράποντες, / τόσσον πρωτοτύπιο καλοῦ πέλας,) ὁσσάτιόν περ / αἰθῆρ ἡελίοιο, *carm.* 1.1.8.122ff. (456):

ὡς δ' ὑπ' ἀήταις
 χειμερίοις παλίνορσος ἀλίπλοος ἦλθεν ὀπίσσω,
 αὖθις δ' ἠὲ πνοιῆσιν ἐλαφροτέρησι πετάσσας
 125 ἰστίον, ἢ ἐρέτησι μόγῳ πλόον αὖθις ἄνυσσεν,
 ὡς ἡμεῖς μέγαλοιο θεοῦ ἀπὸ τῆλε πεσόντες
 ἔμπαλιν οὐκ ἀμογητὶ φίλον πλόον ἐκπερώωμεν.

in *carm.* 1.2.1.278ff. (543f.):

ὡς δ' ὀλίγην μὲν νῆα μικρὸς προΐησιν ἀήτης
 λαίφεσι πεπταμένοισι δι' οἴδματος ὤκα θέουσαν,
 280 ἠὲ χέρες πέμπουσιν ἐπειγομένην ὑπ' ἐρετμοῖς,
 πολλὴν δ' οὐκ ὀλίγη πνοιὴ φέρει, ἀλλὰ βαρεῖαν
 πόντον ἐπερχομένην στερεώτερος οὖρος ἐπείγει,
 ὡς ῥα καὶ ἄζυγέες μὲν, ἐπεὶ ζώουσιν ἐλαφροί,
 κουφοτέρης μέγαλοιο θεοῦ χατέουσιν ἀρωγῆς⁷³.

and in *carm.* 2.1.45.317ff. (1375f.):

μηδ' (sc. ἐμέ) ὡς νῆα μέλαιναν, εὐπλοον, ὀρθὰ θέουσαν,
 ἤδη καὶ λιμένων πλησίον ἵπταμένην,

73. Cf. the simile in *Il.* 7.4ff.

λαίφεσι πεπταμένοισιν ἐπαΐξασα θύελλα
 320 λευγαλέων ἀνέμων ἐξαπίνης ὀπίσω
 πέμψειεν παλινόρσον ἐπ' εὐρέα νῶτα βίοιο,...

Other similes with ships (which are another favourite theme in Gregory's poetry, particularly for metaphors of life⁷⁴) are: *carm.* 2.1.1.94f. (977), 1.2.13.2 (754) and 2.1.10.22 (1028).

In the category of similes with natural phenomena one also finds those with rivers: *carm.* 1.1.7.30ff. (441):

30 ὡς δ' ὅτε τρηχάλεω ποταμῶν περάων τις ὀδίτης
 ἐξαπίνης ἀνέπαλτο καὶ ἴσχεται ἰέμενός περ,
 πολλὰ δὲ οἱ κραδίη πορφύρεται ἀμφὶ ρέεθρων·
 χρειῶ θάρσος ἔπηξε, φόβος δ' ἐπέδησεν ἐρωτῆν·
 πολλάκι ταρσὸν ἄειρεν ἐφ' ὕδατι, πολλάκι δ' αὖτε
 35 χάσσατο, μαρναμένων δὲ φόβον νίκησεν ἀνάγκη.
 ὡς καὶ ἐμοὶ θεότητος ἀειδέος ἐγγὺς ἰόντι,
 τάρβος μὲν καθαροῖο παραστάτας ὑψιμέδοντος
 θεῖναι ὑπ' ἀμπλακίῃ φωτὸς κεκορημένον εἶδος,
 μή πω καὶ πλεόνεσσιν ὁδὸν κακίης στορέσαιμι.

The simile, having as its subject a man trying to cross a flooded river, may be compared to a similar one appearing in *Il.* 5.597ff.⁷⁵ Two other river similes are: *carm.* 2.1.83.21ff. (1430)⁷⁶ and 2.1.1.529ff. (1009f.) which is mentioned above (p. 20).

Gregorian similes with heavens and earth are found in *carm.* 2.1.10.5f. (1027):

ὄπλοτέρη Ῥώμη, τόσσον προφέρουσα πολήων,
 ὀσσάτιον γαίης οὐρανὸς ἀστερόεις·

and *carm.* 1.2.2.579 (624): ἡὔτε γαίης / respectively. To these one may add two similes referring to night: *carm.* 1.1.4.44 (419) and 2.1.83.7 (1429): νυχτὶ ἔοικώς / which is the same as that in *Il.* 1.47⁷⁷.

74. See B. Lorenz, *Zur Seefahrt des Lebens in den Gedichten des Gregor von Nazianz, VChr.* 33 (1979) 234-241 and R. Freise, *Zur Metaphorik der Seefahrt in den Gedichten Gregors von Nazianz*, in *Il. Symposium Nazianzenum*, edited by J. Mossay, *Forschungen zu Gregor von Nazianz*, 2, Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1983, p. 159-163.

75. Cf. also *Il.* 21.282f.

76. Cf. *Il.* 5.87ff.

77. Cf. also *Il.* 12.463.

Similes with fire are very common in Homer and are used four times in Gregory: 1) *carm.* 2.1.34.60 (1311): ὡς σπινθήρ καλάμης ὄκα ριπιζομένης, 2) *carm.* 2.1.45.271ff. (1372):

᾽Ως δ' ὅτε καρφαλέην καλάμην σπινθήρ ἀίδηλος⁷⁸
 ἔνδοθι βοσκόμενος, λάμπεται ἑξαπίνης,
 φλόξ ὀλίγη τὸ πρῶτον, ἔπειτα δὲ πυρρὸς ἀέρθη
 ἄσπετος, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ φάσματι δαιόμενος
 275 ὄχ' ὑπέλαμπον ἔρωτα, σέλας δέ τε πᾶσι φαάνθη
 οὐκέτ' ἐνὶ ψυχῆς βένθεσι κρυπτόμενον⁷⁹.

3) *carm.* 1.2.1.511 (560): ὡς τισιν ἐν λάεσσι πυρρὸς μένος⁸⁰. The simile may be compared to that in *Il.* 15.605ff. 4) *carm.* 1.2.2.559 (622) refers to the melting of copper by fire.

Two Gregorian similes with stones appear in *carm.* 1.2.1.511ff. (560f.): ὡς δὲ σίδηρος / κρούμασιν ἐκ λιθάκων ἦχε σέλας, ὡς ἀπὸ θνητῶν / εὐσεβίην λοχόωσαν ἄγει Λόγος, and *carm.* 2.1.50.42 (1388): ἔμπνοος ὥστε λίθος/.

Gregory—as does Homer—uses similes with metals: a) iron⁸¹ in *carm.* 1.2.1.511ff. (560f.)—cited just above—*carm.* 2.1.1.32 (972) which refers to the rusting of iron and *carm.* 1.2.29.97f. (891): ὥστε λίθος, / ὄν μάγνης ἐρύει⁸², b) copper in *carm.* 1.2.2.559 (622): ὡς πυρὶ χαλκός. / and c) gold in *carm.* 1.1.7.91 (445): ὡς χρυσὸς χοάνοισι καθαιρόμενοι βιότιοι /. The simile is taken from the OT—specifically from *LXX Sap.* 3.6—and it is used again in *carm.* 1.2.1.602 (568) and *carm.* 1.2.38.4 (967).

Some Gregorian similes refer to various objects, instruments and other things used in daily life: 1) *carm.* 2.1.1.143f. (980) refers to a net, 2) *carm.* 2.1.1.268 (990) to a weight (τάλαντον)⁸³, 3) *carm.* 1.2.12.1 (753) to a wheel, 4) *carm.* 2.1.15.13 (1251) to a circle and 5) *carm.* 2.1.45.228 (1369) to cheese⁸⁴. The simile in *carm.* 2.1.45.156 (1364): ἔμπνοον ὡς κιθάρην Πνεύματι κρουομένην./—a lyre inspired by the Pneuma—has a Christian content⁸⁵. In the same category one may also include the simile in *carm.*

78. The adjective is used with πῦρ in two similes in *Il.* 2.455 and 11.155.

79. Cf. the Homeric similes in *Il.* 11.155ff., 2.455ff., 14.396f., and 20.490ff.

80. Cf. *Il.* 6.182.

81. Such similes in Homer are: *Od.* 19.211 and 494.

82. A simile with a magnet is found in Eurip. *Jr.* 567 (*TGF*, Nauck²).

83. Cf. the Homeric simile in *Il.* 24.80ff.

84. Cf. the simile in *Il.* 5.902ff. which refers to cheese-making.

85. See my dissertation, *op. cit.*, p. 241 (the note on *carm.* 2.1.38.50).

2.1.34.193ff. (1321) which refers to the story of Polycrates' ring (related by Herodotus in his *Histor.* 3.41f.).

In Homer men are compared with various individual gods or goddesses, or even with the deity in general expressed as θεός, ἀθάνατοι, δαίμων⁸⁶. So too Gregory compares men with God or Christ: *carm.* 1.1.5.43 (427) and 2.1.16.86 (1260).

In Gregory's poems there are also various comparisons with man in general (βροτός, ἄνθρωπος): *carm.* 1.1.2.67, 72 (406) and 1.2.2.620 (627); or even with characters of men: *carm.* 2.1.15.12 (1251): ἀλιτήμων, *carm.* 2.1.17.15 (1263): φρενοπλήξ⁸⁷, *carm.* 2.1.87.3 (1433): ἄσαρκος and *carm.* 1.1.2.67 (406): ἀδάμαστος.

Another type of Homeric and Gregorian similes alike is that which refers to various human activities: 1) that of a coppersmith (χαλκεύς)⁸⁸ in *carm.* 1.1.2.52 (405), 2) of a charioteer (ἡνίοχος), in *carm.* 2.1.17.82 (1267), 3) of a seaman (ἀλίπλοος) in *carm.* 1.1.8.122ff. (456) which is cited above (p. 21), 4) of a flute-player in *carm.* 1.1.8.91ff. (453f.), 5) of an engraver in *carm.* 1.2.1.189ff. (537)⁸⁹, 6) of hunters in *carm.* 2.1.50.17f. (1386), 7) of one tending cattle (βουκόλος) in *carm.* 2.1.16.72 (1259), 8) of one playing the game of πεσσοί in *carm.* 1.2.1.503ff. (560) and 9) of one taking the army from a king in *carm.* 1.1.7.70 (444).

In Homer similes with abstract nouns are very rare⁹⁰. In Gregory's poems we find such similes in: 1) *carm.* 1.1.5.5 (424): stroke/beat (πληγή), 2) *carm.* 2.1.83.17ff. (1429f.): disease (νόσος) and 3) *carm.* 1.1.4.44f. (419): old age (γῆρας).

Next come the family similes which appear both in the Gregorian and the Homeric poems, particularly the *Odyssey* (as they are appropriate for a poem about the reuniting of a family⁹¹): 1) *carm.* 2.1.19.4ff. (1271):

ὥς δὲ πατὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἄφρονος υἱὸς ἐοῖο
5 πολλάκις ἀμφοδίων ἐπέων θράσος ἦχ' ὑπέδεκτο,
 τούνεκα καὶ σὺ λόγοισιν ἐμοῖς, θεός, Ἴλαος εἴης, ...

Similes with father and son appear also in the Homeric epics⁹². 2) *Carm.* 2.1.50.33ff. (1387f.):

86. See e.g. *Od.* 2.5, 3.468 and *Il.* 5.438.

87. See also *carm.* 1.1.6.99 (437), 2.2.5.83 (1527) and *AP* 9.141.

88. Cf. the simile in *Od.* 9.391ff.

89. Cf. the simile in Empedocles *fr.* 23 (Diels-Kranz, *Vorsokr.*, i, p. 321f.).

90. See e.g. *Od.* 7.36 and *Il.* 15.80ff.

91. See Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 220 and cf. Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

92. See *Il.* 23.222ff. and *Od.* 17.111f., and the Biblical one in *LXX Ps.* 102.13.

νῦν γε μὲν, ὡς λιπόμαστος ἐν ἀγκαλίδεσσι τεκούσης
 νηπίαχος θηλὴν ἔσπασεν ἀυαλέην
 35 χεῖλεσι διψαλέοισι, πόθον δ' ἐψεύσατο μήτηρ,
 ὡς ἄρ' ἐμῆς γλώσσης λαὸς ἀποκρέμαται, ...

This simile reminds us of the Biblical one in LXX *Ps.* 130.2, while the theme of a mother and baby appears in *Il.* 4.130f. 3) The massed negative simile in *carm.* 2.1.45.2ff. (1353f.) refers to a man who cries for the death of his children, parents and wife, for his burnt homecountry and for his limbs which have been weakened by an illness. In the same category we may include family similes referring to birds: *carm.* 2.2.1.159ff. (1463) —the text is cited above (p. 19)— in which an eagle teaches its nestlings how to fly. Such family similes appear in the Homeric epics too⁹³.

Finally, in Gregory's poetry there are some similes with subjects taken from the Old and New Testament, and the Christian tradition. These are: 1) the gold similes we have mentioned above (p. 23), 2) *carm.* 1.1.9.87ff. (463f.) which refers to the tenth plague of Pharaoh⁹⁴, 3) *carm.* 2.1.16.66ff. (1259) which is a massed negative simile and it refers to the distress of the Israelites having been deprived of their temple (during the Babylonian captivity), or of their ark by the Philistines⁹⁵, and to Jacob's sorrow at the kidnapping of his son Joseph⁹⁶, 4) *carm.* 2.1.55.9 (1400) which is based on *Ev. Mt.* 8.30ff. (or *Mc.* 5.11ff., *Lc.* 8.32f.), 5) *carm.* 2.2.1.330 (1475) which is taken from *Ev. Mt.* 7.2 (cf. *Mc.* 4.24 and *Lc.* 6.38), 6) *carm.* 1.1.2.19f. (403) which refers to the relationship between the Son and the Father, 7) *carm.* 1.1.5.43 (427) which refers to Christ and finally 8) *carm.* 2.1.45.156 (1364) which is mentioned above (p. 23).

Homer's similes, as Bassett observes, 'lack the direct personal reference, the «I» and the «You»', although he goes on to note that the formal subjective element is the present tense which is used in them and makes the pictures belong neither to the past nor to the story⁹⁷. On the contrary, in the Gregorian poems (most of which have a personal autobiographical character) there are a lot of similes the apodosis of which refers to the poet himself⁹⁸.

93. See e.g. *Il.* 9.323f., 12.167ff., 17.4f. and 133ff.

94. See LXX *Ex.* 11.1ff. and Gregory's *carm.* 1.1.14.12 (476).

95. See LXX *1 Reg.* 4.11.

96. See LXX *Gen.* 37.12ff.

97. See Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

98. See e.g. *carm.* 2.1.1.55ff. (974), 2.1.19.19f. (1272), 1.1.7.30ff. (441), 1.1.9.87ff. (463f.), 1.2.13.1f. (754), 1.2.12.11 (754), 2.1.10.22 (1028), 2.1.15.11f. (1251), 2.1.16.66ff. (1259) and 2.1.34.119ff. (1315f.).

A small number of Homeric similes have been severely criticized as inappropriate (either by containing irrelevant details, or by lacking an exact correspondence with the point they illustrate), and many theories have been brought forward to explain this⁹⁹. On the contrary, the Gregorian similes with only a few exceptions, are exact at more than one point of comparison and are reinforced with relevant details.

The Gregorian similes are used not as mere embellishments, but as consistent parts of the poem. Their primary function is the same as that of the Homeric similes, namely to illustrate and underline various aspects of the content of the poem not capable of direct description¹⁰⁰. If we were to examine all the Gregorian similes in detail and within their context, we could see that they have a multiplicity of usages, among others: to suggest inward feelings and physical, or mental situations, to illustrate appearance, sound, measurement of space and time, quantity, or above all to provide a whole picture in order to explain a particular situation or event¹⁰¹. And since this detailed examination forms itself an extended topic of research and, therefore, it would obviously lead us out of the restricted limits of a short article as is the present one, we may end here this preliminary study of the Gregorian similes leaving for the future any further discussion on them.

To sum up our discussion we focus attention on the following points: 1) In types, length and form the Gregorian similes adhere to the Homeric ones. 2) Apart from some Gregorian similes with obvious Biblical or Christian origin, the rest of them use themes from the animal and inanimate nature, the natural phenomena and the daily life which are largely similar to those used in the Homeric similes but are presented freely and with considerable flexibility. 3) In opposition to the Homeric similes, most of the Gregorian ones are appropriately chosen to fit the context and some of them have a personal character. And 4) the Gregorian similes have a variety of functions as do the Homeric ones.

Athens

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99. See Camps, *op. cit.*, p. 57f., Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 220f., Bassett, *op. cit.*, p. 165f., Bowra, *op. cit.*, p. 116f. and 126 and Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 6f.

100. On the function and usages of the Homeric similes see among others Coffey, *art. cit.*, p. 118ff., Camps, *op. cit.*, p. 56 and Webster, *op. cit.*, p. 223, 225 and 235.

101. See e.g. *carm.* 2.1.19.19f. (1272), 2.1.50.17f. (1386), 1.1.7.30ff. (441), 1.1.7.1ff. (438f.), 2.1.83.7f. (1429), 2.1.16.13 (1255), 1.1.7.50ff. (442), 1.2.13.1f. (754), 1.2.12.3 (754), 2.1.1.529ff., 616ff. (1009f., 1016), 1.2.2.526ff. (620).