Interest in literary composition and literary criticism goes back to archaic and early classical times and is connected with the Homeric and other epics. An important advance was made by the Sophists, Socrates, and Platon. However, the first great writing of lasting importance was when Platon’s disciple, Aristoteles, decided to address literary questions. This he did in his Περὶ Ποιητικῆς, which though taking up poetry and drama, is mainly concerned with tragedy, especially, as a philosophical problem with semi-universal validity, whose accompanying emotions of pity and fear conduce a katharsis. Here he was apparently counteracting Platon’s view that the pity and fear produced by tragedy should be banished because it tended to affect people in real life, too, thus leading to unhappiness.1 As should be expected, literary questions are taken up also in his Τέχνη Ἑτορικῆ.

By the time Dionysios Halikarnasseus turned his attention to literary criticism and style, these questions had passed through the sifting hands

of the great Alexandrian grammarians.\textsuperscript{2} Dionysios’s work was to be followed by that excellent writing of the first century AD, \textit{Περὶ Ἑγών}, which has come down as the work of Longinus, and constitutes the greatest piece on literary criticism in antiquity.\textsuperscript{3}

2. Dionysios Halikarnasseus

Dionysios Halikarnasseus, a fellow countryman of Herodotos, was born in Halikarnassos before the middle of the first century BC. He taught rhetoric for example in Rome between c. 30 and 8 BC. He died in the early part of the first century AD. His literary work is partly of a chronographic historical nature, his \textit{Roman Antiquities}, and partly literary-critical, to which he devoted a number of essays in which he treated of the ancient Greek orators and of Greek style, especially his \textit{Περὶ συνθέσεως ονομάτων} (‘On the Composition of Words’).

The importance of Dionysios’s literary critical work may be gauged by the following judgments. J.E. Sandys states: ‘We must recognise the fact that, in the minute and technical criticism of the art and craft of Greek literature, these works stand alone in all the centuries that elapsed between the Rhetoric of Aristotle and the treatise On the Sublime’, and refers to an anonymous author who calls him the ‘canon of rhetorical criticism’, and to Doxopatres who calls him ‘the great Dionysius, that excellent exponent and indeed the father of our art’. Sandys quotes also among others Gräfenham: ‘in point of learning and insight, one of the best critics of his time’; Saintsbury: ‘a critic who saw far, and for the most part truly, into the proper province of literary criticism—that is to say, the reasonable enjoyment of literary work and the reasonable distribution of that work into good, not so good, and bad’; and finally Rhys Roberts: ‘He was at once a scholar and a critic…he furnishes us with one of the earliest and best examples of the systematic exercise of the art of literary criticism’.\textsuperscript{4} I might also add that speaking about

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{3} I hope to devote a separate study to this writing in the not very distant future.
\end{itemize}
literary critics in his Lives of Philosophers and Sophists, Eunapios calls Dionysios πάντων ἀριθμότερος (‘the most renowned of them all’).5

According to Dionysios very few of those who had written handbooks on rhetoric or on language had touched upon literary problems, while up to his time no scientific investigation existed that treated the science of literary criticism methodically and in depth.6 Dionysios then would seem to be not only a pioneer, but also the founder of Greek literary criticism properly speaking. In view of the fact that today we possess only a fraction of the ancient literature, it is impossible to prove or disprove this claim.

a. The Two Parts of Style
Dionysios divides style, that is, the whole science concerned with literary writing into two parts: choice of words (ἐκλογή ὠνομάτων) and composition of words (σύνθεσις ὠνομάτων).7 The present work deals only with the second of these divisions in point of logical order, though in point of power and effect in making speech delightful, enjoyable, or pleasing as well as persuasive, it is prior.8 He promises his young friend, to whom he dedicates his work, to return to the first division on some later occasion, but it is not known whether he ever wrote such a treatise.

The science of literary criticism is understood by Dionysios quite differently from the way it has often been applied, for example, in biblical studies, namely, to clarify the relationship of dependence between various documents. For Dionysios, literary criticism is the method to apply in analyzing the mental processes of an author in the arrangement of his words, in order to achieve a pleasant or enjoyable, beautiful, and successful discourse.

Two important terms in literary criticism had made their appearance already with the two rival schools of rhetoric in the fifth century BC.

6.  Composition 1: τὴν περὶ τῆς συνθέσεως τῶν ὠνομάτων πραγματείαν ὀλίγοις μὲν ἐπὶ νοῦν ἐλθόντας, ὡστὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων ῥητορικῶς ἢ διαλεκτικῶς συνέγραψαν τέχνας, οὐδὲν δ’ ἀκριβῶς οὐδ’ ἀποχρόντως μέχρι τοῦ παρόντος ἐξειργασμένην, ὥς ἐγὼ πείθομαι.
7.  This is the scheme admitted by Theophrastos.
8.  Composition 2: δευτέρα δ’ οὗσα μοῖρα τῶν περὶ τῶν λεκτικῶν τόπων θεωρήματον κατὰ γοῦν τὴν τάξιν (ήγεται γὰρ ἢ τῶν ὠνομάτων ἐκλογῆ καὶ προφύστατα ταύτης κατὰ φύσιν) ἡδονήν καὶ πειθώ καὶ κράτος ἐν τοῖς λόγοις οὐκ ὀλίγῳ κρείττον’ ἐκείνης ἔχει.
Gorgias of Leontini, Sicily, and his school sought to achieve ἐυέπεια, 'beauty of language', in their discourse, whereas the other rhetorical school, that of Protagoras of Abdera, was primarily concerned with ὀρθοέπεια, 'correctness of language'.

These two aspects of literary criticism were combined by Dionysios in his critical evaluation of ancient poetry and prose. Dionysios is the author who more than any other author before him had developed his sense of the beauty of language to a very high degree, and sought to reduce to a scientific discipline the fruits of his long and intimate occupation with texts. For Dionysios, literary criticism is not simply negative criticism, concerned with dissecting the λέξις, 'discourse', but the synthesis and appreciation of the whole. According to Dionysios, literary criticism must lead to the enjoyment of literature. His main interest therefore, is to look for beauty, pleasantness, sweetness, for the element that enraptures, that carries away the reader, the element that transports. In this respect his powers of sensitivity are not inferior to those of ‘Longinos’, even though the latter author has composed antiquity’s masterpiece on literary criticism (if from another standpoint).

To this intent Dionysios analyzes many passages from ancient authors in order to show why they composed the way they did, and what sort of effect they achieved. The magic of a beautiful discourse does not lie in the choice of words (i.e. in the intrinsic quality of the chosen words themselves), but in their arrangement or composition. This can be proved from Homeros who portrays everyday events in a superb way. Dionysios concludes: διὰ γὰρ τῶν ἐνυέλεστάτων καὶ παπενοτάτων ὄνομάτων πέπλεκται πάσα ἡ λέξις. From a passage in Herodotos (1.8-11) Dionysios shows that although the subject was undignified and undecent

9. On εὐέπεια, see Dionysios Halikarnasseus, Composition 23: ταύτης τῆς λέξεως οἱ εὐέπεια καὶ η χάρις ἐν τῇ συγχεῖα καὶ λειτυτεί γέγονε τῶν ἀρμονίων; see also Demosthenes, 25: συνθετείς τῷ πράγμα, τάχ’ ἂν εἴποι τις, εὐέπειαν ἄπαιτών καὶ καλλιλόγεαν παρὰ ἄνδρος οὐ ταῦτα σοφοῦ. See further Platon, Axiochos 369d; Philon, De Iosepho 79; Sophocles, Oidippos Tyrannos 932; Sozomen, 4.21.

10. On ὀρθοέπεια, see Dionysios Halikarnasseus, Demosthenes 25;


13. Composition 3: ‘His entire composition is interwoven with the most trivial and unadorned words’.
improper, in fact, closer to ugliness than to beauty, Herodotos has succeeded in telling the story with great dexterity and charm.\footnote{Composition 3: \( \text{πράγμα οὖχ ὅτι σεμνὸν ἡ καλλιλογεῖσθαι ἐπιτῆδειον, ἀλλὰ καὶ παιδικὸν καὶ ἐπικίνδυνον καὶ τοῦ αἰσχροῦ μᾶλλον ἡ τοῦ καλοῦ ἐγγυτέρω: ἀλλ’ εἰρήται σφόδρα δεξιῶς, καὶ κρείττον γέγονεν ἄκουσθηναι λεγόμενον ἡ ὁφθήναι γνώμενον.} \(14\)}

b. \textit{Word-Order in the Greek Sentence}

New Testament Grammarians have tried to fix the word order of the Greek sentence. Blass–Debrunner–Rehkopf find as normal the word order of conjunction-predicate-subject-object-complements.\footnote{F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and F. Rehkopf, \textit{Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch} (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 14th edn, 1976), §472.} Robertson advocates greater freedom, though he thinks that usually the predicate begins the sentence.\footnote{A.T. Robertson, \textit{A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research} (Nashville: Broadman, 4th edn, 1934), p. 417.} Turner suggests that the order in ancient Greek was normally subject-object-verb.\footnote{N. Turner, \textit{Syntax}, vol. 3 of \textit{A Grammar of New Testament Greek}, by J.H. Moulton (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), p. 347.} Dionysios tells that he tried all the orders available, but came to the conclusion that his predecessors had used all of the orders equally successfully, and that consequently attractiveness and beauty in expression did not depend on any particular order of arrangement.\footnote{Composition 5: \( \text{τοτὲ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τούτων ἐγίνετο καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων αὐτοῖς ἡδεῖα ἡ σύνθεσις καὶ καλῆ, τοτὲ δ’ ἐκ τῶν μὴ τοιούτων ἄλλ’ ἐναντίων. διὰ ταύτας μὲν δὴ τὰς αἰτίας τῆς τουαύτης θεωρίας ἀπέστην.} \(18\)}

c. \textit{The Tasks of Composition}

Dionysios considers that the science of composition has three tasks: (1) to discover what is to be joined with what in order to produce beautiful and pleasant effect in the whole; (2) how to form the parts that will be joined together so that the whole will be harmonious, and (3) whether anything in the parts needs to be added to, subtracted from, or modified in view of their future use within the whole.\footnote{Composition 6. These points are illustrated by actual passages from ancient authors, e.g., Demosthenes, \textit{On the Crown} 1 (226): \( \text{εἰς τουτον τὸν ὁγόνα.} \) Demosthenes might have said εἰς τοῦτον τὸν ὁγόνα, since this would have been enough, but he added a letter to the pronoun with a view to composition (προστέθηκε τι τῇ ἀντωνυμίᾳ γράμμα τῆς συνθέσεως στοχαζόμενος). Thukydides 3.57.4 in giving the Plataians’ appeal to the Spartans, has a sentence full of pathos: \( ὑμεῖς τε ὁ\).}
Dionysios is of the opinion that the two most important effects which both poets and prose writers strive after are delightfulness or enjoyment (ἡδονή)\textsuperscript{20} and beauty (τὸ καλὸν).\textsuperscript{21} These are not always found in the same author; for example, Thukydides and Antiphon composed beautifully, but lack in aesthetic pleasure. The converse is true of Xenophon and Ctesias, while Herodotos has both.\textsuperscript{22}

d. *The Characteristics of Delightful and Beautiful Composition*

In order for a composition to be delightful or enjoyable it must exhibit the following five characteristics or qualities:

Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἡ μόνη ἔλπίς, δέδιμεν, μὴ οὐ βέβαιοι ἦτε. Dionysios argues that if the order of the clauses in this sentence changed—i.e. ὑμεῖς τε, ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, δέδιμεν μὴ οὐ βέβαιοι ἦτε, ἡ μόνη ἔλπίς— the charm and the pathos would no longer be the same. A third example is taken from Demosthenes, *On the Crown* 179. Had Demosthenes written ταῦτ’ ἐπ’ ἔγγαια, ἐγγαία, πρεσβεύσας δ’ ἔπεισα Θηβαίους (‘Having said this, I moved a resolution, and having moved a resolution I went on the embassy; and having gone on the embassy, I persuaded the Thebans’) would the sentence have been composed as elegantly as it actually was composed: οὔκ ἐπ’ ἔγγαια μὲν ταῦτα, οὔκ ἐγγαία δὲ· οὔδ’ ἐγγαία μὲν, οὔκ ἐπείσα ἐπείσα μὲν, οὔκ ἐπείσα δὲ Θηβαίους (‘I did not say these things and then failed to move a resolution, I did not move a resolution, and then failed to go on the embassy; I did not go on the embassy, and then fail to persuade the Thebans’)? It should be pointed out that the Greek is much more elegant than the English translation. This passage was used by Ad Herennium 4; Demetrios, *On Style* 270, and Quintilian 6.3.70 as an example of climax. Occasionally a sentence may be lengthened in order to produce equally long clauses, i.e. balance, as e.g. Aeschines, *Against Ktesiphon* 202: ἐπὶ σαυτὸν καλεῖς, ἐπὶ τοὺς νόμους καλεῖς, ἐπὶ τὴν δημοκρατίαν καλεῖς. As Dionysios points out (*Composition* 9) Aeschines could have used just one clause: ἐπὶ σαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὴν δημοκρατίαν καλεῖς, but his much-admired sentence has been divided into three clauses not from necessity but to make the harmony more pleasant (τοῦ δὲ ἦδιὼ ποιήσασι τὴν ἄρμονίαν).

20. This term is sometimes translated as ‘attractiveness’. I prefer to render it with ‘delight(ful(ness))’, ‘enjoyment’, ‘pleasant(ness)’ because these English words bring out more clearly the personal enjoyment experienced at hearing or reading a well-composed discourse, whereas ‘attractiveness’ would be a characteristic of the discourse, which is not a natural meaning for ἡδονή. Sometimes, though, attractiveness may be used.


22. It might not be out of place to point out that Dionysios cherished an inordinate admiration for his fellow-countryman Herodotos.
1. Freshness (ὀρά)
2. Charm (χάρις)
3. Euphony (εὔστομία)
4. Sweetness (γλυκύτης)
5. Persuasiveness (τὸ πιθανόν)

while in order for it to be beautiful it must have the following five characteristics or qualities:

1. Grandeur (μεγάλοπρέπεια)
2. Solemnity (βάρος)
3. Seriousness (σεμνολογία)
4. Dignity (ἀξίωμα)
5. Mellowness / Ripeness (ὁ πίνος)

e. The Prerequisites for Delightful and Beautiful Composition
To achieve both delightful or enjoyable and beautiful composition four things are necessary:

1. Melody (μελος, ἀρμονία)
2. Rhythm (ῥυθμός)
3. Variety (μεταβολή)
4. Appropriateness (τὸ πρέπον)\(^{23}\)

1. Melody. With regards to melody Dionysios speaks of the harmonious effects produced by the sounds of the letters and syllables, the blending of rough with smooth syllables, of short with long syllables. It is in things such as these that good taste or the sense of the fitness of things (καιρός)\(^{24}\) appears.\(^{25}\) Good taste is the best measure of what is pleasurable and what is nauseous.\(^{26}\) He states, however, that it is impossible to give rules for what constitutes good taste, admitting an element of elusiveness and subjectivity, because good taste cannot be

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23. As proof for the appositeness of this claim Dionysios asserts that in theaters both educated and uneducated people show appreciation for the pleasurable and beautiful, and that even those who could not play a single note of music can unerringly tell the difference between good and bad music. The reason for this is that aesthetic appreciation is innate in every man, whereas ability to play is acquired by practice (Composition 11).

24. καιρός carries the sense of appropriate timing, of fitness, and comes close to ἐπιρέπεια and τὸ πρέπον. We may therefore render it with ‘good taste’.

25. Composition 12.

pursued scientifically; it is a question of judgment, a judgment, however, that comes by training.27

Dionysios expatiates on what makes for pleasant sounds, noble as well as ignoble vowels and consonants. He has a peculiar taste for long vowel-sounds giving first place to α and last place to ε, while calling σ ‘charmless and nauseating and when used overmuch excruciating’.28 He counsels, however, using what he considers the finest vowels and smoothest of consonants to achieve freshness, beauty, and charm, just as Homeros, the πολυφωνότατος ἀπάντων τῶν ποιητῶν, did.29

2. Rhythm. With respect to rhythm, Dionysios asserts that every word consisting of more than one syllable is pronounced in some sort of rhythm. By rhythm he means the metrical foot. Here he presents the twelve primary types of foot, the majority of which are noble and give pleasure, while the trochee, the choree, and the amphibrach are undignified:

With two syllables:

1. Hegemon / Pyrrhic (ἡγεμών, πυρρήχιος): (∪ ∪) (οῦ μεγαλοπρεπῆς ή σεμνός)
2. Spondee (σπόνδειος): (− −) (ἀξίωμα μέγα καὶ σεμνότητα πολλήν)
3. Iambus (ἱαμβος): (∪ −) (οὐκ ἀγενής)
4. Trochee (τροχαῖος): (− ∪) (ἀγενέστερος)

With three syllables:

5. Choree (χορεῖος): (∪ ∪ ∪) (ταπεινός, ἀσεμνός, ἀγενής)
6. Molossus (μολόσσος): (− − −) (ὕψηλος, ἀξιωματικός, διοβεβληκός)
7. Amphibrach (ἀμφιβραχχυς): (∪ − ∪) (ἀσχήμων, ἀηδές)
8. Anapaest (ἀνάπαυστος): (∪ ∪ −) (σεμνότης, μέγεθος, πάθος)
9. Dactyl (δάκτυλός): (− ∪ ∪) (πάνυ σεμνός, κάλλος)
10. Cyclic (κυκλικός): (∪ ∪ −) (πάνυ καλός)30

27. Composition 12: οὕτω ὄλως ἐπιστήμη θηρατός ἐστιν ὁ καιρός ἀλλά δόξη. ταύτην δ’ οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ πολλῶν καὶ πολλάκις γυμνάσαντες ἀμεινον τῶν ἄλλων εὐρίσκουσιν αὐτόν.
28. Composition 14: ἀχαρι δὲ καὶ ἀηδὲς τὸ σ καὶ πλεονάσαν σφόδρα λυπεῖ.
29. Composition 16: ‘The poet who has used more voices than anyone else’.
30. The cyclic is to be differentiated from the anapaest, though its form is the same.
Another type of three syllables:

11. Cretic (κρητικός): (− ∪ −) (σῶκ ἁγενής)
12. Bacchius (βακχείος): (− − ∪) (τὰν όνδρόδες, σεμνολογία)
13. Hypobacchius (ὑποβακχεῖος): (∪ − −) (ἀξίωμα, μέγεθος)

Platon is one of those who often excelled in his composition, being most ingenious in finding true melody and fine rhythm (ὁ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἐμμέλειαν τε καὶ εὐρυθμίαν συνιδεῖν δαιμονιώτατος). Had he only been as felicitous in his choice of words, then the first prize in prose literature would have been awarded to him. But now it must go to Demosthenes.

31. Composition 17.
32. Composition 18. He exemplifies Platon’s superb composition by a quotation from Menexenos 236d, which he scans as follows:

εργό μὲν | ἡμὶν | οἴδε ἐ | χουσὶν | τὰ προσή | κοντα | σφίσιν | αὗ | τοῖς
− − − − − ∪ ∪ − − ∪/− ∪ − − ∪/− − − − −
ῶν τυχόν | τες πορεύ | ονται | τὴν εἰ | μαρμένην | πορείαν
− − − − − ∪ − − − − − − − − − − −

Dionysios comments: ‘What has made the following passage of Platon’s so adorned, dignified and beautiful, other than that it is composed of the most beautiful and most renowned rhythms?’ (τὴν δὲ δὴ Πλατωνικὴν λέξιν ταυτην τίνι ποτὲ ἀλλω κοσμηθείσαν οὕτως ἀξιωματικὴν εἶναι φαίη τις ἄν καὶ καλὴν, εἰ μὴ τῷ συγκείσθαι διὰ τῶν καλλίστων τε καὶ ἀξιολογοτάτων ῥυθμῶν…). He goes on to show in detail that Platon has used the noblest kinds of foot, appropriate to the slow movement necessary in a mourning procession. The first is a bacchius, the second a spondee. The next is a dactyl (preserving the hiatus), the following a spondee. The fifth is a cretic or an anapaest, the following is, in my opinion, a spondee, and the last an hypobacchius, or, else an anapaest. Thereafter come the catalectic syllable. None of these rhythms is mean or ignoble. In the next clause the first two are cretics, and the following two spondees. Thereafter follows a cretic, while the sixth is a hypobacchius. A passage composed of such beautiful rhythms is inevitably a beautiful passage. There are countless such passages in Platon. This passage is praised also by ‘Longinos’.

33. Dionysios cites as an example of bad taste Hagesias the Magnesian, the founder of the Asianic movement in rhetoric. He quotes at length a passage according to which Alexander punished the treacherous prince of Gaza by having him dragged behind a chariot in the same way as Achilles had done with Hector’s corpse (Ilias 22.395-411). In his comparison Dionysios shows that Hagesias lacks the dignity and elevatedness of Homeros in telling this horrible story, and attributes the bad effect mainly to the rhythms used.
3. **Variety.** The third factor in beautiful composition is variety (μεταβολή):

The best style is that which contains the greatest freedom from uniformity and exhibits varieties in composition; when one thing is said within a period, and another outside it; when one period consists of many clauses and another of a few; when one clause is shorter and another is longer; when one is more rough and the other more refined; when the rhythms are variable and the figures are of various kinds, and the intonations of voice, which are called prosodiai, by their variety remove every feeling of satiety… I am sure every one knows that in discourse variation is a most pleasant and beautiful characteristic.34

As examples of such composition Dionysios recommends Herodotos, Platon and Demosthenes, ἀμήχανον γὰρ εὐρείν τούτων ἑτέρους ἐπεισοδίους τε πλείοσι καὶ ποικιλίαις εὐκαιροτέραις καὶ σχήμασι πολυειδεστέροις χρησμένους.35

4. ** Appropriateness.** Finally, appropriateness is defined as ὀμολογουμένου δή παρὰ πάσιν ὅτι πρέπον ἐστι τὸ τοῖς ύποκειμένοις ἀρμόττον προσώποις τε καὶ πράγμασιν.36 To bring out the meaning of things by the use of appropriate words and composition is the usual characteristic of that most inspired (δαιμονιώτατος) poet, Homerus.

Here Dionysios takes up the Homeric passage depicting Sisyphos’s labors and gives us a fine example of his artistry and penetrating critique. The passage can be fully appreciated only in its entirety, though here only the highlights can be mentioned. The first part runs:

34. Composition 19: καὶ ἔστι λέξεις κρατίστη πασῶν, ἤτε ἂν ἔχῃ πλείστας ἀναπαύλας τε καὶ μεταβολάς ἐναρμονίους, ὅταν τουτὶ μὲν ἐν περίοδῳ λέγηται, τουτὶ δ’ ἔξω περιόδου καὶ ἢδε μὲν ἢ περίοδος ἐκ πλειόνων πλέκηται κόλων, ἢδε δ’ ἔξω ἐλαττώνων, αὐτῶν δὲ τῶν κόλων τὸ μὲν βραχύτερον ἢ, τὸ δὲ μακρότερον καὶ τὸ μὲν αὐτουργότερον [τὸ δὲ βραδύτερον], τὸ δὲ ἀκριβέστερον, ὑνθοὶ τε ἄλλοτε ἅλλοι καὶ σχήματα παντοῖα καὶ τάσεις φωνῆς αἱ καλοῦμεναι προσῳδίαι διάφοροι κλέπτουσαι τῇ ποικιλίᾳ τὸν κόρον… ὅτι γὰρ ἡδιστὸν τε καὶ κάλλιστον ἐν λόγοις μεταβολῆ, πάντας εἰδέναι πείθουσι.

35. Composition 19: ‘For it is impossible to find any others who have used a greater number of parenthetical digressions, more timely variations, and more variegated figures’.

36. Composition 20: ‘it is admitted by all that a treatment is appropriate when it fits the entities concerned, persons or things’. Cf. a few lines further down: οὐχ ὀμοία συνήθει χρώμεθα ὄργιζόμενοι καὶ χαίροντες (‘We do not use the same kind of composition when we are angry as when we are glad’).
Dionysios’s sensitive comments are:

Here we have a composition that shows each of the particulars: the weight of the stone, his difficulty in moving it from the ground, the stone’s weight felt by his limbs, his slow ascent to the hilltop, the hardship in pushing the stone upward. No one would question this.38

Further down Dionysios continues:

First, in the two lines in which Sisyphos rolls the stone upward, except for two verbs, all of the words in this text are dissyllables or monosyllables. Next, the long syllables are half as many as the short ones in each line. Then, all the arrangements are such that the words have been so interspaced as to make the intervals clearly perceptible either on account of the collision of vowels or of the joining of semivowels and voiceless letters... The monosyllabic and disyllabic words by leaving many breaks between them evoke the long span of time. The long syllables, by having a steadying, delaying characteristic in their being uttered, show the resistance, the weight and the arduousness. The inhalation of breath between the words and the collocation of rough letters show the intermissions of his exertions, the halts, and the immensity of his labor. With respect to the rhythms when considered as to their length they reveal the straining of his limbs, his effort input as he rolls his load, and the heaving of the rock... He has not used the same means to portray the stone’s return from the top and its rolling downhill, but made his composition faster and briefer.39

37. ‘And Sisyphos I saw going through great toil holding a huge stone with both his hands; pushing it up with hands and feet he raised it upwards to the hilltop.’

38. Composition 20: ἐνταῦθα ἡ σύνθεσις ἐστὶν ἡ δηλοῦσα τῶν γινομένων ἐκαστὸν, τὸ βάρος τοῦ πέτρου, τὴν ἐπίπονον ἐκ τῆς γῆς κίνησιν, τὸν διερειδόμενον τοῖς κώλοις, τὸν ἀναβαίνοντα πρὸς τὸν ὄχθον, τὴν μόλις ἀνωθουμένην πέτραν’ οὐδεὶς ἄν ἀλλως εἶποι.

39. Composition 20: πρῶτον μὲν ἐν τοῖς δυσὶ στίχοις οἷς ἀνακυλεῖ τὴν πέτραν, ἔξω δειν ῥήματον τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς λέξεως μόρια πάντ᾽ ἐστίν ἦτοι δισύλλαβα ἢ μονοσύλλαβα· ἐπείτα τῷ ἡμίσει πλείους εἰσίν αἱ μακρὰ σύλλαβαι τῶν βραχείων ἐν ἐκατέρω τῶν στίχων· ἐπείτα πάσαι διαβεβήκασιν αἱ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἁρμονίαι διαβάσεις εὐμεγέθεις καὶ διεστήκασι πάνω αἰσθητῶς, ἢ τῶν φωνημένων γραμμάτων συγκρουμένων ἢ τῶν ἡμιφάνων τε καὶ
Dionysios continues:

Then, having said in the same style as earlier:

\[\text{άλλι' ὀτε μέλλοι}\]
\[\text{ἄκρον ὑπερβαλέειν}\]

he adds this:

\[\text{τὸ τ' ἐπιστρέψασκε κραταῖς' }\]
\[\text{αὕτης ἔπειτα πέδονδε κυλινδετο λάας ἀναιδὴς}\]

40

and continues:

Does not the composition of the words roll downwards, as it were, together with the weight of the stone, or rather does not the speed of the declamation surpass that of the falling of the stone? I certainly think so. And what is the reason for this again? It is worthwhile noticing the following: the line depicting the stone’s rolling down has no monosyllabic word and only two disyllabic words. This, first of all, not only does it not retard the rhythms, but instead makes them faster. Then again, of the line’s seventeen syllables ten are short and seven long, and even these are not perfectly long. It is inevitable then that the diction is drawn downward and is compressed on account of the shortness of the syllables… And what excites greater astonishment is that not one long rhythm which naturally lends itself to the heroic meter, neither spondee nor bacchius, is blended within the line, except at the end. All the others are dactyls, and these are mixed together with their irrational syllables, so that some of them do not differ much from trochees. There is then

\[\text{άφανων συναπτομένων'… αἱ μὲν μονοσύλλαβαι τε καὶ διςύλλαβαι λέξεις}\]
\[\text{πολλοὺς τοὺς μεταξὺ χρόνους ἀλλήλων ἀπολείπουσαι τὸ χρόνον ἐμιμήσαντο τοῦ ἔργου: αἱ δὲ μικραὶ συλλαβαὶ στριγμοὺς τινας ἔχουσαι καὶ ἔγκαθίσματα τὴν ἀντιτυπίαν καὶ τὸ βαρὺ καὶ τὸ μόλις τὸ δὲ μεταξὺ τῶν ὁνομάτων ψύγμα καὶ ἢ τῶν τραχυνόντων γραμμάτων παράθεσις τὰ διαλείμματα τῆς ἐνεργείας καὶ τὰς ἐποχὰς καὶ τὸ τοῦ μόχθου μέγεθος: οἱ ρυθμοὶ δὲ ἐν μήκει ἔθεσαν τὴν ἐκτάσειν τῶν μελῶν καὶ τὸν διελκυσμὸν τοῦ κυλίνδετο καὶ τὴν τοῦ πέτρου ἐρείσιν… τὴν γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς κορυφῆς ἐπιστρέφουσαν πάλιν καὶ κατακυλισμένην πέτραν οὗ τὸν αὐτὸν ἠμηνήσευκε τρόπον, ἀλλ' ἐπιταχύνας τε καὶ συστρέψας τὴν σύνθεσιν.}\]

40. ‘But when it is about
to pass the top’

he adds

‘then mighty force turned it back
and at once down the plain rolled the impudent rock’.
nothing to prevent a composition formed of such rhythms from being smoothly-running, rounded, and flowing.41

f. Three Kinds of Style
The above points are according to Dionysios the most important to consider for every writer aspiring to write poetry or prose.42

Dionysios recognizes three kinds of style:

1. Austere (αὔστηρά)
2. Polished (elegant) (γλαφυρά, or ἀνθηρά)
3. Temperate (well-mixed) (ἐὐκρατος)

1. The Austere Style. The austere style is characterized by perceptible intervals between the parts of speech, it allows harsh sounding collocations, it is more apt to expansion, admitting long syllables. It uses grand and dignified rhythms, setting forth its clauses in grandeur; it exhibits naturalness rather than artificiality, portraying pathos rather than moral character. It is flexible with regards to the cases, uses many different figures of speech, few conjunctions, and omits articles. It is plain, magnanimous and unadorned, its beauty lying in its archaic character.43 This style has been used in epic poetry by Antimachos of Kolophon and Empedokles, in lyrics by Pindaros, in tragedy by

41. Composition 20: οὖχι συγκυλίεται τῷ βάρει τῆς πέτρας ἢ τῶν ὀνομάτων σύνθεσις, μᾶλλον δὲ ἔφθακε τὴν τοῦ λίθου φοράν τῷ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας τάχος; ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ, καὶ τις ἐνταῦθα πάλιν αἰτία; καὶ γὰρ ταῦτ’ ἦν ἄξιον ἰδεῖν’ ὅ τὴν καταφορὰν δηλῶν τοῦ πέ τρου στὶ χος μονοσύλλαβον μὲν οὐ δεμί αν, δισυλλάβοις δὲ δύο μόνας ἔχει λέξεις. τούτ’ οὖν καὶ πρῶτον οὐ διόσπη σει τούς χρόνους ἀλλ’ ἐπιταχύνει’ ἐπειθ’ ἐπτακαίδεκα συλλαβῶν οὕσων ἐν τῷ στίχῳ δέκα μὲν εἰς βραχεῖα συλλαβαί, ἐπατ’ δὲ μακραὶ οὐδ’ αὐτά τέλειοι· ἀνάγκη δὴ καταπάσθαι καὶ συστέλλεσθαι τὴν φράσιν τῇ βραχύτητι τῶν συλλαβῶν ἐφελκομένην... ὦ δὲ μᾶλιστα τῶν ἄλλων θαυμάζειν ἄξιον, ῥυθμὸς οὕδεις τῶν μακρῶν οὐ φύσιν ἤχουσιν πίπτειν εἰς μέτρον ἡρωικόν, οὐτε σπονδεῖος οὔτε βακχεῖος ἐγκαταμέμβεται τῷ στίχῳ, πλὴν ἐπὶ τῆς τελευτῆς’ οἱ δ’ ἄλλοι πάντες εἰς δάκτυλοι, καὶ οὕτωι παραμειμέμενας ἐχοντες τάς ἀλόγους, ὡστε μὴ πολὺ διαφέρειν ἐνίοις τῶν τροχαιῶν. οὐδέν δὴ τὸ ἀντιπράπτων ἐστὶν εὔτροχον καὶ περιφερή καὶ καταρρέουσαι εἶναι τὴν φράσιν ἐκ τοιοῦτων συγκεκρυμένην ρυθμόν.

42. Composition 20: ὄν μὲν οὖν δεῖ στοχάζεσθαι τοὺς μέλλοντας ἢδεῖαν καὶ καλὴν ποιῆσειν σύνθεσιν ἐν τῇ ποιητικῇ καὶ λόγοις ἀμέτροις, ταῦτα κατ’ ἐμὴν δόξαν ἐστὶ τὰ γοῦν κυριώτατα καὶ κράτιστα.

43. Composition 22.
Aeschyllos, in history writing by Thukydides and in forensic oratory by Antiphon.

Dionysios criticizes roughness, discordance and dissonance in this style, taking as examples Pindaros and Thukydides. With regard to Pindaros,44 Dionysios has the following to say:45

44. Dionysios responds to Pindaros’s frag. 75:

Δεῦτ’ ἐν χορὸν Ὀλύμπιοι
ἐπὶ τε κλυτὰν πέμπτε χάριν θεοὶ
‘Come to the dance*, Olympians
And send your glorious favour, O gods divine’

(* or song, i.e. the choir).

45. Composition 22. In order to gain an insight into the kind of literary qualities that Dionysios looks for, I will quote in abbreviated form his criticisms of Pindaros and Thukydides: τὸ πρῶτον αὐτῷ κάλον ἐκ τεταρτῶν σύγχειται λέξεως μορίων, ῥήματος καὶ συνδέσμου καὶ δυεῖν προσηγορικῶν· τὸ μὲν οὖν ῥήμα καὶ ὁ συνδέσμος συναλοίη ἱκανοθέτεται οὐκ ἀπὸ πεποίηκε τὴν ἀρμονίαν· τὸ δὲ προσηγορικὸν τῷ συνδέσμῳ συνηθόμενον ἀποτετράχυκεν ἀξιολόγος τὴν ἀρμονίαν· τὸ γὰρ ἐν χορὸν καὶ ἀντίτυπον καὶ οὐκ εὐπεπές, τοῦ μὲν συνδέσμου λήγοντος εἰς ἡμιφώνον στοίχειον τὸ ν., τοῦ δὲ προσηγορικοῦ τὴν ἀρχὴν λαμβάνοντος ἀφ’ ἐνός τῶν ἀφών τοῦ χ’ ἀσύμμετρα δὲ τῇ φύσει ταῦτα τὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ ἀκόλουθα· οὐ γὰρ πέφυκε κατὰ μίαν συλλαβὴν τοῦ χ’ προτάπτεσθαι τὸ ν., ὡστε οὐδὲ συλλαβὴν ὀρία γινόμενα συνάπτει τὸν ἥχον, ἀλλ’ ἀνάγκη σιωπῆς τίνα γενέσθαι μέσην ἀμφοῖν τὴν διορίζουσαν ἐκατέρω τῶν γραμμάτων τὰς δυνάμεις. τὸ μὲν δὴ πρῶτον κάλον οὕτω τραχύνεται τῇ συνθέσει... τὸ δὲ γε τούτῳ παρακείμενον κάλον τὸ "ἐπὶ τε κλυτὰν πέμπτε χάριν θεοὶ" διαμέλησεν ἀπὸ τοῦ προτέρου διά βασιν ἀξιώλογον καὶ περιείληθεν ἐν αὐτῷ πολλάς ἀρμονίας ἀντίτυποι. ἄρχει μὲν γὰρ αὐτοῦ στοιχείον ἐν τῶν φωνητῶν τὸ ε καὶ παράκειται ἐτέρῳ φωνητί τοῦ ε’ εἰς τούτῳ γὰρ ἐλήγε τὸ πρὸ αὐτοῦ. οὐ συναλείφεται δὲ οὐδὲ ταύτ’ ἀλλήλους οὐδὲ προτάπτεται κατὰ μίαν συλλαβήν τὸ ἐν τῷ ε’ σιωπῆ δὲ τίς μεταξὺ ἀμφοῖν γίνεται διερείδουσα τῶν μορίων ἐκάτερον καὶ τὴν βασιν αὐτοῖς ἀποδιδοῦσα ἀσφαλῆ, ἐν δέ τῇ κατὰ μέρος συνθέσει τοῦ κάλου τοῖς μὲν ἐπὶ τε συνδέσμοις ἀφ’ ὧν ἄρχεται τὸ κάλον, εἰτε ἄρα πρόθεσιν αὐτῶν δεῖ τὸ ἡγούμενον καλεῖν, τὸ προσηγορικόν ἐπικείμενον μόριον τὸ κλυτὰν ἀντίτυπον πεποίηκε καὶ τραχείαν τὴν συνθέσιν· κατὰ τά ποτε; ὅτι βούλεται μὲν εἶναι βραχεία ἡ πρώτῃ συλλαβή τοῦ κλυταν, μακροτέρα δ’ ἐστὶ τῆς βραχείας εἰς ἀφώνου τοι καὶ ἡμιφώνου καὶ φωνητὸς συνεπώτα. τὸ δὲ μὴ εἰλικρινῶς αὐτῆς βραχῦ καὶ ἀμα τὸ ἐν τῇ κράσει τῶν γραμμάτων δυσεκφέρητον ἀναβολὴν τῇ ποιεῖ καὶ ἐγκοπὴν τῆς ἀρμονίας, εἰ γοῦν τὸ κ τῶι ἀδέλφοι τῆς συλλαβῆς καὶ ποιήσειν ἐπὶ τε λυτάν, λυθήσεται καὶ τὸ βραδύ καὶ τὸ τραχύ τῆς ἀρμονίας. πάλιν τῷ κλυταν προσηγορικῷ τὸ πέμπτε βραχτικόν ἐπικείμενον οὐκ ἔχει συνῳδὲν οὐδ’ εὑκέραστον τοῖν ἥχον, ἀλλ’ ἀνάγκη στηριχθήναι τὸ ν π καὶ πιεσθέντος ἱκανώς τοῦ στόματος τότε ἄκουστον γενέσθαι τὸ π’ οὐ γὰρ ὑποτακτικόν τὸ ν τὸ π.
The first clause consists of four parts of speech: a verb, a connective (συνδέσμος), and two appellatives. By being fused together the verb and the connective have produced a delightful harmony, while the appellative, by being placed alongside the connective, has roughened considerably the combination. 'Εν χρόνισ unharmonious and lacks in euphony, because the conjunction ends in a semivowel letter, ν, and the appellative begins with a mute, χ. These consonants are by their nature unmixable and non-fusable. For it is not natural to place a ν before a χ in the same syllable. Consequently, when they fix the boundaries of syllables they do not unite into a continuous sound, but it is inevitable that there occurs a pause between them, which distinguishes the sound-value of each letter. This then is the reason why the first clause gets its roughness in the composition... The following clause ἐπὶ τε κλυτάν πέμπτε χάριν θεοί is a long way away from the previous one and contains many discordant joints (ἀρμονίας). The clause begins with a vowel, ε, and near it is another vowel, ι, in which letter the previous clause, too, ended. The two letters cannot be fused together, nor can an ι precede an ε in the same syllable. There occurs a pause between them separating the parts from each other and safeguarding their basic difference. With respect to the detailed composition of the clause, the appellative κλυτάν which is joined to the connectives ἐπὶ τε (or shall I call the first of these a preposition), makes the composition discordant and rough. How so? Because the first syllable in κλυτάν is supposed to be short, but it is actually longer than an ordinary short, consisting of a voiceless consonant, a semivowel, and a vowel. The fact that it is not purely short together with the difficulty in pronouncing the letters so fused, retards and disconnects the harmony. Now if one were to remove the κ from the syllable and make it ἐπὶ τε λυτάν then the slowness and the harshness in the composition would be eliminated. Again, letting the verb πέμπτε follow the appellative κλυτάν...
does not make for a harmonious and well-unisoned sound. It is necessary for the \( v \) to be firmly pronounced, and when the lips have been sufficiently squeezed then the \( \pi \) is heard, for the \( \pi \) cannot be connected onto the \( v \). The cause for this is the configuration of the mouth; it does not pronounce the two letters at the same place or in the same way. With respect to \( v \) the sound is formed in the palate with the tongue rising to the edges of the teeth and the breath dividing between the nostrils, while for \( \pi \) the mouth is closed and the tongue is inactive, the breath taking a compact sound at the opening of the lips, as I have said above. In that the mouth takes a different configuration from the previous one, that is not akin or similar, involves a certain time during which the smoothness and euphony of the harmony is interrupted. At the same time the first syllable of \( \pi \varepsilon \mu \varepsilon \tau \varepsilon \) does not have a soft sound either, but is harsh to the hearing beginning as it does with a voiceless consonant (\( \pi \)) and ending in a semivowel (\( \mu \)). Juxtaposing \( \theta \varepsilon \omega i \) next to \( \chi \varepsilon \rho i \nu \) has the effect of breaking up the sound and creating a considerable interval between the parts, the one ending in a semivowel, \( \nu \), and the other having as its first letter the voiceless \( \theta \). And it is unnatural for a semivowel to be placed before a mute.

The criticism of Thukydides may be exemplified by his very first sentence (1.1): "Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ἴσως ἐνέγραψε τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων ὡς ἐπολέμησαν πρὸς ἄλληλους. This involves many clashes: the \( \zeta \) in Ἀθηναῖος clashes with the \( \xi \) in ἴσως (demanding a stop after the \( \zeta \) before the \( \xi \) can be uttered). The \( \nu \) in τῶν with the \( \pi \) in πόλεμον, the \( \nu \) in πόλεμον with the \( \tau \) in τῶν, the \( \nu \) in τῶν with the \( \Pi \) in Πελοποννησίων, the \( \nu \) in Πελοποννησίων with the \( \kappa \) in καὶ, as well as a vowel clash between the \( \iota \) in καὶ and the \( \Lambda \) in Ἀθηναίων.

2. The Polished Style. The main characteristics of the polished style are that it does not place each word in prominence. There are no long intervals between words, instead it has a fast movement, and the various parts are interwoven so as to convey one meaning. To this contributes the exact fitting together of the parts, which does not leave place for perceptible intervals. All its words are melodious, smooth, and soft, and it detests rough and discordant syllables. Fine fitting together relates not only to words, but also to clauses, forming the period. The clauses are neither too short nor too long, so as to encompass the total length of the period within a man’s breath. The figures of speech must not be archaic, exhibiting grandeur or solemnity, but soft and flattering, having much that is alluring and appropriate to the theater. In short, the polished style
is the exact opposite of the austere style. This style is represented in
epos by Hesiodos, in lyric by Sappho, Anakreon and Simonides, in
tragedy by Euripides, in prose by Ephoros and Theopompos, and in
oratory by Isokrates.

46. Composition 23.
47. Sappho, frag. 1:

Ποικιλόθρον' ἀθάνατ' Ἀφροδίτα,
παῖ Διὸς δολόπλοκε, λίσσομαι σε,
μή μ' ἁσαίσι μηδ' οὖνισαι δάμνα,
πόσσια θύμων
‘Immortal Aphrodite, who sittest on a richly ornamented throne,
Daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I beseech Thee
Do not crush my spirit with vexation and distress,
August Queen’.

Dionysios comments: ‘The eloquence and gracefulness of this composition lies in
the continuity and the smoothness of its arrangement. The words are placed side by
side and are interwoven according to the natural affinities and unions of the letters.
For almost throughout the entire ode only such vowels are joined to the voiceless
letters and the semivowels as naturally may precede or follow one another in the same
syllable. There are very few cases of semivowels joined to semivowels or voiceless
and voiced vowels joined to one another which disturb the flow of sound... (παύτης
τής λέξεως ἡ εὐέπεια καὶ ἡ χάρις ἐν τῇ συνεχείᾳ καὶ λειτοτηθ̣ γέγονε τόν
ἀρμονιών· παράκειται γὰρ ἀλλήλους τὰ ὀνόματα καὶ συνύφανται κατὰ τίνας
οἰκειότητας καὶ συζυγίας φυσικάς τῶν γραμμάτων· τά γὰρ φωνήντα τοῖς
ἀφώνοις τε καὶ ἡμιφώνοις συνάπτονται μικροῦ διὰ πάσης τῆς ὀδής, ὃ σα
προτάττεσθαι τε καὶ ὑποτάττεσθαι πέφυκεν ἀλλήλους κατὰ μίαν συλλαβήν
συνεκφερόμενα· ἡμιφώνον δὲ πρὸς ἡμίφωνα ἡ ἁφῶνα· καὶ ἁφῶνον ὁ πρὸς ἡμιφώνον
και φωνηντὸν πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμπτώσεις αἱ διασαλεύουσαι τοὺς ἡχοὺς ὀλίγα πάνυ
ἐνεισιν).

48. Having quoted Isokrates, Areopagitikos 1-5 (Πολλοῦς ύμων οἴομαι θαυμάζειν, ἢντινα ποτὲ γνώμην ἔχων περὶ σωτηρίας τὴν πρόσωδον ἐποιησάμην,
ὡςπὲρ ἡ τῆς πόλεως ἐν κινδύνοις οὔς ἢ σφαλέρως αὐτῇ τῶν πραγμάτων
καθεστῶν, ἀλλ’ οὐ πλείους μὲν τρίτης ἢ διακοσίας κεκτημένης, εἰρήνην δὲ
tὰ περὶ τὴν χώραν ἀγούσης καὶ τῶν κατὰ θάλατταν ἀρχοῦσης, ἐτὶ δὲ
συμμάχους ἐξούσιας πολλοῦς μὲν τοὺς ἐτοίμους ἥμιν ἢν τὶ δέ τῇ βοηθήσοντας,
pολὺ δὲ πλείους τοὺς τὰς συντάξεις ὑποτελοῦντας καὶ τὸ προστατύµενον
ποιου̣ττας...), Dionysios finds that the words here are well-blended together, do not
stand out so as to be viewed on all sides, they are not divided by long intervals, they
are instead smoothly moving on as a continuous stream, being gentle and smooth.
The reasons for this are i.e. that there are no dissonances of vowels, and few
dissonances of semivowels and voiceless letters. The clauses are balanced rounding
up the whole into a well-proportioned period.
3. The Temperate Style. For lack of a proper name Dionysios calls the third style temperate (or well-mixed), inasmuch as it consists of the best elements of the austere and the polished styles. It is a kind of a golden mean between the first two styles. In Dionysios’s opinion this style is the winner, being a mean, which is, a virtue in life, work, and art, as Aristoteles himself maintained. The chief representative here is Homeros, ‘the source from which all rivers and all seas and all fountains flow’.

Others who have excelled in this style include: in lyric Stesichoros and Alkaios, in tragedy Sophokles, in prose Herodotos, in oratory Demosthenes, and of philosophers Demokritos, Platon and Aristoteles; it is impossible to find any others who blended their compositions better than these authors. No examples are here deemed necessary, because the entire composition of these authors exemplifies this kind of style.

Chapters 25 and 26 address the question of how to make prose look like poetry.

3. Dionysios’s Relevance for the New Testament

Through this work Dionysios has done us a great service. He has not merely given us his own subjective opinion about what makes literature delightful and beautiful; in his work he has incorporated not merely the literary tastes and trends of his time, but inasmuch as those tastes and trends had been forming over a period of many centuries, we may feel confident that he lays before us some of the things that Greeks generally felt important and looked for in fine literature. Being an artistic people, and oriented towards aesthetic perfection, they set a high standard and placed stringent demands on those who aspired to literary immortality, to be included in the pantheon of the Muses.

Is there any relevance in all this for the New Testament? When Paul addressed the Athenians (according to Acts 17), and when he proclaimed his message to the Corinthians, his speeches would undoubtedly have been measured by such standards as the ones Dionysios set forth in his work. Paul is quite explicit on the matter: κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν πρὸς υμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἠλθον οὐ καθ’ ύπεροχὴν λόγου ἡ σοφίας... καὶ ὁ λόγος καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς [ξ] σοφίας...
[λόγοι] (1 Cor. 2.1-4). Still, for all his disownment of and disassociation from literary aestheticism, the least we can say is that Paul had certainly been confronted with it in his learning of the Greek language, and furthermore, as an author who wanted to communicate his message effectively, he must have made some effort to write in such a way as to be taken seriously. If he did not strive for melody and rhythm, at least appropriateness and good taste were for his exalted message a sine qua non.

It ought to be a rewarding task to try to apply Dionysios’s principles for pleasant and beautiful composition on, for example, Paul’s letters to see to what extent he made the effort to adhere to the aesthetic standards of his time, or to determine in how far Paul’s letters judged by contemporary literary standards, reveal conscious or unconscious affectation or at any rate conformity—or non-conformity, for that matter.

The twentieth century has been the century of Deissmannism: the writings of the New Testament have been studied time and again against the backdrop of the illiterate papyri, the barbarous documents from Egypt. The New Testament writings are literary works, not private letters or contracts, and should be judged in the light of other similar literature.

When I say ‘similar literature’ I do not mean the scientific writing of the times, such as works on mathematics, astronomy, mechanics, and pneumatics, not to mention medicinal works. There is a great difference in form and purpose between scientific writing and the New Testament. Scientific writing operates within the strict parameters of cold, objective description. Its purpose is to give instruction in the science concerned, not to appeal to the aesthetics of the reader, not to produce literature. The New Testament writings, on the other hand, appeal to the mind and soul of the reader. Their purpose is to convert the reader, that is, to persuade the reader of the correctness of their point of view, and win him over to their standpoint by appealing to his intellect, reason, and aesthetic appreciation. Thus, while Dionysios’s precepts would hardly have any relevance for scientific writing, apriorically they would be quite relevant for such writings as we find in the New Testament. These two bodies of writings belong to two quite different literary genres.

However, the suggestion to return to the more sober literature in the light of which to examine the New Testament is not made in order to show how near to good literature it comes or to show its inferiority, nor
in order to enter that fruitless field of literary sources and presumed dependence, but in order to introduce the reader to an area of aesthetic appreciation of the New Testament, which, as far as I know has not been a conscious pursuit among New Testament scholars.

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4. Paul and Literary Criticism

An attempt will now be made to see whether and to what extent Paul follows or adheres to Dionysios’s recommendations for delightful, beautiful and effective composition. This will be done not exhaustively, but by addressing a number of Dionysios’s criteria for good composition.

a. Euphony

Dionysios’s principles for euphonious composition become clear from his critical treatment of the composition of ancient authors. Euphony (εὐφωνία, here not unrelated to εὐέρεθα, εὐστομία, ἀρμονία, etc.) is concerned with the euphonious collocation of letter-sounds. The examples cited above show that Dionysios, and by extension the Greeks, were very particular about the smooth, euphonious, continuous, uninterrupted utterance of the string of words making up the colon, the sentence, or the period (to the extent this was feasible). Remembering that writing at this time was continuous, without breaks between words, the total composition (until the natural break) was looked upon as one unit. It was therefore important that words kept on rolling one after the other and the intonation of the voice varied continuously without any stops. An abrupt break or pause was considered a disaster. To achieve this effect it was important that one word ended and the next began with consonants and vowels that fitted euphoniously into one another. If therefore it became necessary to take time between words to move the tongue to another place in the mouth from that of the previous sound, or to give the tongue, the lips, or the mouth another configuration in order to utter the following sound, this retarded the continuous flow of words, introduced breaks or pauses, resulted in hiatus, in lack of euphony and harmony, and the composition was regarded as lacking in delightfulness and beauty.

Naturally, it was impossible to always have a euphonious connection between words, if the sentence was to be a meaningful sentence, and one had to use a particular word which did not happen to cohere with
the previous or the following one. However, the attempt was made, as far as this was possible, to choose such words as harmonized with others within the collocation, and not infrequently the expedient was resorted to of transposing words within the sentence in order to find a more appropriate place for them. Such transpositions were possible because the case system and verbal endings gave considerable liberties in structuring the sentence. This, however, did not happen without sometimes sacrificing clarity—a fact that has made many a modern student sigh at this Greek liberty in sentence structure.

In applying euphonious principles to Paul’s composition the point of departure must, of course, be the historical Greek pronunciation. (The pronunciation propounded mistakenly by Erasmus is unusable.) This began to take its definitive form in classical times, in a process that was practically complete by the time of Paul, and which has remained unchanged ever since. It is appropriate here to underline the importance of reading aloud. So did the ancient Greeks. So did Paul, and so did the Church leaders who received Paul’s letters and caused them to be read aloud in the churches. Only in this way shall we be in a position to appreciate Paul’s letters aesthetically.

Bearing in mind Dionysios’s recommendations, above, I now turn to Paul’s letters. In Phil. 1.8, μάρτυς γάρ μου ὁ Θεός ὡς ἐπιποθῶ πάντας ύμᾶς ἐν σπλάγχνοις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, the collision between the ζ in μάρτυς and the γ in γάρ as well as the hiatus between μου and ὁ could have been avoided if Paul had placed γάρ as the third word in the sentence. Moreover, the clash between the ζ in σπλάγχνοις and the Χ in Χριστοῦ as well as the hiatus between Χριστοῦ and Ἰησοῦ would have been eliminated if he had written Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, which was fully possible. Thus, had the sentence been μάρτυς μου γάρ ὁ Θεός ὡς ἐπιποθῶ πάντας ύμᾶς ἐν σπλάγχνοις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ it would have had a smoother, more pleasant and flowing quality. However, Phil. 1.13-14 ὡστε τοὺς δεσμοὺς μου φανερῶ ἐν Χριστῷ γενέσθαι ἐν ὀλῷ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πάσιν, καὶ τοὺς πλείονας τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἐν κυρίῳ πεποιθότας τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου περισσοτέρως τοιμάν

52. See section 2.c. above, ‘The Tasks of Composition’.
53. This, though less frequent, is well attested: cf. e.g. Rom. 2.25; 7.7; 13.6; 14.5; 1 Cor. 1.18; 5.3; 10.1; 10.26; 12.8; 14.17; 16.7; 2 Cor. 2.9; 5.7; 9.1; 10.13; 11.4; Gal. 2.12; 1 Thess. 1.8.
структур в тон логон лаляев содержит крайне мало жестких комбинаций: v + X, v + λ, σ + λ и v + κ (которые не могут происходить в одной силяке). Там всего одна жесткая комбинация: αι + ε, обе части которой, однако, произносились идентично, что облегчало их произнесение в последовательности. Впрочем, эта фраза не красивая. Причина этого в основном синтактическо-коллокационная и частично из-за преобладания мертвых согласных. Например, наименее приятная из них, так называемые остановки, k, π и τ, встречаются 3, 7 и 12 раз соответственно. Далее, неудовлетворительны комбинации: st, sd, sm, sq, ss, lm, nl (по мнению Дийонас, в его завышенной оценке: αχαρι και αηδες) встречаются более 18 раз. Колы не соединены благородно. Далее, есть неясности (например, с какими словами относится еιν Χριστω). Следует переосмыслить и переписать. Вероятно, следующая структура облегчает некоторые недостатки:

wστε φανερόν γενέσθαι εν ὕλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πάσιν ὁτι δέδεμαι ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. διὸ οἱ πλείονες τῶν ἐν κυρίῳ ἀδελφῶν πεποιθότες τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου περισσοτέρως τολμῶσιν ἀφόβως τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν. Στо φιλ. 2.5, τούτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὁ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, φраза, с которой произносится соединение между καὶ и ἐν как альтернативу, а между ἐν и Χριστῷ, чтобы быть понятым: ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ есть стереотипная фраза.Το не было, то тогда его форма была бы в v. 11, что есть, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Этим фраза бы была более гладкой. Филипп. 2.17 ἄλλα εἰ καὶ σπένδομαι ἐπὶ τῇ θυσίᾳ καὶ λειτουργίᾳ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν, χαίρω καὶ συγχαίρω πάσιν ὑμῖν, уже красивая фраза, имеющая незначительные диссонансы, была бы лучше, если бы ἄλλα εἰ был стёрто до ἄλλα’ εἰ.55

b. Changes in Ordinary Forms and Constructions in View of Composition

Дийонас цитирует Демостене, On the Crown 1, eἰς τοὺς τόν ἀγώνα, как пример осознанной комбинации с целью построения. Дийонас указывает, что Демостен использовал обычные
form τοῦτον but he chose instead to add one letter in order to emphasize this particular lawsuit. With regards to Paul, we find an example of this in 1 Cor. 1.20, where instead of the simple οὐκ, he uses the emphatic οὐχί: οὐχί ἐμφάνας ὁ Θεός τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ κόσμου τοῦτον;56 In Phil. 4.2, Εὐδοίαν παρακαλῶ καὶ Συντύχην παρακαλῶ τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν ἐν κυρίῳ. Paul, like Aischines (Against Ktesiphon 202: επὶ σαυτὸν καλεῖς, ἐπὶ τοὺς νόμους καλεῖς, ἐπὶ τὴν δημοκρατίαν καλεῖς)57 repeats his request not out of necessity, but in order to make his request separately to each of the two women, and thus make his point more effective.

In Phil. 1.15, τινὲς μὲν καὶ διὰ φθόνον καὶ ἔριν, τινὲς δὲ καὶ δι᾽ ἐνδοκίαν τὸν Χριστὸν κηρύσσομιν, the elision in διὰ is conscious with a view to composition. Two non-Pauline passages of relevance here are Jas 3.12 and Heb. 7.4. The first of these, οὐτὲ ἀλυκὸν γλυκὺ ποιήσαι ὕδωρ, has achieved a fine effect by transposing the word γλυκύ, which actually belongs together with ὕδωρ, so as for it to stand next to its opposite ἀλυκόν, in order to accentuate the contrast between the salty source and the sweet water. Hebrews 7.4 θēρεῖτε δὲ πηλίκος οὕτος, ὁ καὶ δεκάτην Ἀβραάμ ἐδοκεῖν ἐκ τῶν ἀκροθνίων ὁ πατριάρχης has purposely moved the apposition ὁ πατριάρχης, which logically should follow Ἀβραάμ, to the end of the sentence in order to create a beautiful climax. In 1 Cor. 1.18, ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις μιρία ἐστίν, τοῖς δὲ σφετέρωσις ἡμῖν δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστιν, is harsh. The harshness would have disappeared if Paul had written ὁ γὰρ λόγος τοῦ σταυροῦ.58 Moreover, the second part of the sentence would have been more pleasant if ἡμῖν had been placed before τοῖς δὲ σφετέρωσις, taking the form ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς σφετέρωσις δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστιν. However, this would have spoiled the neat balance in the contrast τοῖς μὲν ἀπολλυμένοις – τοῖς δὲ σφετέρωσις, which was of more consequence to Paul (we need to remember that Paul set greater store by content than by form).

1 Corinthians 7.14 ἐπεὶ ἁρά τὰ τέκνα υμῶν ἀκάθαρτα ἐστίν, νῦν δὲ ἀγιὰ ἐστίν is problematic. Paul is not making a statement of fact (‘your children are unclean’), but a hypothetical one, the apodosis of a

56. There are several such examples in Paul, e.g., Rom. 3.29; 1 Cor. 6.1, 7; 9.1; 2 Cor. 3.8; 1 Thess. 2.19.
57. See section 2.c. above, ‘The Tasks of Composition’.
58. So in Rom. 6.7: ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν; Acts 17.28: τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν, etc.
supressed condition. Thus, ἐπεὶ takes the place of the protasis (‘If this were not so’, referring to the previous statement in this verse). He ought, therefore, to have used in the apodosis the imperfect indicative with the modal ἀν: [εἰ ταῦτα οὕτως οὐκ εἶχεν.] τὰ τέκνα ύμων ἀκάθαρτα ἂν ἦν. The inferential ἀρα introduces the conclusion in place of a regular apodosis. It is possible that in this he was influenced by the following factual statement: νῦν δὲ ἄγια ἔστιν.

These examples show that while Paul can sometimes construct beautiful and smooth sentences, he does not appear to pay excessive attention to ἐνέπεια or ὀρθοἐπεια. Of interest in this connection is, no doubt, the story referred to by Dionysios,59 that after Platon’s death (at eighty-two) his writing-tablet was found which contained the opening eight words of his Republic (κατέβην χρῆς εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος) arranged in several different ways.60 Dionysios refers also to Isokrates’ constant revision of his Panegyrikos, which took ten years to complete. They were writing literature; Paul was writing practical letter-messages called forth by pressing circumstances, which did not allow him the luxury of revision.

c. Compositional Effects

Compositional effects such as climax, pathos, etc. are important in beautiful and delightful composition. Paul is not devoid of such effects. For example, 1 Cor. 4.8 ἥδη κεκορεσμένοι ἐστέ, ἥδη ἐπλουτῆσατε, χωρὶς ήμῶν ἐβασιλεύσατε leads up to a beautiful climax, ‘you have reigned as kings’, only in order to smash the Corinthians’ pride a moment later by ruthlessly questioning their having reigned as kings: καὶ ὅφελόν γε ἐβασιλεύσατε ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμῖν συμβασιλεύσωμεν. There is strong pathos in 1 Cor. 4.9-13. First there is the vivid presentation of himself (and the other apostles) as gladiators (ἐπιθανατίους). Then the actual spectacle in the amphitheater is evoked (θέατρον ἐγένετο καὶ ὅσιον). This is exemplified by the climactic amplification [ἡμεῖς] μιμοῖ, ἀσθενεῖς, ἀτιμοὶ. What ἀτιμοὶ implies is explained by the long list of unpleasant experiences: πεινῶμεν, διψῶμεν, γυμνιτεύομεν, κολαφίζομεθα, ἀστατοῦμεν, κοπιῶμεν, λοιδοροῦμεν, διωκόμενοι, δυσφημοῦμενοι. This finally issues into the summary statement of the treatment he is receiving at the hands of the.

59. Composition 25.

60. See also Quintilian, Institutio oratoria 8.6.64; Demetrios, On Style 204; and Diogenes Laertios, 3.37.
world, which also forms the climax of the whole passage: ὁς περικαθάρματα τοῦ κόσμου ἐγενήθημεν, πάντων περίψημα ἕως ἀρτι.61

d. Qualities Signalling Delightful and Beautiful Composition

1. Melody. Dionysios speaks with regards to melody in terms of using the most euphonious and smooth letters, blending the rough-sounding letters and syllables with their smooth-sounding counterparts, short with long syllables, etc. A good example of this in Paul would be Rom. 8.18: λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἄξια τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς. This sentence contains α (the most euphonious vowel according to Dionysios) no less than 12 times, η (the second most euphonious vowel) 4 times, ου and αι (both of which occupy a good position in the scale) 4 and 3 times respectively, and finally ν twice. Of the less euphonious vowels ο (which is the best) occurs 6 times, while its inferior ε occurs only once and the least euphonious ι occurs 3 times. With regards to the consonants the sentence contains λ (τῶν ἡμιφῶνων γλυκύτατον) 4 times, ρ (τῶν ὀμογενῶν γενναίοτάτον) 3 times, μ and ν (ranging between the first two, and resembling the sounds of horns) occur 4 and 6 times respectively. The ζ (which μᾶλλον ἡδύνει τὴν ἀκοῆ τῶν ἑτέρων) occurs just once. The rough κ and ξ occur 3 and 2 times respectively. Finally, there are very few disharmonies, a fact that contributes to the melodious flow of the sentence. Such a use of the most beautiful and smooth sounds, such a blending of euphonious with less euphonious syllables, and such a mixture of long and short syllables cannot but result, according to Dionysios, in beautiful composition.62

61. There are many such passages in 2 Corinthians. Luke has a beautiful sentence in Acts 26.29. In answer to Agrippas’s ironic remark, Paul is represented as saying: εὐξαίμην ἂν τῷ θεῷ… οὐ μόνον σέ… σήμερον γενέσθαι τοιούτους ὀποίους καὶ ἐγὼ εἰμι παρεκτός τῶν δεσμῶν τούτων. No doubt Chrysostom is right in his interpretation of the last four words (Commentary on Acts 52.2: οὐκ ἀποδυσπετῶν διὰ τὰ δεσμά, οὐδὲ αἰσχυνόμενος διότι ἐδέξετο, τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ, εἰ περὶ τὸ ἄλλο, ἄξιον δόξη, and 52.4: ἔτι γὰρ ἀσθενεστέρον διέκειντο, καὶ συγκαταβατικότερος ἦν ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ), but even so the pathos is not removed.

62. Syntactically the sentence would have been more correct if it had taken the form πρὸς τὴν δόξαν τὴν μέλλουσαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς. This would, however, have introduced two disharmonies between τὴν δόξαν and τὴν μέλλουσαν.
2. *Rhythm*. There are not a few passages in Paul that would lend themselves to a metric declamation. For lack of space only one such passage will be taken up here, and that quite briefly. Of the great passage of Phil. 2.5-11, only the first sentence will be quoted:

\[
\text{τούτο φρό | νεἰτε ἐν | ύμίν}
\]

- - - - - - -

\[
\text{ὁ καὶ ἐν | Χριστῷ ᾽Ι | ἡσοῦ,}
\]

- - - - - -

\[
\text{ὁς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ | ὑπάρχων}
\]

- - - - - - -

\[
\text{οὐχ ἄρ | παμμὸν ἦ | γῆσατο}
\]

- - - - - - -

\[
\text{τὸ εἷναι | ἵσα | θεῷ,}
\]

- - - - - - -

\[
\text{ἀλλὰ ἐ | αὐτὸν ἔ | κένωσεν}
\]

- - - - - - -

\[
\text{μορφὴν | δούλου | λαβὼν.}
\]

- - - - - - -

In the first colon the first foot is a bacchius, the second is a dactyl, while the third foot is a spondee. In the second colon, the first foot is a hypobacchius. This is followed by a bacchius and a spondee. The third colon is introduced by a hypobacchius, which is followed by a cretic, and ends in a hypobacchius. The fourth colon is opens with a spondee, which is followed by two cretics. The fifth colon begins with a hypobacchius, continues with a spondee, and ends in an iambus. The first and second feet of the sixth colon are dactyls and its third foot an amphibrach. Finally, the seventh colon consists of three spondees.

If this scanning is correct, it means that apart from one amphibrach, which does not rate high with Dionysios, all the other feet belong to the most beautiful and noble of rhythms. Moreover, the spondees of the last colon, by their retarded movement, make the last three words the most emphatic in the sentence, thus accentuating the contrast between what Christ was in his pre-existence, which, too, is expressed by the predominantly slow feet of the third colon, and what he became through his incarnation. This contrast is even more enhanced by the preponderantly fast movement of the sixth colon, which aptly describes Christ’s emptying of himself.
3. Variety. As Dionysios points out this is a very broad area encompassing periodic structures, simple sentences, short and long clauses, rough and smooth styles, a great variety of figures, and other features. There is a plenitude of most of these characteristics in Paul’s letters, though periodic composition is quite infrequent in Paul, as in the New Testament in general. The two longest sentences in the New Testament occur in letters that are disputed, Eph. 1.3-14 (202 words) and Col. 1.9-20 (218 words). But even so, there is a great variety in the number and length of Pauline clauses. For example, his description in Rom. 4.17-22 of the faith of Abraham, who is a prototype of those who believe, contains about 15 clauses or 97 words, while his description of the hardly less momentous sin of Adam and its consequences for humanity in Rom. 5.12 receives a bare four clauses or 30 words. Among the pictures used of the Church of Christ are the metaphors of body and temple. Here variety is seen in the very detailed description of the Church as the body of Christ in 1 Cor. 12.12-26 and the markedly brief treatment of the Church as the temple of the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. 3.16-17. Again, his clear and smooth analogy in Rom. 7.2-3, of the married woman and her obligations, not only contrasts sharply with the laconic and somewhat confusing figure of his birth-pains for the Galatians in Gal. 4.19, but implies variety from his equally effective allegory of Hagar and Sarah in Gal. 4.22-26, and is considerably longer than the similar treatment of 1 Cor. 7.39-40. Though this might be viewed as infelicitous, sometimes the improper use of figures is dictated by the sense desired, as with the metaphor of the wild olive tree in Rom. 11.24, which though incorrect from the agricultural point of view, has taken the only form that would suit the author’s argument.

4. Appropriateness. Dionysios reminded us that ‘it is admitted by all that a treatment is appropriate when it fits the entities concerned, persons as well as things’. For Dionysios this is the one thing that should accompany all the other adornments of style. For example, he points

64. See Section 2.e.4. above, ‘Appropriateness’.
65. Composition 20: καὶ γὰρ τοῖς ἄλλοις χρήμασιν ἄπασι παρεῖναι δεῖ τὸ πρέπον.
In Paul this finds an apt illustration in the marked difference between the agitated tone of Galatians and the serene tone of Philippians. Dionysios points out, moreover, that appropriateness can take a great number of forms, such as choice of words, composition, as well as the important insight that eyewitnesses do not report events using the same sort of composition about everything, being impelled by natural impulses to seek to imitate what was said.

If Paul’s composition can be faulted with lacking in refinement, at least it cannot be faulted with lacking in appropriateness. Paul’s composition is versatile, lively, replete with appropriate ideas and images, and an ever-changing style according to the demands of the subject matter. Thus, defending himself against Galatian charges of antinomianism, he aptly reminds them of his past life as a Jew, his excessive zeal, indeed, his madness in the Jewish cause as well as his exceptional success, and then relates how the radical change that came over him was the result of a divine revelation (Gal. 1.13-17). Every single word in this composition is carefully chosen to suit the subject in hand. Comparing this with the very different charges of the Corinthians, we find that his defence in 1 Cor. 9.1-23 takes quite a different form. In his defence at 1 Cor. 9.4-7 the three climactic rhetorical questions: ‘Do we not have the right to eat and drink?’, ‘to live in the married estate?’, and ‘not to work?’ are appropriately balanced by the three figures of the labor and reward of the soldier, the farmer, and the shepherd.

2 Corinthians 4.7 gives the beautifully appropriate metaphor of the treasure in the earthen vessel: ἐχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτον ἐν ὀστρακίνοις σκεῦσιν. The contrast could not be greater between the indestructibility and value of this eternal treasure and the fragility and worthlessness of the container. This contrast gives added force to the second part of the verse: ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἢ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν.

66. Composition 20: ‘We do not use the same kind of composition when we are angry as when we are glad’.

67. Composition 20: οἱ αὐτοὶ ἀνθρωποὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ καταστάσει τῆς ψυχῆς οὐντες ὃταν ἀπαγγέλλωσι πράγματα οἷς ἂν παραγενόμενοι τύχωσιν, οὐχ ὁμοῖα χρώνται συνθέσει περὶ πάντων ἀλλὰ μιμητικοὶ γίνονται τῶν ἀπαγγέλλομένων καὶ ἐν τῷ συντιθέναι τὰ ὁνόματα, οὐδὲν ἐπιτηδεύοντες ἀλλὰ φυσικῶς ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἀγόμενοι.
Finally, the letter to Philemon as a whole must be judged to be a model of appropriateness, where Paul’s tactful expressions balancing between graceful, delicate demand and humble request correspond beautifully with the character and station of the persons involved, their reciprocal relations, as well as the actions contemplated.

e. Does Paul Adhere to Any One of Dionysios’s Styles?
Paul’s style cannot be said to adhere to the purely austere style. For example, he does not make it his practice to let individual words stand out in prominence, nor does he prefer pathos to moral character. But neither can it be said to belong to the polished style. His many rough compositions, the gaps and breaks in thought and expression bespeak the austere rather than the polished style. This does not mean, however, that he does not sometimes exhibit a beautiful finish. Paul’s style is better categorized as a mixture of the austere (in his case rough) and polished styles—though not always of what is best in them. Thus, it would be a long way from Platon or Demosthenes’ temperate style. He does not seem to have made the conscious effort to adhere to a particular diction.

5. Conclusions
The above discussion is a first attempt to look at Paul’s letters from the standpoint of Dionysios Halikarnasseus, who was one of the most important literary critics of a generation or two before Paul, and who may rightly be taken as a representative of Greek literary tastes in general. Space did not allow a thorough investigation in Paul of all the points Dionysios raises. I have, therefore, concentrated on a smaller selection of characteristics for achieving delightful and beautiful composition, and taken a first look at Paul for comparable features.

The discussion of Pauline texts indicates that while Paul, not infrequently exhibits elements that were deemed by Dionysios necessary to good composition, he seldom made a conscious effort to adhere to literary rules for elegance in style. Thus, his more felicitous choices of words and compositions seem most of the time to be the result of instinctive feeling and natural taste; they are the spontaneous intellectual outbursts of a great soul caught up in an unusual mission, rather than the outcome of studious effort or conscious affectation of generally accepted stylistic standards.
It appears, moreover, that content was more important to Paul than form. But being a great and original thinker, a versatile writer with a fair grasp of the Greek language, and believing himself to have been entrusted with a message and a mission of momentous importance, it was inevitable that he would give expression to such spontaneous dynamism, and by it lay a claim for a place in Greek literature.

Paul’s literary production should not be compared with the literary work of Homeros. Homeros wrote fine literature, art, music. Paul writes epistles: letter-messages to his converts and others, in which he debates, argues, expostulates, challenges, threatens, beseeches. This material is a long way from the barbarous private letters of the Egyptian papyri. Of classical counterparts, those closest in respect of genre and purpose are such authors as Platon and Demosthenes, the other orators, and such later writers as Dion Chrysostomos and Ailios Aristeides. Of course, they write Attic and use rhetorical devices, while Paul writes post-classical Greek, not without a little Septuagintal influence, and moreover, he writes spontaneously and without conscious rhetorical ornamentation. Had Paul reworked his letters, they would have looked quite different from what they are now. Nevertheless, from the perspective of literary genre, the authors just named are those that supply the standard models for composition, and set the parameters for anyone who seeks to communicate his message in Greek.