

THE TYRANT KINGS OF SYRACUSE

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AT THE end of the fourth and during the third centuries B.C., Agathocles and Hiero II bore, or usurped, the title of king of Syracuse.¹ The fact is generally admitted, both because of documentary evidence,² and because the practice was common for monarchs of every sort in the Hellenistic age. Moreover, a convincing case can be made that Agathocles in particular assumed the title following closely upon its first use by Alexander's successors. There also exists a not inconsiderable corpus of evidence to show that the title was borne by at least the more important monarchs of Syracuse in the "classical" period of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., that is, by the Deinomenids and by the elder and the younger Dionysius. With some exceptions, this evidence has been denied by scholars of the last few generations, partly on the basis of a priori assumptions which are ordinarily only implicit, and partly because of special explanations and rationalizations. It is the purpose of the present paper to argue the contrary, that even in classical times there was nothing incompatible in actuality between the fact of tyranny and the title of king, and that Syracusan monarchs or tyrants of that time did in fact assume the royal title.

In archaic times, it is generally agreed, the term "tyrant" merely meant a ruler, without any necessarily pejorative connotation. It is significant for our purpose that Isocrates, writing apparently not long after 374 B.C., could use the terms "king" and "tyrant" interchangeably, and in a context where he is unlikely to have been willing to give offense.³ Still later in the fourth century, when "tyrant" and "king" came to be ever more sharply differentiated, Aristotle could say that various kings, especially Pheidon of Argos, having started out as true kings, became tyrants.⁴ Plato in his *Epistles* (whether they are genuine or merely "Platonic" is beside the point) urges Dionysius II to reform his ways and thus to cease being a tyrant and

1. In accordance with common or technical Greek usage it would be more correct to write "king of the Syracusans" (cf. A. Aymard, "Le protocole royal grec et son évolution," *Études d'histoire ancienne* [Paris, 1967], pp. 73-99, at 75-76), but it seems better to conform to English usage in the title of an article written in English.

2. Cf., e.g., Head, *Hist. Num.*², pp. 180 and 184.

3. Isoc. 2 (*Nic.*), 1, 4, and 35-36; cf. J. Labarbe, "L'apparition de la notion de la tyrannie dans la Grèce archaïque," *AC* 40 (1971): 471-504, at 497, 498, and 500.

4. *Pol.* 5. 10. 1310b25-27; cf. Plato *Gorg.* 479A, where Archelaus of Macedonia is called a tyrant since Plato regarded his power as illegitimate or criminally tainted (see P. Cloché, *Histoire de la Macédoine* [Paris, 1960], pp. 82-83), although Archelaus was regularly regarded as a king (Thuc. 2. 100. 2). See also P. de Francisci, *Arcana imperii*, vol. 2 (Milan, 1948), p. 44, nn. 4 and 5. On the generally tendentious character of the sources on tyrants, which obscure various aspects of the institution, see Busolt, *Griechische Staatskunde*, 1:389. It is pertinent to note that although Agathocles certainly was a king, he is frequently objugated as a tyrant. See also C. D. Perry, "The Tyranny of Three," *CJ* 68 (1972-73 [1974]): 144-48, at 144; C. Mossé, *La tyrannie dans la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1969), pp. 138-41.

become a king.⁵ The advice would be particularly piquant if in fact Dionysius did use the title of king, although the counsel cannot be used as evidence that he did.

Thus there is no reason to believe that, if the Deinomenids and the Dionysii of Syracuse are regularly termed "tyrants," they themselves therefore cannot have used the title of "king."⁶ On a principle analogous to that of the *lectio difficilior* in paleography, even a few instances in which they are termed kings would argue that king was their proper title. One can also assume that politicians of any time and place are fundamentally much alike. If ancient Greek politicians who occupied a monarchical position thought that they could profitably arrogate the ancient and prestigious name of king, it is a priori likely that they would do so. Men are ruled by words and symbols, as modern studies of political mystique and charisma have amply shown.

European kings of the past several centuries have strongly emphasized their titles: Henry VIII subscribed his letters to Ann Boleyn as "H. Rex," and the monarchs of Spain signed documents with the formula "I, the King." Kings of ancient Greece, however, mentioned their title far less frequently, even in the Hellenistic age when the royal title was more often used than in earlier centuries. If recent European practice occupies one end, as it were, of the titular spectrum, the usage of the ancient Greeks occupies the other. Ancient Greek kings commonly did not use their title in official documents, and they used it less often in the fifth and fourth centuries than in Hellenistic times. In official documentary references to them by other Greek states the title likewise frequently went unused. The point has been established by the keen and careful analysis of the late André Aymard.⁷ Aymard deals mainly with literary materials and especially with documents. The coins offer a not dissimilar picture, although on coins kings were more likely to be recorded with title, or name, or effigy, or a combination.⁸ Hence if documents (in the narrower sense) or coins do not record anything that later times consider royal attributes, this fact should not be used as evidence against the literary sources, to prove that ancient Greek monarchs did not use the royal title. It should not even establish a negative presumption; the historical problem must be decided on other grounds.

The evidence to be detailed below seems convincing to the present writer. Why, then, have the majority of recent scholars writing on the matter not been equally convinced? In the first place, there seems to be a common

5. *Epist.* 3, 315D and 319D.

6. Contra, M. Scheele, *Strategos Autokrator* (Diss. Leipzig, 1932), p. 23.

7. *Études*, pp. 73–99; also "Basileus Makedonon," *ibid.*, pp. 100–122; "L'institution monarchique," *ibid.*, pp. 123–35. For the fifth century or earlier, readers may wish to sample and ponder the documents in Meiggs and Lewis, *GHI*, nos. 5, 65, 91 (restoration); for the fourth century before Alexander, see Tod, *GHI*, vol. 2, nos. 109, 111, 115, 117, 120, 123 (l. 109), 129, 139, 151, 157, 158, 163, 167, 173, 181. Aymard's work is an indication of how the discovery of "antiquarian" detail can lead to important historical conclusions.

8. Head, *Hist. Num.*², pp. 865–68 (Cyrene), 319 (Epirus), 320 (Amyntander), and 219–20 (some of the coins of Macedonian kings until Alexander).

assumption that "kings" are impossible, or at least unlikely, in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.; the principle is rarely enunciated, but is frequently to be found between the lines.⁹ It seems never to have been argued point by point, but has merely been assumed, although it would seem obviously poor methodology to reject evidence in order to make a phenomenon conform to a preconception whose foundations have never been tested. This arbitrary procedure was possible until Aymard had worked out royal "protocol" among the ancient Greeks. Further, the thought of Plato and Aristotle has not only been part of the warp and woof of European and American thought, it has also had great influence, consciously and unconsciously, on the way in which historians of ancient Greece have conceived their subject. And in that thought, not only in the passages just cited, is embedded the philosophical idea that king and tyrant are two separate categories, so that, although a ruler could pass from one class to the other, in the highest and best sense a monarch was either a king or a tyrant, but not both. Specifically, therefore, it was clear that the Deinomenids and the Dionysii were tyrants; the sources, including the philosophers themselves, frequently call them by that name. Isocrates was a rival of the philosophers and obviously does not subscribe to their partly artificial dichotomy between "king" and "tyrant"; quite possibly the rhetorician's use of the term more closely approximates normal Greek definitions of the first half of the fourth century. Finally, the Peisistratids, most famous of all tyrants in subsequent recollection because they ruled Athens, ruled as political bosses behind the scenes, according to the high authority of Thucydides.¹⁰ In the case of the Peisistratids one ought to inquire first of all why they held no regular office, and in the context of this problem to ask why they did not use the title of king, although in both nearby Corinth and Sicyon the tyrants did apparently use this title.¹¹ Why the Peisistratids were not "kings" it would be hard to say. But one may note that in the sixth century the idea of a monarchical king of Athens belonged to a remote and legendary past, yet there was in the city a man chosen every year to be king archon, whose traditional sacral authority was great, but whose power in practical political terms was inferior to that of some of his fellow archons. Whatever may be the reason for the Peisistratids' abstention from holding high office, the historical example of Ionian Athens was certainly not binding on Dorian Syracuse.

Even less can one determine whether the native institutions of archaic Syracuse constituted any precedent for the tyrants of subsequent ages. A dubious tradition mentions the existence of a certain Pollis as king of Syracuse at an uncertain but presumably archaic date. But he may have

9. W. Hüttl, *Verfassungsgeschichte von Syrakus* (Prague, 1929), p. 60, says expressly that in the fifth century the kingly title, except in Cyrene, was only a memory among the Greeks (in Sparta too, that model for Greek thought?). Hüttl is merely putting rather more bluntly an assertion by Beloch of the same kind, *Gr. Gesch.*², 2.1:73, n. 1. In effect this is circular reasoning: only by throwing out the Syracusan evidence can one establish the generalization then used to reject that evidence!

10. Thuc. 6. 54. 6; J. B. Bury, "The Constitutional Position of Gelon and Hieron," *CR* 13 (1899): 98-99, at 99, seems to imply that his reasoning was unduly influenced by this last point.

11. S. I. Oost, *CP* 67 (1972): 10-30; *CP* 69 (1974): 119-20.

merely been invented by someone's overingenious imagination to explain a variety of Syracusan wine.¹²

THE DEINOMENIDS

The present *communis opinio* among scholars holds that the Deinomenid rulers of Syracuse never took the royal title;¹³ the evidence of a contemporary (Pindar) and of a near-contemporary (Herodotus) is dismissed as flattery or mere courtesy, while the much later Diodorus is simply rejected, in effect, as a compiler who did not realize what he was writing.¹⁴

The place to begin an investigation is with one of the lesser members of the family, Deinomenes, the son whom Hiero I made king of his new foundation Aetna, according to Pindar (*Pyth.* 1. 60). Despite the fact that a scholium to Pindar (*Pyth.* 1. 118c, Drachmann, 2:20) says rather that Hiero appointed his son *strategos* of Aetna—the sort of reference which ordinarily suffices to discredit any mention of kingship elsewhere—most modern scholars treat Deinomenes as an exception to the rule that the Deinomenids did not take the title of king. Yet Pindar twice refers to Hiero himself as king (*Ol.* 1. 23 and *Pyth.* 3. 70). This apparently unwelcome datum is frequently dismissed out of hand, yet it seems difficult to distinguish between Pindar as a historical source when he speaks of Deinomenes and Pindar as a nonhistorical source when he speaks of the young man's father. However that may be, Deinomenes is accepted almost universally as king of Aetna.¹⁵ It has been suggested that this is owing to Deinomenes' conse-

12. Hippias of Rhegium, *FGHHist* 554 F 4 (with Jacoby ad loc., Teil IIb, 485); Arist. frag. 585 (Rose); A. R. Burn, *The Lyric Age of Greece* (London, 1960), p. 83 and n. 86; M.-P. Loicq-Berger, *Syracuse: Histoire culturelle d'une cité grecque* (Brussels, 1967), p. 84, n. 2; Hüttl, *Verfassungsgeschichte*, p. 44, but cf. pp. 44–47; E. A. Freeman, *History of Sicily*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1891), pp. 431–36; T. J. Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 14–15, 56, 93–94.

13. The question of what title the Deinomenids or the Dionysii used or did not use will be discussed here only as the question of the title of king is affected. Most, but not all, of the modern scholars cited below argue that the Deinomenids, and more especially the Dionysii, ruled by virtue of *some* title or position. A few prefer to regard them (the Deinomenids in particular) as ruling, like the Peisistratids, as political bosses. Note especially that A. Schenk von Stauffenberg, *Trinakria* (Munich, 1963), p. 202, on the basis of the lack of any title, royal or otherwise, in extant Deinomenid inscriptions, holds that the dynasty used no title to rationalize its rule.

14. On the absence of the royal title for the dynasty in general (rejection of the evidence for individual Deinomenids will be noticed in what follows): Dunbabin, *Western Greeks*, pp. 427–28 (except for Polyzalus); U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, "Hieron und Pindaros," *Sitzb. Akad. d. Wiss. z. Berlin* (1901), pp. 1273–1318 (= *Kl. Schr.*, vol. 6 [Berlin, 1972], pp. 234–85), at 1276 ("vollkommen ausgeschlossen"); Francisci, *Arcana*, 2:49 and n. 4; Scheele, *Strategos*, p. 23 and n. 33; Hüttl, *Verfassungsgeschichte*, pp. 58–60; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen* (Munich, 1967), 2:603–4. M. I. Finley, *Ancient Sicily to the Arab Conquest* (New York, 1968), p. 56, after remarking that the question of the title of the Deinomenids is unimportant, employs a whole page of his brief survey to argue that the Deinomenids did not use the royal title. Note that Aymard, *Études*, p. 74 and n. 1, without arguing the matter, accepts the royalty of the Deinomenids. And Busolt, *Staatskunde*, 1:390, n. 5, is exceptional in that he at least seems to concede the possibility. It is obvious that the Deinomenids used no indication of royalty on their coins, Head, *Hist. Num.*², pp. 172–74.

15. The trouble here seems mainly the vast *auctoritas* of Wilamowitz, who knows somehow that Deinomenes was religiously established as king, but that Hiero his father (whose royal position is denied by W., despite the identical authority of Pindar, twice given in the father's case) must not have been so consecrated; cf. "Hieron und Pindaros," p. 1278; cf. idem, *Pindaros* (Berlin, 1922), pp. 230 and 297. It is not out of place to note that in the inscription recording the presentation of his father's gifts to Zeus at Olympia, Deinomenes, in accordance with common usage, mentions no

cration as king; presumably his father Hiero was not so consecrated. Yet one may observe that Hiero received honor as oecist of Aetna. Surely this function has a religious aspect, and if Hiero could be consecrated oecist, why could he not also be consecrated as king, or be regarded as having inherited such a consecration?

The two instances in which Pindar refers to Hiero I as king are put down frequently to mere courtesy or flattery, as we have noted. Especially since Bacchylides (5. 2) addresses Hiero as general (*stratagos*), it has been argued by J. B. Bury¹⁶ that the latter must be the real, legal and constitutional, title of the tyrant. But by this same logic it seems one should argue that, since the Atreidae are called *κοσμήτορε λαῶν* by Homer (*Il.* 1. 16 and 375; cf. *Od.* 18. 152), their real title is not "king," but "marshaler of the folk." Yet this is manifestly absurd. Note that Arcesilas of Cyrene is called king by Pindar (*Pyth.* 4. 2 and 110, 5. 15; cf. 5. 97), and no one is likely to suggest that "king" was not a real title of the Battiads, even though they issued no "royal" coins. Furthermore, Aeschylus, Pindar's contemporary (and also a visitor to Sicily), can refer to the Greek kings at Troy as "generals" (*Ag.* 581; one may also note that at *Pers.* 73 he can refer to Xerxes as archon of Asia; compare the title of "archon of the Syracusans" given to Hiero by Athen. 12. 512D¹⁷). Aristotle clearly connects *basileia* and *strategia*; and it is well known that the military functions of an Indo-European king are of prime importance.¹⁸ Finally, to return to Bacchylides, *στραταγέ* is not the metrical equivalent of *βασιλεῖ*. And was Bacchylides so discourteous and unflattering that he did not use the epithet "king," although his rival Pindar had no such compunction? At least so far, it seems, no convincing argument has been advanced for discounting Pindar's use of "king," *basileus*, for either Deinomenes or Hiero I. It is true that one cannot expect a poet always to be literally, constitutionally accurate (perhaps Bacchylides may be taken as an example, but if so, then one implies that Hiero cannot have been both *stratagos* and *basileus* at once, or that the former was not subsumed in the latter). But it would seem that the burden of proof lies on those who would discount any given instance, and so far proof has not been advanced either for Hiero or Deinomenes, apart from some very dubious

title for himself or his father (Paus. 8. 42. 9). Wilamowitz' theory that Deinomenes was king and Hiero I was not is followed by most modern scholars: Berve, *Tyrannis*, 1:149; cf. 2:604; idem, "Zur Herrscherstellung der Deinomeniden," *Studies Presented to D. M. Robinson*, vol. 2 (St. Louis, 1953), pp. 537–52, at 545; Stauffenberg, *Trinakria*, pp. 209, 222, 261–62, and 291; E. Kirsten, "Ein politisches Programm in Pindars erstem pythischen Gedicht," *RhM* 90 (1941): 58–71, at 60 and n. 4; H. Fränkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums* (New York, 1951), p. 575; cf. Freeman (who admits the possibility that the Deinomenids used the royal title, but leans strongly to the view that they did not), *History of Sicily*, 2:245 and 274. At least Scheele, *Strategos*, p. 24, is logical in rejecting Pindar's testimony to the kingship of Deinomenes as well as to that of Hiero I.

16. "Constitutional Position," pp. 98–99. N.B. that there is no question here of the position of *strategos autokrator* as opposed to simple *strategos/stratagos*; the former concept had not yet been devised. On the Bacchylides passage see A. Taccone, *Bacchilide* (Turin, 1907), ad loc., p. 45; R. C. Jebb, *Bacchylides: The Poems and Fragments* (Cambridge, 1905), ad loc., p. 269.

17. From Heracleides? See Wilamowitz, "Hieron und Pindaros," p. 1276.

18. Arist. *Pol.* 3. 14. 1285a7–8, b17–19; E. Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society*, trans. E. Palmer (Coral Gables, 1973), pp. 307–376 on IE and Greek kings.

explicit or implicit assumptions.¹⁹ That the failure of the Deinomenids to use the royal title on their inscriptions²⁰ is irrelevant evidence has already been shown.

Hiero I's predecessor as tyrant of Syracuse was his brother Gelo, who had previously ruled at his native Gela before interfering successfully in the affairs of Syracuse. Since a contemporary source refers to Hiero as king, one would expect a priori that Hiero's greater brother might very well have used the title, and that his successor would have taken over the title from Gelo. In dealing with the royal title for Gelo one should not forget the reverence and respect in which the victor of Himera was held by subsequent generations of Syracusans (cf. Plut. *Tim.* 23. 8). Herodotus was not, except by the extremest technicality, a contemporary of Gelo, but he flourished in the decades following the lifetime of the Syracusan tyrant. His ability as a historian, despite his faults, and his honest attempts to find accuracy and truth have recently been well expounded by a Low Countries scholar.²¹ The Herodotean account of Sicilian events and Sicilian-East Greek relations in 480 B.C. is open to several adverse criticisms. The fact remains, however, that Herodotus himself came to West Greece at Thurii, and in dealing with Gelo, whose renown (we may assume) continued to grow during the course of the fifth century, he uses the word *basileus*, "king"; that is, at 7. 161. 1 he causes an Athenian ambassador to address the Syracusan tyrant, "O King of the Syracusans." It may also not be without relevance that at 7. 159 the Lacedaemonian ambassador indignantly compares Gelo's claims to Greek leadership with those of Agamemnon, whom any Greek would remember as *basileutatos* (*Il.* 9. 69). Flattery or courtesy cannot be the explanation for the Athenian's address, since he proceeds to rebuke Gelo for his presumption. Nor can sarcasm or irony be present, given the dramatic setting of the speeches,²² which are probably not historical.²³ It is unlikely that Herodotus would make his Athenian ambassador, who had come to ask a favor of greatest importance, use a title sarcastically. On the contrary, it is to be presumed that Herodotus knew what he was doing when he had his ambassador use the royal title here. Some scholars have held that Gelo (like Peisistratus) used no title whatever, not even *strategos*,²⁴ but in that case it would surely have been possible simply to begin, "O Gelo." What seems

19. Among modern scholars, for the royal title, see, e.g., L. Bornemann, "Pindar's achte pythische Ode . . .," *Philologus* 50 (1891): 230-47, at 244; A. Holm, *Geschichte Siciliens im Alterthum*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1870), pp. 212 and 231; W. Jaeger, *Paideia*², trans. G. Highet, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1945), pp. 216-17; H. G. Plass, *Die Tyrannis in ihren beiden Perioden bei den alten Griechen* (Leipzig, 1859), 1: 296-97; Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2: 799 (but undecided in *Staatskunde*, 1: 390); Lenschau, s.v. "Hieron (11)," *RE* 8 (1913): 1496-1503, at 1496. Against: Beloch, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2.1: 73, with n. 1; Stauffenberg, *Trinakria*, p. 222; Wickert, s.v. "Syrakusai," *RE* 4A (1932): 1478-1547, at 1487; Mossé, *La tyrannie*, p. 85; Berve, *Studies . . . Robinson*, 2: 544-45; E. Will, *Le monde grec et l'Orient*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1972), p. 247.

20. See Meiggs and Lewis, *GHI*, nos. 28, 29. A possible exception is discussed below.

21. H. Verdin, *De historisch-kritische methode van Herodotus* (Brussels, 1971), with an adequate English summary, pp. 223-34.

22. Sarcasm is denied by Jebb, Bacchylides commentary, p. 466; in general, see R. W. Macan, *Herodotus: The Seventh, Eighth, & Ninth Books*, vol. 1.1 (London, 1908), p. 224, on Hdt. 7. 161. 1.

23. See for example Dunbabin, *Western Greeks*, p. 421.

24. Berve, *Tyrannis*, 1: 143-44; Will, *Monde grecque*, 1: 232

important here is that Herodotus, whether in a really historical context or not, wrote in effect that Gelo had the title of king. The truth of the matter would presumably be known not only to the historian but to almost any well-informed Greek of the time—and the ill-informed in any age are not interested in history. Again, it is hard to see how from the mere context of the address the reader or hearer of this portion of the work would know that the title was sarcastically intended.

Again, a nice semantic point must be made, if the use of the title were mere flattery or courtesy. In undoubted fact Gelo was monarch of Syracuse. If some specific constitutive act gave him the title of king (a step which may have happened, see below), then the discussion is closed: Gelo *was* king. But if there was no such constitutive act, and Gelo was merely called king from time to time by those in his presence who wished to be courteous or flattering, then is not a real monarch who is regularly (but presumably with Greek lack of frequency) called a king a real bearer of the title? The point seems of some value in considering a relatively simple institution like ancient Greek kingship. Whatever Gelo was called behind his back in his lifetime—tyrant or anything else—is irrelevant. Nothing said behind his back could differentiate him from a Zeus-descended king in the fullest Greek sense. And Gelo was a king in the Homeric sense: he was a noble, and an ancient priesthood was hereditary in his family.²⁵

Besides, later tradition, especially that found in Diodorus, is not without weight to prove Gelo's kingly title.²⁶ Presumably Diodorus contains an important element going back to Timaeus and earlier.²⁷ According to Diodorus (11. 26. 6), after the victory of Himera Gelo was hailed as "benefactor" (*euergetes*), "savior" (*soter*), and "king" (*basileus*) by a Syracusan assembly (*ekklesia*). The criticism that the two former epithets smack too much of Hellenistic usage seems telling, and the fact that apparently variant versions of the same story are found in Polyaeus (1. 27. 1, without mention of any title but *strategos autokrator*; the latter term is presumably anachronistic), and in Aelian (*VH* 6. 11; there is another version in 13. 37, but with differing circumstances—in both places Gelo is given no title whatever) does not inspire confidence. And it is true that scholars have tended to reject Dio-

25. See, e.g., A. R. Burn, *Persia and the Greeks* (London, 1962), p. 303; Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2:780; the point is unreasonably doubted by E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, vol. 4.1 (rev. H. E. Stier), p. 594.

26. The author of the *Prolegomena in Hermogenis Περὶ σράσεων* (H. Rabe, *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. 14 [Berlin, 1931], p. 269) makes Gelo already king at Gela; whether right or wrong, at least the datum associates the royal title with Gelo's name.

27. The tangled, not to say hopeless, question of Diodorus' sources cannot be gone into here. But it seems likely that even in his history of the Western Greeks the truth about Diodorus' sources is far more complex than many scholars have recognized. See, e.g., R. Drews, "Diodorus and his Sources," *AJP* 83 (1962): 383-92; F. W. Walbank, "The Historians of Greek Sicily," *Kokalos* 14-15 (1968-69): 476-97, at 482; T. S. Brown, "Timaeus and Diodorus' Eleventh Book," *AJP* 73 (1952): 337-55; idem, *Timaeus of Tauromenium* (Berkeley, 1958), pp. 64 and 73; F. Sartori, "Sulla *Dynasteia* di Dionisio il Vecchio nell' opera Diodorea," *CS* 5 (1966): 3-61, at 7-8 and cf. 15-50; Beloch, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2.2: 26; N. K. Rutter, "Diodorus and the Foundation of Thurii," *Historia* 22 (1973): 155-76, at 155-61; for references to the recent "Silenus" theory, with criticisms, see Walbank, pp. 486-97; add E. Manni, "Ancora a proposito di Sileno-Diodoro," *Kokalos* 16 (1970): 74-78.

dorus' statement.²⁸ One must be content to note that it may contain some truth, although from the passage itself it seems impossible to determine what is historical. Yet if Gelo and the Deinomenids in general took the title of king, they must have started to do so on some particular occasion, and psychologically speaking, a great success in a great patriotic war, long favorably remembered by the Western Greeks, would seem to have been a good time. One thinks of Bismarck's clever maneuver to create the German Empire on the tide of emotion produced by an overwhelming victory in war. It is more significant that from this point onward Diodorus commonly refers to Gelo, and after him to Hiero, as king.²⁹ Primarily on the authority of the near-contemporary Herodotus it seems probable that Gelo, from whatever initial point in his rule, was regarded as king in general public usage. This interpretation is supported by Diodorus' use of the title and by the evidence for the other Deinomenids.³⁰ Consistently with his treatment of Gelo and his successor, Diodorus also refers to the brief regime of Thrasybulus, the last of the Deinomenid brothers to rule at Syracuse, in terms of royalty.³¹

The position of Polyzalus, the fourth Deinomenid brother, although he never ruled at Syracuse, is interesting in connection with royal titles. The base supporting the famous bronze statue of the charioteer of Delphi still bears part of a metrical dedicatory inscription of Polyzalus which refers to him as ἑλᾶς . . . ἀνάσσω, although the words were later erased (leaving sufficient traces to permit a restoration of the original reading), and other words were substituted.³² Fortunately, it is not necessary here to advance arguments or speculations about why or when the inscription was partly erased and rewritten. The point is that it was presumably Polyzalus who originally described himself at some time during his tenure of power at Gela by the words quoted above. In Homeric and Mycenaean Greek (*w*)*anax* is well known in the sense of "king," but it can also mean "lord," or "master"

28. Cf., e.g., Dunbabin, *Western Greeks*, p. 427; Stauffenberg, *Trinakria*, p. 201. Astonishingly enough, G. Glotz, *Hist. grecque*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1931), p. 101, makes no mention of *basileus*, but seems willing to accept *euergetes* and *soter*!

29. Gelo: 11. 23. 3, 38. 2, 3, 7. Hiero: 11. 38. 3 (H. received the *basileia* from G.), 7, 48. 3 (*ter*), 51. 2, 53. 4, 66. 1, 4. Note also that Timaeus, *FGHist* 566 F 93b *fin.* (*apud* Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 2. 29d) refers to Hiero (and Theron of Acragas) as king. But that is far from proving that Diodorus is following Timaeus in his use of the royal title for Gelo and Hiero.

30. For Gelo's kingship: R. Hackforth, *CAH*, 4:382; O. A. B. Siefert, "Gelon, Tyrann von Gela und Syrakus," *Programm . . . Altona* (1867), p. 24; Busolt, *Gr. Gesch.*, 2:797 (cf. 799), but he is undecided in *Staatskunde*, 1:390; Plass, *Tyrannis*, 1:294 (accepts the conferral of the legal title by the post-Himera assembly). Against Gelo's kingship: G. Pugliese Carratelli, "Gelone principe Siracusano," *ASSO* 28 (1932): 3-25, 421-46, at 15, n. 3 ("certainly not" [!]); Stauffenberg, *Trinakria*, p. 202 (G. was called king, because there was no other way to address him, but this is only in fact, not in title [very subtle!]; the comparison with the Peisistratids is explicit); Wickert, s.v. "Syakusai," *RE* 4A (1932): 1485; Berve, *Studies . . . Robinson*, 2:545 and 547; idem, *Tyrannis*, 1:143-44 and 147 (no title at all); Burn, *Persia*, pp. 485-86; N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Greece to 322 B.C.*² (Oxford, 1967), p. 270; Will, *Monde grec*, 1:232 (no title); Niese, s.v. "Gelon (3)," *RE* 7 (1912): 1007-13, at 1012 (surely not king, and probably no title at all); Freeman, *History of Sicily*, 2:122, 434, and 500-502, makes partially contradictory statements that render his opinion doubtful. The foregoing lists are far from complete.

31. Diod. 11. 66. 4, 67. 1, 5, 68. 7.

32. See R. Hampe in (H. Brunn)-P. Arndt-G. Lippold, *Denkmäler der griechischen und römischen Skulptur*, plates 786-90 (Munich, 1941), text, pp. 24-29.

of something, or can refer to a member of a royal family,³³ and in post-Homeric Greek it is primarily a poetical word. H. T. Wade-Gery,³⁴ at any rate, had no doubt on this point, but translated the quoted words as "that keeps in Gela royal state"; and he refers to Polyzalus forthrightly as "King of Gela." The interpretation seems strong but not cogent; if it be accepted, then we do have one inscriptional attestation to the royalty of a Deinomenid, and the whole course of argument above³⁵ is confirmed. In any event, the evidence for the royalty of any given Deinomenid brother tends to confirm the evidence for the others, and, as so frequently with accumulating evidence, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Accordingly, we may conclude that ruling members of the Deinomenid family probably used the title of king, at Syracuse, at Aetna, and at least for a time at Gela.³⁶

THE DIONYSII

Neither Dionysius I nor Dionysius II issued coins bearing his name or effigy, but as pointed out above (p. 225), under archaic or classical conditions of Greek kingship the fact has no necessary bearing on their use of the royal title. Granted that the Deinomenid dynasty, especially the revered Gelo, commonly used the title of king, some degree of a priori likelihood is created that the second tyrant dynasty at Syracuse followed its predecessor's example.³⁷ Although again there is positive evidence frequently passed over in silence, modern scholars are if anything more convinced that the Dionysii did not use the royal title than that the Deinomenids did not.³⁸ But when evidence for the kingly title does occur in sources from the fourth century B.C. onward, it should be perhaps particularly impressive in view of the general detestation in which these rulers were held (especially later perhaps, after the spread of the philosophical distinction between king and tyrant, and particularly after the unfortunate experiences of Plato in Syracuse during the tyrannical regime).³⁹ In view of this general distaste, any evidence for "kings" at Syracuse in later writers is important, for it seems difficult to believe that *every* such reference goes back to the favorable account of Philistus, and is thus to be condemned as mere flattery. Perhaps

33. Especially on Cyprus, apparently; see the citations in LSJ, s.v. On *anax* and related words see also Busolt, *Staatskunde*, 1:322, n. 6 (on 323); Benveniste, *Indo-European Language*, pp. 320, 321, and 327.

34. "Classical Epigrams and Epitaphs," *JHS* 53 (1933): 71-104, at 103-4.

35. Except for the historicity of the royal acclamation of Gelo after Himera.

36. For a Greek rationalization of royal power like that of the Deinomenids, see Arist. *Pol.* 3. 17. 1288a15-19.

37. That Dionysius ridiculed Gelo (Plut. *Dion* 5. 9), even if the allegation is correct, by no means excludes his having been inspired partly by Gelo's example.

38. E.g., G. Beloch, "L'impero siciliano di Dionisio," *Atti Accademia dei Lincei*, Memorie della classe di scienze morali . . . , 3d ser., 7 (1880-81): 211-35, at 227-28; Busolt, *Staatskunde*, 1:391; Freeman, *History of Sicily*, vol. 4 (Oxford, 1894), p. 7; Niese, s.v. "Dionysios (1)," *RE* 5 (1905): 882-903, at 898; K. F. Stroheker, *Dionysius I* (Wiesbaden, 1958), p. 173; Sartori, "Dynasteia di Dionisio," pp. 57-61. For a statement that the absence of royal coinage of Dionysius I is unimportant, see V. Ehrenberg, "Von den Grundformen griechischer Staatsordnung," *Polis und Imperium* (Zurich, 1965), pp. 105-138, at 128 and n. 1.

39. Cf. P. N. Ure, *The Origin of Tyranny* (New York, 1922), p. 30.

it is unnecessary to point out that the sources refer to the two Dionysii commonly as tyrants, and frequently merely by their given name.⁴⁰

The best evidence for use of the royal title by Dionysius I is in the speech against Andocides attributed to Lysias (6 [*Andoc.*] 4–6), where he is named as one of a group of kings. The oration or pamphlet dates from 399 B.C. or shortly thereafter,⁴¹ and the context is instructive. The famous or infamous Andocides is under attack for impiety. In real or simulated horror, the author speculates that an acquittal might open the way for the impious defendant to be chosen king archon. Andocides has flattered many kings, but the Syracusan Dionysius was not deceived by him. We surely seem here to be dealing with an official, and therefore religious, title, not flattery or courtesy. (One might well expect a remark that Dionysius was really only a tyrant, if he did not in fact bear the royal title.) The king archon of Athens is, although an annual magistrate, the successor of the ancient kings of Athens, especially for purposes of dealing with the gods. Dionysius and other (similar) kings are assimilated to that ancient monarchy and royalty. We can only conclude that Dionysius had assumed the royal title in its full and traditional sense some time before the date of Lysias (?) 6, and that the news had reached Athens; the implication of the passage is that the title is to be regarded in the traditional and sacred form of ancient Greek kingship. It is in place here to note that later Greek authors tell us explicitly that Dionysius showed himself attired in the regalia of Greek kings (at least from time to time), including the diadem as well as the purple.⁴² Further, we may have Dionysius' own implicit claim that his rule is not merely a tyranny, but a kingship (i.e., legitimate), when he avers that tyranny is the mother of injustice (Nauck, *TGF*², p. 794, frag. 4). This makes best sense, if, opposing the philosophic concepts of kingship and tyranny, he was arguing by implication that he was no tyrant, but a true *basileus*. Dionysius I, of course, was a consummate politician; his disclaimer is quite natural.

Although Polybius was certainly not immune to error, he was ordinarily conscientious in determining facts (it cannot be denied that sometimes he failed, even when no apparent bias was involved); he tells us (15. 35. 4) that both Agathocles and Dionysius I after their acquisition of power were recognized as kings.⁴³ It is probably right to suppose that Polybius was opposed to tyrants: compare 2. 59. 6, although here he seems more heated in his opinion than is ordinarily the case, for he is engaged in polemical argumentation.⁴⁴ On the other hand, it is likely that his source in 15. 35. 4

40. For the latter, see, e.g., Xen. *Hell.* 5. 1. 26, 7. 1. 20–22, 28, and Aen. *Tact.* 10. 21–22.

41. Most recently, K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum* (Berkeley, 1968), pp. 78–83.

42. Bato of Sinope, *FGrHist* 268 F 4 (cf. Livy 24. 5. 4, probably from Bato or his source); Duris, *FGrHist* 76 F 14 speaks of a (surely special?) robe and a golden *stephanos*. Berve, *Tyrannis*, 2:653 merely dismisses Bato's diadem as false—a convenient way of rejecting inconvenient evidence.

43. F. W. Walbank, commentary ad loc., 2:495, seemingly largely influenced by the failure of numismatic and other documentary evidence, thinks that Dionysius I was actually *archon* of Sicily. Berve, *Tyrannis*, 2:649, as usual, thinks that any evidence showing kingship for a Syracusan tyrant is wrong. On the expression *archon* of Sicily, see below, n. 45. Walbank's reference to the absence of royal indications on contemporary Syracusan coins is of course correct, cf. Head, *Hist. Num.*², pp. 175–78.

44. Cf. Brown, *Timaeus*, p. 96.

was not Timaeus; if Timaeus had been the source, Polybius would probably have said that Dionysius was nothing but a tyrant, and seized the opportunity to denounce his favorite whipping boy. It is also worthy of note that in a treaty of alliance between Dionysius and Athens in 367 B.C. it is specified that Dionysius and his descendants are to be allies.⁴⁵ It is natural to connect such a provision with hereditary royalty.

The next question is, When did Dionysius take the title of king? Dionysius' ascent to power was essentially consummated, one may infer, by his election to the office of *strategos autokrator* in 405 B.C. (Diod. 13. 94. 5–6); it is notable that explicit appeal was made to the great powers of Gelo in dealing with the Carthaginians. The example is edifying to scholars who see in the Carthaginian menace the principal impulse toward Sicilian tyranny; certainly it must have seemed so to Dionysius from a more personal point of view. At some time before the composition of the speech against Andocides (Lysias [?] 6. 6), i.e., before 399 B.C. or shortly thereafter, Dionysius apparently had assumed or usurped the title of king. It seems likely that this royal assumption or usurpation was somehow temporally and causally connected with Dionysius' first treaty with the Carthaginians, which according to Diodorus (13. 114. 2) provided that the Syracusans be subject to Dionysius. Gelo, at least according to Diodorus, had been saluted king after Himera. That this tradition (unhistorical or not) or some form of it already existed by the end of the fifth century cannot be known, yet it is quite possible (though only that) that Dionysius in his turn seized upon the occasion of his first war with Carthage to promulgate his royalty. His real accomplishment in his first Carthaginian war can hardly, save for obtaining peace, be compared to Himera; yet politicians not infrequently fail to tell the truth save when it is contrary to their interests or wishes to lie. It seems reasonably safe to believe that Dionysius I proclaimed himself king of the Syracusans, or perhaps simply king, at some time in the last few years of the fifth century B.C., although the fact cannot be proved directly.

Diodorus Siculus nowhere refers explicitly to Dionysius as king. Note, however, two passages. At 14. 66. 1 Diodorus says that no one would compare Dionysius with Gelo, for the latter freed all Sicily (thus various "tyran-

45. Tod, *GHI*, vol. 2, no. 136, ll. 10–11. Athenian decrees concerning Dionysius refer to him as *archon* of Sicily. Although Beloch, *Gr. Gesch.*, 3.1: 111 and n. 1; 3.2: 200–201; "L'impero siciliano," pp. 227–28, who regards Dionysius as having an official position or title as "*archon* of Sicily," thinks that this is proof that the title was hereditary, the hereditary aspect is much more characteristic of treaties with kings; cf., e.g., Tod, *GHI*, vol. 2, no. 177, ll. 10–12. The theory that Dionysius actually ruled under this title has deservedly found little favor. The title is found only in Athenian documents, and as Stroheker, *Dionysius I*, p. 174, rightly points out, the Athenians are by no means always constitutionally accurate in the use of terminology even in their official decrees; one might add that lapses of protocol or diplomatics occur even in their decrees relating to their own government. It is a matter which bedevils epigraphers. Most scholars see the title as merely one of courtesy, or an attempt to explain Dionysius' real power over (Greek) Sicily. But Sicily is only a geographical term in Greek usage, not a political or constitutional term; the Athenians were merely trying to be realistic. On the subject see also Scheele, *Strategos*, pp. 43–44; Francisci, *Arcana*, 2:51; Stroheker, *Dionysius I*, pp. 172–75; Aymard, *Études*, p. 77; Finley, *Ancient Sicily*, p. 80; H. Meier-Welcker, *Dionysios I* (Zurich, 1971), p. 58; Wickert, s.v. "Syrakusai," *RE* 4A (1932): 1512; Ehrenberg, *Polis und Imperium*, p. 126; Niese, s.v. "Gelo (3)," *RE* 5 (1905): 898; Berve, *Tyrannis*, 2:648; Busolt, *Staatskunde*, 1:392, n. 1. On the terminology commonly used for Dionysius' position, see Sartori, "*Dynasteia* di Dionisio," pp. 13–15.

nical" acts are passed over in silence), while the former enslaved his country. This may mean that comparisons with Gelo had been made, putting the two more or less on equal footing. And at 15. 74. 5 the historian tells us that Dionysius II buried his father adjacent to the gates called royal, by the acropolis.⁴⁶ Since a place name is obviously meant, Diodorus or his source could not suppress the reference to royal gates; at the very least, it seems to indicate the presence of kings at Syracuse—possibly the Deinomenids, however (or someone else like the mysterious Pollis), rather than the Dionysii. According to Diogenes Laertius 2. 66, Aristippus was well regarded by Dionysius, and hence was called his royal (*basilikon*) dog by Diogenes the Cynic. Roman authors, however, quite commonly refer to Dionysius as *rex*, or use related words.⁴⁷ Presumably the Latin represents *basileus* and related words in (ultimately) Greek sources. Of course, Dionysius is also frequently called a *tyrannus*; but it seems to strain credulity and confidence to assume that *all* the "royal references" go back to the favorable account of Philistus.⁴⁸

None of our extant traditions about the royalty of Dionysius II are primary, but there is considerable secondary documentation, some of it of particular interest. In the first place, we may safely take it for granted that any position he occupied he inherited from his father. And since Dionysius II succeeded without incident to his father's power (Diod. 15. 73. 5, 74. 5), it also seems safe to hold that the case for him, even though it relies on nonprimary sources exclusively, strengthens that for his father. As in the case of the father, so also in that of the son, Diodorus regularly makes no references to royalty; yet once he slips, or his source slips, when referring to the younger man.⁴⁹ At 16. 17. 2 he refers to Dionysius' royal equipage (*paraskeue*). The very fact that mention of things royal seems to slip into the narrative perhaps in itself lends importance to the testimony. Has Diodorus or his source (sources?) carefully expunged a number of similar references? Perhaps among the items in this equipment we should see the various regalia enumerated by Bato of Sinope (*FGH Hist* 268 F 4). Plutarch also has two interesting slips ("slips" because both Dionysii had been established from the fourth century B.C. onward as archetypal tyrants, in large part because of their brushes with philosophers who at the time came off second best): Plutarch tells us that Dionysius placed a royal

46. F. S. Cavallari, *Die Stadt Syrakus im Alterthum* (Strassburg, 1887), p. 186, thinks that a gate in the acropolis is meant, "probably" the entrance door to the palace.

47. Cic. *Div.* 1. 73 (= Philistus, *FGH Hist* 556 F 58); *Nat. D.* 3. 84 (he left "potestatem . . . quasi iustam et legitimam" as a legacy to his son); *Tusc.* 5. 58, 61; *Nep. Regg.* 2. 2, *Timol.* 2. 2, 3. 4, 5; *Pomp. Trog. Prol.* 19. More citations could be added.

48. Most modern scholars are agreed that Dionysius ruled throughout all his years of power as *strategos autokrator* (but cf. Beloch on "archon of Sicily," above, n. 45), or possibly with no title at all: Bury, "Constitutional Position," p. 98; idem, *CAH*, vol. 6 (1927), p. 116; Berve, *Tyrannis*, 1: 236; Niese, s.v. "Gelo (3)," *RE* 5 (1905): 899; Francisci, *Arcana*, 2: 484 (but "esteriamente" he assumed "l'aria di un re"); Glotz, *Hist. grecque*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1936), p. 387; Meier-Welcker, *Dionysios I*, p. 54; Wickert, s.v. "Syrakusai," *RE* 4A (1932): 1512; Mossé, *La tyrannie*, p. 106; Busolt, *Staatskunde*, 1: 391.

49. For the general hostility of the sources to Dionysius II see H. D. Westlake, *Timoleon and his Relations with Tyrants* (Manchester, 1952), p. 22 with nn. 2 and 3.

chariot at Plato's disposal, and that, after Dionysius had been expelled, his sister nevertheless continued to receive royal honors (*Dion* 13. 1, 21. 9). Elsewhere Plutarch may offer some indirect hints to our purpose. At the beginning of Dion's struggle against the tyrant the people conferred upon both him and a colleague the office of *strategos autokrator* (*Dion* 29. 4; cf. 33. 2, 48. 4): this seems odd, if for half a century the power of the tyrants had been exercised through this nominal office. Plutarch also echoes Platonic language: if Dionysius II would listen to Plato, from being a tyrant he would become a king (*Dion* 10. 3, cf. 5). Again (*Comp. Tim. et Aem. Paul.* 2. 3), many feared that Dion might be aiming at a "Laconian *basileia*." Once more, the Roman authors are more forthright, referring to Dionysius II as *rex* (or with related words), as well as *tyrannus*.⁵⁰

Disputed questions in Greek and Roman history seldom admit of certain solutions. Nevertheless the foregoing argumentation seems to demonstrate that, contrary to usual scholarly opinion, probability strongly favors the view that both the Deinomenids (at least from some time after Gelo gained control of Syracuse) and the Dionysii formally used the title of king. Further, it seems that one ought to discard the largely unexpressed belief that tyrant and king were always separate and disparate concepts in the classical period of the fifth century and the fourth century down to Alexander. The present writer has previously argued that in archaic times both the Cypselid tyrants of Corinth and the Orthagorid tyrants of Sicyon used the royal title.⁵¹

If nothing else, the example of Peisistratus warns against the idea that every tyrant was regarded as a king in some formal sense.⁵² Nevertheless, when evidence indicates that a monarch ordinarily classified as a tyrant may also have claimed the royal title, that evidence ought not to be discarded out of hand, or disposed of by special explanation, but analyzed on its own merits.⁵³ One should not forget that politicians frequently lie, call black white, and in general make fraudulent claims. And successful tyrants were of necessity successful politicians according to their times and places.

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50. Nep. *Dion.* 1. 1, 2. 4, 5. 5, *Timol.* 2. 2; Justin 21. 1. 3, 7, 2. 8 ("regio apparatu"), 9, 3. 9.

51. See above, n. 11.

52. Eupolis, frag. 96 (1:338 Edmonds), calls Peisistratus king, but he obviously cannot prevail against the explicit statement of Thucydides; cf. also the suggestion of Edmonds, 1:339. Schol. Aristoph. *Acharn.* 61 ought to be interpreted in the light of the foregoing argument.

53. Thus Timaeus, *FGrHist* 566 F 93b calls Theron, the tyrant of Acragas, a king; Hdt. 3. 42. 2 has a fisherman address Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, as king. The possibility that these politicians used the title should not be dismissed without question.