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Author
Hoekstra, Kinch

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Thucydides and the bellicose beginnings of modern political theory

Kinch Hoekstra

It is March of 1554. England – and England's place in the world – is on a knife's edge. In January, it had been announced that the new queen, Mary, would marry Philip (soon to become Philip II, King of Spain), son of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. This move would bring together several of the most important European dynasties, but many in England are gripped by the anxiety that they will become subject to imperial Spain. Thomas Wyatt proclaimed that he was taking up arms 'to defende the realme from Spaniards and other straungers', and together with other powerful figures marched on London.[1] Scores thought to have played some part in the rebellion have been executed, as has Lady Jane Grey, who had claimed the throne for a short while the previous year; but unrest threatens to spread and vital decisions loom. Settlement depends on ensuring the loyalty of the Queen's council, and above all on Mary's decision about what to do with her half-sister Elizabeth. The masterful political strategist Simon Renard, the Emperor's ambassador to England and Philip's primary adviser, stands to play a pivotal role in this situation. Renard had orchestrated the royal betrothal, and as the eyes and ears of the Emperor in London, his word will determine whether Philip will come to England, as Mary so ardently wishes. Close counsellors have been advising clemency toward

[1] Wiatt 1962: 130.

Elizabeth and others who had not been directly implicated in the plot, but both the Emperor and Renard are unflinching in their demands: Elizabeth and more leading rebels must be executed swiftly, or insurrection will continue and escalate, and Philip will remain abroad.[2] Mary's reign and Elizabeth's life are at stake, as is whether Philip will become King of England. Renard hits upon a way to tip the balance, as he writes to assure the Emperor on 22 March: 'and certainly, Sire, I have steadily admonished [the Queen] to have the prisoners punished promptly, and gave her Thucydides translated into French so that she may see the counsel he gives and what punishments should be inflicted on rebels'.[3] Renard stands at the beginning of a period in which Thucydides is increasingly used in this way: as an authority who can sway monarchs and inform political strategy – and who requires order, severity, and blood.

From the mid-sixteenth century to the 1620s, there was a crescendo of interest in Thucydides among the intellectual and political elites of Europe. Much of the use to which Thucydides was put was along conventional lines: the text was mined for assorted antiquarian matters (details of Greek rites, the location of an ancient city); sifted for evidence about the plague, a pressing preoccupation in early modern Europe; deployed or attacked in the battle of the sexes, as Pericles' dismissal of women was taken up; judged for its stylistic merits; and sampled for ethical, political, and military maxims. James I, to take another royal example, repeatedly drew on Thucydides for counsel for his son in his 1599 *Basilicon doron*. A number

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[2] Tytler 1839: 2:311-12, 2:316-23, 2:333-9; Terrier de Loray 1864: 2:390. Renard regarded Elizabeth and Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon, as the 'inciters and leaders' of the rebellion (Tytler 1839: 2:334: 'promoteurs et chiefz'). The international stakes were especially high, in Renard's view, because the king of France, the Emperor's only remaining rival in Christendom, had aided the rebellion and was backing further such uprisings against Mary (Tytler 1839: 2:335).

[3] Tytler 1839: 2:346 ('et certes, Sire, j'ay continuellement admonesté la dite dame pour le prompt chastoy des prisonniers, et donné Thucydide translaté en François pour veoir le conseil qu'il donne, et punitions que l'on doibct faire des rebelles'). It is likely that Renan was careful to draw the Queen's attention to Claude de Seyssel's translation of Cleon's insistence on the execution of the rebel Mitylenians, and his denunciation of pity and indulgence as fatal weaknesses of empire (Thucydides 1527: fols. LXXXVIII^{v}-XC^{v} (3.38-40)). It is tempting to think that the future Elizabeth I owed her life to the studious Mary's willingness to read beyond her assignment, to Diodotus' rebuttal (esp. fols. XCI^{v}-XCIII^{r} (3.44-8)).

of readers converged on a more ambitious project, however, using Thucydides to intervene in contemporary debates about war and policy, and constructing as they did so the foundations of a modern theory of politics and international relations.

One of the claims that I aim to make plausible is that Thucydides played an important role in the articulation of early modern political thought.[4] Another is that a determinative chapter in the story of how Thucydides became the figure now familiar to theorists of politics and international relations was written in these decades, particularly via a focus on what Thucydides was taken to say about the imperatives of war. Earlier writers who cited Thucydides had not developed a pattern of quotation and commentary that amounted to the stable ascription of a political teaching. But by the late sixteenth century, Thucydides was regularly held up as an authority about the legitimacy of imperial expansion and preventive attack, and was read as providing a clear-eyed view of the underlying realities of power. It is from this period that we can identify a group of thinkers whom we can call the early modern Thucydideans, distinguished not only by their reliance on Thucydides, but also by their association of Thucydides with this set of preoccupations. Appeal to Thucydides to justify pre-emption or preventive war was tightly connected to such an appeal to justify imperial expansion.[5] The prospect that another power was intent on empire was presented as a threat to one's own interests or existence, thus providing the warrant for pre-emption. And expansion was itself justified as a necessary defence against those

[4] This is not to say that modern political thought would not have unfolded in something like the form it did without Thucydides (nor is it clear how such a claim could be established or refuted), but that it did unfold in part via interpretations of Thucydides. To understand those interpretations is to understand better that unfolding. To claim that writers of this period merely illustrate their pre-established arguments with quotations from or references to authorities would be to exaggerate the creative autonomy of authors and underplay the extent to which writers are formed by their reading even when they set out to find rhetorical reinforcement for what they precedently wished to argue. Authors are influenced by the language they use to support their positions. And the invocation of authority opens up a certain range of replies, as the interpretation or use of the authority is then one of the matters that may be contested.

[5] A distinction between pre-emption and prevention is now common, the former being a response to a credible imminent threat. Although such a distinction (though in different terms) was sometimes made, to hew to it throughout this essay would be misleading because of renaissance and early modern attempts to deny, diminish, or occlude it.

who were ready to attack to prevent just such expansion. Advocates of imperial or anticipatory war marched under other banners, often simultaneously, including honour, glory, and Christian duty. At least when Thucydides is invoked, however, it is clear that the dominant justification at stake is instead what we might call that of national interest, and particularly the necessity of defence.

From early on, Thucydides was held up as an exemplar both by supporters of monarchical empire and by republicans. In the early fifteenth century, for example, the republican Leonardo Bruni adopted Thucydides as a congenial predecessor.[6] He had been sent a Greek manuscript of Thucydides from Venice, but resisted a plea to translate it, writing to Niccolò Niccoli in December of 1407: 'Do you not realise how many sleepless nights would be needed to produce such a work?'[7] The requisite nights, nearly four years of them, were not put into the project of a full translation until 1452, when one was completed by Lorenzo Valla, then a supporter of Rome.[8] Valla wrote in his preface to Pope Nicholas V that he was like a soldier who had been sent to conquer the hardest and harshest province of the Greek world for the Roman empire.[9] Once he had done so, the formerly formidable territory of Thucydides' history slowly became accessible from anywhere in Europe.[10]

Thucydides had maintained that history is useful because the future will resemble the past. Later interpreters were moved by this thought, which they frequently cite, to look to

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[6] On Bruni's indebtedness to Thucydides, see especially Klee 1990: 23-58.
[7] Botley 2004: 11 ('Non tibi venit in mentem quam multis vigiliis opus sit ad tantum opus conficiendum?'). A few other Thucydides manuscripts that went to Florence and Venice in this period are noted in Woodward 1943: 4-5.
[8] Pade 1985 assesses Valla as a translator of Thucydides, with a focus on Book 3. See also Ferlauto 1979. The 1564 and 1588 Stephanus editions of Thucydides have frequently but mistakenly been taken to provide a reliable text of Valla's translation (Westgate 1936), as has the Portus edition of 1594.
[9] See Chambers 2008: 1-2. Cf. the preface to Valla's earlier *Elegantiarum linguae latinae* about 'this more splendid rule': 'wherever the language of Rome prevails, there is the Roman empire' ('hunc splendidiorem dominatum....Ibi romanum imperium est ubicumque romana lingua dominatur') (Garin 1952: 596).
[10] For a catalogue of Thucydides translations and commentaries through 1600, see Marianne Pade's painstaking contribution to the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum* (Pade 2003).

Thucydides for prudent counsel for their own times.[11] So it is striking that Thucydides' portrait of primitive Greece was one major source of fascination. Although Thucydides' account of unashamed predation could be used as an indictment of modern times,[12] there was a more common use of his discussion of Greek beginnings. Thucydides was frequently invoked to shore up the legitimacy of conquest, and especially of establishing rule where there had been a total absence of dominion. John Dee in 1577 emphasises Thucydides' claim that Minos was the first to acquire dominion over the sea, and to support his central argument in *Mare clausum* John Selden adds to this what Thucydides says about the dominion then acquired by the Corinthians and Ionians.[13] Thucydides' account of early times was used to show how natural and deep-rooted was the violent pursuit of dominion. Jean Bodin in 1576 draws on Thucydides to show that in earliest times predation was honourable, and that commonwealths originated from force and violence.[14] In 1580, Torquato Tasso invokes one of the same passages from Thucydides to argue that acquisition from predation during wartime is natural and just.[15] Given these influential uses of the Greek historian, it is no surprise that he becomes a standard authority for justifying imperial conquest.

John Dee proceeds by asking: 'What wold that Noble, Valiant, and Victorious Atheniensien PERICLES, say, yf, now, he were lyuing, and a Subiect of Authority, in this

[11] E.g., Carion 1533: [3], sig. Aiiii^{v}, and Chytraeus 1567: 10, quoting Thucydides 1.22.4.
[12] Cf. Urrea 1575: fols 65^{v}-66^{r} and Micanzio 1987: 131 (letter to William Cavendish of 12 March 1621).
[13] [Dee] 1577: 4 (cf. Gregoire 1596: 316-17); Selden 1635: 37, 44, etc. (referring to Thucydides 1.4, 1.13.1-5, and 1.13.6). Grotius used Thucydides 1.139.2 to argue that while all property had its beginning in original occupation, that which is by nature unbounded should remain so (Grotius 1625: 142 (2.2.3); see Grotius [1606]: fol. 102^{r} (ch. 12) and [Grotius] 1609: 18 (ch. 5) re. 'aoris[t]on').
[14] Bodin 1576: 381-2 (3.7), 50 (1.6); cf. Gentili 1585: 55 (2.8), Marquez 1614: 9, and Sarpi 1761-8: 4:214 and 5:22-3.
[15] Tasso 1982: 132 ('sì che par naturale l'acquisto eziandio che si fa nelle prede della guerra'; though the qualification does not seem to do much work, Tasso does add 'quando la guerra sia giusta' before giving the example from Thucydides). The Thucydides passage is 1.5.1-2.

Brytish Kingdom?'[16] Dee's 1577 treatise is his answer to his Queen and his fellow subjects, and consists of recommending 'Sea Souerainty' by building up a navy that will provide security against domestic and foreign threats at home and ensure fear and renown abroad.[17] Portugal and Spain are using their ships to conquer the world, but the British should be the ones contending 'for the Generall Monarchie'; Dee highlights Pericles' claim that the dominion of the sea is a great matter, and that if they were islanders, they would be invincible.[18] The Athenians themselves did not fulfil this condition, but the British do, and so Pericles' vision of a powerful maritime empire can be realised by 'The Brytish Monarchy'.[19] Thucydides was sometimes used to underline the advantages of unity or monarchy in particular, especially in allowing for decisive military and political action. Pierre Loiseleur writes in 1584 to Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's Principal Secretary, to ask for aid in the Dutch struggle against the Spanish. He complains that the provinces are disunited, for 'what pleases one displeases another', and he laments 'the party-interests, hates, jealousies and other passions amongst peoples and towns, different yet of equal power, who do not think of the common misery, but whet each other as to a point'. Loiseleur blames 'the difficulties which exist in popular alliances, as are noticed in the first discourse of Pericles'.[20]

By contrast, the republican esteem for liberty might be thought to give rise to a Thucydides hostile to domination *per se* and generally orientated to normative ideals and constraints. We find instead that Thucydides is a republican authority insofar as he emphasises the harsh priorities of imperial power for non-monarchical commonwealths. The coexistence in Athens of what could be called an 'elite democracy' and an imperial naval power made

[16] [Dee] 1577: 11.
[17] [Dee] 1577: 39. On Dee's programme in context, see MacMillan 2006.
[18] [Dee] 1577: 54, 23 (quoting Thucydides 1.143.5 in Melanchthon's Latin translation).
[19] [Dee] 1577: 37-8, where Dee quotes at length from Thucydides 2.60-64.
[20] Letter of 21/31 August 1584, from Delft (Lomas 1916: 19:28), referring to Thucydides 1.141.6.

Thucydides an especially attractive model in the Republic of Venice. The Venetian Antonio Zeno emphasised a theme that would become prominent in subsequent decades when in 1569 he published a translation of and commentary on the speech at the end of the first book of Thucydides in which Pericles 'urges the Athenians to enter into war'.[21] Zeno touches briefly on the importance of claiming that the other side has been the true initiator of the war, such that one's attack is presented as the virtuous taking necessary revenge against provocations by the wicked.[22] He then emphasises the nub of Pericles' argument for war: 'you must know, that of necessity Warre there will bee; and the more willingly wee embrace it, the lesse pressing we shall haue our enemies'.[23] A few years earlier, when the Turks had entered Hungary and were threatening islands under Venetian control, it had been Alcibiades' imperial ambitions that were summoned by Bernardino Rocca to urge on Sforza Pallavicino, the Governor General of Venice. A conservative policy of defence was less reliable than dynamism abroad: the example of Alcibiades at Syracuse illustrated the lesson 'that fortune favours the bold'.[24] Cicero had said that Thucydides 'sounds, as it were, the trumpet of war', and what was heard in the late sixteenth century was more specifically that we are justified in waging war because it is necessary or even simply advantageous, and that it is prudent to attack rather than waiting to be attacked.[25]

In 1606, Venice is again anxious about an assault, now by the Pope rather than the Turk. Henry Wotton, the ambassador of James I at Venice, is eager to do two things: convince his

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[21] Zeno 1569: 22 ('ad bellum suscipiendum hortatur'). The background for the commentary on this speech probably has to do with disputes between the Venetians and Turks about territories in Dalmatia and Albania, and especially their emerging quarrel over Cyprus.
[22] Zeno 1569: 135, commenting on Thucydides 1.144.2.
[23] Zeno 1569: 137-8. For this quotation of Thucydides 1.144.3, I follow Thomas Hobbes's translation, which corresponds well here with Zeno's Latin (Thucydides 1629: 79; Zeno 1569: 136: 'Scire autem oportet, necessarium esse bellum, quod si sponte magis suscipiemus, minus incumbentes hostes habebimus'). In his critical reflections on Machiavelli from around 1530, Francesco Guicciardini had endorsed this passage as providing prudent counsel (Guicciardini 1933: 54-5, commenting on *Discorsi* 2.14). A member of the Venetian patriciate, Zeno emphasises the nobility of Pericles, and his excellence and power within the republic (so Zeno 1569: 19, draws on Thucydides 2.65.9: 'uerbo quidem status popularis, re autem praestantissimi uiri dominatus esset').
[24] Rocca 1566: 28, 30 ('che la fortvna favorisce i coraggiosi').
[25] Cicero 1971: 334-5 (12.39).

audience (the Collegio or cabinet of the Republic) that they should consider him 'a true Venetian', and convince them to opt for 'Open war'. In true Venetian style, he calls on the authority of Thucydides in favour of his recommendation that 'to avoid the greater we should choose the lesser evil'.[26] He compares the Venetian council to the Athenian, prudent but too slow to attack. 'I fear that Thucydides' exclamation may apply to the Republic when he says, "Happy had Athens been had her wise resolves found rapid execution".' The best course of action would have been for the Venetians to have attacked at once; but having already delayed, they should first ally with Protestant powers and the French.[27] Wotton knows better than any other Englishman to what the powerful of Venice are likely to respond, and picks up the same Thucydidean message when addressing the Collegio again in 1617, when the latest threat is Spain: 'The Senate is well advised to...disclose the ill will of the enemy. I should advise it to make proof of its friends so that it may not incur the reproach of the Athenian Senate, which was the wisest in the world, but while the Athenians deliberated the Spartans were acting. Deliberation is very dangerous at this time without making preparations and proving friends.'[28] In Venice, Thucydides speaks with a limited vocabulary, ranging from recommending active preparations against the enemy to calling for open war.

Well after such tenets of tough prudence had been taken as the core of Thucydidean wisdom, the humanist republican Domenico Molino, a Venetian senator, did not hesitate to read

[26] Brown 1900: 10:407 (2 October 1606). Cf. Gentili's use of Thucydides, discussed below: as Izaak Walton reports, Wotton was a close student of Gentili (see n. 86).
[27] Brown 1900: 10:408. Wotton may be relying on a misappropriation of Thucydides 2.40.2-3, 3.38.1, or 6.18.4-7, though perhaps 1.70 is most likely (see Thucydides, 1550: fol. xxviii^{v}; see also 8.96.5). In that case, Wotton would have applied the characterisation of the Spartans to the Athenians, perhaps better to evoke the Venetian association with Athenian wisdom, 'republicanism', naval power, and imperial ambition.
[28] Hinds 1909: 15:71 (13 December 1617).

Thucydides as upholding liberty.[29] And it is likely the perceived fusion of freedom at home and dominance abroad that proved attractive, for Thucydides could be seen as an authority for a realist republicanism, or a prudent imperialism that was necessary for the citadel of liberty to survive and thrive.[30] Along with Paolo Sarpi and Fulgenzio Micanzio, Molino participated in the discussions of the Morosini 'mezato' or 'ridotto', a kind of salon with close connections to Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes.[31] Molino wished to harness classical philology to the cause of political liberty. This project was significantly constrained by his assumption that republics would be bolstered by translations of the histories of ancient republics, and monarchies by those of ancient monarchies. Molino urged Isaac Casaubon to publish his work on Polybius in order to offset the political principles drawn by Lipsius from Tacitus and others who had only written about the matters of princes.[32] Paolo Sarpi had pressed Casaubon to supplement his edition of Polybius with a commentary, so that he could discuss the issues of politics and war more accessibly, put forward his ideas about ecclesiastical liberty, and express his admiration for the Republic of Venice.[33] It was in this vein that Molino wrote to the classicist Joannes Meursius (Jan van Meurs) in 1622, pressing him to translate Thucydides. 'If you worked so much and so admirably on the inanimate rock of Athens, why would you show yourself less ready or generous in reanimating and giving a new spirit to so worthy a citizen of that great mother of civil

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[29] Marco Trevisan was to rely on a tendentious reading of Thucydides 2.65.9 in his denunciation of Molino himself as a tyrant to the State Inquisitors of Venice (Cozzi 1995: 385-6). The form of this denunciation suggests that Trevisan drew on Jean Bodin (see Bodin 1576: 680 (6.4)), rather than directly from Thucydides.

[30] So in claiming that the Venetians obtained a right of dominion over the Adriatic in 1177, Claudio Cornelio Frangipane invokes the authority of Thucydides to argue that 'men are moved by natural necessity to rule' (Frangipane 1615), citing the Athenian envoys in the Melian dialogue (5.105.2): 'Gli uomini, dice egli, dalla natural necessità son mossi a signoreggiare').

[31] The judgement that Sarpi, Micanzio, and Molino 'formed a sort of intellectual triumvirate' (Haitsma Mulier 1980: 90) is plausible, especially given the sometimes inextricable intricacies of authorship. For a sketch of the Morosini group, see Micanzio 1646: 67-9; cf. 73-4.

[32] Molino to Casaubon, 18 January 1609 (Cozzi 1959: 181 n. 3); Casaubon's edition of Polybius was published late that year.

[33] According to Cozzi 1979: 116-17. Although part of it was later published, Casaubon never completed his commentary.

liberty?...Why should you not show that you are grateful to Thucydides, an author to whom all of us who enjoy a free country owe so much? And if the others have in such grand style adorned the teachers of tyranny, why should a free man show himself to be stinting toward the teacher of the most sweet and cherished liberty?'[34] Nor were republicans seeking to enlist a champion the only ones to ascribe republicanism to the son of Olorus. 'Thucydides falls short in every way,' complained Gerolamo Cardano: 'he wrote of ancient matters that are foreign and far from our ways; he wrote for a Republic, and belonged to the popular party.'[35]

It is tempting to follow Giuseppe Toffanin's division of Tacitists into red and black, or republican champions of liberty and monarchical advocates of order and empire, such that the Venetian Thucydideans are red, whereas the Thucydideans in England to be discussed below are black.[36] Under scrutiny, however, most of the relevant parties show their intermediate hues; and many Venetians, like the Athenians themselves, turn out to be *schwarzroten*. Paolo Sarpi, legal adviser of the Republic of Venice, claimed that the Republic's true title to dominion was also her title to liberty, and that 'from one and the same cause was she born free and had a maritime empire'.[37] Sarpi emphasised the Republic's need to govern with a firm hand, and turns to Thucydides not for Pericles' idealised account of Athens, but for Cleon's argument for severity

[34] Letter of 19 August 1622 (translated from Cozzi 1959: 181). Meursius had recently finished his study of the Acropolis, having dedicated it to Molino on 14 July, which explains the reference to his efforts on the rock of Athens (Meursius 1622: sig. *4^{r}).

[35] 'Thucydidi omnia desunt: antiqua, moribus a nostris longe aliena; Reipublicae scripsit, & popularis fuit...': Cardano 1627: 348 (ch. 70). This work was largely written in the 1560s (see Grafton 2002: 366), but first published in 1627.

[36] Toffanin 1972, a work that is invariably cited to authorise a simplistic distinction that its author was keen to complexify (see pp. 169-70 for one relevant example). Some form of the distinction dates back at least to Isaac Casaubon's 1609 translation of Polybius into Latin, where Casaubon denounces the devotees of Tacitus: 'either they tacitly accuse present Princes of tyranny, or they openly wish to be seen as those who would teach them to establish tyranny' (Casaubon 1709: 82: 'eos tyrannidis Principes hodiernos tacitè accusare; vel palam tyrannidis instituta videri velle eos docere'). The delicacy of presenting the work of Tacitus to those in power can readily be seen in the prefatory materials by Henry Savile and A. B. [Anthony Bacon?] in Tacitus 1591.

[37] Sarpi 1945: 4 ('per una stessa causa ella nacque libera et hebbe imperio marittimo').

against subject commonwealths on the basis that people naturally have little respect for those who show them much respect, and much respect for those who show them little.[38]

Another example is Paolo Paruta, a powerful Venetian senator and the official historian of the Republic. In *Della perfettione della vita politica*, first published in 1579, Paruta presents a dialogue about prudence that leads to a dispute over whether history should be philosophical or straightforwardly factual, and implicitly but clearly endorses the position of the interlocutor who articulates a balance and holds up the history of Thucydides as its highest exemplar. Some years earlier, when he delivered the eulogy for those he presents as having died defending the liberty of Venice against the Ottomans at Lepanto, Paruta took Pericles' funeral oration as his model.[39] He relies on Thucydides most extensively, however, in his *Discorsi politici*, published posthumously. Although this work has given Paruta a reputation for recommending the balance of power and discouraging an aggressive foreign policy,[40] the history he learns from Thucydides leads him to quite different conclusions.

Paruta argues that the balance of power came about because of the Spartan jealousy of Athenian power and vice-versa, and that this weakened Greece when she could have grown greater and stronger; she remained powerless to attempt great undertakings to enlarge the boundaries of her dominion.[41] This came about because the Greeks never united themselves under the power of one authority, whether a prince or a republic: 'the excessive desire for liberty...was precisely that which shortened the time they had to enjoy it, since finding themselves divided and weak, the road was open to those who wanted to attack and subdue

[38] Sarpi 1996: 705, referring to Thucydides 3.39.5 ('Ciascun stima poco quello che lo riverisce e molto quello che non tiene di lui conto').
[39] Paruta 1599: 211-19, and Paruta 1572.
[40] See e.g. Meinecke 1957: 66.
[41] Paruta 1629: 209, 210 (1.14): 'per le quali veniua la Grecia ad indebolirsi, non à far si maggiore, e più potente'; 'restare sempre...impotente al tentare imprese grandi, per douer molto allargare i confini al suo dominio'.

them.'[42] The signal example that Paruta gives of this is the Athenian ambition to conquer Sicily, and the Spartan determination to foil this expansion.[43] The Greeks had virtue, but the Sicilian disaster shows that they were unable to combine this with empire; the message is that the Venetians can have both if they stay unified and internally at peace, which they can do if they avoid too much liberty. This is made explicit two discourses later, when Paruta says that while Rome was able to increase its power and expand its borders thanks to military discipline, it required better laws and civil order to endure; Venice, on the contrary, while it has these latter requisites, needs greater military might and discipline if it is not only to endure but to be powerful and expand.[44]

Even monarchomachs were keen to invoke Thucydides, as demonstrated by the most famous of their texts, the 1579 *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*. The Thucydidean context for what is there drawn on is an appeal by the Corinthians to the Lacedaemonians for help against Athens and the Athenian rejoinder. The Athenians argue that their expansion stems from pursuing safety when they were in danger, protesting that 'wee were forced to aduance our Dominion to what it is, out of the nature of the thing it selfe; as chiefly for feare, next for honour, and lastly for profit.'[45] We who are not close offspring of Machiavelli may again assume that there is a tension between valorising liberty and touting international *Realpolitik*, and so expect the author (or authors) of the *Vindiciae*, in defending liberty and indicting tyranny, to condemn any such justification for prevention. The author is instead making a case *for* intervention, albeit for

[42] Paruta 1629: 210 (1.14): 'il troppo desiderio della libertà...fù quello appunto, che abbreuiò il tempo del goderla, poiche per trouarsi essi diuisi, e deboli, fù aperta la strada...à che volse assalirli, & opprimerli.'
[43] Paruta 1629: 208-9 (1.14).
[44] Paruta 1629: 208-10 (1.14); 264-70 (2.1). This reading is at odds with William J. Bouwsma's view that Paruta's anti-imperialism and advocacy of a small state converged with his consistent condemnation of Rome and praise of Venice (Bouwsma 1968: 270-91). Bouwsma even attributes 'pacifism' to Paruta (272). Paruta does establish his bona fides in his first discourse with a clear condemnation of Rome's imperial insatiability, but as the work progresses it becomes clear that he does not simply mean to flatter his compatriots for rejecting empire in favour of law and justice.
[45] Thucydides 1629: 41 (1.75.3).

assistance by friendly powers. He thus chooses the appeal of the Corinthians, who upbraid the Lacedaemonians as 'the onely men…that loue to pull downe the power of the Enemie, not when it beginneth, but when it is doubled', and compare them unfavourably to the Athenians: '*they* make account by beeing abroad to adde to their estate; *you*, if you should goe forth against the State of another, would thinke to impayre your owne.'[46] The Corinthians here argue that the Spartan preference to defend themselves against invasion rather than to invade is foolish, as they will have to face the Athenians when they are stronger. The author of the *Vindiciae* emphasises the Corinthians' suggestion that not to intervene would be shameful and hypocritical. 'Hence Thucydides says: "Tyrants are not only those who reduce others into servitude; much more so are those who are able to keep such violence in check but do not do it...." And he is right.'[47] As the Venetians appeal to Thucydides for simultaneous support of liberty and empire, seeing military expansion as consistent with the cause of liberty, so a monarchomach could use him to explain that intervention is not only consistent with liberty but necessary to protect it, and that those who do not intervene abroad may be at least complicit in slavery and tyranny.[48]

Despite their sporadic emphasis on the importance of liberty, the republican readings of Thucydides generally mirror and are mirrored by monarchical interpretations. A royal imperial reading of Thucydides gained ground after the 1589 publication of Lipsius' celebrated *Politica*,

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[46] Thucydides 1629: 37 (1.69.4, 1.70.4).

[47] 'Hinc Thucydides, Non ij modo, ait, tyranni sunt, qui alios in seruitutem redigunt, verum longe potius ij, qui, cum eam violentiam reprimere possint, non curant....& recte.' ('Brutus' 1579: 232-3, referring to Thucydides 1.69.1). Compare Hobbes's more accurate 'For not he that bringeth into slauery, but he that being able to hinder it, neglects the same, is most truely said to doe it' (Thucydides 1629: 36). Importing the idea of tyranny into this passage fits the purposes of the *Vindiciae* well, but did have precedents: see the translation by Francesco Soldo di Strozzi (Thucydides [1545]: 33), used by Remigio Nannini (or Fiorentino, or Nanni) (1557: 8).

[48] The speech of the Corinthians was regarded by Olivares' friend Juan de Vera y Figueroa as one of the prime sources on which to draw 'Para persuadir a una guerra' (Vera y Figueroa 1620: 2:fol. 127^{r-v}; cf. 2:fols. 123^{v}-124^{r}, where he recommends the Corcyrean appeal to Athens for help against the Corinthians (1.32-36) 'para solicitar a un Principe, que haga guerra a otro'). See also the use of this passage from about 1594 ('he is not only a Tyrant that enforceth his Subjects to live in bondage and servitude, but he also that may withstand another mans violence, and do not withstand the same') justifying an English campaign against Spain to prevent Philip II from becoming 'Monarch of the world', Elizabeth being the only one 'of her self sufficient to cross his enterprises, to withstand his indeavours, to prevent his purposes, and to invade his Kingdom' ('Wotton' 1657: 109, 3, 82).

which was not addressed to republics but to 'Emperor, Kings, Princes'.[49] Thucydides was tailored for royal courts in this period by singling out criticisms of popular rule in the text, especially by Cleon; and particularly by highlighting the historian's observation that although Athens under Pericles was in name a democracy, it was in fact rule by the first man.[50] Those with a royal audience in mind had no qualms about translating this claim into an endorsement of monarchy *per se*, or drawing from it a general claim that all democracies or republics are ruled by one who is in effect a monarch.[51] An increased interest in Thucydides was apparently due in part to the prominence and impact of Lipsius' work,[52] and it must also have been a function of the readiness of readers in war-ravaged Europe to find insights in such a powerful account of war-ravaged Greece. Both the prominence of Thucydides and an engagement with central issues about the right of war and the demands of security were features of the *Politica*, and others were moved to take them up, and to put them together, not just because of the reputation of Lipsius but also because of his ambiguity. This ambiguity facilitated differing readings of Thucydides by readers like Alberico Gentili and Hugo Grotius, who deployed those readings to articulate diverging views about war.

Lipsius treats Thucydides as an outstanding authority on subjects political, diplomatic, and military. He appeals to Thucydides often (at least thirty-two times in the *Politica* alone), and

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[49] 'Imperator, Reges, Principes' (Lipsius 2004: 226; I have translated throughout from the Latin text of this edition, but have been influenced by Jan Waszink's translation therein). Lipsius acknowledged that a history need not favour the regime it chronicles. In his dedicatory letter to Emperor Maximilian II in the *Monita*, for example, he deplores life in imperial Rome as one of frequent misery under tyrannical rule, while nonetheless insisting that the times Tacitus chronicles are similar to their own (Lipsius 1606).

[50] Thucydides 3.37-8; 2.65.9.

[51] Bodin 1576: 680 (6.4); Marquez 1614: 284.

[52] In his classic study, Gerhard Oestreich points out that fifteen editions of the *Politica* appeared by 1599 (averaging 1500 copies per Plantin edition), and translations into seven European languages by 1604. He concludes: 'In an extraordinary manner he succeeded in training and educating the princes and their advisers. His work was used as a textbook on practical politics at the courts and universities of Europe' (Oestreich 1982: 57, 59).

goes so far as to refer to Thucydides simply as 'the oracle'.[53] It is frequently observed that Lipsius' favoured historian and political authority is Tacitus, so it is noteworthy that he puts Thucydides at the head of the historians who wrote in Greek, and then places Tacitus in a parallel position for those who wrote in Latin.[54] Lipsius' encomium of Thucydides is undiluted, and he ranks Thucydides high among those he has 'appealed to with greater frequency and pleasure'.[55] It is generally acknowledged that Tacitism shaped the political thinking of this period; through Lipsius and others this fed and furthered an appetite for the political wisdom of the ancients, especially the ancient historians, and particularly Thucydides. So developed a close relative of political Tacitism that, while not as widespread, arguably had a deeper impact on political thought than did Tacitism itself. Yet the Thucydideans have not been identified, distinguished, or considered together under this rubric.

The authority of Thucydides is powerful enough that Lipsius uses him for a wide range of purposes, as will Gentili, Grotius, and others. From the first book he pulls the maxim that 'the present ruling authority is always burdensome for the subjects', for example, and from the sixth the lesson that, none the less, 'those people act most carefully who guide the commonwealth by the present customs and laws, with the least alteration, even if they are worse'.[56] Although he

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[53] Lipsius 2004: 556 (5.6: 'oraculum'). As he is here quoting Pericles from Thucydides (2.13.2), the epithet may attach instead to the former.

[54] Lipsius 2004: 732-4 (in the notes, printed with the *Politica* from 1590). The two Greeks he here singles out as superior are Thucydides and Polybius; his Latin list is topped by Tacitus, Sallust, and Livy. He says that Sallust would have been first of the Latin writers, had his work survived entire, and refrains from saying more on the basis that his praise for Sallust is the same that he has supplied for Thucydides.

[55] Lipsius 2004: 254 ('frequentius et libentius utimur'). The list of Greeks in this top category of his 'auctorum syllabus' is selective: Aristotle, Thucydides, Plato, and Xenophon. Thirty-four other Greeks make his B-team. He explains that he appeals to Tacitus most frequently not only because of his prudence and compact formulations, but also because – having become intimately familiar with Tacitus by producing a careful edition and annotations – 'he is familiar to us, and came forward unsolicited' ('quia familiaris nobis, et offerebat se non vocatus') (Lipsius 2004: 254). Not least, Lipsius was much more comfortable with Latin than with Greek.

[56] Lipsius 2004: 698 (6.5: 'Praesens imperium subditis semper grave', quoting Thucydides 1.77.5); Lipsius 2004: 428 (4.9: 'Eos hominum tutissime agere, qui praesentibus moribus legibusque, etiamsi deteriores sint, minimum variantes, rempublicam administrant', rendering Thucydides 6.18.7). The former also features in e.g. Ralegh 1751: 1:97, and the latter in Junius 1606a: 1:35 and Casaubon 1638: 135.

has a taste for the prosaic, Lipsius does not read Thucydides so crudely as do many of his predecessors. For example, rather than routinely cutting a phrase from one of the speakers and telling us that it has the authority of 'Thucydides', as is frequently done in this period, he generally distinguishes those worthy to be authorities – mostly Archidamus, Brasidas, and above all Pericles ('most prudent Athenian') – from those unworthy.[57] So Lipsius says that Cleon is 'lying' when he asserts that 'most dangerous to ruling [Imperio] are compassion, flattery, and lenity'; he recommends instead 'calm power' and forgiveness of the afflicted.[58] And he says that despite his name, Euphemus did not speak well when he said that 'for a ruling man or city nothing is unjust that is advantageous'.[59] Lipsius calls this doctrine 'wicked', preferring the view of Xenophon and Cicero that the true riches for a prince are virtue and justice.[60] When Lipsius does attribute a thought to Thucydides himself, this is not always because the historian has articulated it in his own voice, but is sometimes a way to detach a thought of which he approves from a character of whom he disapproves.[61]

Distinguishing who says something as a simple measure of whether it is commendable provides limited leverage, however, especially with an author of such powerful subtlety as Thucydides. Lipsius pursued different purposes differently: whereas in his editions and

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[57] The reference to Pericles ('prudentissimus Atheniensium') is in Lipsius 2004: 556 (5.6). In *Monita* 2.12.3, he says that Pericles deserved to be called 'Olympian' (Lipsius 1606: 151).
[58] Lipsius 2004: 330 (2.13: 'Mentitur'; 'nocentissima Imperio, Miserationem, Blandiloquentiam, et Lenitatem' (Thucydides 3.40.3); 'tranquilla potestas').
[59] Lipsius 2004: 320 (2.10: 'Viro aut urbi principi nihil iniustum quod fructuosum'), referring to Thucydides 6.85.1. Lipsius gives the Greek, but translates *alogon* as 'unjust' rather than 'unreasonable' (compare on the one hand to Seyssel's 'vng homme qui regit par tyrannie et vne cité qui a empire ne reputent riens deshonneste qui leur soit profitable' (Thucydides 1527: fol. CCIX^{v}); and on the other to Hobbes's 'to a Tyrant or Citie that raigneth, nothing can bee thought absurd if profitable' (Thucydides 1629: 397). Ben Jonson was struck by this claim of Euphemus when he read Lipsius in the 1623 edition (Evans 1998, and Evans 1992 at p. 48 of Jonson's marked copy of the *Politica*). Pierre Charron borrowed heavily from this chapter of the *Politica*, neglecting to note that this particular borrowing came from Lipsius or Thucydides (Charron [1608?]: 357 (3.2; reference also absent from earlier edns); Eberhard von Weyhe similarly fails to mention either the immediate or the ultimate source for this maxim (Weyhe 1615: 147 ('Communis tamen est opinio improborum aulicorum: *Nihil iniustum quod fructuosum*')).
[60] Lipsius 2004: 320 (2.10: 'Malitioso').
[61] An example is the quotation of Cleon from Thucydides 3.37.3 in Lipsius 2004: 356 (3.4).

philological commentaries he aimed for a high standard of fidelity, in works like the *Politica* and the *Monita* his reading of classical texts was limited by a somewhat mechanical approach to accomplishing his didactic purposes.[62] This leads him at times to deploy a passage in a way that is against the grain of the ancient text he is appropriating. This has been noticed in Lipsius' treatment of Tacitus, the only case of a classical Lipsian source that has been carefully studied.[63] The opinions of Tacitus are rarely stated, and can be properly discerned, when they are discernible, only by artful attention to the fabric of the history.[64] The same is true of Thucydides.

Lipsius may well have recognised this. When drawing on Thucydides for his political teachings, Lipsius sometimes identifies them as 'arcana': mysteries, secrets, hidden doctrines. An example is the observation (picked up by Gentili and Hobbes) that the dull generally run the commonwealth better than the intelligent.[65] Even these 'arcana' are hardly hidden or enigmatic, though they may count as paradoxical in the early modern sense. Lipsius seems to have something more in mind, however, and to recognise that Thucydides offers something to his readers that cannot be discerned from a tissue of sententious extracts, when he says that Thucydides is 'everywhere *secretly* instructing, and guiding one's life and actions'.[66]

Elsewhere I will argue that when Hobbes follows Lipsius' idea that Thucydides secretly instructs his readers and guides their actions, he is primarily concerned with what Thucydides can teach about engaging in what are now called wars of choice. But the theme is already

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[62] Lipsius' reflection on the charge that he quotes ancient authorities in a way that is not in the spirit of their writings is hardly straightforward (see the preliminary 'MONITA *quaedam, sive* CAUTIONES' (Lipsius 2004: 234-40)).
[63] See especially Morford 1993, in particular pp. 143-4, 150-1.
[64] See e.g. Pelling 1993, and Syme 1970.
[65] Lipsius 2004: 356 (3.4, quoting Thucydides 3.37.3). While Lipsius says that this is an *arcanum*, it is one of the passages from Thucydides quoted most frequently at this time (as is the related judgement at 3.83.3), intellectuals writing about politics taking special pleasure in proclaiming the political incompetence of intellectuals. See, e.g., Estienne 1582: sig. aiiii^{r}; Costa 1584: 720-1; Botero 1596: 40; Junius 1606a, 2:68 and 3:9; Junius 1606b: 88; Ralegh 1751: 1:63; Jansen 1637: 434 (2.43); Saavedra Fajardo 1640: 28. Montaigne uses the passage somewhat differently in an addition in the Bordeaux copy of his essay 'De l'Art de Conferer' (Montaigne 1588: fol. 411^{v} (3.8, at http://artfl.uchicago.edu/images/montaigne/0419v.jpg). Cf. Lipsius 2004: 368 (3.8) for another 'arcanum' drawn out of Thucydides.
[66] Lipsius 2004: 732 (emphasis added: 'occulte ubique instruens, actiones vitamque dirigens').

prominent in Lipsius. Although he approves of Augustine's view that 'the natural order is fitted for peace among mortals',[67] Lipsius thinks that this heightens the need to understand what the requirements are for a just war. Quoting Thucydides 1.78.1, he says that one must examine all the possible outcomes before starting a war, and observes: 'Just as it is easy to descend into a well, but not at all easy to get out again, so it is with war.'[68] He accepts that defence is a just cause, and the Roman law principle that force may be repelled by force. While defence is always licit, however, Lipsius insists that 'one's advance is not to be extended under the pretext of Defence.'[69] He quotes Archidamus to the effect that even if one is prosecuting an injustice, it is impermissible to take up or continue in arms if the other is willing to bring the case for judgement.[70] War is just, he claims, only if it is necessary.

As with the case of deception for the public good, however, Lipsius looks on the question of territorial expansion and preventive invasion with a Mona Lisa smile. For he countenances some extension of the boundaries of strict necessity, sanctioning not only responding to injustice, but also *preventing* it. 'Certain other attacks seem legitimate even without [precedent] injustice: as against Foreigners whose morality or religion is wholly inconsistent with ours, especially if they are powerful and have themselves attacked others....For here the motive is Restraint, and the prevention of evil.'[71] Lipsius casts this view as a simple elaboration of Augustine's position that war can be justified only if it addresses injury or injustice, concluding that one acts well if the

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[67] Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* 22.75 ('ordo naturalis mortalium paci accommodatus'), quoted in Lipsius 2004: 544 (5.4).
[68] Lipsius 2004: 550 (5.5: 'Uti in puteum facile te demiseris, haud facile eduxeris: ita in bellum').
[69] Lipsius 2004: 546 (5.4: 'Defensionis specie, non longius eundum').
[70] Lipsius 2004: 548 (5.4, quoting Thucydides 1.85.2).
[71] Lipsius 2004: 548 (5.4: 'Invasio quaedam legitima videtur, etiam sine iniuria. ut in Barbaros, et moribus aut religione prorsum a nobis abhorrentes: maxime si potentes ii, et aliena ipsi invaserunt....Caussa enim hic est, Coerctio, et in malo repressio'). The 'Barbaros' here may specifically mean 'Savages'; in the Roman *censura* of the *Politica*, recently published by Jan Waszink, Laelius Peregrinus accordingly associates Lipsius' argument here with that made about the Americans in 1550 by Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda at Valladolid (Lipsius 2004: 714).

intention in attacking is to prevent another from being *able* to commit injustice.[72] Whereas Lipsius is usually eager to back up his claims with the approval of Thucydides – and has at this point just done so to give weight to the principle that one cannot wage war if the other is willing to submit to judgement – he opts instead for the unimpeachably pious authority of Augustine for such a dangerous view.[73] It will be up to Grotius to call on Thucydides to support a version of the Augustinian position.[74]

The argument for preventive attack is markedly broadened in the *De iure belli* of Alberico Gentili, the professor of civil law at Oxford, who acknowledges the influence of Lipsius and specifically commends him on this question. Gentili was publishing his masterwork in instalments while Lipsius brought out subsequent editions of his *Politica*; the *De iure belli* was published in its final form in 1598. In the first book of that work, in the chapter 'Of defence on grounds of expediency' ('De utili defensione'), Gentili writes that such a defence is

> when we make war through fear that we may ourselves be attacked.…those who desire to live without danger ought to meet impending evils and anticipate them. One ought not to delay, or wait to avenge at one's peril an injury which one has received, if one may at once strike at the root of the growing plant and check the attempts of an adversary who is meditating evil.[75]

The special authority Gentili accords to Thucydides is readily seen in the unfolding of this discussion of prevention. Gentili adduces a balanced passage in which Aulus Gellius cautions

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[72] Lipsius 2004: 548 (5.4), pressing into service Augustine's letter 138 (to Marcellinus, sec. 14).

[73] Cf. Francisco Vitoria's argument of 1539 (Vitoria 1991: 298): 'the purpose of war is the peace and security of the commonwealth as Augustine says in *De ciuitate Dei* XIX.12, and in his *Ep.* 189.6 to Boniface. But there can be no security for the commonwealth unless its enemies are prevented from injustice by fear of war. It would be altogether unfair if war could only be waged by a commonwealth to repel unjust invaders from its borders, and never to carry the conflict into the enemies' camp.'

[74] Not that Augustinians were at this time especially eirenic. One striking example of Augustinian support for bellicose intervention is the 1592 justification of war against the 'Zambales' of the Philippines (Juan de Valderrama et al., in Blair, Robertson, and Bourne 1903: 199-217). The Augustinians argue that 'the prince and the state...not only may...defend themselves lest either they or their subjects suffer injury, but they may avenge injuries by inflicting punishment' (203). For some other ways in which Augustine was enlisted for the cause of wars abroad, see Pagden 1995: 96-8.

[75] Gentili 1933: 2:61/1:96-7 (1.14). Citations of this work are to page numbers of the English and Latin volumes, respectively, followed by book and chapter number.

that whether we are to anticipate or defer or take vengeance or be on our guard depends on the circumstances. A gladiator will kill if he is quick or be killed if he is slow, Gellius says; but we cannot simply extrapolate from this instance, for 'the life of men is not circumscribed by such unjust and inevitable necessities that you must be the first to inflict injury, in order to avoid suffering injury in case you do not inflict it'. Anticipation or prevention is thus apparently restricted to special cases like that of the gladiator. Gentili puts Cicero forward as a critic of the idea that we may attack for fear of being attacked. 'And Cicero says: "Who ever made such a law as this, or to whom could this be conceded without the greatest danger to all men, that it should be right for a man to kill one at whose hand he said that he himself feared death at a later time?"'[76] That is, if we accept the principle that one may attack another for fear of attack, then the unacceptable result would follow that everyone will always be in danger of attack; so Cicero here effectively rules out the legitimacy of the wars that Gentili calls wars of expediency.

To overcome Cicero's authoritative endorsement of this moderate position, Gentili has to deploy what he regards as especially heavy ordnance. 'Yet the reply of the Mytilenians to the Athenians was right', he writes, quoting Thucydides:

> "If we seem to any one unjust, because we revolted first, without waiting until we knew clearly whether they would do us any harm, such a man does not consider well; for if we had been equally strong, so that we could have plotted against them in turn and could have delayed with safety, then his words would be just. But since they always have the opportunity of doing harm, we ought to have the privilege of anticipating our defence."[77]

It may be that all are in greater danger if they understand that prevention or anticipation is legitimate, but it remains the case that if a commonwealth is likely to be harmed and is safer to anticipate than to delay, then they may legitimately anticipate. This is sanctioned by the

[76] Gentili 1933: 2:63/1:100-1 (1.14), citing Gellius 6.3.30-2 and Cicero, *Pro M. Tullio* 56.
[77] Gentili 1933: 2:63/1:101 (1.14), quoting Thucydides 3.12.2-3 (I have substituted 'right' for 'reasonable' in the translation of Gentili's judgement here ('rectè')). Cf. Besold 1624: 85-6.

fundamental right of self-preservation. Gentili later says: 'Defence is in accordance with the law of nature and of God, has the consent of all nations, is born with the world, and is destined to endure so long as the world lasts; and this no civil nor canon law can annul.'[78] Already in 1587, Gentili had cited a passage from Thucydides where the Plataeans argue that in attacking the Thebans they were justly avenging an injury, and that 'by the Law of all Nations it is lawfull to repell an assailing enemy'.[79] Gentili does not reflect on Thucydides' presentation of the initial assault as having come about because 'the *Thebans* foreseeing the Warre, desired to praeoccupate *Plataea*, (which was alwayes at variance with them) whilest there was yet Peace, and the Warre not openly on foot'.[80] And Gentili moves well beyond the Plataeans when he maintains that what this 'common law of all' sanctions is no mere right of defence, but a right of conquest.[81]

In *De iure belli*, immediately after he quotes the passage from Thucydides in which the Mytilenians defend the justice of anticipatory assault, Gentili asks: 'What then are we to ask of men like Bartolus and Baldus…?', two of his favourite authorities, who disagree. His answer is striking: 'Are we not to value more highly…the opinion of Thucydides, an eminent and wise man; an opinion confirmed also by reason?'[82] It is notable that the comparative antiquity of Thucydides is not sufficient for this pre-eminence, for Gentili dismisses Herodotus as providing stories for our mere delectation[83]; Thucydides is a decisive authority because of his wisdom –

[78] Gentili 1933: 2:312/1:507 (3.6). Gentili illustrates this with Pericles' position that in the name of self-defence it would be licit to melt the gold of the sacred statues for the war effort (Thucydides 2.13.5).
[79] Gentili 1587: 29, quoting Thucydides 3.56.2; English here from Thucydides 1629: 174.
[80] Thucydides 1629: 82 (2.2.3).
[81] Gentili 1587: 29 ('communem omnium legem').
[82] Gentili 1933: 2:63/1:100-101 (1.14).
[83] Gentili 1599: 173. Although Cicero had nominated Herodotus the father of history, Thucydides' apparent criticism of him in 1.20-2 as a fabulist along with his other predecessors was influential in this era (as was Plutarch's lengthy indictment). So Vives says that it would be truer to call Herodotus the father of lies than the father of history (Vives 1550: 87; cf. 355), a judgement that can also be traced back to Cicero (in the same passage, *De*

and because the deliverances of that wisdom can be confirmed by reason.[84] Gentili cites Thucydides twenty-nine times in *De iure belli* (and many times elsewhere, especially in *De legationibus*). In the history of the Peloponnesian war he finds a distinction of war from brigandage, examples of religious motives for war, evidence of the Greek prohibition of killing suppliants, and a delineation of different kinds of alliance; he also appeals to Thucydides when discussing the status of refugees, punishment for seizure of property, the legitimacy of a prince's defence of the subjects of another prince, illegitimate construals of the terms of an agreement, rights over hostages, burial of the enemy, claims to conquered territory, what is due to captives, whether the adjacent sea is included in a dominion, and more. But it is notable that his encomium of Thucydides comes when he uses him at a pivotal juncture in weighing the question of anticipatory attack. In addressing the question of the legitimacy of anticipation, Gentili enters into a traditional debate.[85] In putting Thucydides at the centre of this question, he opens an early modern dispute within that debate.

Gentili's position on anticipation is shared with enthusiasm and applied specifically to Spain and the Ottomans by others in his circle, such as Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville. Sidney countenanced 'this audacity of undertaking the conqueror at home', and aspired '[t]o carry war into the bowels of *Spain*' by sailing into the Netherlands.[86] Greville holds that it can be

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legibus 1.1.5: 'apud Herodotum, patrem historiae...sunt innumerabiles fabulae'); and Bodin refers to 'Thucydides, the most truthful father of history' (Bodin 1650: 318; cf. 49-50).

[84] Such esteem was unexceptional at the time, though many such tributes were presumably based on reputation. Examples include de Casterlein 1555 (17: 'Thucidides meester van grooten name') and Pinto 1563 (fol. 324^{v}: '[ ]o grão Thucydes').

[85] So in 1588, René de Lucinge opens his chapter 'D'avoir tousjours tasché à faire guerre offensive' with the observation: 'C'est un doubte longuement debatu, et non encor bien resolu, à sçavoir s'il est meilleur d'aler attaquer l'ennemy en sa maison, que de l'attendre chez soy' (de Lucinge 1984: 51).

[86] Greville [1651]: 107, 105; cf. 102 *et passim*. Cf. also Henry Wotton's use of Thucydides, discussed above. As Izaak Walton reports (Walton 1670, separate pagination 18-19), when Wotton was at Oxford, 'he was taken into such a bosom friendship with the learned *Albericus Gentilis*...that, if it had been possible, *Gentilis* would have breathed all his excellent knowledge both of the *Mathematicks* and *Law*, into the breast of his dear *Harry* (for so Gentilis used to call him:)...there was in Sir *Henry* such a propensity and connaturalness to the *Italian* Language, and those Studies whereof *Gentilis* was a great Master, that this friendship between them did daily increase, and

legitimate to go to war for gain, but also sees in others' ambition for gain an opportunity for attack: they can 'never take us in their strength, / Who in their growings interrupted are'; 'So that to wain a growing Empire's might, / Infallibly is every prince's right.'[87] In his treatise on the usefulness of war, Dudley Digges counsels invading as the way to avoid being invaded, and prays 'that wee may not suffer our enemies or neighbours to grow too mightie'.[88] Not everyone took this commonplace of the nobility with a straight face. John Marston, in *The Dutch Courtezan*, has Sir Lionel Freevill explain that houses 'of lasciuious entertainement' are 'Most necessarie buildings', as otherwise his own house would become one: 'I would haue married men loue the Stewes, as Englishmen lou'd the low Countreys: wish war should be maintain'd there, least it should come home to their owne dores'.[89] But the aggressive stance and its purported champion were not to be displaced by ridicule. The following year, for example, Barnabe Barnes, in arguing that good arms are more important than good laws, makes a grave appeal to authority: 'according to *Thucydides*, he that will not in tranquilitie leuie necessarie warre standeth in the very doore of daunger'.[90]

The expansionist power that the English were being told they should pre-empt or prevent was being warned of such potential attacks, and Thucydides was also a great authority there. This is illustrated in the work of Girolamo Frachetta, who worked for the Spanish ambassador to Rome. Frachetta invokes the authority of Thucydides more than sixty times in his *Prencipe*, most frequently to argue along the lines that 'it is more advantageous to prevent the enemy' by attacking rather than defending.[91] Frachetta claims that we may be engaging in a defensive war

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proved daily advantagious to Sir *Henry*, for the improvement of him in several Sciences, during his stay in the University.'

[87] Greville 1870: 202, 187 (OED, 1989: *s.v.* 'wane', *v.*, II. *trans.* 'To cause to decrease').

[88] Digges 1606: 99; cf. 96-111. This fourth discourse is by Dudley rather than Thomas Digges.

[89] Marston 1605: sig. A4^{r}.

[90] Barnes 1606: 162.

[91] Frachetta 1599: 173, quoting Thucydides 6.18.3.

even when we are attacking the enemy in his own country, and uses passages from Thucydides to insist that the Spanish should fight rather than engage in seemingly harmless compromises, so as not to invite the enemy's contempt.[92] Like the English, the Spanish saw the Dutch as the fulcrum, and presented attack as necessary for defence and empire as necessary for survival. So Balthasar de Zúñiga addressed the Council of State in Madrid: 'If the republic of these rebels goes on as it is, we shall succeed in losing, first the two Indies, then the rest of Flanders, then the states of Italy, and finally Spain itself.'[93]

Notwithstanding his heavy dependence on Gentili's work, it was the Dutch scholar and political figure Hugo Grotius who joined this debate in explicit opposition to Gentili's position that concern for the growing power of another can legitimate war. His opposition was not overt in the early work *De iure praedae*, but he does make the striking claim that Aquinas agrees with Thucydides when he holds that the proper aim of war 'is nothing other than the repelling of injury'.[94] Grotius quotes Thucydides most extensively from the Corinthians' speech urging the allies of Sparta to join the war effort against Athens.[95] Given his aim of justifying what was seen as Dutch aggression at sea, the choice of text is intriguing, for he presents Thucydides as maintaining not only that one should go to war if one has suffered an injury, but also that one should *only* go to war if one has suffered an injury.[96] Grotius will go on to argue that the Dutch have suffered a string of injuries at the hands of the Portuguese; and in order to underline the legitimacy of attacks on and capture of Portuguese ships, he also argues that one may attack if it

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[92] Frachetta 1599: 23, 152-4.
[93] Trevor-Roper 1970: 280.
[94] Grotius [1606]: fol. 54^{v} (ch. 9: 'nihil est aliud quam injuriae depulsio'). Grotius began this work in 1604 and reported in November of 1606 that it was finished; he entered political life in 1607, when he became Attorney General of Holland, Zeeland, and West Friesland.
[95] The citations are from Thucydides 1.124.2 and 1.120.3-4; H. G. Hamaker misidentified them as from 1.36 in the first edition, and every subsequent edition has copied this error. Although Grotius quotes Thucydides in Greek elsewhere in this work, he here relies on one of the revised versions of Valla's translation.
[96] Grotius [1606]: fol. 54^{r}, where he quotes Thucydides 1.120.3 (ch. 9: 'esse quidem modestorum hominum quiescere nisi iniuria lacessitos').

is necessary for defence, to punish an injury done to others, or to collect a kind of fine if it counts as just punishment. These are all cast in terms of warding off or punishing injury, but do not conform to what he presents as the strict Thucydidean criterion, that attack is justified only as a direct response to an injury that one has received.

Thucydides is also presented as a moderate and moral voice elsewhere in this work. Grotius approvingly quotes Pericles to the effect that private benefit must be subordinated to the public good.[97] He appeals to Thucydides to argue for further constraints on just war, in particular the condition that one party may proceed only if the other refuses to reach a judicial settlement of the dispute.[98] Later in the work his Thucydides is somewhat harder, but still rooted in the demands of what justice requires; in particular, he conscripts Thucydides to shore up his view that punishment (or revenge, 'ultio') of injuries suffered from an obstinate offender is not only honourable ('honesta') but also necessary.[99] Grotius says that Thucydides admirably expresses many maxims in support of this position, so it is somewhat surprising that he cites Cleon, whom Thucydides calls 'the most violent of the citizens', and then the Athenian envoys to Melos, who notoriously deny the relevance of considerations of justice.[100] Grotius quotes Cleon to the effect that concessions to the enemy simply allow them to abuse our goodness anew; and then draws on the envoys at Melos to say that refraining from punishing an enemy will be taken as a sign of weakness, and a reputation for mildness will turn into contempt.[101]

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[97] Grotius [1606]: fol. 11^{r} (ch. 2), quoting Thucydides 2.60.2-4 (quoted earlier in Hotman 1560: 42). See Grotius [1606]: fol. 133^{v} (ch. 13), where Grotius quotes Alcibiades' defence of striving to preserve the received form of government (Thucydides 6.89.6): this is used by Grotius to back up the idea that those within a territory tacitly pledge to obey the magistrates in power, and to argue that those who carry out the wishes of the States General, e.g. by capturing enemy treasure, are acting as authorised combatants.

[98] Grotius [1606]: fol. 44^{v} (ch. 8), quoting Thucydides 1.85.2 (cf. n. 70, above).

[99] Grotius [1606]: fol. 146^{r} (ch. 14: 'ultio sane sui honesta est, quia necessaria'). For an earlier position along these lines, based on (a misidentified and garbled version of) Thucydides 7.68.1, see Volland and Neander 1588: 138-9.

[100] See Thucydides 3.36.6 and 5.86-98.

[101] Grotius [1606]: fol. 146^{r} (ch. 14). The first of these claims comes from Thucydides 3.37.2, rather than (as Williams and Zeydel in their 1950 edition, followed by van Ittersum in 2006) from the Melian Dialogue; what

Grotius goes on to say that this is precisely what the Portuguese have done in response to the benevolence that the Dutch have shown them, even after the Dutch have suffered injury. 'Not for nothing does the pre-eminent historian affirm that those who initiate the gratuitous injury of others are not thereafter to be appeased by beneficence'; those who have begun in such a way will pursue our total destruction.[102] The 'pre-eminent historian' is Thucydides, who is used to set up the conclusion that the Dutch must punish the Portuguese when the opportunity arises, because benevolence to such malefactors would only result in their own downfall: 'to take revenge on such people is certainly honourable, for it is necessary.'[103] It is significant that Grotius here provides a blanket justification for Dutch aggression against their enemies within a framework not only of necessary defence, but also of precedent injury and subsequent punishment. The moral claim reinforces the prudential, and the effect is to expand the sphere of legitimate attack.

In his *De iure belli ac pacis*, Grotius again uses the text of Thucydides to strengthen his positions, though he also draws on it for an emblematic expression of the basic realism he sets out to confute in his work.[104] 'And this work is all the more necessary,' he writes at the outset, 'because neither in our age nor formerly has there been a shortage of those who disparage this part of the law as nothing but an empty name. The saying of Euphemus in Thucydides is in nearly everyone's mouth: *for a king or commonwealth that bears rule, nothing is unjust that is*

Grotius marks as from 'in colloquia Athen et Mel.' is the *following* sentence, based on Thucydides 5.97 (cf. 5.95) (fol. 146^{r-v}).

[102] Grotius [1606]: fol. 149^{v} (ch. 14, returning to Cleon, here from Thucydides 3.40.6): 'non frustra praestantissimus historiae auctor affirmaverit, illos praecipue, qui nulla de causa aliquem injuria provocarunt, nullis postea benefactis mitigari, quominus eumdem, quem semel odisse ultro coeperant, ad internecionem usque persequantur.' Cf. n. 3, above.

[103] Grotius [1606]: fol. 149^{v} (ch. 14: 'Adversus tales igitur homines...ita se ulcisci quia necessarium etiam honestum est').

[104] Grotius began this work in late 1623; it was finished by the end of 1624 and published in 1625. Later editions incorporate a range of Grotius' alterations (up to and including the edition of 1646, the year after his death); I translate from the first edition.

advantageous.'[105] When Grotius follows Lipsius in attributing the phrase to 'Euphemus in Thucydides' rather than to Thucydides, he facilitates disagreement. When he criticises preventive attack, by contrast, he refers to what he culls from Thucydides as the Greek historian's own pronouncements. Grotius thereby appeals directly to the authority of Thucydides to contradict those who had claimed that the historian justified such prevention, though their distance from his substantive conclusions is ultimately quite narrow.

Grotius begins with what he takes to be Augustine's definition, asserting that 'a just cause for undertaking a war can be nothing other than injury'.[106] Whereas in the *De iure praedae* Grotius had relied on Cleon to argue for the necessity of punishing the one who has committed injustice, by the time of the 1631 edition of the *De iure belli ac pacis* he takes seriously Diodotus' response, that punishment should not be meted out even to a guilty party unless some good will result.[107] He goes on to interpret this expansively, such that the injury need not have been already received; indeed, 'the first cause of a just war is an injury not yet committed, which threatens one's body or property'.[108] Moreover, because there is a natural right of self-defence, war is justified to prevent a threat to one's life even if the party who stands to harm me does so without injustice or sin.[109] Despite his argument from precedent injury, Grotius stands close to Gentili and others when he emphasises the legitimacy of defence that follows not from the injustice of the aggressor but from the natural principle of self-preservation

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[105] Grotius 1625: sig. av^{r-v} ('Atque eò magis necessaria est haec opera, quòd & nostro saeculo non desunt, & olim non defuerunt qui hanc iuris partem ita contemnerent quasi nihil eius praeter inane nomen existeret. In omnium fermo ore est Euthydemi [sic: recte 'Euphemi'] dictum apud Thucydidem, regi aut ciuitati imperium habenti, nihil iniustum quod vtile...'). (Jean Barbeyrac (Grotius 1724: 2 n. 1) accurately diagnoses Grotius' misinterpretation of this remark by Euphemus (Thucydides 6.85.1), which probably derived from Lipsius (see n. 59, above).) An exclusive focus on this phrase from Euphemus during this period enables an assimilation of him to Machiavelli (Barlaeus 1633: 6). Grotius may be right that people were commonly willing to quote the phrase, but it appears that none wished to do so approvingly in writing.

[106] Grotius 1625: 123 (2.1.1: 'Causa iusta belli suscipiendi nulla esse alia potest, nisi iniuria').

[107] Compare Grotius 1625: 399 and Grotius 1631: 289 (2.20.4).

[108] Grotius 1625: 124 (2.1.2: 'Prima...causa iusti belli est iniuria nundum facta, quae petit aut corpus, aut rem').

[109] Grotius 1625: 124 (2.1.3).

that applies to all creatures. Grotius commends Thucydides for the view that some actions are necessitated by our nature, and thus not to be punished.[110] The difference is over what and how self-preservation justifies, and how to distinguish action undertaken from necessity rather than mere expediency. Grotius also extends the reach of intervention by arguing that the right of punishment is not limited to cases where we have already suffered injury. He goes on to claim, for example, that while private war is restricted to mere defence, the public authorities also have the right of punishing, and so they may anticipate force that is not imminent, but threatens from far away.[111] And he will argue that one may have this right of punishment without having civil jurisdiction and without having received the injury, for it extends to punishing violations of the law of nature or of nations, and thus applies to such inhuman monsters as pirates, cannibals, and those who disrespect their parents.[112]

Having expanded his position dramatically beyond the moralistic opening move that war can only be justified as punishment of injury, Grotius then appears to rein it in again. For the prevention of injury to be a just cause, 'imminent, and nearly immediate, danger is required'; I may not anticipate another simply because he arms himself, but may do so if he arms himself with a manifest intention to kill me and I am unable to rely on an authority to protect me .[113] In support, he lifts both the quotation from Cicero and that from Gellius that Gentili had used in weighing the question of anticipation.[114] But instead of trumping these with the example of the Mytilenians from the third book of Thucydides, he enlists Thucydides as a *critic* of an overly permissive right of anticipation based on fear. He offers a passage in book 1 against acting on

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[110] Grotius 1625: 420 (2.20.19).
[111] 'Have the right of punishing': 'vlciscendi habent ius', which can also mean that they have the right of taking revenge. The claim about anticipation or prevention of far away force is at Grotius 1625: 136 (2.1.16: 'Vnde illis licet praeuenire vim non praesentem, sed quae de longo imminere videatur').
[112] Grotius 1625: 434-5 (2.20.40).
[113] Grotius 1625: 125 (2.1.5: 'Periculum praesens...requiritur, & quasi in puncto').
[114] Grotius 1625: 126 (2.1.5).

the basis of uncertain future threats, and then joins Thucydides in condemning those caught up in the Corcyrean civil war who had pre-empted the future misdeeds of others by doing evil themselves.[115] Grotius does not only appropriate the authority Gentili had used for the other side, he singles out Gentili for denunciation.

Grotius explicitly targets the fourteenth chapter of the first book of *De iure belli*, the stretch of argument from Gentili considered above. He objects that 'some propound what is intolerable: that according to the law of nations it is right to take up arms to reduce a growing power which expanding too much could harm us.'[116] Grotius concedes that such a measure may be expedient, but denies that this expediency justifies. 'That the possibility of suffering violence confers a right of inflicting violence is inconsistent with all considerations of equity. Human life is such that we never have full security. Defence against uncertain fear is to be sought from divine providence and from harmless precautions, not from force.'[117] It is this criterion of just war that the Spartans failed to meet: 'Thucydides holds that the true cause of the Peloponnesian war was the Athenians' growing power and the Lacedaemonians' mistrust.'[118] Such 'fear of a neighbouring power is not a sufficient cause', however: 'for to be just, defence must be necessary, which it is not unless it is known that the other has not only sufficient power, but also the intention' to attack; and this conviction must amount to a 'moral certainty'.[119] Despite

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[115] Ibid., rendering Thucydides 1.42.2 and 3.82.5. Barbeyrac's reproach on the first occasion stands as an apt general lament about the usual mode of using Thucydides at this time: 'Nôtre Auteur, comme on voit, a fait une maxime générale de ce qui étoit dit à l'occasion de la crainte d'une Guerre particuliére' (Grotius 1724: 210 n.8).

[116] Grotius 1625: 136 (2.1.17): 'Illud verò minimè ferendum est, quod quidam tradiderunt, iure gentium arma rectè sumi ad imminuendam potentiam crescentem, quae nimiùm aucta nocere posset.' The marginal annotation is 'Alb Gent. lib. I.c.14'.

[117] Ibid.: 'Sed vt vim pati posse ad vim inferendam ius tribuat, ab omni aequitatis ratione abhorret. Ita vita humana est, vt plena securitas nunquam nobis constet. Aduersus incertos metus à diuina prouidentia, & ab innoxia cautione, non à vi praesidium petendum est.'

[118] Grotius 1625: 467 (2.22.1: 'Thucydides belli Peloponnesiaci veram causam censet fuisse vires Atheniensium augescentes & Lacedaemoniis suspectas'), referring to Thucydides 1.23.6.

[119] Grotius 1625: 468 (2.22.5: 'Metum...ex vicina potentia non sufficere....Vt enim iusta sit defensio necessariam esse oportet, qualis non est nisi constet, non tantùm de potentia, sed & de animo; & quidem ita constet vt certum id sit ea certitudine quae in morali materia locum habet').

providing justification for a wide range of aggressive actions abroad, Grotius also demonstrates that the text of Thucydides could be used to articulate and insist on limits to international aggression.

A less ambivalent version of Thucydides and the justification of preventive attack comes from Francis Bacon. Bacon's essay 'Of Empire' illustrates that English concern with empire was primarily an anxiety about the growth of others' power, and usually only derivatively about extending England's power abroad. This focus brings Bacon to blunt contradiction of a tradition of thought that runs from Augustine and is still influential in Grotius. Discussing how kings should deal with their neighbours, Bacon writes:

> There can no generall Rule be given, (The Occasions are so variable,) save one; which ever holdeth; which is, That *Princes* doe keepe due Centinell, that none of their *Neighbours* doe overgrow so, (by Encrease of Territory, by Embracing of Trade, by Approaches, or the like) as they become more able to annoy them, then they were.[120]

In the context of the perceived *ius gentium* or the developing international law of the day, it was itself a provocation to say that the single universal commandment sovereigns must observe in their relations with other states is that they prevent *all* ways in which those other states may become 'more *able*', not even to destroy, but simply 'to annoy'.[121] And Bacon went on to clarify that he understood full well that he was rejecting a traditional principle of the relevant casuistry. 'Neither is the Opinion, of some of the Schoole-Men, to be received; *That a warre cannot justly be made, but upon a precedent Injury, or Provocation.* For there is no Question, but a just Feare, of an Imminent danger, though there be no Blow given, is a lawfull Cause of a Warre.'[122]

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[120] Bacon 1985: 60. This passage and the next one quoted did not appear in any of the editions through that of 1624, being unique to the 1625 edition, the last that Bacon revised.
[121] Bacon need not have meant such annoyance as was negligible: see OED 1989: *s.v.* 'annoy', *v.* 4a: 'To molest, injure, hurt, harm; now *esp.* in military use'.
[122] Bacon 1985: 61.

Bacon expands on this idea in his *Considerations Touching a Warre With Spaine*, written in 1624, while Grotius was writing the *De iure belli ac pacis*. Contrary to Grotius, Bacon strives to show that just apprehensions *are* a legitimate ground of war, treating at some length '*Iustus Metus*', or '*A iust Feare of the Subuersion of our Ciuill Estate.*'[123] If this justification is valid, then war must be waged with Spain 'not for the *Palatinate* onely, but for *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, our *King*, our *Prince*, our *Nation*, all that we haue'. Bacon says that to show that a war on foreign soil is tantamount to their own defence, he must prove 'that a *iust Feare*, (without an Actuall Inuasion or Offence,) is a sufficient Ground of a *War*, and in the Nature of a true *Defensiue*'.[124] Bacon asserts the special exemplary status of Greek and Roman history, and singles out Thucydides and Xenophon as the only Greeks whose texts should be 'kept intyre without any diminution at all' in constructing a universal history. He accordingly looks to Thucydides for the relevant lesson.[125]

> [I]t is good to heare what time saith. *Thucydides*, in his *Inducement* to his Story of the great *Warre* of *Peloponnesus*, sets downe in plaine termes, that the true Cause of that *Warre* was; *The ouergrowing Greatnesse of the Athenians, and the feare that the Lacedemonians stood in thereby*; And doth not doubt to call it, *A necessity imposed vpon the Lacedemonians of a Warre:* Which are the Words of a meere *Defensiue*: Adding, that the other Causes were but specious and Popular.[126]

Bacon then quotes at some length from Book I. Thucydides gives us 'what time saith', and what time says to Bacon is markedly different from what he was telling Grotius, though via the same text.

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[123] Bacon 1629: 13, 4. Coleman Phillipson considered these arguments from Gentili, Bacon, and Grotius together in Gentili 1933: 2:36a-37a.

[124] Bacon 1629: 12. Bacon takes himself to be quoting the criterion 'iustus metus qui cadit in constantem virum' from Roman private law, extending it from individuals to commonwealths, as civil lawyers frequently had done. As is often the case, the principle is incorporated into scholastic thinking, too: see Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sententiis* 4.29.2. Others at this time relied on Thucydides in articulating the idea of 'iustus metus' (cf. Besold 1623). Bacon may have picked up the idea in this context from Gentili, who seems to get it from Hugues Doneau.

[125] Bacon 1605: fol. 12^{r} of Book II. Fol. 11^{v}: 'for it hath pleased God to ordaine and illustrate two exemplar States of the worlde, for Armes, learning, Morall Vertue, Policie, and Lawes.'

[126] Bacon 1629: 13, referring to Thucydides 1.23.6.

Bacon does insist that a just fear must not be 'out of vmbrages, light Iealousies, Apprehensions a farre off; But out of cleare Foresight of imminent Danger'.[127] Like Gentili and Grotius, Bacon is concerned to claim that there are limits on when war can be waged – just as he is concerned to show that these do not as it happens constrain the campaign he wishes to justify. He first argues that a just fear may be based on evidence of an aggressive intention, and that there are even cases where one can legitimately assume that another's intentions are always aggressive.

> Therefore in Deliberations of *Warre* against the *Turke*, it hath beene often, with great iudgement, maintained; That *Christian Princes* and *States* haue alwayes a sufficient Ground of *Inuasiue Warre* against the Enemie: Not for *Cause* of *Religion*, but vpon a iust *Feare*; Forasmuch as it is a Fundamentall Law, in the *Turkish Empire*, that they may (without any other prouocation,) make warre vpon *Christendome*, for the *Propagation* of their *Law*; So that there lieth vpon the *Christians* a perpetuall *Feare* of a *Warre*, (hanging ouer their heads,) from them: And therefore, they may at all times, (as they thinke good,) be vpon the Preuention.[128]

Christian states may thus at any time legitimately attack the Ottomans as a defensive measure. And presumably if the Ottomans had reason to believe that this is what the Christians believed, they would on the same grounds be justified in attacking a Christian state at any time. Bacon argues in some detail that the crown of Spain is even more inclined to invasion and expansion than the Turk, and 'nothing is more manifest, than that this *Nation* of *Spaine* runnes a race (still) of *Empire*'.[129] Bacon sees that the parenthetical is needed here because even the Spanish had become convinced that Spain was far from ascendant, and was indeed in a period of precipitous

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[127] Bacon 1629: 13.
[128] Bacon 1629: 16. On 'Preuention', see note 134, below.
[129] Bacon 1629: 24; see Grotius' triple invocation of Thucydides (3.40.3, 3.37.2, 5.97) to support the idea that the aggressive character of the Portuguese justifies a more aggressive Dutch policy (Grotius [1606]: sig. 146^{r-v} (ch. 14). Bacon's position here marks a shift from his 1622 *An Advertisement Touching An Holy Warre* (Bacon 1629: 77-134), where he proposed an alliance with Spain against the Ottomans as the '*Common Enemies*...of *Mankinde*' (134); there too, however, his animating purpose seems to be to unify Britain in the cause of a war. On the justification of attack based on a claim that Spain was attempting to build a comprehensive empire, see Bosbach 1988.

decline.[130] Although by 1624 universal monarchy may have been a matter of spectral rhetoric, a fatally influential prescription within Spain for the perceived decline was to have 'a good war'.[131] Nor is it a merely speculative point that Bacon's justification for attack admits of hazardous symmetry, for when Bacon is writing to try to push Buckingham and the cause of the new war party, Carlos Caloma, Spanish Ambassador to England (and translator of Tacitus) writes to Olivares: 'nothing else but war is to be expected from these people. Let Your Excellency believe me, I beg and pray, even if for certain reasons it suits us to defer it, our best plan is to show bravery and resolution [now], rather than allow them to increase their strength.'[132]

Before making the case for preventively attacking Spain in particular, Bacon ratchets up his theoretical justification for anticipatory attack with three further turns of the argument, two based on Demosthenes and one on Plato. First, he provides the simile of Athens' war against Philip being like 'country Fellowes in a Fence Schoole, that neuer ward till the blow be past….*with them hee that gets a blow, streight falleth to ward when the blow is past; And if you strike him in another place, thither goes his hand likewise*'. Clearly the whole art is to prevent the blow rather than reacting once the blow has landed, and Bacon duly draws the lesson that the simile 'exposeth to scorne *Wars* which are *not* Preuentiue'.[133] This is a dramatic shift from the usual discussion of prevention, and even from its usual justification: such discussions normally

[130] See Elliott 1989: Part IV, esp. 241-61.
[131] Elliott 1986: 47-84, 203-25. Olivares in September of 1623 was exhorting the Castilian deputies to emulate the greatest of the Greeks and Romans by restoring and redeeming their commonwealth by war as well as peace (ibid., 150, 203).
[132] Letter of 10 August 1624: 'no ay que esperar destos otra cossa que guerra y crea V. E., yo se lo suplico, si por algunos respectos nos conviene dilatarlo no es tan buen camino el de su firmamento como el demostrar balor y resolucion' (as quoted in Wilson and Turner 1949: 478, 482). Like the English, the Spanish were ready to see hostility as part of the other's inherent national character. This was hardly a new view of the English. Renard wrote in 1554 to Charles V of 'l'inimitié naturelle qu'ilz portent aux etrangiers...qu'est accreue contre les Espaignolz' (Tytler 1839: 2:336; cf. Griffet 1766: 181). The label 'new war party' adopted above is used in Limon, 1986; Cogswell, 1989 prefers to call this group the 'Patriots'.
[133] Bacon 1629: 16-17; the final italicisation is mine. Bacon's source is the first Philippic, also quoted in Bacon 1605: fol. 100^{v} of book 2 (sig. Ccc3^{v}), and later in Thomas Hobbes, *De cive* 13.8.

address the question of prevention as a special case requiring extra justificatory steps, but here it is treated as the only worthy form of war. The choice is presented as either preventive attack or risky foolishness.

Bacon recognises that this brings him to a radical position, according to which every state should preventively attack another so long as its enmity is sufficiently probable and victory looks more likely now than later. He is cautious about appearing to take this position, but ends up endorsing a version of it. '*Clinias* the *Candian*, (in *Plato*,) speaks desperately and wildly; As if there were no such thing as *Peace* betweene *Nations*; But that euery *Nation* expects but his aduantage to Warre vpon another. But yet in that Excesse of Speech, there is thus much that may haue a ciuill Construction; Namely, that euery State ought to stand vpon his guard, and rather preuent, than be preuented. His words are….*That which Men...call Peace, is but a naked and empty Name; But the truth is, that there is euer betweene all Estates a secret Warre*.'[134] Having denied that there is a constant war among all nations (for while defence is an adequate ground, mere advantage is not), Bacon nonetheless affirms that there can be a general just fear of being oppressed. As any nation should then defend itself by attacking any other when success looks sufficiently likely, this evidently means that there would be no true peace among nations after all. It hardly matters that conquest is not justified for mere imperial acquisition if it may be justified by a generalised necessity of defence.

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[134] Bacon 1629: 17-18; Bacon here quotes Plato, *Laws* 626a, together with the tag 'melius est praevenire quam praeveniri'. As Franz Bosbach says, this 'widely cited precept' ('dem immer wieder zitierten Grundsatz') was frequently used during the Thirty Years' War to characterise an offensive as defensive given the justification of necessity (Bosbach 1988: 102). He identifies two German sources from this period who cite the phrase (from 1620 and 1626), and two French (from 1624 and 1635) (ibid., 102 n. 82). This maxim can also be found e.g. in Junius 1606a, 2:163; Ganivet 1614: 3.2; and Rittershausen 1616: 5.9.8. The precept is also frequently translated into vulgar tongues, as it is here by Bacon. So John Reynolds urges Prince Charles to transform his 'contemplation into Action, that our ships and selues may bee in a readinesse to prevent *Spaine*, ere *Spaine* bee readie to prevent us; and of power to strike him, ere he can possibly be sufficiently powerfull to threaten us' ([Reynolds] 1624a: sig. iii^{v}). Like Bacon, Reynolds leaves no doubt that prevention means preventive war, not the prevention of war: 'all the Subiects of this Kingdom...doe vehemently desire Warre with *Spaine*, as knowing it necessary for our Estate' (ibid., sig. iii^{r}). Thomas Scott goes so far as to say that it is because the Spanish know that they can no longer trust the English that the English must 'preuent by war, [or] they wil shortly be preuented' ([Scott] 1624: sig. B3^{r}).

It looks like we have gone about as far as possible in this direction, having arrived at what is, under the pretexts, an international war of all against all. But Bacon takes yet another step, now taking as his text Demosthenes' speech *Against Aristocrates*; again, while he seems at the outset to be distancing himself from the position of Iphicrates, he ends up essentially endorsing it.

> For he, in the Treaty of Peace with the *Lacedemonians*, speaketh plaine language; Telling them, there could be no true and secure Peace, except the *Lacedemonians* yeelded to those things, which being granted, it would be no longer in their power, to hurt the *Athenians*, though they would. And to say truth, if one marke it well, this was, in all Memory, the maine peece of Wisdome, in strong and prudent Counsels; To bee in perpetuall watch, that the *States* about them, should neither by Approach, nor by Encrease of Dominion, nor by Ruining of Confederates, nor by blocking of Trade, nor by any the like meanes, haue it in their power, to hurt or annoy...; And whensoeuer any such Cause did but appeare, straight-wayes to buy it out with a Warre....[135]

Again we have universal hostility, and what is more, hostility with no real prospect of cessation, for the only guarantee is the impotence of the other. If the other is powerful enough to harm me, then I must remain in the attitude of hostility that Hobbes will characterise as war itself. A dramatic position, perhaps due to Gentili, who had written: 'And was not the reply of Iphicrates also clever, who when the Lacedaemonians promised complete protection and safety, said that the only guarantee which would satisfy him was for the Lacedaemonians to show that they could not do harm if they would.'[136] Bacon contrasts this view to that of 'some *Schoolemen*, (otherwise Reuerend Men, yet fitter to guide Penkniues, than Swords)' who hold that 'euery *Offensiue Warre* must be *Vltio*; A *Reuenge*, that presupposeth a precedent Assault or Iniurie'.[137]

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[135] Bacon 1629: 18-19. See Demosthenes, *Against Aristocrates* (23.116-17; cf. 23.125). The reference is difficult to track down (so B. H. G. Wormald mistakes it as from Thucydides (Wormald 1993: 184)) because modern editions refer to *Philocrates*, without noting that 'Iphicrates' is a variant reading. The passage is a favourite of Bacon's: see the 1592 'Observations upon a Libel', *Apophthegms New and Old* of 1625 (ap. 144); and *De sapientia veterum* 5, 'The River Styx, or Leagues' (Bacon 1857-74: 7:145, 13:358, 6:634, and 6:707).
[136] Gentili 1933: 2:358/1:587 (3.13).
[137] Bacon 1629: 20.

The latter view, he suggests, is one of speculation detached from the history and actuality of human nature.

> For certainly, as long as Men are Men, (the Sonnes, as the Poets allude, of *Prometheus*, and not of *Epimetheus*,) and as long as Reason is Reason; A *iust Feare* will be a iust Cause of a Preuentiue *War*; But especially, if...there be a *Nation*, that is manifestly detected, to aspire to *Monarchie*, and new Acquests; Then other *States* (assuredly) cannot be iustly accused, for not staying for the first Blow; Or for not accepting *Poliphemus* Courtesie, to be the last that shall be eaten vp.[138]

Bacon thus builds on Thucydides to repudiate the influential view of Augustine; he thereby distances himself from some of Grotius' premises, however intent Grotius may be to draw sweeping conclusions from the necessity of preservation and from the allowances for warding off and punishing injury.[139] Bacon aligns himself instead with Gentili, and adumbrates a logic to be found in Hobbes's discussion of the state of nature. It is a logic that is forcefully conveyed in popular print, too. John Reynolds in 1624 urges Parliament to tell old King James 'that old *Pericles* made the greatnesse of his generositie and courage, to reuiue and flourish on his Tombe, when hee caused the *Athenians* to warre vpon the *Pelloponessians*....Tell him that to transport Warre into *Spaine*, is to auoide and preuent it in *England*.'[140] 'Wars, Wars, then ye,' Reynolds exhorts the honourable members, '(with cheerefull hearts and ioyfull soules) let vs prepare our

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[138] Bacon 1629: 20-21 (cf. Homer, *Odyssey* 9.355-370). In a letter from Venice of 30 October 1622, translated by Thomas Hobbes, Fulgenzio Micanzio writes to William Cavendish: 'In this *Interim*, the Spanyards have leasure for treatyes with y^{e} which they prepare great and secure conquests. And it seemes y^{t} to others is left onely y^{e} privilege of the Gyant that is who shall be last devoured' (Micanzio 1987: 223). This comparison is a favourite of Micanzio's: see ibid., 242 (30 June 1623), 252 (1 September 1623), 261 (17 November 1623), 314 (s.d.: 'the game goes the best on the Spanyards side that themselves could wish, and that other Potentates are content with that Monarchy of theirs, and seeke no further than the favour of Polyphemus to devoure them last'). Cavendish had put Micanzio in direct contact with Bacon (Micanzio 1987: 54-5, 31 March 1616), and in any case Bacon would very probably have received copies of the letters to Cavendish: Hobbes translated these for circulation during a period in which Bacon was in close contact with Cavendish and was employing Hobbes for literary tasks. Greville attributes to Philip Sidney the idea that Spain intended for its allies 'no other favor...than *Poliphemus* promised to *Ulysses*, which was, that they should be the last whom he purposed to devour' (Greville [1651]: 114). Erasmus is the likely Renaissance source, commenting on the adage 'Cyclopis donum' that the 'favours of tyrants and brigands are of this sort' (Erasmus 1982: 323 (ad. 305; 1.4.5): 'Cuiusmodi sunt fermè tyrannorum & latronum beneficia').

[139] Bacon nonetheless takes care to maintain that his view is consistent with that of Augustine and Aquinas (Bacon 1629: 22-3).

[140] [Reynolds] 1624b, sig. B[1]^{v}.

selues for Warrs.'[141] The Thucydidean platform in political thought is by this time increasingly fixed, and remarkably bellicose.

When we read later thinkers observing that what present nations have learned from Thucydides' teaching is that the growth of a neighbouring power unquestionably makes it liable to attack, Hobbes's political thought appears to fall neatly on the line.[142] There is no space here to lay out an interpretation of what Hobbes aimed to do with his translation of Thucydides, or to consider the relevant context of international and domestic politics. What is clear is that when Hobbes was immersed in producing his edition in the mid-1620s, the dominant outlook of the early modern Thucydideans was that of the war party. And whatever his intentions may have been, Hobbes was later taken to be their greatest champion.[143]

[141] [Reynolds] 1624b, sig. B2^{r}.

[142] The particular source of my paraphrase here is von Chemnitz 1640: 3.2, p. 23 ('Norunt hae Nationes, initijs potentiae vicinae, nimium ac manifeste crescentis, a vicinis, ex praecepto Thucydidis, mature occurrendum, facileque'). In 1651, Hobbes's critic Hermann Conring saw no difficulty in lumping together views on the preservation and destruction of commonwealths by 'Thrasymachi,...Euphemi, Thucydidei & Machiavelli discipuli' (Conring 1730: 554). Addressing Hobbes, Thomas Tenison later suggests that the phrase from Euphemus (cf. notes 59 and 105, above) was what 'first hint[ed] to you your sandy Politicks' (Tenison 1670: 162).

[143] For comments on an earlier version, I would like to thank Ethan Shagan, Jeffrey Knapp, Victoria Kahn, Jonathan Sheehan, David Bates, and other members of the Early Modern Sodality; and Mark Bevir and other participants in the Political Theory Workshop at Berkeley.

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