Helena Cichocka

Mimesis and Rhetoric in the Treatises by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Byzantine Tradition (selected problems)

Passages from Book I of the epitome Περὶ μιμήσεως, attributed to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, are the source of definitions of the terms which are of concern to us in this paper and of key relevance to the treatise of Dionysius:[1] rhetoric (ῥητορική) and mimesis (μίμησις) as well as the source of comments on the importance of nature (φύσις) in literature. Book II of Dionysius' treatise, most of which has been preserved, explains what authors from among poets, philosophers, historians and orators are to be imitated, while Book III, which has not been preserved, was expected to answer the question how they should be imitated.[2]

The extant passages from the epitome Περὶ μιμήσεως begin (in the edition of Usener – Radermacher) with the definition of rhetoric, usually ascribed in Greek and Byzantine tradition to Dionysius of Halicarnassus:

Ῥητορική ἐστι δύναμις τεχνικὴ πιθανοῦ λόγου ἐν πράγματι πολιτικῷ, τέλος ἔχουσα τὸ εὖ λέγειν[3] – *Rhetoric is the technical competence of persuasive expression in political activity having as the purpose to speak properly.*[4]

The text of this definition is quoted several times without any comments by anonymous commentators of Hermogenes' and Aphthonius' treatises and by Byzantine epitome authors.[5] Nor is Dionysius' definition accompanied by any commentary in Maximos Planudes' Προλεγόμενα τῆς ῥητορικῆς[6] or Matthew Camariotes' Ῥητορικῆς ἐπιτομὴ ἐκ τῶν τοῦ Ἑρμογένους.[7]

My review of Dionysius' definitions of rhetoric accompanied by comments[8] starts with *Prolegomenon* 17 to Hermogenes' treatise Περὶ στάσεων ascribed to Marcellinus,[9] which is followed by an analysis of the commentary on Dionysius' definition in anonymous *Prolegomenon* 4.[10] The

---

[1] Cf. D. Battisti, Osservazioni sul testo del Περὶ μιμήσεως di Dionigi di Alicarnasso. *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 30/3 (1988) 101. For the further analyses I use the edition of Dionysius: Dionysii Halicarnasei Quae extant, vol. V–VI: Opuscula, vol. I–II, ed. H. Usener – L. Radermacher. Lipsiae 1889–1904/1929 (= Us. – Rad.). Other frequently cited editions: Prolegomenon Sylloge, ed. H. Rabe. Lipsiae 1931 (= Proleg. Syll.); Rhetores Graeci I–IX, ed. Chr. Walz. Stuttgartiae – Tubingae 1832–1836 (= Walz I–IX).

[2] Cf. Us. – Rad. II 197–217 (ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΑΛΙΚΑΡΝΑΣΕΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΜΙΜΗΣΕΩΣ ΤΑ ΣΩΙΖΟΜΕΝΑ); *cf.* H. Cichocka Mimesis i retoryka w traktatach Dionizjusza z Halikarnasu a tradycja bizantyńska [Mimesis and Rhetoric in the Treatises by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Byzantine Tradition]. Warszawa 2004, 64–75 (Chapter II. 2. 2: Problems of the reconstruction of the treatise Περὶ μιμήσεως).

[3] Us. – Rad. II 197, 2–3.

[4] Cf. G. A. Kennedy, The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World, 300 B.C. – A.D. 300. Princeton, N.J. 1972, 347: ... the artistic faculty of persuasive speech in political matters, having the goal of speaking well.

[5] Cf. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 78–83 (Chapter III: The definition of rhetoric attributed to Dionysius of Halicarnassus and its reception in Byzantium).

[6] Proleg. Syll. 7., 65, 13–16; *cf.* Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 83–86.

[7] Walz VI 601, 2–4.

[8] Cf. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 87–110.

[9] Cf. G. A. Kennedy, Later Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric. *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 13/3 (1980) 186; *cf.* Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 87–92.

[10] Cf. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 92–96.

text of Dionysius' definition of rhetoric is later cited by Doxapatres in *Prolegomenon* 9, i.e. an introduction to Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata;* however, Doxapatres ascribes this definition to Dionysius Thrax.[11] The text of Dionysius' definition, ascribed to a certain Lollianus, is also cited by Sopatros in a broad commentary on Hermogenes' Τέχνη.[12]

A review of the definition of rhetoric by Dionysius cited by Byzantine experts in the theory of rhetoric shows that this definition attracted attention and was very popular in Byzantium. Therefore it seems obvious to argue that Dionysius' definition was the basis of the so-called standard definition, a model in the Byzantine tradition.

By distinguishing between rhetoric and other word-based arts, primarily dialectics and grammar, the words in the definition: ἐν πράγματι πολιτικῷ (*in political activity*) established a direct link between rhetoric and the political life of the Byzantine Empire.[13] Thus the definition of rhetoric accepted and approved in the theory and practice of the Byzantine tradition extends and restructures Dionysius' definition of rhetoric.

The basic version of the Byzantine standard definition reads:

Ῥητορική ἐστι τέχνη περὶ λόγου δύναμιν ἐν πράγματι πολιτικῷ, τέλος ἔχουσα τὸ πιθανῶς εἰπεῖν κατὰ τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον[14] –
Rhetoric is a practice regarding the competence of the word in political activity having as the purpose to speak persuasively according to the possibility.[15]

Some Byzantine commentators cite the standard definition without any commentary or merely with a brief introductory sentence.[16] One of the first ones to do so was Troilus (4th/ 5th cent.), the author of an introduction to Hermogenes' system of rhetoric,[17] followed by anonymous authors of general introductions to the art of rhetoric.[18] The text of the standard definition also opens a review of the definitions of rhetoric in an anonymous epitome,[19] which includes random commentaries on Hermogenes' treatises.

The earliest Byzantine treatise that cites the standard definition with a commentary is an introduction to rhetoric by Trophonius (6th cent.).[20] From among Byzantine commentaries and scholia which cited the standard definition of rhetoric with a commentary, the one that deserves special attention is an exceptionally extensive introduction to Aphthonius' Progymnasmata by Doxapatres (11th cent.).[21] A much shortened version, which is also an excerpt from and a paraphrase of the relevant passages from Prolegomenon 9. by Doxapatres, is an introduction (also to Aphthonius' Progymnasmata) by an unknown author, identified by Walz with Doxapatres.[22] The closing section of

---

[11] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 96–104.

[12] Walz V 15–211. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 104–108.

[13] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 110.

[14] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 111–144 (Chapter IV: The standard definition of rhetoric in Byzantium).

[15] Cf. B. Schouler, La définition de la rhétorique dans l'enseignement Byzantin. *Byz* 45/1 (1995) 168–169: La rhétorique est une technique s'applicant à la capacité du discours en matière politique, dont le but est s'exprimer de manière persuasive dans la limite du possible, τέχνη περὶ λόγου δύναμιν …. .

[16] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 112–118.

[17] Proleg. Syll. 5 (Προλεγόμενα τῆς ῥητορικῆς Ἑρμογένους) (44–58).

[18] Proleg. Syll. 2. (14, 6–16, 6); Proleg. Syll. 23 (III 339, 15–347, 12); Proleg. Syll. 24 (III 349, 1–3).

[19] Walz III 611, 1–3.

[20] Proleg. Syll. 1 (Τροφωνίου Σοφιστοῦ Προλεγόμενα εἰς τὴν ῥητορικήν) (1, 3–14, 4). Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 118–123.

[21] Proleg. Syll. 9 (80, 11–155, 32). Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 124–132.

[22] Proleg. Syll. 11 (Incerti auctoris Prolegomena in Progymnasmata)(158, 10–170, 25) = Walz II (Doxapatri Prolegomena rhetoricae)(69, 4–80, 27). Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 133–140.

the introduction to rhetoric by Maximos Planudes (13th/ 14th cent.) is a review of the major Byzantine commentators who cite the standard definition of rhetoric together with a commentary.[23]

What follows from the above summary and relevant analyses[24] is that the definition of rhetoric accepted and approved in the Byzantine tradition transformed and extended the definition of rhetoric by Dionysius, which, unlike the earlier Greek definitions, made it possible to establish a link, to the greatest possible extent, between both the theory of rhetoric and its practical application and the political activity in the Byzantine Empire.

The question that remains is the indisputable interrelation between the definition of rhetoric by Dionysius (passage I in Usener – Radermacher)[25] and another two terms of key relevance to his epitome Περὶ μιμήσεως: (1) μίμησις and (2) ζῆλος, cited in the edition as passage III of the first book.[26] They are preceded in passage II by a concise presentation of the basic concepts[27] linked with the interpretation of the term *imitation,*[28] namely φύσις δεξιά (*skilful nature*), μάθησις ἀκριβής (*precise learning*) and ἄσκησις ἐπίπονος (*painful practice*).

Next the publisher of the epitome cites[29] the text in the introductory section of Syrianus' commentary on Hermogenes' treatise Περὶ τῶν στάσεων,[30] which makes an clear reference to the text contained in passage II of the first book of the epitome. In the introductory section of his commentary Syrianus refers to Plato's remarks which define the most important qualities of an orator in Apologia and Gorgias:[31] *veracity, justice and competence*. However, the direct starting point for the commentator's analyses is a quotation from Phaedrus, in which Plato states that if somebody is an orator owing to his innate talents (φύσει), he will not become a famous orator until he adds knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and practice (μελέτη) to them.[32]

Definitions of the terms (together with testimoniums) of key relevance to Dionysius' epitome, i.e. μίμησις and ζῆλος are given in passage III of the epitome in Usener –Radermacher.[33] The first definition provided is that of μίμησις:[34]

μίμησίς ἐστιν ἐνέργεια διὰ τῶν θεωρημάτων ἐκματτομένη τὸ παράδειγμα –
imitation is an activity expressing a model through schemes.[35]

---

[23] Proleg. Syll. 7 (64, 11–73, 8). Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 140–144.

[24] Cichocka Mimesis i retoryka 111–144.

[25] Us. – Rad. II 197, 2–3.

[26] Us. – Rad. II 200, 28–201, 15.

[27] Us. – Rad. II 200, 4–7: τρία ταῦτα τὴν ἀρίστην ἡμῖν ἔν τε τοῖς πολιτικοῖς λόγοις ἕξιν καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τέχνῃ τε καὶ ἐπιστήμῃ χορηγήσει· φύσις δεξιά, μάθησις ἀκριβής, ἄσκησις ἐπίπονος· ἅ περ καὶ τὸν Παιανέα τοιοῦτον ἀπειργάσατο.

[28] Us. – Rad. II 200, 4–20. Cf. H. Flaschar, Die klassizistische Theorie der Mimesis, in: Le classicisme à Rome aux Iers siècles avant et après J.-C. (*Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique* XXV). Vandœvres – Genève 1978, 87: „Das theoretische Modell, von dem Quintilian sich für die Einordung auch der römischen Literatur mit nur geringen Modifikationen leiten lässt, ist durch Dionys von Halikarnass gegeben. Er repräsentiert am reinsten die gängige klassizistische Theorie der Mimesis. In ihr lassen sich folgende Hauptmomente unterscheiden: Mimesis bezieht sich auf drei Hauptbegriffe, die Dionys in seiner Schrift Περὶ μιμήσεως nach der Definition der Rhetorik (Fr. 1) einführt (Fr. 2): φύσις δεξιά, μάθησις ἀκριβής, ἄσκησις ἐπίπονος".

[29] Us. – Rad. II 200, 10–14.

[30] Cf. Syriani in Hermogenem Commentaria, vol. II (Commentarium in librum ΠΕΡΙ ΣΤΑΣΕΩΝ), ed. H. Rabe. Lipsiae 1893, 4, 19–5, 1–5: ἀκολούθως δὲ τῷ θείῳ Πλάτωνι καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τίτλῳ περὶ μιμήσεώς φησι ὅτι "τρία ταῦτα τὴν ἀρίστην … ἄσκησις ἐπίπονος, ἅπερ καὶ τὸν Παιανέα τοιοῦτον ἀπειργάσατο."

[31] Cf. Plat., Apol. 18 A: … αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο σκοπεῖν καὶ τούτῳ τὸν νοῦν προσέχειν, εἰ δίκαια λέγω ἢ μή· δικαστοῦ μὲν γὰρ αὕτη ἀρετή, ῥήτορος δὲ τἀληθῆ λέγειν; Gorg. 508 C: … τὸν μέλλοντα ὀρθῶς ῥητορικὸν ἔσεσθαι δίκαιον ἄρα δεῖ εἶναι καὶ ἐπιστήμονα τῶν δικαίων, … .

[32] Plat., Phaedr. 269 D: εἰ μέν σοι ὑπάρχει φύσει ῥητορικῷ εἶναι, ἔσει ῥήτωρ ἐλλόγιμος, προσλαβὼν ἐπιστήμην τε καὶ μελέτην· ὅτου δ᾽ ἂν ἐλλίπῃς τούτων, ταύτῃ ἀτελὴς ἔσει.

[33] Us. – Rad. II 200, 22–201, 15.

[34] Us. – Rad. II 200, 22–23.

[35] Cf. J. W. H. Atkins, Literary Criticism in Antiquity, II. Cambridge 1934, 112: „Imitation in general he describes as ´a copying of models with the help of certain principles´"...; Kennedy, The Art of Rhetoric 348: „Another fragment (3) defines

The other version of the definition of μίμησις, which is ascribed to a later tradition,[36] is cited by Usener – Radermacher among the testimoniums provided after the definitions of μίμησις and ζῆλος:

λόγος [ἢ πρᾶξις] ὁμοίωσιν εὖ ἔχουσαν τοῦ παραδείγματος περιέχον[37] –
a word [or an activity] bearing accurate resemblance to the pattern.

The text of the definition of ζῆλος[38] refers to the text of the definition of μίμησις, cited as the standard one in the edition with a slight opposition expressed by the particle δέ, which argues that the two concepts complement each other:[39]

ζῆλος δέ ἐστιν ἐνέργεια ψυχῆς πρὸς θαῦμα τοῦ δοκοῦντος εἶναι καλοῦ κινουμένη –
emulation is an intellectual activity directed towards admiring what seems to be beautiful.[40]

The definitions of Dionysius' terms μίμησις and ζῆλος were cited by Syrianus in the initial section of the commentary on Hermogenes' treatise *De ideis*[41] as an illustration of the quotation taken from that source: "ἡ γάρτοι μίμησις καὶ ὁ ζῆλος".[42] Let me remind you that Hermogenes begins his treatise on ideas with a statement that being acquainted with knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) about them is one of an orator's key duties.[43] He goes on to underline that μίμησις and ζῆλος, which come into being in conjunction with mere experience (ἐμπειρία ψιλή) and some skill not linked with words (ἄλογος

---

imitation (mimêsis) as ´an activity receiving the impression of a model by inspection of it´"; D.A. RUSSELL, De imitatione, in: Creative Imitation and Latin Literature, ed. D. WEST – T. WOODMAN. Cambridge 1979, 10: „Mimēsis *is an activity reproducing the model by means of theoretical principles*"; G. AUJAC, Recherches sur la tradition Περὶ συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων de Denys d'Halicarnasse. *Revue d'histoire des textes* 4 (1974) 27: „L'imitation est l'action de reproduire le modèle dans les règles"; A. N. CIZEK, Imitatio et tractatio. Die literarisch-rhetorischen Grundlagen der Nachahmung in Antike und Mittelalter. Tübingen 1994, 19: „Die Nachahmung (μίμησις) ist eine Tätigkeit, die das Muster mit Hilfe genauer Betrachtung abbildet"; D.G. BATTISTI, Dionigi di Alicarnasso Sull' imitazione. Edizione critica, traduzione e commento. Pisa – Roma 1997, 57: „L'imitazione è l'atto di riprodurre il modello secondo le regole..."; Cf. Denys d'Halicarnasse, Opuscules rhétoriques, V, par G. AUJAC. Paris 2002, 27: „L'imitation est l'action de reproduire le modèle dans les règles".

[36] Us. – Rad. II 201, 1: ὡς δὲ οἱ μεταγενέστεροι λέγουσιν, … .

[37] Us. – Rad. II 201, 1–2.

[38] Us. – Rad. II 200, 24–25.

[39] RUSSELL, De imitatione 10: „It is clear that for Dionysius *zēlos* is at any rate the more spontaneous of the two, the less amenable to rule. But it is important to remember that both are means to the same end; they are not exclusive, they complement each other, ... What he says in that connection refers to the whole complex idea of '*mimēsis – zēlōsis*', not to *zēlōsis* without its partner. It is thus wrong, or at least false in terms of this evidence, to treat 'imitation' and 'emulation' as fundamentally different, the one passive and negative, the other positive and original"; CIZEK, Imitatio et tractatio 19: „In der an anderer Stelle begegnenden Kontraststellung von μίμησις und ζῆλος erscheint die erstere als passiv-rezeptives Moment, das die Ausgangsbasis für den aktivisch auftretenden ζῆλος bildet, wobei die dialektische Komplementarität dieser zwei Prozesse offensichtlich ist".

[40] ATKINS, Literary Criticism in Antiquity 112: „and he further justifies the process as being in an enthusiastic form (ζῆλος), "an activity of the soul inspired by the spectacle of the seemingly beautiful"...; KENNEDY, The Art of Rhetoric 348: „while emulation (zêlos) is called an "activity of the soul impelled toward admiration of what seems to be fine"; RUSSELL, De imitatione 10: „Zēlos is an activity of the mind, roused to admiration of something believed to be beautiful"; CIZEK, Imitatio et tractatio 19: „ ... die Nacheiferung (ζῆλος) aber ist ein Streben in der Seele, die durch das, was thr schön erscheint, zu Bewunderung hingerissen wird"; BATTISTI, Dionigi di Alicarnasso 57: „L'emulazione è la spinta dell' anima mossa all'ammirazione"; cf AUJAC (2002) 27: „L'émulation est l'élan actif de l'âme, mis en : mouvement par l'admiration de ce qui lui paraît beau".

[41] Syriani in Hermogenem Commentaria I 1, 4–95, 9.

[42] Syriani in Hermogenem Commentaria 3, 15–21: "ἡ γάρτοι μίμησις καὶ ὁ ζῆλος" Διονύσιος μὲν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ περὶ μιμήσεως ὁρίζεται τὴν μίμησιν οὕτως …; *cf.* Hermog., De ideis 213, 14.

[43] Hermog., De ideis 213, 4–14.

τριβή), could not be properly applied (τυγχάνειν τοῦ ὀρθοῦ) if they did not actually have something taken from nature (κἂν πάνυ τις ἔχῃ φύσεως εὖ).[44]

Notwithstanding, the natural abilities alone (φύσεως πλεονεκτήματα) which are not accompanied by training (τέχνη) will not lead to any success, Hermogenes argues.[45] And he who has knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) and understanding (γνῶσις) of this topic will not, even with his modest natural talents, miss the goal by emulating (ζηλοῦν) the ancients;[46] obviously, he will be more successful if he employs his natural talents (φύσις).[47] However, if somebody has not received any natural talents, he has no choice but to learn, as this is within his power;[48] through practice and correct training he will soon excel his competitors endowed with natural abilities.[49]

The issues concerning the meaning and the practical application of the terms μίμησις and ζῆλος were examined in more detail in the introductory section[50] of the commentary on Hermogenes' *De ideis,* ascribed to Syrianus. In 1931 H. Rabe included this text[51] in *Prolegomenon Sylloge* as *Prolegomenon* 28 by a certain Phoebammon.[52] Like Hermogenes, Syrianus establishes a link between the process of *imitation* and primarily the theory of style.[53] He underlines that the one acquainted with the topic (ἐπιστήμων) should know not only the quantity of styles (ποσότης) but their properties (ἰδιότης) and the process of imitation relative to the ancient predecessors (ἡ μίμησις ἡ πρὸς τοὺς παλαιούς).[54] This is because if one attempts to imitate the ancients' styles, his efforts will prove futile because he will apply his statement (λόγος) to its nature (φύσις), not the way it is handled (μεταχείρισις). He reminds the reader that Dionysius is one of those who distinguished between three types of style: χαρακτὴρ ἰσχνός, μέσος and ἀδρός.[55] Syrianus further concludes that the apprehension (κατάληψις) of the three types of style will result from as many as four solutions, namely our performance (τὰ ὑφ᾽ ἡμῶν ἀποτελούμενα) is determined by imitation (ζῆλος), nature (φύσις), chance (τύχη), or art (τέχνη).[56]

Let me observe at this point that Syrianus' statement on the mutual relationship between imitation, nature, chance and art was extensively paraphrased in the 11th century by John Syceliotes, the author of the most extensive extant commentary on Hermogenes' treatise Περὶ ἰδεῶν,[57] who cited the name of Phoebammon. Having remarked on Lysias' style, Syrianus goes on to explain that we *imitate* (μιμούμεθα) a painting by shaping it in the same way if we use a specified method (μέθοδος) and the same tools, i.e. through art (τέχνη); this does not occur by virtue of nature or by chance.[58] In that he makes an express reference to the first chapter of Book II of Dionysius' *De imitatione,*[59] bringing up a story of the painter Zeuxis who achieved through art (τέχνη) what was difficult to achieve through nature (φύσις) or by chance (τύχη).[60] – Therefore the conclusion that we can draw

---

[44] Hermog., De ideis 213, 14–214, 1.

[45] Hermog., De ideis 214, 1–3.

[46] *Ibidem* 214, 4–6.

[47] *Ibidem* 214, 6–8.

[48] *Ibidem* 214, 8–10: … μαθητόν ἐστι καὶ διδακτόν … .

[49] *Ibidem* 214, 10–12: τάχα γὰρ ἂν οὕτω καὶ τοὺς πεφυκότας οἱ μὴ τοιοῦτοι μελέτῃ καὶ πῇ κατ᾽ ὀρθὸν ἀσκήσει παρέλχοιεν.

[50] Syriani in Hermogenem Commentaria, I (1892) 96, 3–112, 24. CICHOCKA, Mimesis i retoryka 155–158.

[51] Without the initial part to be found in Syrianus's edition: *In Hermog.,* 96, 3–97, 6

[52] Proleg. Syll., 375, 3–388, 14 = Syrianus, In Hermog., 97, 7–112, 24, (28 [Phoebammonis Prolegomena in Hermogenis ΠΕΡΙ ΙΔΕΩΝ]; cf. A. BRINKMANN, Phoibammon ΠΕΡΙ ΜΙΜΗΣΕΩΣ. *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 61 [1906] 117–134).

[53] CICHOCKA, Mimesis i retoryka 155–158.

[54] Syrianus, In Hermog. 98, 20–22.

[55] *Ibidem* 99, 18–20: … οὗτος γὰρ τρεῖς εἶναι χαρακτῆράς φησι, τὸν ἰσχνὸν τὸν μέσον τὸν ἀδρόν·

[56] *Ibidem* 101, 1–4.

[57] Cf. Walz VI (Ἰωάννου τοῦ Σικελιώτου Σχόλια εἰς Ἰδεῶν α´.) (72, 12–73), 17 ≈ Syriani In Hermogenem Commentaria, I 101, 1–102,12 = Proleg. Syll., 378, 10–379, 24.

[58] Syrianus, In Hermog. 101, 4–19.

[59] Us. – Rad. II 203, 10–18.

[60] Syrianus, In Hermog. 102, 3–8.

from Syrianus' commentary is that he considered the art of rhetoric (τέχνη) to be an instrument used in the process of imitation (μίμησις).[61]

Another matter that raises methodological doubts (ἀπορήματα) is presented by Syrianus in his reference to his earlier remark on the difficulty *imitating* the ancients' style.[62] He continues those considerations to say that as a matter of fact it is not possible to imitate (ζηλῶσαι) patterns (τύποι) of the ancients because transposing the laws of nature (φύσις) to a disposition (διάθεσις) peculiar to somebody changes the whole arrangement of words (λόγου διοίκησις) by virtue of its specific character (ἰδιότης).[63] Therefore it is impossible to *imitate closely* (ζηλῶσαι … εἰς τὸ ἀκριβές) Demosthenes' or Plato's style. This can be achieved partly if one also tries to get closer to other authors, not necessarily Demosthenes or Plato.[64]

In consequence, one should not give up creating speeches (λόγοι) only because he cannot immediately become Demosthenes; he should also try to analyse other orators (ῥήτορες) who initially refrained from speech to find out whether they had not been overwhelmed by a desire to produce speeches that did not seem to depart much from the model (τύπος) set by Demosthenes.[65] Syrianus goes on to argue that it is possible to retain one's own nature (φύσις) while *imitating* (ζηλῶσαι) an ancient model; an example is an imitation of Lysias' style.[66] To sum up his remarks on the theory and practice of *mimesis*, which refer to the types of style and Hermogenes' ideas, Syrianus contends that it is possible to imitate somebody while retaining individual properties (ἰδιότης) of one's works.[67]

An abbreviated form of a commentary on the cited passage from Hermogenes' *De ideis*[68] is a passage from anonymous scholia accompanying that treatise,[69] where the anonymous author, having cited the definition of ζῆλος, argues, citing Dionysius, that for purposes of the ancient models the term ζῆλος is equivalent to the term μίμησις.[70] The anonymous author observes that mere experience (ψιλὴ ἐμπειρία), i.e. mere introduction (ἀνάγνωσις) without the art (τέχνη) is nothing but a skill without the art (ἄλογος τριβή), which is not competent in any area (παντελῶς ἀμαθής). What is truly revealing (εὑρίσκει) is the word (λόγος) if it acts according to the art (κατὰ τὴν τέχνην).[71] At this point the author cites a statement to be found in Plato's *Gorgias*,[72] according to which an activity inexpressive by the word (ἄλογον πρᾶγμα) cannot be called art.[73]

The term ζῆλος is also defined through μίμησις by Ammonius in an etymological dictionary Περὶ ὁμοίων καὶ διαφόρων λέξεων (*De adfinium vocabulorum differentia*).[74] K. Nickau, publisher of Ammonius' works, dates that lexicographer at the early part of the 1st or 2nd century,[75] whereas H.

---

[61] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 157.

[62] Syrianus, In Hermog. 98, 20–22.

[63] Syrianus, In Hermog. 104, 14–17: οὐχ οἷόν τέ φασι "ζηλῶσαι τοὺς τῶν ἀρχαίων τύπους· καταφερομένη γὰρ ἡ φύσις πρὸς τὴν οἰκείαν διάθεσιν μεταβάλλει πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἰδιότητα τὴν πᾶσαν τοῦ λόγου διοίκησιν".

[64] Syrianus, In Hermog.104, 17–22.

[65] *Ibidem* 104, 22–105, 6.

[66] *Ibidem* 105, 15–21: ... τὸν Λυσιακὸν ζηλοῖ χαρακτῆρα.

[67] *Ibidem* 105, 22–106, 2.

[68] Cf. Hermog., De ideis, 213–214, 12.

[69] Walz VII 2 (Ἀνονύμου Σχόλια ...) (865, 8–14).

[70] *Ibidem*, p. 865, 14–15: ὁ πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχαίους ζῆλος, φησιν, τουτέστιν ἡ μίμησις, … .

[71] *Ibidem*, p. 865, 15–866, 2. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 152–153.

[72] Cf. Plat., Gorg. 465 A.

[73] Cf. Walz VII 2 (866, 2–4): καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων φησίν· ἐγὼ γὰρ τέχνην οὐ καλῶ, ὃ ἂν ᾖ ἄλογον πρᾶγμα.

[74] Ammonii qui dicitur Liber de adfinium vocabulorum differentia, ed. K. Nickau. Lipsiae 1966. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 153–155.

[75] Cf. Nickau, Ammonii (Prolegomena) LXVI.

Hunger takes Ammonius to be a lexicographer of the Byzantine period.[76] In his lexicon Ammonius gives several terms whose meaning is very close to that of ζῆλος.

When he makes a distinction between rivalry (ζηλοτυπία) and ζῆλος Ammonius argues that zelos is an *imitation* of beauty (ζῆλος δὲ μίμησις καλοῦ), just like a child imitates his teacher.[77] He goes on to expand on the difference between ζηλῶσαι and ἐρίσαι and explains that ζηλοῦν means to imitate with passion (σὺν ἐπιθυμίᾳ μιμεῖσθαι).[78] He makes a similar distinction between ζῆλος and φθόνος, namely he defines *zelos* as an imitation, arising from passion, of what seems to be beautiful.[79] To sum up his definitions accompanied by examples, Ammonius states that there are three forms (εἴδη) of *zelos,* of which the first two can be considered to be equivalent to *mimesis,* namely (1) blessing (μακαρισμός), whereby it is said that somebody imitates somebody else in something (ζηλωτός δεῖνα ἐπὶ τῷδε) and (2) it is said that somebody is somebody else's imitator (ζηλωτής τινος εἶναι λέγεται), e.g. Theseus of Heracles; the third type is the equivalent of the term "invidiousness" (τρίτος δὲ ὁ φθόνῳ ὅμοιος).[80]

Ammonius' definitions confirm the above submission put forward by the anonymous scholiast that the terms *zelos* and *mimesis* correspond with each other and are almost identical or even exchangeable. Exchangeability of those terms can also be seen from e.g. relevant examples of the extant passages of Dionysius' epitome *De imitatione*[81] and his remarks set forth in *Epistula ad Pompeium.*[82]

Let me illustrate exchangeability of the cited terms using selected examples taken from Greek historiography. When analyzing the works of historians[83] Dionysius argues that Xenophon became Herodotus' imitator (ζηλωτής) in regard to the qualities of the subject and style.[84] He expands on his submission in *Epistula ad Pompeium* using similar phrases[85] and stresses that Xenophon is worthy of praise as an imitator of Herodotus not only because of the subject (ὑπόθεσις) of the work but also the arrangement of the content (οἰκονομία).[86] Likewise Dionysius observes in his epitome *De imitatione* that Xenophon's style sometimes resembles Herodotus',[87] In his *Epistle to Pompeius* he argues that Xenophon is stylistically similar to Herodotus to some extent (πῇ μὲν ὅμοιος).[88]

Later in the epitome Dionysius refers to Philistus as an *imitator* (μιμητής) of Thucydides, excluding, however, his delineation of characters.[89] He observes that Philistus first and foremost *imitated* (ἐζήλωκεν) Thucydides in his leaving the argument open and in some disorder in terms of the arrangement of the content.[90] What Philistus did not imitate (οὐκ ἐζήλωκεν) was Thucydides' sophisticated and perfect style; he merely carefully copied (πάνυ ἀκριβῶς ἀπεμάξατο) what was compact (τὸ στρογγύλον), cohesive (τὸ πυκνόν), euphonic and vivid (τὸ εὔτονον καὶ ἐναγώνιον).[91]

---

[76] Cf. H. Hunger, Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner, I–II. München 1978, II 49: „Das bekannteste derartige Lexikon aus byzantinischer Zeit ist unter dem Namen Ammonios ... überliefert".

[77] Cf. Amm. 209.

[78] Cf. Amm. 210.

[79] Cf. Amm. 211: ... ζῆλος μὲν γάρ ἐστι ἡ δι᾽ ἐπιθυμίαν γινομένη μίμησις δοκοῦντός τινος καλοῦ … .

[80] Cf. Amm.. 213: ζήλου τρία εἴδη … .

[81] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 165–186.

[82] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 186–193.

[83] Cf. Us. – Rad. II 207, 5–210, 10.

[84] *Ibidem* 208, 1–3: ὁ μὲν Ξενοφῶν Ἡροδότου ζηλωτής ἐγένετο κατά τε τὰς πραγματικὰς ἀρετὰς <καὶ τὰς λεκτικάς· ...>.

[85] Cf. Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp. 4, 1 (Us. – Rad. II 241, 2–4): Ξενοφῶν μὲν γὰρ Ἡροδότου ζηλωτής ἐγένετο κατ᾽ ἀμφοτέρους τοὺς χαρακτῆρας, τόν τε πραγματικὸν καὶ τὸν λεκτικόν. Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 187–189.

[86] Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp 4, 2 (Us. – Rad. II 241, 14–22).

[87] Us. – Rad. II 208, 5–6: ... τῷ δὲ λεκτικῷ πῇ μὲν ὅμοιος ... .

[88] Cf. Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp. 4, 3 (Us. – Rad. II 241,23–242, 5).

[89] Us. – Rad. II 208, 14–15: Φίλιστος δὲ μιμητής ἐστι Θουκυδίδου, ἔξω τοῦ ἤθους.

[90] *Ibidem* 208, 17–20: ἐζήλωκεν δὲ πρῶτον μὲν τὸ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ἀτελῆ καταλιπεῖν τὸν αὐτὸν ἐκείνῳ τρόπον· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν ἀταξίαν αὐτοῦ τῆς οἰκονομίας.

[91] *Ibidem* 209, 3–5: τὸ δὲ στρογγύλον καὶ πυκνὸν καὶ εὔτονον καὶ ἐναγώνιον πάνυ ἀκριβῶς ἀπεμάξατο … . Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 171–172.

Similarity (ἐοικέναι) between Philistus and Thucydides is pointed out by Dionysius later in his Epistle to Pompeius,[92] where he observes that he does improve the method of presenting the characters;[93] then he goes on to set the modes of presenting the subject by the two historians side by side.[94] As for the style used by Thucydides, according to Dionysius Philistus avoided what was significant (σημειῶδες) and elaborate (περίεργον), while copying (ἐκμέμακται) what was compact (στρογγύλον), brief (πυκνόν) and determined (ἐνθυμηματικόν).[95] Dionysius also observes that many periods constructed the way Thucydides did it (ὁμοίως) could be found in Philistus' works.[96]

The analysis of the two passages characterizing Xenophon's dependence on Herodotus and Philistus' dependence on Thucydides reveal that the same or very similar terms are used in Dionysius' epitome *On imitation* and the *Epistle to Pompeius*, first and foremost the interchangeable use of the terms ζηλωτής and μιμητής to refer to an *imitator*. It follows that passage III, 2 of the epitome appears to be an abridged version of passage 3, 4–5 of the Epistle to Pompeius, which corresponds to it;[97] that this conclusion is correct is corroborated by the subsequent analysis of passages from Dionysius' treatise On Thucydides.

In the introduction to the treatise Περὶ Θουκυδίδου[98] Dionysius makes a reference to his treatise Περὶ μιμήσεως. He underlines that his intention was to bequeath beautiful and well-developed rules (κανόνες), to be employed by those who have elected to write and speak well to create their own exercises (γυμνασίαι), not by imitating everything (μὴ πάντα μιμούμενοι) to be found in those authors' works but receiving (λαμβάνοντες) only their qualities (ἀρεταί) and avoiding their failures (ἀποτυχίαι).[99] Turning to relatively detailed remarks on imitation in Chapter 6, Dionysius argues that Thucydides did not imitate Herodotus (οὔτε … μιμησάμενος Ἡρόδοτον) because he did not establish a link between history and a specific place, the way Hellanicus and others like him did, nor did he place the deeds of Greeks and barbarians all over the world in a single work.[100] In Chapter 8 Dionysius points out Thucydides' truth and objectivism in presenting history, which he considers to be beautiful and a thing worth *imitating* (μιμήσεως ἄξια).[101]

Dionysius does not return to *imitation* until Chapter 25 of the treatise On Thucydides, starting a detailed analysis of the historian's style.[102] He thinks that his observations are to be useful for those who elect to *imitate* Thucydides (μιμεῖσθαι τὸν ἄνδρα).[103] Further in Chapter 25 Dionysius cites a passage from Book IV,[104] and then in Chapter 26 extensive passages from Book VII[105] of Thucydides' work, adding his brief comments on the style. Further analyzing Thucydides' style, Dionysius concludes that the historian's citations are *admirable and worth imitating* (ἄξια ζήλου τε καὶ μιμήσεως).[106]

---

[92] *Cf.* Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp. 5 (Us.–Rad. II 242, 14–244, 10). Cɪᴄʜᴏᴄᴋᴀ, Mimesis i retoryka 189–190.

[93] Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp 5, 1 (Us. – Rad II 242, 14–15): Φίλιστος δὲ Θουκυδίδῃ μᾶλλον <ἂν> δόξειεν ἐοικέναι καὶ κατ᾽ ἐκεῖνον κοσμεῖσθαι τὸν χαρακτῆρα.

[94] Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp 5, 1–2 (Us. – Rad. II 242, 16–243, 1–3).

[95] Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp 5, 3 (Us. – Rad. II 243, 4–7).

[96] Dion. Hal., Ep. ad Pomp 5, 4 (Us. – Rad. II 243, 9–13).

[97] Cɪᴄʜᴏᴄᴋᴀ, Mimesis i retoryka 189–192.

[98] Thuc. 1 (Us. – Rad. I 325, 3–326, 12). Cɪᴄʜᴏᴄᴋᴀ, Mimesis i retoryka 200–208 (Chapter VII 4: Μίμησις and ζῆλος in treatise On Thucydides).

[99] *Cf.* Thuc. 1 (Us. – Rad. I 325, 14–16).

[100] Thuc. 6 (Us. – Rad. I 332, 7–11).

[101] Thuc. 8 (Us. – Rad. I 334, 13–335, 13).

[102] Thuc. 25 (Us. – Rad. I 364, 3–10).

[103] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 364, 10–16): … σκοπὸν ἔχουσα τὴν ὠφέλειαν αὐτῶν τῶν βουλευσομένων μιμεῖσθαι τὸν ἄνδρα.

[104] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 364,17–366, 4).

[105] Thuc. 26 (Us. – Rᴀᴅ. I 366, 4–370, 24).

[106] Thuc. 27 (Us. – Rad. I 371, 1–2); as for the meaning of ζῆλος (*admiration*) *cf.* Thuc. 2 (Us. – Rad I 326, 13–23: … <εἴ τε κατὰ τὸν ζῆλον> τῶν ἀρχαίων … .

Dionysius does not discuss and analyze the issues of imitating Thucydides' work in more detail until the closing chapters (52–53) of the treatise Περὶ Θουκυδίδου.[107] He begins Chapter 52 from a statement that he has one topic left, namely the orators and historians who *imitate* (περὶ τῶν μιμησαμένων) Thucydides; he considers that subject to be indispensable for completing his treatise.[108] However, taking up this subject puts him in an awkward position because he would not like to give those who are always critical the occasion for an attack. This is because it may seem that we fulfil a slanderous and spiteful task if we present authors who did not correctly take advantage of *imitation* (μὴ καλῶς τῇ μιμήσει χρησαμένους) citing their works of which they were most proud and which brought them wealth and esteem of people deserving glorious fame. To prevent any such suspicion, Dionysius decently refrains from putting forth any objections and reproaching anybody with their mistakes.[109] He also adds some remarks about those who were successful in *imitation* and closes his argument at that point.[110]

According to Dionysius, none of the ancient historians became Thucydides' *imitator* (μιμητής) and that because of the features that differed most from those of others, namely the style interlarded with foreign words (γλωσσηματική), affecting the archaic (ἀπηρχαιομένη), poetic (ποιητική) and strange (ξένη) at the same time; as for the syntax, the unnatural way of constructing and combining ambiguous sentences, which made his speech intricate and obscure.[111]

However, according to Dionysius Thucydides did find an *imitator* (ζηλωτής) in many points only among orators, and that was Demosthenes.[112] Let me remind you here that passage II of the extant part of Dionysius' *De imitatione* closes with the conclusion that it is nature (φύσις), learning (μάθησις) and practice (ἄσκησις) that contributed to Demosthenes' magnitude.[113] Moreover, Syrianus' commentary on Hermogenes' treatise *De ideis* showed Demosthenes as the example to which imitators wished to come closer.[114]

In his treatise on Thucydides Dionysius pays attention to the fact that is relevant to our considerations, namely that Demosthenes inserted the virtues (ἀρεταί) taken from Thucydides in his political speeches (πολιτικοὶ λόγοι) which neither Antiphontus nor Lysias nor Isocrates, outstanding orators of their times, possessed, namely speed (τάχη), conciseness (συστροφή), intensity (τόνος), pungency (πικρόν), concentration (στριφνόν) and forcefulness (δεινότης).[115] What Demosthenes disregarded was the bizarre (τὸ κατάγλωσσον τῆς λέξεως), strange (τὸ ξένον) and artificially poetic (τὸ ποιητικόν) styles, because he did not take them to be adequate to court trials.[116] Nor did he accept Thucydides' figures (σχήματα) which departed from the natural order and solecisms, choosing instead to use the language in common (ἐν τοῖς συνήθεσιν ἔμεινε) and decorate his expressions (φράσις) using variety (μεταβολή) and embellishing (ποικιλία). However, he did not express any idea (νόημα) in a simple way (ἁπλῶς), i.e. without the use of a figure.[117]

---

[107] Thuc. 52–53 (Us. – Rad. I 411, 13–413, 12).

[108] Thuc. 52 (Us. – Rad. I 411, 13–16): Εἷς ἔτι μοι καταλείπεται λόγος <ὁ> περὶ τῶν μιμησαμένων τὸν ἄνδρα ῥητόρων τε καὶ συγγραφέων, <ἀναγκαῖος μὲν ὤν>, ὥσπέρ τις καὶ ἄλλος, εἰς τὴν συντέλειαν τῆς ὑποθέσεως ... .

[109] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 411,16 – 412, 3).

[110] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 412, 3–5): περὶ δὲ τῶν κατορθωσάντων ἐν τῇ μιμήσει μικρὰ προσθέντες ἔτι καταπαύσομεν τὸ λόγον.

[111] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 412, 5–17): Συγγραφέων μὲν οὖν ἀρχαίων, ὅσα κἀμὲ εἰδέναι, Θουκυδίδου μιμητὴς <οὐδεὶς> ἐγένετο κατὰ ταῦτά γε, καθ᾽ ἃ δοκεῖ μάλιστα τῶν ἄλλων διαφέρειν, κατὰ τὴν γλωσσηματικὴν καὶ ἀπηρχαιομένην καὶ ποιητικὴν καὶ ξένην λέξιν, ... ἐξ ὧν ἡ πάντα λυμαινομένη τὰ καλὰ καὶ σκότον παρέχουσα ταῖς ἀρεταῖς ἀσάφεια παρῆλθεν εἰς τοὺς λόγους.

[112] Thuc. 53 (Us. – Rad. I 412, 18–20): Ῥητόρων δὲ Δημοσθένης μόνος, ὥσπερ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγα τι καὶ λαμπρὸν ἔδοξαν ποιεῖν ἐν λόγοις, οὕτω καὶ Θουκυδίδου ζηλωτὴς ἐγένετο κατὰ πολλά ... .

[113] Us. – Rad. II 200, 6–7 ... φύσις δεξιά, μάθησις ἀκριβής, ἄσκησις ἐπίπονος. ἅ περ καὶ τὸν Παιανιέα τοιοῦτον ἀπειργάσατο.

[114] *Cf.* Syrianus, In Hermog., 104–105.

[115] Thuc. 53 (Us. – Rad. I 412, 20–26).

[116] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 412, 26–413, 2).

[117] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad.I 413, 2–6).

What Demosthenes did was to *imitate* (ἐζήλωκεν) Thucydides' intricate sentences which expressed much in a few words and which gave a remote conclusion and expressed arguments in an unexpected way; he inserted them in deliberative and judicial speeches (δημηγορικοὶ καὶ δικανικοὶ λόγοι), more freely in public than in private suits.[118] Therefore Dionysius observes that he would not hesitate to advise those who practise political speeches (πολιτικοὶ λόγοι) and who keep their views unspoilt to draw on Demosthenes, the greatest of all orators, as their adviser (σύμβουλος), and to *imitate* (μιμεῖσθαι) such constructions (κατασκευαί) in which brevity (βραχύτης), forcefulness (δεινότης), strength (ἰσχύς), vigor (τόνος), elevation (μεγαλοπρέπεια) and related qualities (ἀρεταί) are plainly seen by all men.[119]

According to Dionysius one should not *admire* (θαυμάζειν) or *imitate* (μιμεῖσθαι) sentences that are puzzling, difficult to understand and require grammatical explanations, and those that feature numerous unnatural schemes and solecisms.[120] Summing up his earlier analyses, Dionysius concludes that there is no point in *imitating*, in the same way, (ζηλωτὰ εἶναι) Thucydides passages not expressed clearly (μὴ σαφῶς) and passages that display clearness (σαφήνεια) together with other virtues.[121]

To sum up his considerations of Thucydides' work, Dionysius sets forth an extremely important view (particularly for contemporary literary criticism). He asks why praising Thucydides' style we persistently assert that Thucydides wrote his History for the contemporary reader who knew and understood it while disregarding future readers (i.e. those in Dionysius' times), who removed the historian's entire style from judicial trials and any other public events on the ground that it was completely useless. Notwithstanding, Dionysius admits that the narrative part (διηγηματικὸν μέρος) of Thucydides' work deserves admiration (θαυμαστῶς ἔχειν), with hardly any exceptions, and is capable of any application. As for deliberative oratory (δημηγορικόν), not all of it is suitable for *imitating* (εἰς μίμησιν ἐπιτήδειον), only the part that although easily comprehensible to all cannot be composed by everybody in the same way (κατασκευασθῆναι δ' οὐχ ἅπασι δυνατόν).[122]

The analysis of the above passage that closes Dionysius' treatise On Thucydides shows an important, albeit a rather obvious, property of Greek literary criticism, namely that.[123] It is thus arguable that it is through the arrangement of content in their edition of selected passages from Dionysius' epitome Περὶ μιμήσεως that Usener and Radermacher somehow suggest establishing a link between rhetoric and the art of imitation; before they cite the passages, they give the definition of rhetoric (passage I), followed by the definitions of the terms expressing imitation, i.e. μίμησις and ζῆλος (passage III). Next the publishers cite one more important definitions μίμησις, to be found in the closing section of the treatiseΤέχνη ῥητορική[124] attributed to Dionysius. To close a critical review of errors (Chapter X) in declamations, Pseudo-Dionysius states, having analysed the epilogue, that antiquity (παλαιότης) does not consist in the arrangement of the books but the use of *similarity* (ὁμοιότης),[125] and gives us another definition of *mimesis*[126] here:

---

[118] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 413, 6–12): τὰς δὲ πολυπλόκους νοήσεις καὶ πολλὰ δηλούσας ἐν ὀλίγοις καὶ διὰ μακροῦ κομιζομένας τὴν ἀκολουθίαν καὶ ἐκ παραδόξου τὰ ἐνθυμήματα φερούσας ἐζήλωσέν τε καὶ προσέθηκε τοῖς τε δημηγορικοῖς καὶ τοῖς δικανικοῖς λόγοις, ἧττον μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν ἰδιωτικῶν δαψιλέστερον δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν δημοσίων ἀγώνων.

[119] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 417, 25–418, 3).

[120] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 417, 22–25).

[121] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad. I 417, 25–418, 3).

[122] *Ibidem* (Us. – Rad.I 418, 6–18).

[123] Cichocka, Mimesis i retoryka 208.

[124] Us. – Rad. II 201, 7–15. = 373, 14–22.

[125] Us. – Rad. II 373, 13–16: Ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὴν παλαιότητα μὴ ἐν τῇ θέσει τῶν βιβλίων νομίζωμεν εἶναι, ἀλλ' ἐν χρήσει τῆς ὁμοιότητος.

[126] *Ibidem* 373, 16–17.

μίμησις γὰρ οὐ χρῆσίς ἐστι τῶν διανοημάτων, ἀλλ᾽ ἡ ὁμοία τῶν παλαιῶν ἔντεχνος μεταχείρισις – *Imitation is not a simple use of thought, but the similar treatment of the ancient tradition which requires technical skills.*

Consequently the one who *imitates* (μιμεῖται) Demosthenes is – according to Pseudo-Dionysius – not the one who delivers or reproduces his speeches but the one who delivers them after the style of Demosthenes (Δημοσθενικῶς), i.e. the one who faithfully expresses the specific features of Demosthenes' speeches, like in the case of Plato and Homer.[127] The final definition of *mimesis* is given in this section of the treatise:

καὶ πᾶσα μίμησις ὧδε ἔχει· τέχνη ζῆλος ἐκμάττων ἐνθυμημάτων ὁμοιότητα[128] – *every imitation consists in the following: artistic emulation expressing resemblance of ideas.*

Having drawn up that conclusion, Pseudo-Dionysius explains that the lecture on *mimesis* is much longer, so he will refer to it later,[129] thus obviously directing the reader to the unabridged version of the treatise Περὶ μιμήσεως. Pseudo-Dionysius' treatise *Ars rhetorica* expresses the dominant theme of the then prevailing definition of *mimesis* more accurately than Dionysius does; namely, *imitation is not merely the repeated use of thoughts, but it consists in the ancients mastering an appropriate art (τέχνη)*. We can assume that the art in question was rhetoric.

---

[127] *Ibidem* 373, 18–20: καὶ μιμεῖται τὸν Δημοσθένην οὐχ ὁ τὸ <Δημοσθένους λέγων ἀλλ᾽ ὁ> Δημοσθενικῶς, καὶ Πλάτωνα ὁμοίως καὶ τὸν Ὅμηρον; *cf.* Syrianus, In Hermog. 104, 17–22: … ζηλῶσαι γὰρ εἰς τὸ ἀκριβὲς τὸν χαρακτῆρα τὸν Δημοσθενικὸν ἢ Πλατωνικὸν ἀδύνατον, πλὴν εἰ μὴ τελέως …; *cf.* Battisti, Dionigi di Alicarnasso (Introduzione) 16–17: „Dionigi dà una precisa indicazione sulla nozione di mimesi: „La mimesi è l'atto di riprodurre il modello secondo le regole" (*De imit.* fr. 2, ...). Nell' *Ars rhetorica* (VI, ...) ... questo concetto è espresso ancor più chiaramente: l'imitazione non è riutilizzazione dei pensieri (διανοημάτων), ma equivale ad impossessarsi della stessa technica degli antichi ... La mimesi è l'emulazione di una *techne* che riproduce una somiglianza delle idee (τέχνης ζῆλος ἐκμάττων ἐνθυμημάτων ὁμοιότητα), cioè dei criteri e delle peculiarità dell' opera di ogni singolo artista".

[128] Us. – Rad. II 373, 20–21.

[129] *Ibidem* 373, 21–22: μακρότερος ὁ περὶ μιμήσεως λόγος, ὃν ἀλλαχῇ μεταχειριούμεθα.