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## THE LITERARY CIRCLE OF DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS.

THE few facts known with regard to the life of Dionysius of Halicarnassus are derived almost entirely from his own works, or (in other words) from either his *Early Roman History* or his *Rhetorical Writings*.

From the preface of the *Archaeologia* we learn that he took ship to Italy at the conclusion (30 B.C.) of the Civil War; that he spent at Rome the two-and-twenty years which had passed between that time and the date at which he was writing; that he had acquired the Latin language and studied the national records; that he had worked continuously at his subject, had profited by oral information obtained from the most learned men he met, and had consulted the published histories of approved Roman authors such as Porcius Cato, Fabius Maximus, Valerius Antias, and others (*Archaeol.* i. 7). After giving these particulars (in connexion with observations of a more general character), the author adds the simple statement that he is 'Dionysius, Alexander's son, of Halicarnassus,' and then loses himself in the work which he hoped would perpetuate his name.

In the *Archaeologia* Dionysius makes no sort of allusion to his *Scripta Rhetorica*. It is possible that he would have worked into the above autobiographical sketch a few details of his activity as a rhetorician could he have foreseen the day when his fugitive writings on Greek literature would be more highly prized than his elaborate work on early Roman history. But even in the rhetorical writings themselves it is surprising how little definite information we find as to the literary life, and the literary circle, of Dionysius at Rome.

It is, however, a probable inference from the didactic character of these rhetorical essays, and especially from their habit of viewing the classical writers of Greece as models for imitation, that Dionysius was a teacher of composition. The presumption passes into something like certainty, when, in his *de Compositione Verborum*, he undertakes to explain, to the young pupil he is addressing, certain points of detail 'in our daily exercises' (*ἐν ταῖς καθ' ἡμέραν γυμνασίαις, de Comp.* c. 20).

But Dionysius was much more than an ordinary teacher of composition. Together with Caecilius of Calacte, though on slightly different lines from him, he was a leader in that movement for the purification of Greek literary taste which distinguished the age of

Augustus. To CAECILIUS there is only one express reference in his writings, but this is a most cordial one. In the *Ep. ad Pompeium* (c. 3 ad fin.) Dionysius remarks that a certain literary opinion of his own is shared by 'my dear friend Caecilius.'

Though Caecilius survives in fragments only, a fair amount is known, and much has been written, about him. Neither of these statements could well be made with regard to the unidentified Pompeius to whom the Letter just quoted is addressed. The full name of this correspondent of Dionysius appears to have been GNAEUS POMPEIUS GEMINUS. This may be inferred from the opening words *Διονύσιος Γναίῳ Πομπηίῳ*, when taken together with the incidental address *ὁ βέλτιστε Γεμίνε* (*γεμίνε* MB<sup>1</sup>: *γναίε* Pal s mg B) in c. 2.<sup>1</sup> In the absence of any positive information about Pompeius, we are reduced to conjecture. He may, or may not, have been associated in some way with the house of Cn. Pompeius Magnus, himself a great patron of foreign men of letters. He seems, as may be inferred from certain indications in the epistle inscribed with his name, to have been a Greek rhetorician. At all events, it is there mentioned that he had written to Dionysius a letter in which he criticised what he conceived to be the adverse attitude assumed by Dionysius towards Plato. This letter Dionysius treats as a literary document of importance from which definite quotations are to be made. The following passage (*Ep. ad Pomp.*, c. 2 fin.) is particularly interesting. "It is clear from your own letter, excellent Geminus, that you yourself entertain the same opinion as I with regard to Plato. For you write as follows, to quote your own words: 'In other forms of writing there may well occur something intermediate between praise and blame. But in the elaborate style anything that is not success is utter failure. So that, in my opinion, these men should be judged not by their few most hazardous attempts but by their innumerable successes.' And a little later you add the following words: 'Although I could defend all, or at any rate most, of these passages, I do not venture to gainsay you. But this one thing I strongly affirm, that it is not possible to succeed greatly in any manner without such daring and recklessness; and occasional

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps too much importance ought not to be attached to the accentuation of *Γεμίνε* in the MSS.

failure is a necessary result of these risks.'” This passage shows that Cn. Pompeius Geminus was a great, though not an undiscriminating, admirer of Plato, of whom he writes in terms not unlike those employed by the unknown writer of the *De Sublimitate*. Indeed, if conjecture is to seek an author for that treatise in the age of Augustus, this Pompeius might be named with far more plausibility than Dionysius himself, whose claims were, at one time advocated. The matter-of-fact style of Dionysius, his esteem for Caecilius, and his exaltation of Demosthenes above Plato—all these are points which prove (if proof is needed) that he could not have written the *De Sublimitate*, which must have been composed by some ardent worshipper and imitator of Plato.

Another person, AMMAEUS, to whom Dionysius has addressed more than one letter, is as hard to identify as Pompeius. The name Ammaeus, which is consistently thus given without addition by Dionysius, seems to be excessively rare. It is not entered in the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*; and among Greek inscriptions I have noticed it twice only (Boeckh *Corp. Inscr. Graec.* iv. 8947—*Inscriptiones Christianae*), among Latin inscriptions once only (*Inscript. Gall. Cis. Lat.* i. 398). It is not, I think, found in any of the recently published papyri, though I am not without hope that some reader of the *Classical Review* may be able (in this or in some other direction) to throw further light on this and the other names here under discussion. As matters stand at present, we know nothing of Ammaeus, beyond the little we may surmise about him from Dionysius himself. Dionysius addressed two letters to him, those which are traditionally called the *First Letter to Ammaeus* and the *Second Letter to Ammaeus*, the former treating of the alleged dependence of Demosthenes as an orator upon the formal precepts of Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, the latter discussing and illustrating certain peculiarities in the style of Thucydides. Dionysius also addresses to Ammaeus, who must have been highly esteemed by him, his essays *On the Ancient Orators*. His forms of personal address are: ὦ φίλε Ἀμμαῖε (*Ep. ad Amm.* i. c. 3, *Ep. ad Amm.* ii. c. 17), φίλτατε Ἀμμαῖε (*de adm. vi dic. in Dem.* c. 49), βέλτιστε Ἀμμαῖε (*Ep. ad Amm.* i. c. 2), ὦ κράτιστε Ἀμμαῖε (*de Antiq. Orat., Proem.,* c. i.; *de adm. vi dic. in Dem.* c. 58). In the last-quoted essay—that on Demosthenes—he is the person addressed when (γνώσει and ἐξίδεις in c. 13) the second person singular

is used. From a passage of doubtful meaning in the same essay (*de adm. vi dic. in Dem.* c. 49: especially the words οἰομαι μὲν οὖν, ὡς καὶ δόξαν ἐπιεικῆ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἔχω, ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ σοῦ, φίλτατε Ἀμμαῖε, καὶ ἐκ τῆς εὐμοσίας τῆς σῆς λαμβάνων) it would seem that Ammaeus was a cultivated man whose influence upon Dionysius had been considerable. It was Ammaeus, further, that suggested to Dionysius the actual subjects of both the first and the second of the Letters inscribed with his name, the second being written by Dionysius (somewhat against the grain) at his special request. From the introductory letter in which the essays on the *Ancient Orators* are dedicated to him it seems clear that he took a lively interest in Dionysius' efforts to further the study of the best Greek literature at Rome. Whether he, and the other correspondents of Dionysius, themselves lived or did not live at Rome, is a question about which nothing can well be concluded from the epistolary form, since this had long since become customary and even conventional.

Besides Ammaeus there appear in Dionysius' rhetorical writings two other persons, ZENO and DEMETRIUS, whose identification is impeded by the fact that they bear only one name and are not distinguished by any place-designation such as 'Halicarnassus' or 'Calacte.' Zeno is mentioned once only, at the opening of the *Ep. ad Pomp.*, where Dionysius states that he had received from Pompeius a letter in which 'you (sc. Pompeius) write that you have gone through my works, with which our common friend Zeno has furnished you, and have made yourself thoroughly familiar with them.' Of Zeno we hear and know nothing more than this. Nor can we identify the Demetrius who is mentioned in the same epistle. All we know is that Dionysius had addressed to him his memoirs on the subject of imitation (πεποιήκα τοῦτο οἷς πρὸς Δημήτριον ὑπεμνημάτισμαι περὶ μιμήσεως, *Ep. ad Pomp.* c. 3). Can he be the author of the rhetorical treatise which goes under the name of 'Demetrius *de Elocutions*' and which probably belongs to the age of Augustus? The attribution of the treatise to 'Demetrius' may, no doubt, be purely conjectural; but if the name is to stand, the author must certainly not be identified with Demetrius Phalereus, unless the book is to be as much antedated as the *De Sublimitate* is postdated when assigned to the historical Longinus. Possibly, if our information were not so scanty, we might find that men like Caecilius and the other friends of Dionysius, like Theodorus of

Gadara, like the author of the *περὶ ὕψους*, like the author of the *περὶ ἐρμηνείας*, and even like Manilius (for whose date see *Classical Review* xiii. 294), had this in common that they belonged to the age of Augustus or the period immediately succeeding it, and further resembled each other (in some instances) in being freedmen or sons of freedmen attached to the great Roman houses such as that of Pompey, and in having an Eastern or Jewish origin.<sup>1</sup>

It may, therefore, for various reasons be conjectured that the correspondents of Dionysius so far mentioned were not of Roman descent. Two names remain, which are unmistakably Roman. The long essay *de Thucydide* is addressed to Q. AELIUS TUBERO (ὁ Κόντρε Αἰλιε Τουβέρων, *de Thucyd.* c. 1: cp. ἐν τῇ περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θουκυδίδου κατασκευασθείσῃ γραφῇ προσειπὼν τὸν Αἰλιον Τουβέρωνα, *ad Ann.* II. c. 1). This seems to be Q. Aelius Tubero, jurist and historian, who was consul in 11 B.C. No doubt Dionysius may be addressing this statesman's son (a possible pupil of his) rather than himself; but there are two passages which incline one to the other supposition. In concluding the *de Thucydide*, Dionysius says that he might have written more to Tubero's liking, but that he could not have written more truthfully (τούτων ἡδῶ μὲν εἶχόν σοι περὶ Θουκυδίδου γράφειν, ὁ βέλτιστε Κόντρε Αἰλιε Τουβέρων, οὐ μὴν ἀληθέστερα, *de Thucyd.* c. 55). These words make it probable that the addressee is a man of mature judgment with opinions of his own upon the writing of history. An earlier passage in the same treatise makes it similarly probable that he was a literary man. 'Once more I beg you and men of letters generally who read this work (*δεηθεῖς σοῦ πάλιν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων φιλολόγων τῶν ἐντευξομένων τῇ γραφῇ*), to consider my aim in the subject I have chosen. I wish to describe the style of

Thucydides in all its aspects that need discussion, for the special benefit of would-be imitators of that writer' (c. 25 *ibid.*). It may be added that it is no less necessary for modern readers to bear in mind this special aim of Dionysius, whenever his observations on Thucydides seem narrow or perverse. He is writing chiefly with reference to the style (in a more restricted sense than *χαρακτήρος*, so translated above) of Thucydides, and he is provoked into antagonism when he recalls the absurdities into which fanatical admirers of Thucydides, who found it easier to reproduce his eccentricities than his essential greatness, were often betrayed. Their mistake had been exposed at an earlier date by Cicero in his *Orator*. Cicero, indeed, went further, recognising as he did that the imitation in Latin of even a plain, straightforward writer like Lysias was ill-judged, inasmuch as it did not make due allowance for the different genius of the Latin language.

The last name on the list is that of MELITIUS RUFUS. This is the youth, just passing into manhood, to whom Dionysius presents his treatise on the arrangement of words as a birthday offering. He is addressed as follows in the first chapter of the *de Compositione Verborum*: ὁ Ῥούφε Μελίτιε, πατὴρ ἀγαθῷ, κάμωι τιμωπάτου φίλων. This Melitius Rufus (or, Rufus Melitius) is unknown, the father as well as the son. Two manuscripts give *Μερίτιε* in place of *Μελίτιε*. It is thus possible that Metilius Rufus is the correct name, though this does not, I think, bring us nearer an identification. But if we do not know who the youth was, we do know that he was a youth; and from the analogy of the *de Compositione* it may possibly be argued that the *de Thucydide* also was addressed to a younger rather than an older man. The cases are, however, not really parallel. The former subject is better suited than the latter for young men, and the tone which Dionysius adopts in the two treatises is correspondingly different. In the *de Compositione* he is instructing a young learner; in the *de Thucydide* he seems to be holding his own, courteously but firmly, with a man of some standing.

Dionysius' attitude in the *de Thucydide* suggests a wider question. It has sometimes been supposed that the life led by these Professors of Rhetoric, or Professors of Literature, at Rome must have been a distressingly narrow one. So perhaps it might have been but for their association with Roman men of affairs. In the poem

<sup>1</sup> The following passage of Pliny the Elder might help us if only it were a little more explicit: 'Alia creta argentaria appellatur nitore argento reddens. est et vilissima qua circum praeducere ad victoriae notam pedesque venalium trans maria advectorum denotare instituerunt maiores, talemque Publilium Antiochium mimiceae scaenae conditorem et astrologiae consobrinum eius Manilium Antiochum, item grammaticae Staberium Erotem eadem nave advectos videre proavi. Sed quid hos referat aliquis litterarum honore commendatos? talem in catasta videre Chrysgonum Sullae, Amphionem Q. Catuli, Hectorem L. Luculli, Demetrium Pompei, Augenque Demetri, quamquam et ipsa Pompei credita est, Hipparchum M. Antoni, Menam et Meneclatem Sexti Pompei aliosque deinceps quos enumerare iam non est sanguine Quiritium et proscriptionum licentia ditatos.' C. Plin. *Sec. Nat. Hist. Lib. xxxv.* 199, 200 (ed. Detlefsen).

(c. 3) of his *Ancient Orators* Dionysius has paid a warm tribute to the part played by the governing classes of Rome in that improvement of Greek literary taste which he had himself so much at heart; and it is not difficult to imagine the healthy influence which contact with active public men in a great city must have had upon Greek rhetoricians prone to pedantry. That he had personally been made welcome at Rome, is expressly stated by Dionysius in the passage in which he describes his *History of Ancient Rome* as a thank-offering in return for the manifold kindnesses he had received during his residence in the capital (*Archaeol.* I. 6). In particular, he wished to disabuse the Greek mind of derogatory ideas as to the origin of the Romans and as to the means by which they had gained their ascendancy (I. 4, 5 *ibid.*). In so doing he desires, he protests, not to flatter the victors but to tell the truth (I. 6).

The widening influence to which Dionysius refers was all the more needed that men of his class and nationality do not seem, as far as we can discover, usually to have taken any interest in Latin literature for its own sake. It is true that, in a passage already summarised from the opening of his *Archaeologia*, Dionysius refers to his acquisition of Latin and to the use he made of the language in consulting historical authorities. Again, in the introduction to his *Ancient Orators* he alludes, in general terms, to the 'many fine works' which had been produced, both by Romans and by Greeks, in his own day. But of a genuine literary interest in particular Latin books we find no evidence, whereas there are many indications (of a negative kind) to the opposite effect. It is probable that his own knowledge of Latin was not very deep and thorough. Attempts made by Greek rhetoricians to deliver their lectures in Latin had met with official discouragement, and the provinces of the 'grammaticus Graecus' and the 'grammaticus Latinus' were (as we know from

inscriptions and from other sources) kept carefully apart. The Greeks themselves, without doubt, acquiesced readily in this arrangement when, in course of time, their Roman friends and patrons came to speak Greek fluently, and to converse by preference in that language with their Greek preceptors. These preceptors, feeling a natural pride in their own language and literature, and also feeling on safer ground when writing in the former and about the latter, composed in Greek (as Dionysius has himself done) the literary essays they addressed to their Roman pupils. Caecilius, indeed, had the courage to break with tradition so far as to draw what now appears an obvious comparison between Demosthenes and Cicero. In this he seems to have found but one Greek follower, the author of the *Treatise on the Sublime*, who may also have borrowed from Caecilius his reference to the sublimity of Hebrew literature. For his temerity in hazarding an opinion about a Latin author Caecilius was afterwards criticised by Plutarch, who compares him to a 'fish out of water.' In the attitude of Plutarch—that of prudent abstention—we may perhaps find the clue to the silence observed in regard to Latin literature by Dionysius, who in his essays on the *Ancient Orators* never mentions Cicero, in his *Early Roman History* never mentions Livy, in his treatise on the *Arrangement of Words* never mentions Horace. The absence of any allusion alike in Dionysius to Horace and in Horace to Dionysius seems the strangest thing of all, since the life of the author of the *Ars Poetica* extended to the year 8 B.C., by which time Dionysius (who in that year brought out his *History*) must have been at the height of whatever reputation he enjoyed in the capital as a learned Greek critic. As a matter of fact, the only contemporary reference to Dionysius is to be found in Strabo. It is not till the time of Quintilian that he meets with recognition in Latin literature.

W. RHYS ROBERTS.

ON STRABO XII. 3, 38: P. 560.

AFTER describing the castle of Sagylium in the territory of Phazemon in Pontus (possibly the ruin on a pinnacle of the Tavshan Dagh visible from Vezir Keupru) Strabo continues, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἐάλω καὶ διεφθάρη ὑπὸ τῶν Φαρνάκου τοῦ βασιλέως παιδῶν Ἀρσάκης,

δυναστεύων καὶ νεωτερίζων, ἐπιτρέψαντος οὐδενὸς τῶν ἡγεμόνων· ἐάλω δὲ οὐ βία τοῦ ἐσώματος λεηθέντος ὑπὸ Πολέμωνος καὶ Λυκομήδους βασιλέων ἀμφοῖν, ἀλλὰ λιμῆ· ἀνέφυγε γὰρ εἰς τὸ ὄρος παρασκευῆς χωρὶς εἰργόμενος τῶν πεδίων κ.τ.λ.