

What did Theopompus think of Dion?¹

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1

Any attempt to delineate the nature of Theopompus' assessment of Dion of Syracuse must face the fact that no relevant fragment from the excursus on Sicilian history from the *Philippica*, covering Sicilian history from the late 390s to 343 B.C., and therefore the period of Dion, survives. In fact we possess only one fragment of Theopompus which discusses Dion at all, detailing within a wider context of various portents foreshadowing the end of Dionysius II's rule, Dion's rationalistic interpretation of a lunar eclipse (*FGrH* 115 F 331/*Plut. Dion* 24), which had the effect of allaying the fears of Dion's mercenaries. Since this latter fragment does not derive from the *Philippica*'s Sicilian excursus and seems less focussed upon Dion than upon Dionysius II and more upon portents than specifically upon Dionysius II as such, it constitutes singularly unhelpful testimony for any scholarly appraisal of Theopompus' view of Dion in the excursus. Given the unsatisfactory nature of Theopompus' fragmentary evidence pertaining to Dion, it is, accordingly, hardly surprising to observe the lack of scholarly consensus which has characterized literature on this subject. Hence while one solution to the problem has been to ignore the issue entirely² and another has been to admit that the tenuous nature of the evidence obliges us to withhold judgement,³ where a definite stand has been taken we witness fluctuation between views

¹ I should like to express my appreciation to one of the anonymous reviewers of this article for his perceptive critique which helped me clarify my argument. Thanks are also due to my colleague, Professor Andrew Sherwood, for his typically constructive comments.

² M.A. Flower, *Theopompus of Chios*, Diss. Brown University, 1988; M.A. Flower, *Theopompus of Chios: History and Rhetoric in the Fourth Century B.C.*, 1994.

³ R. von Scheliha, *Dion. Die Platonische Staatsgründung in Sizilien*, 1934, 123.

which attribute to Theopompus a negative,⁴ positive⁵ or ambiguous assessment of Dion.⁶

The purpose of the present paper is to suggest that none of the above evaluations are entirely satisfactory. Thus we maintain, on the one hand, that it cannot be argued that Theopompus was directly opposed or favourable or ambiguously inclined towards Dion in the *Philippica*'s excursus. On the other hand, despite this conclusion, we maintain that it is inappropriate simply to withhold judgement or declare that we do not know what Theopompus thought of Dion. On the contrary, we emphasize that Theopompus' feelings about Dion are likely to have been distinctly negative. In contrast to those scholars, however, who have discerned an anti-Dion approach in the *Philippica*'s excursus, we maintain that Theopompus' opposition to Dion was not directly voiced therein but, for practical and logical reasons, was directed at Dion by a more circuitous and indirect route. To substantiate my thesis, I focus my attention upon and offer a critique of those viewpoints which discern direct favour or opposition to Dion in the *Philippica*'s excursus.

2

The chief reason for believing that Theopompus is likely to have been unfavourably disposed towards Dions is that Theopompus' overall assessment of the Dionysian family in the *Philippica* was negative. Indeed, Theopompus attributed the collapse of the Syracusan empire to the dissolute behaviour of Dionysius II and his family.⁷ Logically, therefore, one might deduce that Dion, brother-in-law of Dionysius II, who was very much involved in Syracusan political activity under both Dionysius I and Dionysius II, would have been included in Theopompus' censure of the Dionysian family. Nor should it be forgotten that Dion had clearly benefited materially from his association with the Dionysian family and it could consequently be argued that Dion would have been a prime target of attack of Theopompus, focussing his assault upon the luxurious

⁴ H.D. Westlake, 'The Sicilian Books of Theopompus' *Philippica*', *Essays in Greek Historians and Greek History*, 1969, 237; H.D. Westlake, 'Dion and Timoleon, CAH VI², 1994, 694; G.S. Shrimpton, *Theopompus the Historian*, 1991, 87.

⁵ A. Fuks, *Social Conflicts in Ancient Greece*, 1984, 214 n. 1; E. Manni, 'Timonide e la Vita Plutarchea di Dione', *Aion* 11, 1989, 78.

⁶ Westlake 1969 (n. 4), 237 and 1994 (n. 4), 694 who attributes both disfavour and ambiguity towards Dion to Theopompus; and H. Berve *Dion, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur in Mainz. Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse* 1957, 751.

⁷ See Justin 21.2.1, Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F 185-8 and 283b (Athen. 10, p. 435A-436D) and discussion in Westlake, 1969 (n. 4), 235-6.

lifestyle of the Dionysii.⁸ Within this context, Plutarch's comment regarding Dion's followers' thoughts upon Dion's luxurious lifestyle, at the time of the departure for Sicily (*Dion* 23.4), a lifestyle which surpassed that of an ordinary man — surely an implicit indictment of tyrannical aspirations on Dion's part — is highly pertinent. After all, if Dion's own followers compared Dion's lifestyle to that of a tyrant, and we should add that even Plutarch's source, the pro-Dion Timonides⁹ admitted this fact, then we might with justification attribute a similar

- ⁸ Dion's wealth noted in *Ep.* 7 347B; *Plut. Dion* 15.4; *Nep. Dion* 1.2. See also *Comp. Brut. and Dion* 1.5; *Diog. Laert.* 3.9 and *FGrH* 631. Presumably Hipparinus established the family wealth, when he joined Dionysius I (*Aristot. Pol.* 5.5.6, 1306A, 1), though I follow Berve (n. 6), 763, in his conclusion that Hipparinus is likely to have died too soon to have really profited from his association with the Dionysian house. For a rather weak argument against the idea that Dion made much out of his position vis à vis the Dionysian dynasty, see H. Breitenbach, *Platon und Dion. Skizze eines ideal-politischen Reformversuches im Altertum*, 1960, 84-5, n. 16 and 85, n. 17 with counter arguments of H. Berve, reviewing Breitenbach in *Gnomon* 36, 1963, 375.
- ⁹ See W.H. Porter, *Plutarch: Life of Dion*, 1952, xiv, xxi-xxii against K.J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte* 3.2, 1927, 105; also G. Grote, *History of Greece*, 1869, 10, 392; C. Clasen, *Historisch-kritische Untersuchungen über Timaios von Tauromenion*, 1883, 67; H.W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers*, 1933, 116-8; J.H. Thiel, 'Rond het Syrakusaansche Experiment', *Mededeelingen koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen Afdeling Letterkunde* 4, 1941, 156-7 (English translation by A.M. de Bruin-Cousins in J.H. Thiel, *Studies in Ancient History*, edited by H.T. Wallinga, 1994, 95-6); G.A. Lehmann, 'Dion und Herakleides', *Historia* 19, 1970, 401; M. Sordi, *Diodori Siculi Bibliothecae. Liber Sextus Decimus*. Introduzione, Testo e Commento, 1969, xxxix, 22, 24, 29; M. Sordi, 'Dione e la Symmachia Siciliana', *Kokalos* 13, 1967, 143, 152; M. Sordi in E. Gabba and G. Vallet, *La Sicilia Antica*, 1981, 232; M. Sordi, *La Sicilia dal 368/6 a 337*, 1983, 13-4; Graziano Arrighetti in *La Sicilia Antica*, 1981, 187; Westlake (n. 4), 234; H.D. Westlake, 'Dion. A Study in Liberation', *Essays in Greek Historians and Greek History*, 1969, 252; F. Vatai, *Intellectuals and Politics in the Greek World from the Earliest Times to the Hellenistic Age*, 1984, 90-1. For the view that Plutarch followed both Timonides and Timaeus, see T. Lenschau s.v. 'Herakleides', *RE* 8A, 1912, 461; Von Scheliha (n. 3), 130; Fuks (n. 5), 214 n. 1; For Timaeus, Timonides and Philistus, see J.R. Hamilton, *Plutarch's Alexander: A Commentary*, 1969, xlvi; F. Muccioli, 'Osservazione sull' uso di Timonide nella vita di Dione di Plutarcho', *AS* 5.21, 167-87. For the view that Plutarch drew upon Timonides together with Timaeus, Ephorus and Theopompus, see W. Biedenweg, *Plutarchs Quellen in den Lebensreibungen des Dion und Timoleon*, 1884, 15-23; Berve (n. 6), 753; H. Berve, 'Dion', *HZ* 174 (1957), 2. Plutarch's minimal use of Timonides maintained by W. Capelle, s.v. 'Timonides von Leukas', *RE* 6A, 1937, 1305. A vague sentiment regarding Plutarch's use of Timonides, Timaeus, Ephorus and Theopompus found in B. Caven, *Dionysius I: War Lord of Syracuse*, 1990, 214. Denial of Timonides and affirmation of Timaeus as well as Ephorus and an Hellenistic source as Plutarch's

assessment to Theopompus. We are also cognizant of the attacks launched upon Plato and upon his disciples for succumbing to Sicilian luxury¹⁰ — attacks which perhaps provoked the seventh Platonic *Epistle's* condemnation of Sicilian hedonism (*Ep.* 7. 326 B-C) — evidence once again possibly rendering Dion a prime target for an attack on hedonism by Theopompus. Further, notwithstanding Plutarch's eulogistic assessment of Dion, which clearly sought to obscure Dion's tyrannical stance,¹¹ and the deliberate attempt by Diodorus and the author of the seventh Platonic *Epistle* to ignore and cover up the less savory aspects of Dion's career,¹² suggestive of tyrannical aspirations on Dion's part, one tradition preserved in Nepos, for reasons which we shall delineate below, probably deriving from Athanis of Syracuse,¹³ made no bones about Dion's tyrannical aspirations which turned Dion into a replica of Dionysius II.¹⁴ If Theopompus

authorities in L.M. Hans, *Karthago und Sizilien*, 1983, 3. In general, for the view that Timaeus submerged all Western earlier sources, see L. Pearson, *The Greek Historians of the West: Timaeus and his Predecessors*, 1988.

¹⁰ Thus Dion in Diog. Laert. 3.9 and *FGrH* 631; Xenocrates in *FGrH* 566 F 158a,b/ Athen. 10.49, p. 437b; Philod. *Ind. Ac. Herc.* 8, p. 4, Mekler; Aelian *VH.* 2.41.7; Diog. Laert. 4.10-1; 6.25. On Plato receiving money from Dionysius II to buy Pythagorean literature, see Diog. Laert. 3.9.

¹¹ Whence a) Plutarch's superficial and incomplete account of Dion's last days, b) Plutarch's non-utilization of Athanis' pro-Heracleides history, and c) Plutarch's attribution of the sentiment to Dion (*Dion* 56.3) that Dion's elimination of Heracleides was the only stain on Dion's career — a move justified by Heracleides' "unreasonableness" in opposing Dion's Platonic reforms — a thesis which ignores Dion's undemocratic stance (Plut. *Dion* 12.1; 34.1; 37.5-7; 48.5; 52.4; 53.2-3), dynastic intrigues (Plut. *Dion* 6.2; 7.2; Nep. *Dion* 2.4-5; *FGrH* 566 F 109; Justin 20.5.14) and intrigues with Carthage (Plut. *Dion* 25.12-26.4; 14.4; *FGrH* 566 F 113/Plut. *Dion* 14.4; Diod. Sic. 16.9.4. See L.J. Sanders, 'Nationalistic Recommendations and Policies in the Seventh and Eighth Platonic Epistles', *AHB* 8. 3, 1994, 76-85.

¹² Whence a) Diodorus' omission of discussion of Dion's decline and of Dion's conflict with Heracleides, Diodorus essentially ending his account of Dion with Dion's triumph and the failure of Nypsus' expedition (Diod. Sic. 16.18-20) and b) the seventh Platonic *Epistle's* reference to the conflict of Dion and Heracleides only in the most enigmatic terms (336B cf. *Ep.* 8. 357A).

¹³ For the view that Nepos' hostility to Dion in the latter part of the *Dion* stems from Athanis, see Westlake 1969 (n. 4), 253; H.D. Westlake, 'Friends and successors of Dion', *Historia* 32, 2, 1983, 162; Westlake, 1994 (n. 4), 694; A. Fuks (n. 5), 214, n. 4; W. Orth, 'Der Syrakusaner Herakleides', *Historia* 28, 1 (1979), 52. Against this view, see E. Schwartz, s.v. 'Athanis', *RE* 2B, 1939; A.W. Lintott, *Violence, Civil Strife and Revolution in the Ancient City*, 1982, 207; R.J. Talbert, *Timoleon and the Revival of Greek Sicily*, 1974, 25-6 n. 2; and, above all, Berve (n. 6), 755 and Muccioli (n. 9), 179 who attribute the latter part of Nepos' biography to Timaeus.

had access to this tradition, we might argue that he could have utilized its data to launch an attack upon Dion's tyrannical behaviour which probably included a penchant for hedonism, *en par* with that manifested by other members of the Dionysian dynasty.

More specific evidence suggestive of the fact that Theopompus might have indeed utilized the anti-Dion tradition emanating from Athanis might appear to derive from a fragment of Theopompus (*FGrH* 115 F 194/ Steph. Byz. s.v. Δύμη), where our only reference to Athanis the historian as colleague of Heracleides, the opponent of Dion, as one of the Προστάται τῆς πόλεως occurs. Since Heracleides championed the democratic cause against Dion, whence the derogatory characterization of Heracleides by Plutarch in the *Dion*,¹⁵ it has been inferred from Athanis' being Heracleides' colleague that Athanis is likely to have presented a democratically inclined anti-Dion picture of the Syracusan revolution of the type which we find depicted in the later chapters of Nepos' biography of Dion.¹⁶ Since, moreover, Theopompus mentions Athanis as colleague of Heracleides¹⁷ and is, indeed, the only source to do so, it has been deduced that Theopompus had access, either directly or indirectly, to the anti-Dion tradition as encountered in Athanis.¹⁸

Finally, if we accept that Diodorus in his account of Dion in his sixteenth book followed Theopompus,¹⁹ then, given the somewhat cool attitude manifested in Diodorus' narrative towards Dion, contrasting sharply with Plutarch's portrait of Dion, whence Diodorus' favour to various opponents of Dion —

¹⁴ Thus compare Nepos *Dion* 9.5 and 5.3. Thus 9.5: Hic, sicut ante saepe dictum est, quam inuisa sit singularis potentia et miseranda vita, qui se metui quam amari malunt, cuius facile intellectu fuit. Cf. 5.3: Sed Dion, fretus non tam suis copiis quam odio tyranni. See also Nepos *Dion* 5.5: Nam Dion iis ipsis qui sub adversarii fuerant potestate, regios spiritus repressit. N. Holzberg, 'Literarische Tradition und politische Aussage aus den Feldherrnviden des Cornelius Nepos', *WJA* 15, 1989, 163-4.

¹⁵ Hence Heracleides emerges as irresponsible (32.3; 47.3-4; 49.5), perverse and envious (49.2-4), given to unbalanced judgements (32.3; 33.2), disloyal to authority (32.3; 33.3; 49.3-4), turbulent (32.3; 49.3-4, 53.2), erratic (32.3; 33.2; 45.3; 53.2), factious (32.3; 33.2; 53.2), and, above all, a demagogue, flattering the mob for office and power (33.3; 47.3; 49.3-4).

¹⁶ See above n. 14.

¹⁷ On the question whether the Προστάται τῆς πόλεως are to be identified with the *strategia*, see for the identification, Schwartz (n. 13), 1939; Westlake 1969 (n. 4), 257; G.R. Morrow, *Studies in the Platonic Epistles*, 1935, 22; Fuks (n. 5), 222 and Lenschau (n. 9), 460. Against, Sordi 1969 (n. 9), 38 n. 3; Berve (n. 6), 749, 826-7; Muccioli (n. 9), 169.

¹⁸ See Westlake 1969 (n. 4), 237.

¹⁹ Thus N.G.L. Hammond, 'The Sources of Diodorus Siculus XVI', *CQ*, 32, 1938, 137-51; followed by Thiel 1941 (n. 9), 167 and 1994 (n. 9), 96.

Philistus, Heracleides, and Dionysius II²⁰ —, a good case could be made to substantiate the view that Theopompus' account was hostile to Dion.

Notwithstanding the appeal of the above line of argumentation, it does not, we believe, bear close scrutiny, whence our rejection of the view that Dion was treated unfavourably in the *Philippica*. In the first place, despite Dion's close association with the Dionysian house, Dion's vast fortune, which accrued from this association, and Dion's clear anti-democratic stance during the course of the so-called "liberation", one fact about the Dion tradition is unequivocal: namely that Dion totally eschewed materialistic ambition (Plut. *Dion* 7.3; 8.1-3; 52.2,6). Indeed, Dion ultimately seems to have aimed at imposing upon Syracuse a Spartan-Cretan type political system, based upon ideas found in Plato's *Laws* (Plut. *Dion* 53.4; *Comp. Tim. and Aem. Paul.* 2.2),²¹ which would clearly have been accompanied by the total eschewal of materialistic values and establishment of a sober Dorian lifestyle amenable to Dion. Such projects indeed must have seriously alarmed the Syracusan oligarchs, whence the oligarchic faction's veering towards Heracleides — an occurrence to which Nepos' *Dion* (6.3), alone of our sources, alludes.²² Hence it follows that Theopompus could not with conviction have tainted Dion with the same brush with which he had painted Dionysius II and his family by depicting Dion as an example of Dionysian hedonistic values. As for the tradition which portrayed Plato and the Platonists as objects of the Dionysian hedonistic lure, probably an unreliable tradition created by those wishing to attack Plato for his presence at the tyrant's court, — it was also certainly one ignored by Theopompus, notwithstanding his attack on Plato on other grounds. Indeed the fact that Theopompus, the well-known researcher on private vice of prominent individuals,²³ who vehemently disliked Plato,²⁴ does not seem to have applied this well tried formula to Plato or Platonists such as Dion, suggests that Theopompus either did not have access to such a tradition or, more likely, did not accept its veracity precisely because of its dubious authenticity.

²⁰ Diod. Sic. 16.16.3 (Philistus); 15.74.5; 16.5.1-3 (Dionysius II); 16.16.2 (Heracleides), though see on this Lenschau's suspicions (n. 9), 461. Note also Diodorus' condemnation of Dion as cunning, arrogant and tyrannical (Diod. Sic. 16.13.2; 17.3).

²¹ Note also Spartan support of Dion in Plut. *Dion* 17.8 and Spartan ideology espoused in Plato *Ep.* 7.337B-C and *Ep.* 8. 355B-356E. See also the discussion of G. Marasco, 'La preparazione dell' impresa di Dione in Sicilia', *Prometheus* 8, No. 2, 1982, 167-71.

²² Evidence rejected by G. Pasquali, *Le Lettere di Platone*², 1967, 68-9 and Westlake, 1983 (n. 13), 162. Accepted by Berve (n. 6), 852; H. Berve, *Die Tyrannis bei den Griechen*, 1967, 1, 273; L. de Blois, 'Dionysius II, Dion and Timoleon', *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Instituut te Rome* 40, 1978, 126.

²³ On this topic see Flower 1986 (n. 2), 64-81 and 1994 (n. 2), 166-83.

²⁴ See *FGrH* 115 F 275, 250, 259, 291, 295/ Arrian, *Epict. Diss.* 2.17.5-6; Didym. 1. Dem. 5.21; Athen. 11, 118, p. 508C-D; Didym. I. Demosth. 4.63; Diog. Laert. 6.14.

Hence we possess another reason for not attributing to Theopompus any attack on Dion as a Platonist, submitting to the Dionysian hedonistic lifestyle.

With respect to Theopompus F 194, there are two objections to its acceptance as evidence of Theopompus' democratic sympathies which are likely to have led Theopompus to accept the testimony of Dion's opponent, Athanis. First, a minute fragment, delineating with objectivity the membership of a committee of anti-Dionists, hardly constitutes solid evidence, enabling us to attribute democratic sympathies to Theopompus. Secondly, the evidence suggests that Theopompus was, in fact, singularly unimpressed by democracy, preferring the oligarchic ideal, championed and epitomized by Sparta. Indeed to Theopompus, a democratic constitution in itself constituted a phenomenon conducive to immoral, hedonistic lifestyles.²⁵

Turning to the argument that Diodorus' data pertaining to Dion in book sixteen are somewhat unfavourable to Dion and that this disfavour stems from Theopompus, I initially note that the very thesis that Diodorus was unfavourable to Dion is questionable. The fact remains that Diodorus only betrays partial negativity towards Dion. Accordingly, for all Diodorus' favour towards Dion's opponents, Dion is depicted by Diodorus as the most distinguished of the Syracusans, as noble, pious, generous, courageous, a veritable saviour (Diod. Sic. 16.6.1,4; 9.3; 10.4; 11.2; 17.5; 20.1-2, 5-6) — sentiments which are certainly not equatable with any likely hostility on Theopompus' part towards Dion. Further, the evidence for Diodorus' use of Theopompus is exceedingly slender and based only upon one strand of evidence: the small ship which carried Dionysius II from Syracuse to Corinth, mentioned by both Diodorus (16.70.3) and Theopompus (*FGrH* 115 F 341/Polyb. 12.4a.2) — a reference which, at the most, can be employed to prove that Diodorus perhaps utilized Theopompus as a source for his account of the final exile of Dionysius II. On the other hand, the evidence against such an identification of Theopompus with Diodorus' text is substantial. Thus the whole thrust of Theopompus' excursus, with its emphasis upon Dionysius II rather than upon Dionysius I and upon the hedonistic lifestyle of Dionysius II and his family²⁶ as a major contributory factor for the decline and fall of

²⁵ The Spartan ideal in *FGrH* 115 F 20, 22, 107, 321, 333/Athen. 12.61, p. 543B; Athen. 14.74, p. 657B-C; Plut. *Ages.* 36.6; Plut. *Ages.* 10.9-10; Plut. *Lys.* 30.2. cf. on failure to achieve this ideal, F. 192 and 232/Athen. 12.51, p. 536B-D. Democracy and vice in F. 62/Athen. 12.32, p. 526D-F and discussion in K. von Fritz, 'The Historian Theopompus. His Historical Convictions and Conception of Historiography', *AHR* 46, 1941, 765-87 (reprinted as 'Die Politische Tendenz in Theopomps Geschichtsschreibung', *AA* 4, 1954, 45-64.

²⁶ Hence, while Dionysius I is only mentioned in the excursus for his paternity of Hipparinus and Nisaeus (F 186, 187/Athen. 10.47, p. 436A-B), he is mentioned, more overtly, for his promotion of drinking and gambling and similar vices and for his colonization of Adria in book 21 (F 134, 128C/ Athen. 6.77, p. 261 A-B; Schol. Lycoph. 631).

the Dionysian Empire is not encountered in Diodorus' text on Dion which treats the period within the context of Dion rather than Dionysius II. The reign of Dionysius II, on the contrary, is discussed extremely succinctly in one short chapter (Diod. Sic. 16.5). Moreover, in sharp contrast to Theopompus who emphasized Dionysius II's moral shortcomings, Diodorus 16.5 castigates Dionysius II for political ineptitude. Further, the chronological framework which characterizes the *Philippica's* excursus is not reproduced in Diodorus' account of the Syracusan revolution. Hence, in contrast to Theopompus who began his account of Sicilian history and of the fall of the Dionysian Empire in the late 390s — either in 394, 393 or 392 BC²⁷ — and viewed the period from then to 344 BC as one of progressive decline, Diodorus adopted as commencement point the more conventional date of 367 BC, marked by the death of Dionysius I, succession of Dionysius II, and second visit of Plato to Syracuse, to inaugurate his account of the Syracusan revolution and scarcely covered the latter part of Dionysius II's career, after Dionysius II's first withdrawal, at all, discussing it in a few succinct passages.²⁸ Moreover, the terminal date of the excursus of 344/3 BC has no significance for Diodorus, who, to all intents and purposes, ended his Dionian narrative abruptly with Nypsius' abortive attack (Diod. Sic. 16.18-20) which followed the first expulsion of Dionysius II from Syracuse in 356 BC (Diod. Sic. 16.17), thereafter only covering the last part of Dion's career and its postlude very sketchily in the form of two brief chronological notes (Diod. Sic. 16.31.7; 36.5).

Finally for two other reasons, Theopompus' account of the Syracusan revolution does not appear to underline Diodorus' narrative and hence cannot be used as a source for determining Theopompus' attitude towards Dion. In the first place, I follow Meister²⁹ in noting the total absence of invective — surely the hallmark of Theopompus' style (*FGrH* 115 T 20/Dion. Halic. *Ad Pomp.* 6.9) from Diodorus' text. Secondly, Theopompus' hostility to Plato and Platonism, which we have already suggested probably derived from his teacher Isocrates,³⁰ provokes two comments. First, this phenomenon is scarcely reconcilable with Diodorus' praise of Dion's philosophical training (Diod. Sic. 16.6.3; 20.2). Sec-

²⁷ For 394 BC, Shrimpton (n. 4), 42, 92; for 393 BC, Beloch (n. 9), 11, 21-2; for 392 BC, Hammond (n. 19), 142-3.

²⁸ Diod. Sic. 16. 45.9; 68.1-3; 69.3; 70.1.

²⁹ K. Meister, *Die Sizilische Geschichte bei Diodor von den Anfängen bis zum Tod des Agathokles. Quellenuntersuchungen zu Buch IV-XXI*, Diss., München, 1967, 109-10.

³⁰ This view is admittedly unfashionable at present. Thus Kathleen Reed, *Theopompus of Chios: History and Oratory in the Fourth Century*, Diss. Berkeley, California, 1976, 2-47; Flower, 1986 (n. 2), 12-29 and 1994 (n. 2), 42-62, 83-4; P. Harding, 'An Education to All', *LCM* 11.8 Oct. 1986, 135; R.C. Cooper, *The Development of the Biographical Tradition in the Athenian Orators in the Hellenistic Period*, Diss. UBC, 1992, 72-3.

only, Diodorus' praise of Dion's nobility, piety, generosity and courage and of Dion's role as saviour, which we have already noted, is equally unlikely to have stemmed from the pen of an anti-Platonist such as Theopompus.

3

The alternative suggestion that Theopompus viewed Dion favourably rests upon three foundations: that Theopompus' hatred of democracy, oligarchic sympathies, and Laconianism must have rendered Theopompus favourable to Dion who was popular in Sparta and had decided to establish a Spartan-Cretan constitution at Syracuse; that Theopompus F 331 which extols Dion's rationalistic interpretation of a lunar eclipse is favourable to Dion; and that, given that the same fragment which views Dion favourably is found in Plutarch's biography of Dion, the favourable estimate of Dion which is found in the rest of Plutarch's biography must also derive from Theopompus.

These arguments, I submit, are even less persuasive than those which attribute a negative appraisal of Dion to Theopompus. In the first place, the anti-democratic and pro-oligarchic tendencies as well as Laconianism on Theopompus' part need not necessarily be identified with a pro-Dion stance, notwithstanding Dion's popularity in Sparta and penchant for a Spartan-Cretan constitution. On the contrary, as we have observed, Theopompus was decidedly hostile to Plato. Theopompus, accordingly, is hardly likely to have been enthusiastic about Plato's protege and the latter's attempt to establish a Platonic type state at Syracuse. As regards F 331 as a source indicating Theopompus' pro-Dion stance, as we have seen, since this does not derive from the *Philippica's* Sicilian excursus and appears more concerned with Dionysius II's overthrow and the portents which accompanied this event, it proves singularly unhelpful in assisting us to determine the nature of Theopompus' depiction of Dion in the *Philippica's* Sicilian excursus. Certainly, the fact that this fragment depicts Dion as a level-headed rationalist in this particular instance hardly furnishes us with conclusive evidence proving that Theopompus' overall assessment of Dion was positive. The fact, moreover, that this fragment suggests that Theopompus viewed the overthrow of Dionysius II positively and that Theopompus was therefore hostile to Dionysius II does certainly not prove a corresponding favour to Dion on Theopompus' part.³¹ Finally, the argument that Plutarch's narrative with its clear favour towards Dion derives from Theopompus is confronted by numerous objections. First, it hinges, to a considerable extent, upon what we have argued is a somewhat dubious assumption that F 331 can be utilized as a text offering

³¹ The same can be said for Timaeus of Tauromenium's account of this period, which, for all its hostility to Dionysius II, does not appear to have been unduly favourable to Dion. On this issue, see L.J. Sanders, 'What did Timaeus think of Dion?', *Hermes* 120, 1992, 205-15.

testimony of a pro-Dion stance of Theopompus. But it also should be emphasized that even if it were deduced from this particular fragment that in this instance Theopompus was favourable to Dion, it would, to say the least, be somewhat cavalier to infer from the same fragment an overall influence of Theopompus upon Plutarch, and specifically upon the pro-Dion sentiments which we encounter in the *Dion*. Further, it is obvious that Timonides of Leucas and Timaeus possess stronger credentials as sources of Plutarch than Theopompus merely by virtue of the fact that they are each cited five times by Plutarch³² as opposed to Theopompus who is only cited once. It is also to be emphasized that Plutarch does not cite material from Theopompus' Sicilian excursus once. The case for Timonides vis-à-vis Timaeus as well as Theopompus is particularly strong for two reasons. First, the contemporary eyewitness flavour of much of Plutarch's text, which includes the depiction of the omens foreshadowing Dionysius II's eclipse, is much more likely to be identified with Timonides than with Timaeus³³ or Theopompus since Timaeus was neither a contemporary nor an eyewitness of the events, while Theopompus, although a contemporary, was certainly not an eyewitness of the occurrences in Sicily. Secondly, the pro-Dion flavour of Plutarch's text is obviously compatible with the authority of Timonides whose history, after all, took the form of correspondence pertaining to Dion's expedition, communicated to Speusippus (*FGrH* 561 T 3a, b/*Plut. Dion* 35.4; *Diog. Laert.* 4.5) and, therefore, was obviously pro-Dion in thrust. Nor can it be argued that Theopompus gleaned this pro-Dion material from Timonides. Theopompus, with his hostility towards Plato and Platonism, is most unlikely to have followed the account of Plutarch's source, eulogizing Dion. Certainly, the picture which Timonides seems to have propagated of Dion as an individual favoured by Fortune (*Plut. Dion* 25.12; 26.1-2, 7-10)³⁴ could not possibly have been adopted by an anti-Platonist such as Theopompus.

³² Thus Timonides in *Plut. Dion* 22.5; 30.10; 31.3; 35.4/*FGrH* 561 T 1,2, F 1.3,2. Timaeus in *Plut. Dion* 6.3; 14.5; 31.3, 7; 35.6; 36.1/*FGrH* 566 F 109, 113, 114, 115, 154.

³³ See Porter (n. 9), xxi-xxii.

³⁴ Pearson's attribution (n. 9), 198-9 of this phenomenon to Timaeus is, in my opinion, difficult to accept, given the strong eyewitness flavour of this material which suggests the authority of Timonides.

Given the weaknesses delineated above with respect to argumentation which attributes a positive or negative view of Dion to Theopompus, we might indeed be tempted to conclude with some modern authorities that a clear view of Theopompus' sympathies or lack thereof vis-à-vis Dion is impossible to obtain or that Theopompus simply viewed Dion in ambiguous terms. And yet, for one reason already noted, namely Theopompus' anti-Plato stance, such a solution, I believe, to be not really satisfactory. Obviously if Theopompus manifested a clearly hostile stance towards Plato, he cannot have been enthusiastically inclined towards Plato's protege Dion. But it is equally evident that, for all his hatred for Plato and Platonism, Theopompus could not have directly assaulted Dion within the context of the *Philippica's* Sicilian excursus, quite simply because the hedonistic vices for which Theopompus castigated Dionysius II and the latter's family were not shared by Dion. The dilemma which confronted Theopompus, I believe, obliged Theopompus to resort to a more indirect route to launch his attack on Dion.

To comprehend the nature of Theopompus' negative approach to Dion, we have to bear in mind the broader perspective which Theopompus employed to pursue his chief theme in the *Philippica's* Sicilian excursus, specifically Theopompus' decision to view the fall of the Dionysian Empire in moral-political terminology — a process which he unconventionally dated back to the late 390s and associated with the hedonistic lifestyle of Dionysius II and his family. There were, I believe, three reasons for Theopompus' adoption of this approach, of which the third is particularly pertinent for our enquiry. In the first place, Theopompus, in Gibbonesque fashion, was, by dating back the decline and fall of the Dionysian Empire probably to 392 BC, attempting to draw a contrast between the Empire at its height, following Dionysius' great victory over Carthage, and its demise, fifty years later, in 344 BC.³⁵ Secondly, by beginning his discussion of the decline of the Dionysian Empire, as manifested by the hedonistic lifestyle of Dionysius II and his family, in the late 390s, Theopompus was able to trace back this hedonistic phenomenon to the youth of Dionysius II. Finally — and most important for the thesis which we have been pursuing — Theopompus, by tracing the fall of the Dionysian Empire back to the late 390s and interpreting this fall in moral-political terms, was indirectly assaulting the Platonic tradition about the Syracusan revolution in two ways. In the first place, by dating the decline of the Dionysian Empire to the late 390s, he was challeng-

³⁵ See Hammond (n. 19), 142-3 against Westlake, 1969 (n. 4), 230-1 on Diod. Sic. 16.71.3/ *FGrH* 115 F 184. On the significance of the Dionysian date 392 BC for Ephorus as well as Theopompus, see G.L. Barber, *The Historian Ephorus*, 1925 (reprint 1993), 45-6. The parallel with Gibbon discussed by L.J. Sanders, 'Theopompus and the Dionysian Empire', *CVEMC* 39 N.S. 14 1995, 347-9.

ing the Platonic thesis which maintained that Plato's momentous second visit to Syracuse in 367 BC caused the revolution. Secondly, by interpreting the fall of the Dionysian Empire in moral political terms as applicable to Dionysius II and his kin, Theopompus was, in effect, ignoring the Platonic view which interpreted the fall of the Dionysian Empire within the context of an attempt on the part of Dion to establish a just Platonic regime at Syracuse. The overthrow of the Dionysian regime in Theopompus' scheme thus had nothing to do with Dion, Plato and the Platonic reform, which followed the death of Dionysius I in 368/7 BC, aimed at the overthrow of tyranny and the establishment of a Platonic constitution of justice, as the Platonists liked to maintain. On the contrary, it resulted from an internal process of corruption affecting the Dionysian family, effected between 394 or 393 or 392 and 344 BC which reduced Dionysius I's mighty empire to rubble. Theopompus' assault on Dion was accordingly not based upon exposure of Dion's weaknesses as such. It was effected indirectly by the historian's simply totally ignoring the positive interpretation of Dion and the Dionian revolution recorded by the Platonic tradition.³⁶

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³⁶ For a broader view of the significance of Theopompus' treatment of the period of the Dionysii and Dion, see Cynzia Bearzot, 'Il significato della βασιλεία της πάσης Ευρώπης', *CISA* 12, 1986, 91-104, esp. 99-101; L.J. Sanders (n. 35), 337-53.