

## The Greek Translations of Francis Hickes (1565/6-1631)

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As we come more and more to realize how much early modern translation from ancient texts into English never made its way into print, attention inevitably falls far more often on translations from Latin than Greek, simply because they are so much more numerous. Boys were, of course, taught Latin to a relatively advanced level in English schools, under a method strongly emphasizing the reading of ancient Latin works both of prose and verse. Later in life, from their university days on, men who entertained no expectation that their work would be printed, or that they would become known as writers of any kind, carried out English translations of such texts, or often of excerpts from them, for a variety of reasons, and some of their performances are still extant in manuscripts in repositories such as the Bodleian Library. The position is quite different with Greek. It was possible to take Greek classes in schools, and there was expertise at the universities from the early sixteenth century,<sup>1</sup> but sixteenth- and seventeenth-century culture remained overwhelmingly Latin. Well into the seventeenth century, even when translators addressed a major Greek author, it was often a Latin (or French) version they worked from, and writers known to have had more than a smattering of Greek – George Chapman or Ben Jonson, say – are rarities. Thus it seems entirely unsurprising if at the level of unprinted private exercises we find few recorded English translations of any kind from ancient Greek texts. Here, though, is a counter-example which suggests the reach of Greek learning well beyond the scholarly world.

Francis Hickes has always had a small place in literary history as an early English translator of Lucian. Shortly after his death in 1631 his sole printed work, *Certaine Select Dialogues of Lucian: together with his True Historie, Translated from the Greek into English*, was published in Oxford in 1634. It is respectfully if briefly noticed in surveys of

Lucian's English translation history. Two much more substantial works of translation by Hickes were never printed, but remain available in two manuscripts in the library of Christ Church, Oxford.<sup>2</sup> These manuscripts, the primary subject of this paper, contain complete English versions respectively of Thucydides' and Herodian's histories. They were presented to the college by Francis' son Thomas Hickes, a young chaplain of Christ Church, who also made himself responsible for seeing into print the Lucian translation following his father's death (contributing a dedication and preface). These two substantial, well preserved manuscripts have been routinely recorded and catalogued over the years, but their contents have apparently never been investigated. Our appraisal has shown them to be remarkably successful translations, in the case of the Herodian easily surpassing the only printed English translation of the period, and in that of Thucydides much more than a mere curiosity when placed beside the famous contemporary version by Thomas Hobbes.

But who, first of all, was Francis Hickes? To answer this question it is necessary to begin with Francis' father, Richard Hickes (alternatively Hicks, Hyckes, Heekes, c.1524-1621), whose career is intimately connected with our translator's. According to Gillian Wright's short joint *ODNB* entry for Francis Hickes and his son Thomas, Richard 'may have come to England as a Flemish émigré'. Richard Hickes was indeed a Flemish immigrant, one of those who crossed the Channel for the sake of their religion and with only the skills of their trade to sustain them. But his skills in tapestry-weaving made Richard Hickes very employable. There is no sign of his being in England before the 1560s, but in 1569 he is recorded as being appointed Queen Elizabeth's arrasmaker. The family's connection with the weaving trade in its early English form has, in fact, led to a good deal of recent interest and research by textile historians.<sup>3</sup> Surviving pieces sometimes associated with the family include one of the greatest extant examples of Jacobean tapestry: the 'Four Seasons' set originally made in 1611 and now hanging in Hatfield House. And in the so-called 'Sheldon' county

maps woven in tapestry form, both Richard Hicke's and Francis Hicke's names are found inscribed, at least in the (more complete) copies made later in time.<sup>4</sup>

We must stay with Francis' father Richard for a moment longer. The first unambiguous reference to Richard Hicke occurs when his second child was baptised on 26 October 1567 in Barcheston, Warwickshire. We know that by the time he arrived in Barcheston Hicke was already married.<sup>5</sup> (The parish register is silent, however, about the baptism of Francis, his eldest son, whose date of birth has to be inferred from the date of his matriculation at Oxford.) Upon arrival in Warwickshire Richard was in his forties, and probably a master-weaver who may have had his own workshop in Flanders. He became the manager of a tapestry works at Barcheston set up by a wealthy local landowner, William Sheldon (c.1500-1570), whose will described Richard Hicke as 'the only author and beginner of this art within this realm' – meaning that tapestry-weaving had previously been a purely continental art.<sup>6</sup>

So much for the family's source of income. What has not been recognized by *ODNB* or by literary historians is that in the next generation Francis Hicke drew on the same source. As already noted, Richard Hicke was granted headship of the royal arras works (becoming, in effect, head of tapestry conservation) in 1569. The office, as *ODNB* states, was extended to Francis in survivorship from 1575; but as he would have been a mere child at this date, the fact might mean little. Richard himself, in post for forty years, seems to have been active for only four, though he was involved in the supply of materials to the royal household for much longer. What has proved most misleading, however, is the coy statement by Francis' son Thomas in his preface to the Lucian translation which he prepared for publication that after graduating from Oxford his father was 'taken off by a countrie retirement'.<sup>7</sup> Francis might indeed have lived somewhat remotely, Barcheston being situated on the Warwickshire-Worcestershire border, but it seems highly likely that these words were intended to suggest

something else: that Thomas, the Christ Church chaplain, came of genteel stock. On the contrary, as we shall see, Francis Hickes followed his father into the weaving trade.

Francis Hickes took an Oxford degree as a member of Oriel College in April 1583.<sup>8</sup> At Michaelmas 1584 he entered service in the Great Wardrobe, the part of the royal household in London responsible for repairing the sovereign's tapestries. From 1588, the official date of his father's retirement, he served as its head. After 1604 his name no longer tops the staff list, making it apparent that he appointed deputies as his father had before him, before he formally resigned his post in 1609 aged about forty-three, twenty-five years after he was first appointed.<sup>9</sup> Local church records, legal records, and account books suggest that he was never long absent from Barcheston and the surrounding area during all these years, which has led to the suggestion that he also followed his father into the supervision of the Barcheston tapestry works. However Francis divided his time, as we now say, between London and Warwickshire down to 1609, some, most, or all of it was spent in the management of tapestry workshops – engaged in repair in the royal household's case, and at Barcheston, supposing employment there was one of his reasons for living in the area, in the production of new goods.

Just as it might be difficult for literary scholars to imagine a translator of Lucian, Thucydides, and Herodian in such a role, textile historians suggest that Francis Hickes' translating activities 'sit awkwardly with his position in the Great Wardrobe' (Turner, 'Francis Hyckes'). And although twenty years of his life lay ahead of him in 1611 when the activities of the Barcheston workshop seem to have been either wound up or reduced,<sup>10</sup> the Lucian preface does not suggest this was the only period of Francis Hickes' Greek studies. Thomas writes of his father:

Hee was indeed no profest scholler nor tooke any more than one degree in this famous Universitie, having beene sometimes of *Oriell* Colledge: but yet although hee were taken off by a countrie retirement, hee never lost the true tast and relish that distinguishes men of this education, but rather made continuall improvement of that nutriment which hee had received in his younger daies, from the breasts of this his honoured mother. His studie or rather his recreation, was chiefly in the Greeke tongue.<sup>11</sup>

‘Continuall improvement’ clearly cannot mean that Francis first neglected but then took up his Greek studies again in middle age. It is of course possible, all the same, that the very substantial works of translation he undertook had to wait until then; since there are no indications of their date, we simply cannot know.

Thomas Hicke, the chaplain, was something of a ‘profest scholler’ of Greek (*ODNB* sets out his modest achievements). It would be nice to know more about his input into the Lucian volume, which was an innovative compilation. As has recently been pointed out by Brenda Hosington, only one of the nine Lucian texts it includes had ever been englished before, and the selection ‘represented for the first time in English Lucian’s range of genres’.<sup>12</sup> This could be put more strongly: the previous history of Lucian’s English translation consists of a mere three dialogues, at least two done from Latin versions, by three different hands at various dates in the sixteenth century. Unfortunately we cannot be certain whether the selection was finalized by the father or the son, but the son was certainly responsible for an over-zealous display of learning in the marginal notes he provided. Thomas claims in his preface that without such assistance, ‘the English, would be to many, almost as much Greeke as the Originall’ (sig. A3<sup>v</sup>), but this is far from being the case. The typically down-to-earth

style of the translation is displayed in a short narrative delivered by a character in ‘The Cock’:

This *Simon* had a cousen that was an exceeding rich man; his name was *Drimylus*: he as long as hee lived, would not bestow one halfe-penny on this *Simon*. And no marvell, for he could never finde in his heart to bestow any thing upon himselfe. But when he dyed, all his goods by the law came to this *Simon*: so that hee that was wont to goe in a bare patcht cloake, and glad to licke the dishes, is now cloathed in purple and violet, hath servants, chariots, golden drinking vessels, and tables of Ivorie: and so revered by all men, that he will not so much as looke on me; for I hapning by chance to see him not long agoe, came to him and saluted him; saying, *Simon*, God save you: but hee being offended hereat, said to his servants; bid this beggar not clip my name: I am not *Simon*, but *Simonides*. And which is most to bee noted, women doe now fall in love with him; and to some of them hee makes the matter daintie, and regards them not: to others he is favourable, and doth grant them his love: and they that are forsaken, seeme so much affectioned, that they threaten to kill themselves. Thou seest then how many good things gold is the cause of, so that it altereth the very shape of a man; making the uncomely looke handsome and lovely, like the Poeticall *Cestum*: thou hast heard what the Poet saith, O gold, thou art the sweetest and the welcomest possession.

(*Certaine Select Dialogues*, p. 54)

In the margin of this short passage of his father’s translation, a work clearly intended not for scholars but for readers, Thomas manages to cite and/or quote Claudian, Pausanias, Homer, and Euripides. When the printer of Hicckes’ successor in Lucian translation, another Christ

Church man, Jasper Mayne, added to his edition of Mayne's work some of Hickes' dialogues, he wisely omitted the chaplain's notes.<sup>13</sup>

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Thomas Hickes' preface to the Lucian hints at an intention to print more of his father's work, but this was not to be, perhaps simply because, aged about thirty-five, he died later in the year the Lucian was printed, or perhaps also because publishing the Thucydides and the Herodian translations would have been far more ambitious undertakings. These manuscripts, particularly the former, are every bit as substantial as the size of their Greek originals requires. MS 156 is a folio bound in full leather containing 603 closely written pages, a complete *Peloponnesian War*. The hand is a professional one, the paper carefully ruled. The manuscript's condition is very good except that in several segments there has been serious bleed-through of the ink, making both sides of affected pages very hard to decipher. MS 157, the Herodian, is a quarto notebook, also leather-bound and once possessing ties. It runs to 211 numbered pages and is also in a very good state of preservation. This is in a different hand, and considerably less elaborately prepared than the Thucydides, but indications of professional scribal skills such as a justified right-hand margin are in evidence. Figure 1 shows the first page, the start of which is transcribed in the course of our discussion below. Although two different hands produced the two manuscripts (MS 156 is illustrated on p. 000 below), the texts have in common certain idiosyncrasies of style, such as a heavy use of colon and semi-colon as against light use of the full stop. This suggests the copyists followed their originals closely.

All three of the Greek authors Hickes is known to have translated had extremely limited English translation histories. Until 1629, the only printed English Herodian was a

version of Politian's Latin rendering: the otherwise unknown Nicholas Smyth's *The History of Herodian*, issued in London c.1566. Whether because it was a secondary translation, or because its early Elizabethan prose had come to seem dated, or for whatever other reason, it was evidently considered to be ripe for replacement during Hickeys' lifetime, for in 1629 another London bookseller brought out *Herodian of Alexandria his History of Twenty Roman Cæsars and Emperors*, by J.M.: James Maxwell. Unless we are prepared to imagine Hickeys embarking on his substantial Herodian translation in his mid-sixties, and in the last two years of his life (1629-30; he is reported to have died on 9 January 1631), this must have appeared after his own Herodian was done. In fact, although Maxwell's would only have been a 'rival' translation had Hickeys intended to publish his own, it makes better sense to suppose Hickeys undertook his work before anything was known of Maxwell's. This is partly because it matches the pattern of his other translations, each of them without any recently printed predecessor, which begins to appear to have been Hickeys' preference.

Maxwell (1581?-1635?), an eccentric scholar of theology and prophecy originally educated at Edinburgh University, whom Archbishop Laud once called 'Mountebank Maxwell', had a habit of upsetting authorities. In 1620 he found himself in the Tower of London for publishing strange claims about the genealogy of the Royal House of Stuart. After petitioning successfully for his release he transferred himself to the more accommodating courts of continental Europe, there completing, according to *ODNB*, a number of presumably pot-boiling translations. Of Maxwell's learning there was no doubt, however, and his Herodian – unlike Smyth's, the title page insisted, '*interpreted out of the Greeke Originall*' – was quickly reprinted, in 1635. How does Hickeys' work compare with that of Maxwell, whose Herodian, in the absence of any succeeding attempt, was the only available seventeenth-century text for readers needing an English version?

Hickeys' strengths are clear in the very first sentence: <sup>14</sup>



be controlled; and yet nevertheless, their neat and spruce Compositions should be highly applauded.

(Maxwell, p. 4)

Both translators are prepared to elaborate with their own imagery: thus Maxwell's 'mine and search out the Truth' renders a simple 'neglectful of the truth' in the original, while Hickes' 'compose and garnish the phrase and soile of their writing' elaborates a simple 'concern for expression and euphony'. But 'soile of their writing' shows Hickes' sense of Herodian's own imagery, for  $\text{ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων}$  later in the sentence is literally 'reap the fruits of' the writers' performance; neither translator thinks that rather routine figure worth keeping, but Hickes has transferred the arboricultural idea to that earlier and more striking context. Hickes' rendering also shows more sensitivity to Herodian's allusiveness. The end of this sentence echoes Thucydides' methodological chapters, where he too had talked about the 'pleasure' in 'hearing' that the 'fabulous' could bring ( $\text{ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων}$  1.22.4) and his own contrasting pride in 'exactness' ( $\text{ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων}$  1.22.2). All those elements are kept by Hickes, for 'deliverie' points to public performance; 'fabulous' alone is kept by Maxwell, with 'deliver' less pointedly earlier in the sentence.

Elsewhere in the prologue Maxwell's freedom of rendering veers into carelessness, and important nuances are lost. Herodian criticizes those earlier authors who, misled by the concern to malign or to flatter,  $\text{ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετὴ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἡμετέρων}$  (1.1.2): Hickes captures that very well in 'have by the force and power of eloquence, magnified and extolled matters triviall to so great a height, that truth it self could never attaine the like' (p. 1); Maxwell's 'have not perfectly delineated the Image of Truth' (p. 5) is bland and insubstantial. Herodian's theme is to be a turbulent one, including 'emperors who reached as far as being acclaimed and gaining an ephemeral honour, then were

immediately deposed' (1.1.5). Maxwell takes that 'ephemeral' over-literally, and implausibly has them deposed 'the very same day they were elected' (p. 6); Hickee does not.

Still, Hickee has his freedoms too. At one point they lead him into missing a further Thucydidean point, for at 6.3.2 Herodian describes the tumult under Alexander as  $\text{ἡ μὲν ἄλλοτε καὶ ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ὅτι τὸ τότε τὸ μέγιστον κίνημα τῆς ὅλης Ῥωμαίων ἡμερίας}$  'the greatest upheaval of the whole Roman empire'. That  $\text{ἡ μὲν ἄλλοτε}$  literally 'movements', echoes not just the 'movement of peoples' that had been heralded in the proem (1.1.4) but also the opening claim of Thucydides that his war represented the 'biggest  $\text{ἡ μὲν ἄλλοτε}$  to befall the Greeks and a part of the barbarian world too' (1.1.2). Maxwell's 'hurliburlies' (p. 210) is there rather good; Hickee merely has 'a great power was raised out of all countries within the Roman dominions' (p. 158), which captures neither the meaning nor the Thucydidean resonance. Still, such blemishes are rare: Hickee's elaborations are often both helpful and scholarly. At 1.16.4 Herodian tells us that Commodus' favourite concubine Marcia was granted all the privileges due to an empress 'except for the fire'. Maxwell (pp. 55-6) leaves it at that, but Hickee knows what is meant by that rather obscure phrase: 'saving only the carriage of fire before her' (p. 33).

It is rarely, too, that Hickee loses anything important in adapting. Those privileges accorded to Marcia were just one of the ways in which Commodus was heading for his fall. Herodian introduces this with ominous words, this time perhaps evoking the manner of Herodotus rather than Thucydides –  $\text{ἡ μὲν ἄλλοτε καὶ ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ὅτι τὸ τότε τὸ μέγιστον κίνημα τῆς ὅλης Ῥωμαίων ἡμερίας}$  'it was, so it seems, necessary finally for him to stop his madness and for rule of the Roman empire to cease being a tyranny', 1.16.1).<sup>15</sup> Maxwell has 'But now it was high time for him to leave his Foolery, and the City to be freed from his Tyranny' (p. 54); Hickee, 'The frantic fits of Commodus must now come to an end, and Rome be delivered from the yoke of tyrannie' (p. 32). That 'must now come to an end' is



(Hickes, p. 35)

Whereupon his head being very heavy, he fell into a slumber by reason of his vehement exercise, (as was supposed).

(Maxwell, p. 59)

Hickes' rendering is more accurate (ὁ δὲ μὲν ἰὼν εἰς τὸν ὕπνον ἔειπε ἑαυτὸν ἵπνον ἔχειν) as well as very elegant. The Greek is then difficult, as ἵπνον ἔχειν should mean 'thinking he was suffering ...' or 'experiencing'; but like the English 'experiencing', though unlike 'suffering', it requires an object, and most modern texts add <ἑαυτὸν>, 'this', before ἵπνον. Maxwell's 'as was supposed' seems to take ἵπνον ἔχειν as a passive rather than middle form of ἵπνον ἔχειν (•I think•), which is impossible. It looks as if Hickes is reading or conjecturing ἵπνον ἔχειν ἑαυτὸν 'was accustomed to' (experience such drowsiness when he had been working hard), which may not be strictly necessary but is not at all bad. It will then be a continuation of the point made in the previous sentence, which describes how Marcia often offered him a drink when he returned from the hunt: both that and this will now explain why Commodus drifted off to sleep with no suspicions.

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With Hickes' Thucydides translation an extremely limited predecessor-history is evident once again. The picture is, in fact, very similar to that of the Herodian: the only earlier English translation had also been issued many decades ago, and was made from another one in an intermediate language, this time French. Thomas Nicolls' *The history writtome by Thucidides the Athenyan* was explicitly taken from the French of Claude de Seyssel and appeared in

1550. Nicolls is not known as a writer, but is described on the title page as ‘citezeine and goldesmyth of London’, and his prefatory comments are full of commendations of the moral value of such material as this. His translation is, though, very much a translation of de Seyssel’s, for example including the Frenchman’s preliminaries, such as his dedication. In style it is the type of work which used to prompt the use of the adjective ‘drab’ to describe the English writing of the mid-sixteenth century. In a word, there were plenty of reasons to justify a fresh translation in Hicckes’ time, and once again, a new English version does appear in print at the very end of Hicckes’ life. In this case, however, it is composed not by a James Maxwell but a Thomas Hobbes.

First printed in 1629, Hobbes’ Thucydides had been prepared some unspecified time before that date, Hobbes noting in his preface that he has had his work by him for a while (it is generally supposed for up to a decade).<sup>17</sup> There are no recorded manuscript copies which could have circulated, and it is not even clear that Hobbes made known the existence of his work pre-publication. So, as with his Herodian, it seems Hicckes would have embarked on his version – perhaps after his formal retirement from the Great Wardrobe in 1609, perhaps even before that date - without knowing anything of an eventually forthcoming printed translation. Although our analysis has disclosed some shared pieces of phrasing, we have seen no evidence that either Hicckes or Hobbes knew the other’s work; these coincidences can be more routinely explained (examples follow below).

The critical standing of Hobbes’ translation is at present very high.<sup>18</sup> David Grene, for instance, introduces his edition of 1989 by calling it ‘by long odds, the greatest translation of Thucydides in English’.<sup>19</sup> After assessing Hicckes’ Thucydides, we do not contest Hobbes’ superiority, but we would qualify this sweeping judgement. Hobbes is a remarkable translator, but it is unhelpful to suggest that his *Peloponnesian War* is entirely in a class of its own, because remarkable writers generally do better what some of their contemporaries also

do well. This creates a further reason why we should be interested in a writer like Hicke: his translation provides a benchmark and comparandum for gauging Hobbes' translation. In some cases the two writers' merits are the same, while at some moments we would suggest that Hicke outmatches Hobbes in qualities that are normally the latter's hallmarks. In the following analysis we concern ourselves largely with the two translations *qua* translations - their approaches, their characteristic strengths, their accuracy - but these matters are not wholly separable from the expressiveness of the English prose each writes. We shall recur to this point, noting for now that Hicke was of an earlier generation than Hobbes, and his prose feels earlier too. This is not meant to suggest that it feels in some way primitive or old-fashioned. Shakespeare's first plays were staged around 1590, when Hicke was a young man of about twenty-five (and Hobbes only two years old).

The Herodian translation shows that Hicke was more than capable of grappling directly with Thucydides' Greek. In Thucydides' case, however, there was also the massive presence of Lorenzo Valla's fifteenth-century Latin translation, and with Hicke as with Hobbes one has to ask whether the English translator looked across to Valla's Latin as well as to the Greek text, given that parallel texts were available. Robin Sowerby has made a good case for thinking that Valla's influence on Hobbes was no more than sporadic: there are fewer Latinisms than one would expect if Valla had been a constant resort, though Hobbes unsurprisingly found Valla a useful guide in some of Thucydides' more abstruse passages.<sup>20</sup> The same seems to be true of Hicke. Most of the time he is clearly independent, perhaps indeed more independent than Hobbes. One small example comes at 7.83.4, where Thucydides' ἄρα τῶν ἀρχαίων rendered by Valla as 'ad arma conclamarunt' and by Hobbes as 'gave the Alarme'. Hicke is right to leave it as 'paeana': a paean is a hymn to Apollo sung in various circumstances, including before battle, but 'alarm' or 'shouting' is not the point. It is hard, too, to find any Latinisms in Hicke that can be traced directly to Valla. If one looks, for









against 136; there were 71 in the Greek). Both translators have some very fine moments, in Hickes' case with biblical tonalities: with his 'she fainteth not, nor sinketh at any kinde of adversitie' compare in the Authorized Bible 'the Lord ... fainteth not, neither is weary' (Isaiah 40.28) or 'If thou faint in the day of adversity' (Proverbs 24:10). But Hobbes oddly undertranslates several times. The Greek has Athens winning 'the greatest fame', losing 'the greatest number of men' in war, and acquiring 'the greatest power of any up to this time': Hickes captures all that, whereas Hobbes weakens the superlatives to 'a great name', 'the expence of so many lives', and 'the mighty power it yet hath'. The last seems to be Hobbes' mistranslation of ἡ μὲν ἄρτις ἐξ ἑσθλῶν, which should be taken in Hickes' sense of 'the greatest ... up to this time': it goes closely with the implied comparison with earlier powers. Not that Hickes is perfect: his 'especially amongst the Grecians' for ἐν ἡμετέροις Ἕλλησι suggests that he is taking the genitive plural ἐν ἡμετέροις both with the preceding ἐν ἡμετέροις and with the following ἡμετέροις. That is not likely. But Hobbes' 'that being Grecians, most of the Grecians were our subjects' is not right either: it again loses the comparison with previous generations, for the ἐν ἡμετέροις Ἕλλησι must suggest 'most compared with every other Greek imperial power' ('we held rule over more Hellenes than any other Hellenic state', Crawley), even if Hobbes' meaning is also present as a possibly deliberate ambiguity (so Mynott).

Thucydides notoriously has a taste for abstractions, often for instance taking the form of neuter abstracts such as τὸ φοβηθῆναι and τὸ πιστεῖν ('the fearing', 'the confidence', 1.36.1); this is one thing that makes his generalizations so hard to translate, and often to understand. Hobbes takes it even further than Thucydides himself: one could perhaps link this with his interest in extracting generalizable morals. In another crucial and famous passage Thucydides gives the 'truest reason' for the war:





the changeability of events but their similarity that is being emphasized; a matter of continuity and repeatability rather than ‘mutability’.

Hickes’ rendering invites admiration when he grapples with difficulties. Thucydides’ summing up of Nicias on his death is syntactically complex, and has been disentangled in several different ways: he was ‘least worthy of all the Greeks, at least those of my own time, to fall into so great ill fortune’ (1p. 7.86.5), perhaps ‘because of his conduct that was regulated according to every virtue’, more likely ‘because all his conduct was regulated according to virtue’, possibly even ‘because all his conduct had been with an eye to what was thought of as virtue’.<sup>21</sup> Hobbes simply omits the difficult phrase: ‘the man that of all the *Grecians* of my time, had least deserved to be brought to so great a degree of misery’ (p. 467). Hickes does try: ‘a man, of all the *Grecians* that wear livinge in my tyme, less deservinge to die in such a fashion, because he alwaies caried a religious affectation of godlines and pietie’ (p. 527). That reading of virtue, strictly in terms of religion is itself notable, but Hickes is not alone in that: Valla has ‘propter pietatis studium, quo Deos colere consueuerat’, and Thucydides too has stressed that Nicias ‘was a little too much given to goddiness and that sort of thing’ (7.50.4). His piety is also what Nicias himself has been made to stress in his speech at 7.77, emphasizing the many good things he has done in the past towards both gods and humans. Thucydides himself might not have regarded ‘goddiness’ as so much of a virtue, but it is understandable that Hickes should have done.

That speech at 7.77 is interesting in a further way, as it gives an example of something that Hickes got righter than most of those who have followed. There, in desperate circumstances, Nicias is trying to give his men some hope and comfort. Those past services may offer some cheer:

$$\begin{aligned} & \cdot \frac{1}{2} \cdot g \frac{1}{2}! \mu r \frac{1}{2} \gg \hat{A} \hat{E} / \hat{E} \hat{A}, \hat{A} \pm \hat{A} \hat{O} \hat{A} \hat{e} \frac{1}{4} \gg \gg \hat{A} \frac{1}{2} \hat{A} \pm 1 \hat{r} \frac{3}{4} \hat{V} \hat{E} \hat{A} \pm v \hat{A} P^{\circ} \pm \hat{A} \cdot \frac{3}{4} \pm \frac{1}{2} \hat{t} \\ & \hat{E}^2 \hat{A} \hat{e} \hat{A} \frac{1}{2} \hat{A} \hat{C} \pm \hat{r} \cdot \frac{1}{2} \pm v \gg \hat{E} \hat{A} \hat{A} \pm \frac{1}{2} \end{aligned}$$

(7.77.3)

For which cause, my hope is still confident of the future, though these calamities, as being not according to the measure of our desert, doe indeed make me feare. But they may perhaps cease.

(Hobbes, p. 460)

In regard wherof, my hope of future good fortune is firme: but your calamities offend you more, then cause requiers, which (it may be) shall shortly be releived:

(Hickes, p. 521)

Thucydides leaves it unclear who is to be understood as the grammatical object of  $\hat{E}^2 \hat{A} \hat{e} \hat{A} \frac{1}{2}$ . Hickes assumes that it is 'you', i.e. the soldiers, Hobbes that it is 'me'. For Hickes the point is that the calamities *are* frightening *you*, *but* that is undeserved, *and* they might stop; Hobbes that they *are* frightening *me*, *for* they are undeserved, *but* they might stop. Valla takes it as Hobbes, except that they are frightening *us*. Most English commentators and translators take it differently again, moving the focus of the negative: they do *not* frighten *me* as far as 'desert' is concerned (Dover, Hornblower, and of the translators Lattimore, Hammond, Mynott) or 'as much as they might' (Crawley, Warner), *and* they might stop. Of the other commentators Classen alone takes it Hickes' way,<sup>22</sup> but that interpretation was abandoned in the subsequent edition by Steup. Yet that reading seems a very good one, and  $\hat{A} P^{\circ} \pm \hat{A} \cdot \frac{3}{4} \pm \frac{1}{2} \hat{A}$  is rather easier that way than in any of the others: it in fact coincides with the Scholiast's

remark (‘not as they should, but more than that, clearly’), though Hickee doubtless did not know that. It is probably right.

Hickee is at his best in passages of vigorous narrative, where the range and variation of his style can sometimes outdo Hobbes even in areas that are Hobbes’ own strength. At 7.70.4–6 we have reached the climax of the final naval battle:

because so many shippes wear mett together within so straight a compasse (for never so great a number fought in so narrowe roome, beinge on both sides little lesse then two hundred vessels) their incounters could be but fewe, because they had no distance to retier or breake through, but they often beate one against another, when one shippe by chance did runne upon another, ether as they fled, or went to meete with another: and as longe as a shippe was comminge on, they stood upon the hatches with dartes, arrowes, and stones, would lett fly att them, as thicke as haile: and as soone as they wear closed, the souldiers on shipboard fell to hand blowes, striving all they could to gett into one anothers shippe: and it often tymes fell out, that when one that was gott into one shippe, the other, in like manner, would gett into theirs, which fell so out by narrownes of the place: and sometymes it fortunod, that two shippes or more, must needes be linked and made fast to one: and then the governours, between desiringe to defend the one, and suppress the other, not one by one, but many together, wear so distressed, that they knewe not what to do.

(Hickee, p. 516)

This is very fine. ‘For never so great a number fought in so narrowe roome’ outdoes Hobbes for Laconism compared with his ‘for they were the most Gallies that in any battell they had used, and fought in the least roome’, and is truer to Thucydides’ own style (‘they stood upon the hatches with dartes, arrowes,

and stones, would lett fly att them, as thicke as haile’ provides two more elements for the reader to visualize than Hobbes’ ‘used their Darts and Arrowes, and Stones in abundance’ (p. 455), though Hobbes is more strictly accurate (there is no simile in Thucydides, just •ÆÏËÂ ... •ÇÁö½Ä, ‘they used them unsparingly’). Finally the confusion of the battle is caught very well by Hickee’s staccato cola in ‘between desiringe to defend the one, and suppress the other, not one by one, but many together, wear so distressed, that they knewe not what to do’, though that final ‘they knewe not what to do’ again has no counterpart in the Greek.

The ghastly conclusion of Book 7 again shows Hickee at his best (Figure 2 shows the page of his manuscript containing the conclusion of this passage):

The rest of the prisoners that wear put into the quarries, the Syracusans at the first used with great extremitie: for being many thrust together in a hollow place, without any rooffe to cover them, they wear first afflicted with the heate of the sonne, which had almost stifled them up, and afterwards the night cominge upon them in a contrarie qualitie, Autumnlike and cold, the suddene alteration brought them into many strange diseases: and because they did all their necessities of nature in the same roome, the place beinge narrowe, wher heapes of dead carcasses lay tumblinge on upon another, some that died upon their hurts, and others upon their change and such like causes, the stench was intollerable: beside they wear oppressed both with hunger and thirst ... To sett downe the exact number of all that wear taken, is more then I am able to do: yet I thinke they wear no lesse then seven thowsand: and this was the gretest exploite that was atcheived by Grecians, all the tyme of this warre, and as farre as I can gather, the gretest that ever was performed by them, that ever any man could heare of, most glorious to the conqueror, and to the vanquished, most miserable and disastrous, who wear everie way forth utterlie brought to ruine, afflicted with no meane kinde of calamitie everie way, but brought to destruction universall, and (as they say) quite

overthrowen horse and foote, so that they had nothinge left but all was lost, and of so great a multitude fewe ther wear that returned home againe. And thus much of matters passed in Sicilia.

(Hickes, pp. 527-8)

No punches are pulled, fewer than in Thucydides himself: he simply had the prisoners in the Syracusan quarries ‘doing everything in the same place because the space was so confined’ (7.87.2), while Hickes spells it out – ‘they did all their necessities of nature in the same roome, the place beinge narrowe’. There ‘heapes of dead carcasses lay tumblinge on upon another’ (Thucydides just has them ‘piled up’). Thucydides’ affectation of impersonality is lessened: ‘then I am able to do ... I thinke ... as far as I can gather’, when the first two cases represent only ‘it is hard to say ... ‘in the original and only the third corresponds to an ‘I’ in the Greek (‘so it seems to me’). Yet even that single case is unusual for Thucydides, corresponding to an increasing interposition of his own personality as his work reaches its climax.<sup>23</sup> The repetitions – ‘everie way forth utterlie ... no meane kind of calamitie everie way ... destruction universall ... quite overthrowen ... nothinge left but all was lost ... of so great multitude fewe there wear’ – correspond to similar reduplications in the Greek (° ±Äp Ä±/Ä±³ pÄÄ±/ÄÉÄ& ;P’ r½@³ ;½•Ä;P’ r½° ±° ;Ä±, @Ä±/ÄÄ& Ä±/É»μ, Á³ & ;P’ r½EÄ ;P° •Ä »μÄ & @³ ;¹ •Äx Ä »»ö¼). So there is wordiness and some expansion (274 words against the 207 used by Hobbes here): but it is only taking further what is unusual in

Thucydides’ own manner at this point. What is most Thucydidean of all is the emotional impact of the scene, with so many great Athenian hopes collapsing in grimy, stifling misery.

<1 line #>

We do not know the reasons why Francis Hickes chose not to have any of his three extant Greek translations printed (we do not even know whether he showed them to anyone else).

But we do know exactly how they came to be in the one case printed, in the other two placed

in safe keeping. Their fortunes were clearly extremely favourable. This being so, it is natural to ask how much comparable early modern material has not survived, and just how atypical these two manuscript texts are of the output of amateur translators. Francis Hickes' work obviously encourages the speculation that considerably more high-quality translating activity went on than has normally been supposed below the visible waterline which the print record represents – and from ancient Greek as well as Latin texts. Much of this activity will, of course, no longer be recoverable. But some, as in this case, can still be brought to light.

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<sup>1</sup> For a recent revisionist account emphasizing the diffusion of Greek literacy in sixteenth-century England see Micha Lazarus, 'Greek Literacy in Sixteenth-Century England', *Renaissance Studies*, 29 (2015), 433-58.

<sup>2</sup> MSS 156 (Thucydides) and 157 (Herodian). We are grateful for their kind assistance to the Keeper of Special Collections at Christ Church, Dr Cristina Neagu, and Special Collections assistant Alina Nachescu.

<sup>3</sup> In this paragraph and in what immediately follows we draw upon Hilary L. Turner, 'Finding the Sheldon Weavers; Richard Hyckes and the Sheldon Tapestry Works', *Textile History*, 33.2 (2002), 137-61.

<sup>4</sup> Copies of the maps made in the later seventeenth century are now in the Bodleian Library. For the inscriptions see Hilary L. Turner, 'Oxfordshire in Wool and Silk: Ralph "the Great" Sheldon's Tapestry Map of Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, 71 (2006), 67-72 (pp. 70-1).

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<sup>5</sup> His wife's name is given in more than one source as Anne Ingram. But the Barcheston registers for 1611 record the burial of Margaret, wife of Richard Hicke, on 13 April, suggesting he married more than once.

<sup>6</sup> For Sheldon see further Turner, 'Oxfordshire in Wool and Silk'. Richard Hicke was said by Sir William Cornwallis to be 'verye connyng in the devise of many thinges': Jason Scott-Warren, 'News, Sociability and Bookbuying in Early Modern England: The Letters of Sir Thomas Cornwallis', *The Library*, 1 (2000), 381-402 (p. 398). Cornwallis would have known Hicke in London.

<sup>7</sup> *Certaine Select Dialogues of Lucian* (Oxford, 1634), sig. A3<sup>r</sup>, quoted more fully below (roman/italic font reversed throughout). Antony Wood, the Oxford antiquary and gossip, took over this expression, along with other misleading information on both Francis and Richard, so ensuring the errors were widely diffused. For Woods' summary of Richard Hicke's life, see *The Life and Times of Anthony à Wood, antiquary, of Oxford, 1632-1695*, edited by Andrew Clark, 5 vols (Oxford, 1891-1900), I, 477, note 2.

<sup>8</sup> This paragraph is largely drawn from Hilary L. Turner, 'Francis Hyckes, (?)1566-1631 – a biography' (2009), found at <[www.tapestriescalledsheldon.info/pdfs/](http://www.tapestriescalledsheldon.info/pdfs/)> (accessed 17.4.16).

<sup>9</sup> There is a deed of this date removing the headship of the royal works from both father and son: *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1572-1575*, no. 3269, C66/1136, m.16<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See Hilary L. Turner's 'John Humphreys, "Elizabethan Sheldon Tapestries": A Critique' on the 'tapestriescalledsheldon' site.

<sup>11</sup> Preface to *Certaine Select Dialogues*, sig. A3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Brenda Hosington, '“Compluria opuscula longe festivissima”: Translations of Lucian in Renaissance England', in *Syntagmatia: Essays on Neo-Latin Literature in Honour of*

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Monique Mund-Dopchie and Gilbert Tournoy, edited by Dirk du Sacré and Jan Papy (Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia, 26) (Leuven, 2009), pp. 187-205 (p. 199).

<sup>13</sup> *Part of Lucian made English from the Originall in the Yeare 1638. By Jasper Mayne then Master of Arts, and one of the Students of Christ Church. To which are adjoynd those other Dialogues of Lucian as they were formerly translated by Francis Hickes* (Oxford, 1664).

<sup>14</sup> The punctuation and spelling of Hickes' manuscripts are lightly emended in our quotations. The other texts quoted in this discussion are the Loeb edition of Herodian, 2 vols (edited by C. R. Whittaker, Cambridge, MA, 1969–70) and J[ames] M[axwell], *Herodian of Alexandria his History of Twenty Roman Cæsars and Emperors* (London, 1629).

<sup>15</sup> Compare e.g. Herodotus 1.8.2, 'it was necessary (ἀνάγκη) for things to turn out badly for Candaules'; 2.161.3 and 4.79.1, 'when it became necessary (ἀνάγκη) for things to turn out badly for' first Apriees and then Scyles; 5.33.2, 6.34, 6.135.3.

<sup>16</sup> Most but not all: Lucarini's 2005 Teubner text leaves the text as it is in the MSS, placing commas around ἀνάγκη. The addition of <ἀνάγκη> either before (so Stephanus) or after ἀνάγκη would be an improvement on Hickes' presumed reading as well.

<sup>17</sup> Hobbes' *Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre*, 1629, is the edition quoted throughout (with roman/italic fonts reversed as required). The 1634 and 1648 printings are simply reissues, while the 1676 printing, which describes itself as the second edition 'much corrected', was prepared not by the then still living Hobbes, but by or for the printer who had acquired the copyright. We are grateful to Noel Malcolm for information on this point.

<sup>18</sup> References in what follows to Thucydides commentaries and translations are to the following works. Commentaries: J. Classen, *Thukydides*, 8 vols (Berlin, 1875), rev. J. Steup (Berlin, 1900–22); *HCT* = A. W. Gomme, A. Andrewes, and K. J. Dover, *A Historical*

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*Commentary on Thucydides*, 5 vols (Oxford, 1945–81); L. Bodin, J. Romilly, and R. Weil, *Thucydide: la Guerre de Péloponnèse*, 8 vols (Paris, 1953); Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1993–2008). Translations: Richard Crawley (London, 1874), most accessible in *The Landmark Thucydides* (edited by R. B. Strassler, New York, 1996); Rex Warner (Harmondsworth, 1954); Steven Lattimore (Indianapolis, IN, 1998); Martin Hammond (Oxford, 2009); Jeremy Mynott (Cambridge, 2013). Valla is quoted from Aemilius Portus's parallel-text edition (Frankfurt, 1594) reprinted Oxford, 1696 with alterations not affecting any passages cited here.

<sup>19</sup> *Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War: The Complete Hobbes Translation*, edited by David Grene (Chicago, 1989), p. vii.

<sup>20</sup> Robin Sowerby, 'Thomas Hobbes' Translation of Thucydides', *T&L*, 7 (1998), 147-69.

<sup>21</sup> For discussion see especially W. R. Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton, NJ, 1984), p. 205 n. 53, and Jonathan J. Price, *Thucydides and Internal War* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 242–3, both favouring the third interpretation; Tim Rood, *Thucydides: Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford, 1998), p. 184 n.9, Dover, *HCT*, IV, 463, and Hornblower, III, 741–2, all preferring the second though Hornblower is prepared to countenance some ambiguity. Crawley, Warner, Lattimore, Hammond, and Mynott all opt for the second in their translations.

<sup>22</sup> Though the Budé of Bodin-Romilly also notes, but rejects, a possible translation along those lines ('nos malheurs vous effraient plus qu'il ne convient').

<sup>23</sup> 'His emotions are rather more in evidence in Book VII than elsewhere', K. J. Dover, *Thucydides: Book VII* (Oxford, 1965), p. 24. Compare 7.86.6 just a little earlier (above, p. 000), and see D. Gribble, 'Narrator interventions in Thucydides', *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 118 (1998), 41–67, especially the list at pp. 47–9.