CHAPTER I

The critic; his environment and equipment

DIONYSIUS of Halicarnassus and Quintus Horatius Flaccus were very close contemporaries, were both keenly interested in literature and literary criticism, were both resident in Rome during the first half of the Augustan Age, and may even have known each other; yet to the modern student of their age they present a remarkable contrast. Horace, by reason of the wealth of personal anecdote and the revealing touches of autobiography which abound in his works, emerges as a real and knowable figure, whose likes and dislikes, foibles, inconsistencies, and delightful philosophy of life are so clearly portrayed as to create a sense of intimacy at once. Dionysius, on the other hand, is known to us only as the scholar, not at all as the man; his reticence concerning his own life and activities is such that we are left the impression of little more than a shadow, moving obscurely in the background of the Augustan Age.

In the Preface to his Early History of Rome, a work which he almost certainly regarded as his magnum opus, Dionysius tells us that he sailed from his native Halicarnassus to Rome in the middle of the 187th Olympiad (i.e. in 30 B.C.), at the close of the Civil Wars. There he devoted himself to the study of Roman history, and, after twenty-two years of research, produced the voluminous work,

1 Horace was born in 65 B.C., and Dionysius probably not much later than 60. The evidence for the date of Dionysius’ birth is of a very general nature, and is examined by H. Dodwell, De Aetate Dionysii Halicarnassei, in the editions of Hudson (1704) and Reiske (1774–7); see also Max. Egger, Denys d’Halicarnasse (Paris, 1902), p. 3.

2 G. C. Fiske, Lucilius and Horace (Madison, 1920), p. 77, states this as a fact; it is, of course, purely conjectural.

3 Ant. Rom. 1, 7.

of which little more than one half has survived. The composition of his History necessitated a knowledge of the Latin language, and this, he informs us, he acquired during his stay; but, more than this, it brought him into close contact with many contemporary scholars and men of letters.¹ That Dionysius was thoroughly at home in the metropolis is clear from the fact that he desired his History, when it appeared, to be regarded as a thank-offering for the kindly treatment he had received.²

In Rome Dionysius also practised as a teacher of rhetoric; and, though he does not appear to have been conspicuous as a declamator, he clearly acted as tutor to Roman youths, and possibly kept an open school.³ In his treatise on literary composition, which he addresses as a birthday-gift to his young pupil Metilius (or Melitius)⁴ Rufus, Dionysius promises to expound certain points more fully ἐν τοῖς καθ’ ἡμέραν γυμνασίοις,⁵ and it was his activity as a teacher of rhetoric which led him to study the works of the Attic orators, on whose characteristics he makes so many illuminating remarks.

It is a very probable assumption that the literary treatises which claim our present attention were written at intervals during the period in which Dionysius was engaged in writing the History.⁶ Indeed, they bear many signs of rapid composition;² though it is

¹ Ant. Rom., loc. cit. καὶ τὰ μὲν παρὰ τῶν λογιστῶν ἀνδρῶν, ὥς ἐς ὁμιλήθη ἤδην, διδασχὼν παραδείγματος.
² ib. 1, 6 χαριτωρίους ἄμοιβας, ὃς ἐμοί δόνασιν ἔμν, ἀποδοῦναι τῇ πόλει, παραδείγματε ταμεμιμένῳ καὶ τῶν ἑλλήνων ἄγαθον δοσὺν ἀπέλαυσα διεστρέψον ἐν σώματί.
⁴ The MS. readings at De Comp. Verb. c. 1 are divided, but Metilius is the more probable, being the name of a Republican gens; a M. Metilius Rufus, governor of Achaea, appears in I.G. iii, 874.
⁵ De Comp. Verb. c. 20 (= ii, 94, Usener-Radermacher).
⁶ Roberts, op. cit. p. 5; Egger, op. cit. pp. 20–2.
⁷ Cf. De Lys. c. 10 (= 1, 17) τοῦ χρόνου στοχασμένος; De Isocrate c. 20 (= 1, 92) ἄναγκη δὲ ἵσος στοχάσεαται τοῦ χρόνου; De Isaeo, c. 15 (= 1, 114); De Dem. c. 14 (= 1, 159); c. 32 (= 1, 201).
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only fair to their author to admit that they rarely betray carelessness or inconsistency. It is a recurring characteristic of Dionysius to promise a separate treatise on a point which he feels himself unable to elucidate fully at the time;¹ and the fact that some of these promised essays do not appear to have been composed agrees with the supposition that the extant *Scripta Rhetorica* were the work of one whose leisure hours were all too few.

Considerable light might be thrown on the life of Dionysius if only more could be discovered about those personal friends to whom he dedicated his essays as they appeared;² but enough can be gathered from his references to them to warrant the belief that Dionysius was, if not the central figure, at least a very active member of one of the literary coteries which were so marked a feature of the period in which he wrote. His essays suggest that constant interchange of opinion took place between himself and interested friends,³ while not infrequently one may discern the signs of a literary polemic. Among the most intimate of these students of literature was Ammaeus, the φιλατσός, κράτιστος, and βελτιστός Ἀμμαέος to whom Dionysius addresses one of his most ambitious works, the treatise on the ancient orators. Ammaeus seems to have been particularly familiar with Demosthenes, the idol of Dionysius; for not only is he mentioned in one passage as being occupied with this author,⁴ but it is he who brings to Dionysius’ notice the view of a certain contemporary Peripatetic philosopher who had asserted that the speeches of Demosthenes were based upon a careful observance of the rules laid down in the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle—a view which Dionysius, in his extant reply to Ammaeus, soundly and convincingly rejects.⁵ It was also at Ammaeus’ request for a fuller explanation of the views

¹ *De Lys.* c. 12 (= 1, 22); c. 14 (= 1, 25); *De Isaac.* c. 2 (= 1, 94); *De Dem.* c. 32 (= 1, 201); *Ep. ad Amm.* 1, 3 (= 1, 259); *De Comp. Verb.* c. 1 (= 11, 5).
³ Cf. below, p. 5.
⁴ *De Dem.* c. 13 (= 1, 156) ὃς (ἐπὶ τοῦ Δημοσθένους ἰδιωτικοῦ λόγους) γε δὴ κατὰ τὸ παρὸν ἐντυπωσικῆς γνώσης ὁποία λέγω.
⁵ *Ep. ad Amm.* 1 *init.* (= 1, 257), πρῶτος ὁκούσαντι παρὰ σοῦ, δι’ τῶν φιλοσόφων τῆς κ.τ.λ.
which Dionysius had expressed on the style of Thucydides, that a second "literary letter" was composed. But quite apart from the letters which bear the name of Ammaeus, the modern reader of Dionysius probably owes more than he realises to the pertinent questions of this contemporary scholar.

The long-standing quarrel between philosophers and rhetoricians, in which a new note was struck by the first letter to Ammaeus, is again echoed in the letter addressed by Dionysius to Pompeius Geminus. Pompeius (who was possibly influenced by Poseidonius) possessed so keen an admiration for Plato that he felt himself bound to oppose the view expressed by Dionysius in his essay on Demosthenes that Plato's style was not free from serious faults; and he is thereby responsible for the third literary letter, in which Dionysius replies to his objections and maintains his own position. To Pompeius' request for the critic's opinion of the historians, particularly Herodotus and Xenophon, we owe an excerpt of considerable length concerning them from the second book of the work on imitation; this excerpt Dionysius appended to his reply concerning Plato, and apart from a few scattered fragments, it is the only part of the essay on imitation which survives in its original form.

To pass from Ammaeus and Pompeius Geminus to Quintus Aelius Tubero, at whose request Dionysius composed a special essay on Thucydides, is to pass from two Greeks of unknown origin and connections to a Roman who attained to some distinction under

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1 Ep. ad Amm. II init. (= I, 421) σοῦ δὲ ύπολοιμβάνοντος ἴττων ἰρκυβόθαι τάς γραφάς κ.τ.λ.
2 Cf. De Dem. c. 13 (= I, 157) δέξοις γὰρ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο μαθεῖν (cf. πᾶς κρείττων ἄντι λυπίας Δημοσθένης), and especially Ep. ad Amm. I, c. 2 (= I, 218) where Ammaeus is clearly the instigator.
3 Ep. ad Pomp. cc. 1–2 (= II, 231 ff.).
4 Ib. cc. 3–6 (= II, 232 ff.).
6 A later epitome of Book II exists; discovered by H. Stephanus in 1554, and long printed as the Veterum Censura, it has been edited by Usener, op. cit.
7 Pompeius Geminus is conjectured to have been a freedman of the great Pompey by Krüger, Dion. Hal., Historiographica (Halle, 1833), p. 3 (following Reiske). For his possible authorship of the Περὶ Ὑψος, see G. C. Richards, C.Q. xxxii (1938), pp. 133–4.
the Augustan régime. Tubero may well have been the younger of the two Tuberones who attacked the Ligarius defended by Cicero in 46 B.C., and is possibly to be identified with the consul of 11 B.C. As a jurist and historian, connected with one of the leading Roman families, Tubero was clearly a man of standing, with whom Dionysius was probably on somewhat less familiar terms; and this is to some little extent borne out by the essay on Thucydides, in which Tubero is addressed as one who merits consideration and respect.

With Tubero may be classed the father of that Metilius Rufus who has been mentioned already as the recipient of the De Compositione Verborum; he is to Dionysius τιμώτατος φίλον, words which perhaps hardly lend themselves to the supposition that he was a patron to whose favour Dionysius was indebted.

Enough, then, can be gathered from the circumstances in which the essays were written to make it clear that they were primarily intended for those ψυχαί ἐσπάθευσι καὶ μέτριαι who formed a literary circle of educated Greeks and Romans, though there are not lacking references which strongly suggest that they were ultimately destined for a wider public. Within the circle itself there was considerable interchange of literary documents; for it is noteworthy that the essays on the ancient orators, originally addressed to Ammæaus, found their way into the hands of a certain Zeno, who transmitted them to Pompeius Geminus, while the essay on Thucydides, composed for Tubero, was also read by Ammæaus.

With the exception of the Demetrius to whom the essay on imitation was addressed, and of whom nothing whatever is known, 7

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1 Cf. Pro Ligario, passim.
3 De Comp. Verb. c. 1 (= ii, 4).
4 De Lys. c. 20 (= i, 32).
5 De Dom. c. 32 (= i, 201); De Thuc. c. 2 (= i, 326 and 328); ib. c. 25 (= i, 364) and c. 35 (= i, 383).
6 Ep. ad Pomp. c. 1 (= ii, 221) τὸς συμμάχος τῶν ἔμματος ἐπιχορηγοῦσθος σοι Ζήνωνος τοῦ κοινοῦ φίλου διαπορεύμονος κ.τ.λ.
7 Ib. c. 3 (= ii, 232).
8 Roberts, op. cit. pp. 440–1, conjectures that he may have been the author of the Περὶ Ἐρμήνευσις wrongly ascribed to Demetrius of Phalerum; but there is no evidence, and Roberts himself indulges in quite another fancy in his Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism (London and N.Y. 1928), p. 70.
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the only remaining name which occurs in the Scripta Rhetorica is that of Caecilius, who is a so much more tangible figure than those mentioned hitherto that he is deserving of especial consideration.¹ According to Suidas (whose account, however, is not free from serious blunders²), Caecilius of Calacte, a Sicilian by birth, and by faith a Jew, practised as a rhetorician in Rome under Augustus, and composed numerous works of a literary and historical character. His literary works, of which Suidas gives a list, may be divided into those of a purely technical character, such as a lexicon of rhetorical terms, a glossary of Attic phrases, an art of rhetoric, and a treatise on figures, and those which are classed more properly under the heading of “literary criticism”, such as the work on the characteristics of the ten orators, separate essays on Antiphanes and Lysias, comparisons between Demosthenes and Aeschines, and between Demosthenes and Cicero. To the latter class also belonged the treatise On the Sublime, which inspired the eloquent rejoinder of “Longinus”, while two essays Against the Phrygians and On the difference between the Attic and the Asiatic style bordered very closely upon the same type of composition.

A much- vexed question is that concerning the relations which existed between Caecilius and Dionysius; according to some⁴ they were friendly collaborators; according to others⁵ they were rival professors whose opinions constantly differed. There are admittedly two fragments of Caecilius which do reveal differences of opinion; of these the first⁶ proves a disagreement regarding the order of the

¹ On Caecilius see Brzoska’s valuable article in Pauly-Wissowa’s Real-Encyclopädie; fragments are collected in E. Ofenloch, Caecilii Calactini Fragmenta (Teubner, Leipzig, 1907); cf. also W. Rhys Roberts, in A.J.P. xvii (1897), pp. 302–12; further literature in Brzoska, Ofenloch, and Lehner’s reports in Bursian.

² Blass, op. cit. p. 174.

³ Cf. below, p. 9, n. 4.


⁶ Schol. ad Dem. Ol. 11 init. (p. 71, 1 Dind.) (= frag. 136, Ofenloch).
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*Olynthiacs* of Demosthenes, the second\(^1\) shows a small divergency concerning the number of the genuine speeches of Isocrates. But to make these differences a starting-point for arguing that when later writers record disagreement with Dionysius they are representing the views of Caecilius\(^3\), is a dangerous and unwarrantable procedure. To balance such divergencies of opinion, several instances of definite agreement can be added. In the first place, Dionysius expressly records his agreement with his “dear Caecilius”\(^3\) about the influence of Thucydides on Demosthenes; and to assume that φιλότατος Ἐκκλησίας is ironic or merely a courtesy-phrase\(^4\) is perverse in view of the fact that nowhere in the *Scripta Rhetorica* does Dionysius use φιλός or φιλότατος to connote anything but sincere friendship.\(^5\)

Secondly, we know from pseudo-Plutarch (*De Vit. X Or.* p. 836 a)\(^6\) that Dionysius and Caecilius agreed in their estimate of the number of speeches genuinely attributable to Lysias—hardly a fortuitous concurrence; and the expression there used, οι περὶ Διονύσιον καὶ Ἐκκλησίαν, strongly suggests that the two were regarded as authorities, the results of whose investigations were in harmony. Thirdly, we know from Photius\(^7\) (p. 489 b) that Caecilius acknowledged Lysias to be lacking in power of arrangement (ὀρθοποιεῖ), though abundantly supplied with ideas (ἐφρασί); this statement is in exact agreement with the remarks of Dionysius, who in *De Lysia*, c. 15 *sub fin.*, praises the ἐφρασί of Lysias, but advises his pupils to turn to other models for better ὀρθοποιεῖ. It is noteworthy in this connection that mention of this criticism of Lysias is made by a Neoplatonic scholiast on the *Phaedrus*,\(^8\) who attributes it to οἱ κριτικοὶ, which would therefore seem to mean particularly Dionysius and Caecilius. Finally, the two critics stood closely together in

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2. E.g., fragments 110, 142, 146; see Ofenloch, xxvii.
5. 1, 236; II, 226 (φιλότατος); 1, 259, 438 (φιλός).
7. Ofenloch, frag. 110.
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their estimate of the style of Plato. Dionysius, in his essay on the style of Demosthenes, admitted that Plato had the power to write remarkably pure, direct, lucid, and pleasant Greek, but considered him deserving of the strongest censure for his frequent employment of metaphors and poetical figures, which rendered him obscure. Caecilius, too, spoke of the accuracy, purity, simplicity, and rhythm of the prose of Plato, but severely criticised him for his strong and harsh metaphors and inflated allegory, and was even led so far as to account Lysias altogether superior to Plato. Thus we see that there is considerable evidence for believing the two scholars to have been in agreement on various points of criticism.

However, it would obviously be dangerous, even if instances of agreement or disagreement on such matters of scholarly opinion could be multiplied, to infer therefrom agreement or disagreement in aims and outlook. More revealing than small agreements or divergencies is the fact that both Dionysius and Caecilius were avowed enemies of the Asiatic style; if the titles of Caecilius’ works Against the Phrygians and On the difference between the Attic and the Asiatic style be considered alongside the Preface of Dionysius to his treatise on the orators, where he expresses the deepest disgust with Asianism, “that Mysian or Phrygian or Carian bane”,6 it will be realised that the two critics were inspired by a common purpose in dealing with one of the major problems of their day. From the

1 Cf. F. Nassal, Aesthetisch-Rhetorische Beziehungen zwischen Dionysius von Halicarnass und Cicero (Tübingen, 1910), pp. 161–2. (Nassal’s hypothesis, however, that C. is the common source of Dionysius and Cicero, breaks down in face of Cicero’s enthusiasm for Plato; there are also difficulties of date.) Cf. also F. Walsдорff, Die antiken Urteile über Platon’s Sül (Bonn, 1927), p. 30.
2 c. 5 (= I, 136) ὅταν μὲν ὄν τὴν ἱσχίνην καὶ ἀφελήν καὶ ἀποίητον ἐπιπήδησεν φράσιν, ἐκτέστως ἡδείᾳ ἑστὶ καὶ φιλόθρεπτος κ.τ.λ.
3 Ib. (= I, 137) ὅταν δὲ ἐς τὴν περιπτολογίαν καὶ τὸ καλλεπένν... ἄμετρον ὄρμην λάβῃ, τολλῷ χειρὶν ἑωτής γίνεται... μόλιστα δὲ χειμάζειται περὶ τὴν προτικήν φράσιν.
4 Ofenloch, frag. 126a ὀδὴν τοῦ χαρακτήρος τοῦ Πλατωνικοῦ σφῆσιν (ἐς ὁ Ἀφιξήνης), ὁτὲ τὸ ἀφιβήκας καὶ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀπερίττον (οὔτε τὸ μεγαλοπρεπῆς καὶ ⬠) καὶ εὐρυος.
5 [Longinus] Π. Ἡγ. c. 32 (= frag. 150, Ofenloch).
6 1, 4 Μυση ἢ Φρυγία τῆς ἢ Καρικῶν τι κακόν; cf. Cic. Orator, § 25.
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statement of the author of the Περὶ "Υψωσ (c. 32) that Caecilius was inordinately fond of Lysias, and from the fact that Caecilius devoted a special treatise to this author, the assumption has been made that he was an Atticist of the extremist set. Yet this is an unsafe argument, for, in the first place, it should be remembered that the Περὶ "Υψωσ is a polemical treatise directed against Caecilius himself—a and its value as evidence is not a little impaired by the fragment already quoted which proves Caecilius to have admitted a deficiency in Lysias;² while, secondly, the publication by Caecilius of a separate treatise or treatises on, or in defence of,³ Lysias should not be over-stressed, in view of the fact that Caecilius wrote at least two special treatises concerning Demosthenes, and probably also a special work on Antiphon,⁴ and was clearly interested in all the orators. To describe Caecilius therefore as "ein allzu fanatischer Attiker"⁵ is to transcend the limits of reasonable deduction; both he and Dionysius regarded all the orators as possessing some qualities worthy of imitation for the cultivation of a good prose style.

Finally, one may observe a further point of contact between Dionysius and Caecilius in their common use of the comparative method in literary criticism. Dionysius in his essay on the style of Demosthenes compares Thucydides, Lysias, Isocrates, and Plato in turn with Demosthenes, and finds something unsatisfactory in all but the master-orator; so Caecilius compared Demosthenes with Aeschines, and, in a more daring effort which drew caustic comments from Plutarch,⁶ Demosthenes with Cicero. The extensive use of comparative criticism was one of the most promising departures

² Cf. Brzoska, op. cit. col. 1184 "strenger Lysianer nach dem Muster der von Cicero oft verspotteten Attiker par excellence war er deshalb nicht".
³ If the use of the plural and the preposition are to be stressed in Περὶ "Υψ. c. 32.
⁴ Cf. pseudo-Plutarch, De Vit. X Or. p. 832 ε (= Ofenloch, frag. 99).
⁵ This fragment points to a separate work, and should not be classed as referring to the treatise Περὶ τοῦ χρασκητήρος τῶν δικαίων μέτων. So Blass, Attische Beredsamkeit ², 118; Roberts, op. cit. p. 305.
made by these Augustan critics and affords a further indication of their common purpose and method.¹

With Caecilius the literary circle of Dionysius is—so far as it can be reconstructed—complete; and although it is highly probable that he met many other scholars and men of letters, particularly in the new libraries which were so striking a feature of Augustan Rome,² there is a complete dearth of further evidence. Nor indeed is it known whether Dionysius stayed in Rome after the publication of his History in 8 B.C., nor when he died. One thing, however, is clear: that is, that during his prolonged stay, he found himself fully in sympathy with Augustus and his ministers in their desire to uplift the standards of literature and eloquence. It is to them, in no uncertain terms, that he gives the credit for the revival which had already taken place when he wrote; and, viewing the increasing output of good contemporary literature, both Greek and Roman, he prophesies success for their efforts in oratory, history, and philosophy alike.³ However, this sympathy with the views of the leaders of the state will appear in a clearer light from a consideration of the aims of Dionysius as a rhetorician and literary critic; these aims are easily discoverable in his essays, and claim all the closer attention in that they may be expected to have affected the nature, if not the actual quality, of his critical work.

Much of Dionysius’ work, particularly that which was concerned with the establishment of lists of genuine and spurious speeches,⁴ included comparisons are, of course, common long before the Augustan Age. An early example is seen in the fragment of Demetrius Magnus quoted in c. i of the De Dinarch.⁵

¹ Cf. Egger, op. cit. p. 5.
² Proem, c. 3 (= 1, 7) στίχα β’ ούμια καὶ ἀρχὴ τῆς τοσαύτης μεταβολῆς ἕγενε τὸ πόστομον κρατήσατα Ῥώμη πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἑαυτικά ὁμάλτειᾳ τὰ υπόλει πτερόφλεταν καὶ ταύτης δε αὐτῆς δυναστεύουσας κατ’ ἅρειν καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ κρατῆσαι τὰ κοινὰ διοικώντα εὐπαίδευσθαι πάνυ καὶ γεναίοις τὰς κρίσεις γενόμεναι, ὡς ἄν κοσμούμενον τὸ τό φρόνιμον τῆς πόλεως μέρος ἢτα μέλλον ἐπιθέσθεν καὶ τὸ αὐτόν τούτον ἱμακοσμαίναυ τούτον ἠχεῖν. τοιγάρεται πολλαὶ μὲν ἵστορεται στορμῆς δείξει φράσσεται τοις νοῦς, πολλοὶ δὲ λέγος πολιτικοὶ χαρακτές δικαίωται καὶ κριτικοὶ πολιτικοὶ φιλοσόφοι τε συντομεῖαν ὡς μὲ δία εὐκατα-

³ Frosh, c. 1, 283 ff. of Usener-Radermacher’s text.