GRK 26: Intellectual Enquiry in Classical Athens – Herodotus and Thucydides

Instructor: Michael Lurie

Office: 316 Reed Hall
E-mail: Michael.Lurie@Dartmouth.edu
Office Hours: Monday 3-4pm, Thursday 2-3pm, and by appointment

Teaching Arrangements

Schedule: 2 (MWF 1:45-2:50; x-period: Th 1:00-1:50)
Room: Wilder 102

Brief description of the course

The course offers an opportunity to study the fascinating works of two most important and interesting Greek writers and intellectuals of the 5th century BCE who invented history, or at least the writing of it: Herodotus and Thucydides.

For all their differences, Herodotus and Thucydides both set out to explore, and to make sense of, historical developments and forces that shaped human society and the world they lived in. Both engaged in an intricate intellectual dialogue not only with earlier Greek poetry and thought, but also with many new, often radical political, religious, and scientific ideas and theories that emerged in the 2nd half of the 5th century BCE. Yet in doing so, they developed diametrically opposite modes of historical thinking as well as fundamentally different visions of the universe and man’s place in it.

We will look carefully at, and compare, the most important aspects of their groundbreaking and highly experimental works in the context of Greek literary, cultural, and intellectual history of the archaic and classical ages. Attention will also be paid to the reception of their works, and their philosophies of history, in the Western tradition, from Plutarch and Tacitus to Hobbes and Marx.

Course Objectives

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

– translate fluently and accurately from the prescribed texts into clear and appropriate English
– produce problem-oriented, well-argued, well-researched, relevant, and coherent coursework essays on specific aspects of Herodotus’ and Thucydides’ works and Greek intellectual history of the archaic and classical ages
– demonstrate in written work and in class an informed understanding of the most important cultural, intellectual, theological, and literary issues raised by the study of Herodotus, Thucydides,
and Greek intellectual history as well as of the most important scholarly approaches in the interpretation of Herodotus and Thucydides.

**Transferable Skills**

The goals of the course are also to give students opportunities to:

- enhance their ability to think critically and creatively using qualitative information
- enhance their ability to express themselves clearly and concisely by means of persuasive writing
- enhance their ability to express themselves clearly and concisely using the spoken word in both informal discussion and formal presentation
- enhance their research skills
- display and develop important learner behaviors

**Skills:**

**Critical and creative thinking:** mental activity that is clear, precise, and purposeful. It is typically associated with solving complex real world problems, generating multiple (or creative) solutions to a problem, drawing inferences, synthesizing and integrating information, distinguishing between fact and opinion, or estimating potential outcomes. People with advanced critical thinking skills are prepared to deal with problems with a significant, irreducible degree of ambiguity, i.e., problems for which there is no single, obviously correct solution.

**Persuasive writing** involves generating prose that examines a non-fictional question, suggests an answer, provides reasons why that answer is correct, and supplies supporting evidence; it places heavy emphasis on accuracy, brevity, and clarity

**Public speaking** involves communicating ideas and information clearly and concisely using the spoken word in both informal discussion and formal presentation

**Research** involves (1) identifying a question to answer or issue to explore, (2) defining the parameters of the question or issue in a fashion appropriate to the scale of the project being undertaken, (3) identifying appropriate sources of information including but not limited to primary textual sources, objects, and existing scholarship, (4) gathering appropriate ideas and evidence from those sources, (5) synthesizing and analyzing those ideas and evidence in such a fashion as to produce a convincing answer to the original question or a convincing exploration of the original issue, and (6) presenting the results via either in writing or orally or both. In many cases research involves generating novel syntheses and analyses (as opposed to summarizing what is already known). Stage (5) requires critical and creative thinking, as defined above; Stage (6) requires well-developed skills in persuasive writing and/or public speaking, as defined above
Learner Behaviors:

**Active learning**: participates in class, listens attentively, asks appropriate questions to deepen understanding

**Cooperation and collaboration**: works well with instructors and other students, shows flexibility and adaptability and capacity to understand others’ ideas and feelings

**Conscientiousness**: attends class regularly and arrives punctually; shows up for scheduled meetings reliably and punctually; turns in assignments on time; prepares for classes, tests, and meetings

**Energy/Enthusiasm**: demonstrates and communicates excitement about learning to instructor and other students, makes collaborative environments inside and outside of the classroom more energetic and lively

**Seeks to Improve**: recognizes and reflects on strengths and weaknesses, seeks out and implements advice on improving performance

Assessment

Grades will be based on a take-home midterm exam, a three-hour final exam, one paper (ca. 3500 words), class participation, and several research memos and presentations.

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Research Memos and Presentations</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Final Paper</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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Required Texts

Please make sure you have the prescribed editions and translations listed below:


# Class Schedule (provisional)

## Week 1  
*Tabula Rasa or: From Epos to Historie*

- **Monday:** Intro: Constructing historical *cosmos*
- **Wednesday:** Hdt. 1.1–7: *Cherchez la femme*? Herodotus’ Historical Method
- **Friday:** No Class  | Reading assignment

## Week 2  
*Grudging Gods or: On Human Happiness*

- **Monday:** Hdt. 1.8–14: *Cherchez la femme* II: Gyges without a Ring
- **Wednesday:** Hdt. 1.26–33: Croesus and Solon
- **Thursday [x-h.]:** Making sense of Solon’s philosophy or: Herodotus and Greek Archaic Thought
- **Friday:** Hdt. 1.34–45: Croesus, Adrastus, and the Meaning of Nemesis

## Week 3  
*The Wheel of Time: Learning Through Suffering?*

- **Monday:** No Class  [Martin Luther King Jr. Day]
- **Wednesday:** Hdt. 1.86–91: Croesus on Fire
- **Friday:** God in History: Reception of Herodotean theology in modern intellectual history  
  *(Webinar with Dr Anthony Ellis, University of Berne, Switzerland)*

## Week 4  
*Us and Them: Cultural Relativism and the Origins of Political Theory*

- **Monday:** Looking into a Mirror? Herodotus’ description of Lydian, Persian, and Scythian *nomoi*
- **Wednesday:** ‘Nomos is King of All’: Ethnography, Sophistic Thought, and the Origins of Cultural Relativism
- **Thursday [x-h.]:** Hdt. 3. 80–84: Constitutional Debate
- **Friday:** Constitutional Debate and the Origins of Political Theory

## Week 5  
*On Human Unhappiness or: Falling into the Hands of God*

- **Monday:** Hdt. 7.5–18: Persian Council and Xerxes’s Dreams I
- **Wednesday:** Hdt. 7.5–18: Persian Council and Xerxes’s Dreams II
- **Thursday [x-h.]:** God in History II: Making sense of Xerxes’ dreams
- **Friday:** Hdt. 7.44–57: Xerxes and Artabanus

*Take-Home Midterm Exam (due on Monday, Week 6, in Class)*
### Week 6

**The Discovery of Freedom or: Historical Truth vs. Political Propaganda**

**Monday:** Xerxes & Demaratus (Hdt. 7. 101–104) & Sperthies & Bulis (Hdt. 7.133–137)

**Wednesday:** Herodotus and the Discovery of Political Freedom

**Thursday [x-h.]:** Hdt. 7. 138–144: Athens and Themistocles

**Friday:** Anti-Imperialist Warning or Athenian Propaganda?

### Week 7

**Enter Thucydides or: The Hedgehog and the Fox?**

**Monday:** Enter Thucydides (Thuc. 1.1–20)

**Wednesday:** *Ktema es aei:* Thucydides' Historical Method (Thuc. 1.21-22)

**Thursday [x-h.]:** *Prophasis:* The ‘True’ Causes of War (Thuc. 1.23) and the dangers of ‘objective’ historiography

**Friday:** Thucydides vs. Herodotus (Webinar: Prof. Marek Wecowski, University of Warsaw)

### Week 8

**Words and Deeds: Pericles and the Plague**

**Monday:** Pericles' Funeral Oration I (Thuc. 2.35–46)

**Wednesday:** Pericles' Funeral Oration II

**Thursday [x-h.]:** Pericles' Funeral Oration III. Thucydides' Judgement of Pericles (Thuc. 2.56)

**Friday:** The Great Plague (Thuc. 2.47–54) I: Thucydides and Ancient Medicine

### Week 9

**‘War is Peace’: On Human Nature and ‘Doublethink’**

**Monday:** The Great Plague II (Thuc. 2.47–54): Poetry or Science?

**Wednesday:** The Civil War in Cercyra (Thuc. 3.81,2–85) and the World of Doublethink from Thucydides to Orwell

**Thursday [x-h.]:** The Melian Dialogue I (Thuc. 5.84–116)

**Friday:** The Melian Dialogue II (Thuc. 5.84–116) and Sophistic debates on justice

### Week 10

**‘Half Pint of Water’: Justice, Power, and the Laws of Nature**

**Monday:** ‘Half Pint of Water’: From the Melian Dialogue to the End of Sicilian Expedition

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**Final paper due on Wednesday, March 9, by midnight**

**Final Examination: Saturday, March 12, 11:30 AM**
Course Policies

Honor Principle

Any work that is not the sole work of the student will be considered plagiarism. To avoid the temptation that arises from last minute panic, students who are having difficulty keeping up should contact me immediately. All work submitted for evaluation in the course must be identified as your own. You should make sure that all assignments have your name, course title, term, my name, and date of submission. All your ideas and quotations should be cited properly in accordance with the MLA or Chicago manual of style or other recognised authority.

Attendance, Participation, and Contact

In most classes interaction and discussion rather than passive listening will be the norm. You are expected to prepare in advance for each meeting, in particular by reading thoroughly the relevant text.

Attendance is of course expected. If an absence is inevitable, please notify me in advance, if possible, or as soon after the missed class as possible. Persistent absence without sufficient justification will be reported to the student's Assistant Dean.

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Messages about the course will be circulated to students by e-mail. It will be assumed that every member of the class can be contacted at their University e-mail address and checks incoming mail regularly.

Coursework: Late Submissions

For late submissions, 5% of the maximum obtainable grade will be deducted for each working day, up to a maximum of five days, after which a grade of 0% is to be recorded. Thus, if a paper which is due in on a Friday and which is to be marked out of 100% is handed in on the following Monday, it will be given a grade 5% less than what it is worth; if it is handed in on the following Thursday, it will be given a grade 20% less than what it is worth. These penalties will always be deducted unless an extension has been agreed with the instructor. This should normally be done in advance of the submission date.

Student Disabilities

Students with disabilities who may need disability-related academic adjustments and services for this course are encouraged to see me privately as early in the term as possible. Students requiring disability-related academic adjustments and services must consult the Student Accessibility Services office (205 Collis Student Center, 646-9900, Student.Accessibility.Services@Dartmouth.edu).
Once SAS has authorized services, students must show the originally signed SAS Services and Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive academic adjustments and services, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

**Electronics policy**

No electronic devices may be used in class except in those rare instances explicitly authorised by me. Please ensure that your phone is switched off or put on silent at the beginning of class and kept in your bag.

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**Select Bibliography**

1. **Greek Historiography: Introductions and Companions**


   J. Marincola (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, vol. 1–2 (Malden, MA 2007)

   Feldherr & G. Hardy (eds.), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing: Vol. 1: Beginnings to AD 600* (Oxford 2011)

   J. Marincola (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Greek and Roman Historiography* (Oxford 2011)

2. **Historical Background**


3. Herodotus

Text


English Translations

*De Selincourt rev. Marincola (Penguin 1996)*

R. Waterfield, with intr. and notes by C. Dewald (World’s Classics, Oxford 1998)

D. Grene (Chicago 1987)


Commentaries


Herodotos, erkl. von H. Stein, 5 vols. (Berlin 1962) [in German]


Erodoto, *Le Storie*, vol. 1–9 (Milano 1988ff.) [in Italian]


On individual books:

*G. A. Sheets, Herodotus, *Book I* (Bryn Mawr, PA 1993) [for beginners]*


*S. T. Newmyer, Herodotus, *Book III* (Bryn Mawr, PA 1986) [for beginners]*


L. Scott, *Historical Commentary on Herodotus, Book 6* (Leiden/Boston 2005)


Lexicon

J. E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Cambridge 1938)

*Digital edition: http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/powell/#eid=1&context=lsj*

Introductions and companions

K. H. Waters, *Herodotus the Historian: His Problems, Methods and Originality* (London 1985)


*C. Dewald/J. Marincola (eds.), *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (Cambridge 2006), with bibliography

**Bibliography**


**Collections of essays**

W. Marg (ed.), *Herodot* (Darmstadt 1962; 2nd ed. 1965)  
D. Boedeker/J. Peradotto (eds.), *Herodotus and the Invention of History*, *Arcthsus* 20 (Buffalo 1987)  
N. Luraghi (ed.), *The Historian's Craft in the Age of Herodotus* (Oxford 2001)  
E. Baragwanath & M. de Bakker (eds.), *Myth, Truth, and Narrative in Herodotus* (Oxford 2012)  
*E. Foster & D. Lateiner (eds.), *Thucydides and Herodotus* (Oxford 2012)  
K. Geus, E. Irwin, T. Poiss (eds.), *Herogots Wege des Erzählens: Logos und Topos in den Historien* (Frankfurt am Main 2013)  

**From antiquity to the late 19th century**

*Antiquity:*

Plutarch [ca. 45–120 CE], *On the Malice of Herodotus* (De Herodoti malignitate), [recent editions and commentaries: (a) transl. with an intro. & comm. by A. Bowen (Warminster 1992); (b) Introd., testo critico, trad. e commento a cura di M. Grimaldi (Napoli 2004)]; Loeb Classical Library on-line: [https://www.loebclassics.com/view/plutarch-moralia_malice_herodotus/1965/pb_LCL426.3.xml](https://www.loebclassics.com/view/plutarch-moralia_malice_herodotus/1965/pb_LCL426.3.xml)

*Early modern Europe:*

D. Chytraeus, *In Herodotum Commentarius Accuratus et Argumenta in Singulos Libros [...]* (Halle & Leipzig 1597) [http://gateway-bayern.de/VD16+C+2630]  
D. Chytraeus, ‘Oratio de utilitate Herodoti’, in: *Davidis Chytraei in Herodotum Commentarius Accuratus et Argumenta in Sigulos Libros ... Praemissa est eiusdem oratio, De utilitate lectionis Herodoti* (Halle & Leipzig 1597) [http://gateway-bayern.de/VD16+C+2630]
F. Geinoz, ‘Défense d’Hérodot contre les accusations de Plutarque,’ MémAcInscr 19, 21, 23 (1753–1756) 115-145; 120–144; 101–114 [in French]

C. I. Besenbeck, De Invidia Et Malevolentia TOY ΘΕΙΟΥ. Ad Locum Herodoti Lib. I. Cap. 32 (Erlangen 1787) [http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10215900-1]


19th century:

B. G. Niebuhr, Über die Geographie Herodots (Berlin 1812) [in German]
A. De Jongh, Disquisitio de Herodoti philosophia (Utrecht 1833) [in Latin]
K. Hoffmeister, Sittlich-religiöse Lebensansicht des Herodotos (Essen 1832) [in German]
P.J. Ditges, De fato apud Herodotum ratione (Coblenz 1842) [in Latin]
H. Runge, Herodots Verhältnis zum griechischen Volksglauben (Hildesheim 1856) [in German]

C. F. von Nägelsbach, Die nach homerische Theologie des griechischen Volksglaubens bis auf Alexander (Nürnberg 1857) [in German]

H. Meuss, Der sogenannte Neid der Götter bei Herodot, Beilage zum Programm der Königlichen Ritter-Akademie zu Liegnitz (Liegnitz 1888) [in German]

Books

F. Jacoby, ‘Herodotos’, RE Suppl. II (1913) 205–519 [in German]
F. Wehrli, ΛΑΘΕ ΒΙΩΣΑΣ. Studien zur ältesten Ethik bei den Griechen (Leipzig/ Berlin 1931) [in German]
F. Hellmann, Herodots Kroisos-Logos, Neue philologische Untersuchungen 9 (Berlin 1934) [in German]
M. Pohlenz, Herodot. Der erste Geschichtsschreiber des Abendlandes (Leipzig 1937) [in German]
E. R. Dodds, The Greeks and the Irrational (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1951)

H. Apffel, Die Verfassungsdebatte bei Herodot (3,80–82) (Diss. Erlangen 1957) [in German]
H.R. Immerwahr, Form and Thought in Herodotus (Cleveland, Ohio, 1966)

K. von Fritz, Die griechische Geschichtsschreibung I. Von den Anfängen bis Thukydides (Berlin 1967) [in German]

K. H. Waters, Herodotus on Tyrants and Despots (Wiesbaden 1971)
H. Strasburger, Homer und die Geschichtsschreibung. SB der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch–historische Klasse (Heidelberg 1972) [in German]

F. Solmsen, Two Crucial Decisions in Herodotus (Amsterdam 1974)

H. Lloyd-Jones, The Justice of Zeus (Berkeley 1971, 21983)


R. Parker, Miasma. Pollution and Purification in early Greek Religion (Oxford 1983; 21996)


D. Fehling, Herodotus and his ‘Sources’. Citation, Invention, and Narrative Art, tr. J.G. Howie (Leeds 1989)

D. Lateiner, The Historical Method of Herodotus (Toronto 1989)

N. R. E. Fischer, Hybris. A Study in The Values of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greece (Warminster 1992)
K. Pritchett, *The Liar School of Herodotos* (Amsterdam 1993)


C. Scardino, *Gestaltung und Funktion der Reden bei Herodot* (Berlin 2007) [in German]


H. Löffler, *Fehlentscheidungen bei Herodot* (Tübingen 2008) [in German]

K. Roettig, *Die Träume des Xerxes. Zum Handeln der Götter bei Herodot* (Nordhausen 2010) [in German]


J. Brehm, *Generationenbeziehungen in den Historien Herodots* (Wiesbaden 2013) [in German]


S. Froehlich, *Handlungsmotive bei Herodot* (Stuttgart 2013) [in German]


**Articles and chapters**


*H. Fränkel, ‘Man’s `ephemeros’ nature according to Pindar and others’, *TAPA* 77 (1946) 131–144

H. R. Immerwahr, ‘Historical Action in Herodotus’, *TAPA* 85 (1954) 16–45


*A. Dihle, ‘Herodot und die Sophistik’, *Philologus* 106 (1962) 207–220 [in German]

J. A. S. Evans, ‘Father of history or father of lies: the reputation of Herodotus,’ *Classical Journal* 64 (1968) 11–17


*M. Lloyd, ‘Cleobis and Biton (Herodotus 1.31)’, *Hermes* 115 (1987) 22–28


*C. W. Fornara, ‘Human History and the Constraint of Fate in Herodotus’, in: J. W. Allison (ed.), *Conflict, Antithesis, and the Ancient Historians* (Columbus, Ohio 1990) 25–45


N. Luraghi, 'The Importance of Being 'logios'', *CW* 102.4 (2009) 439–456
*C. Dewald, 'Happiness in Herodotus', *Symbolae Osloenses* 85 (2011) 52–73
E. Irwin, 'To whom does Solon speak? Conceptions of happiness and ending life well in the later fifth century (Hdt. 1.29–33)', in K. Geus et al (eds.), *Wege des Erzählens: Logos und Topos bei Herodot* (Frankfurt am main 2012) 261–321

**Reception**

**General:**

4. Thucydides

Text


English Translations


*A great selection of important passages:*


Commentaries

J. Classen-Steup (ed. comm.), *Thukydidis*, Bd. 1-2 (Berlin 1914-1919), Bd. 3-8 (Berlin 1892-1922) [in German]


**On individual books**

P.J. Rhodes (ed. transl. comm.) *Thucydides, History I* (Oxford 2014)

J.S. Rusten (ed. comm.), *Thucydides Book II* (Cambridge 1989)

P.J. Rhodes (ed. transl. comm.), *Thucydides, History IV.1-V.24* (Warminster 1998)

E.C. Marchant (ed. comm.), *Thukydides Book VI* (London 1914)

L. Bodin & Jacqueline de Romilly (eds.), *Thucydide, Livres VI et VII* (Paris 1963) [in French]

K.J. Dover (ed. comm.), *Thucydides Book VI* (Oxford 1965)

K.J. Dover (ed. comm.), *Thucydides Book VII* (Oxford 1965)

**Index & Lexicon**

M.H.N. Von Essen, *Index Thucydideus* (Berlin 1887)


P. Stork, *Index of Verb Forms in Thucydides* (Leiden/Boston 2008)

**Bibliography**


**Companion**

A. Rengakos & A. Tsakmakis (eds.), *Brill’s Companion to Thucydides* (Leiden 2006)

**Collections of articles**

H. Herter (ed.), *Thukydides* (Darmstadt 1968) [important articles by O. Regebogen, M. Pohlenz, K.J. Dover, F.M. Wassermann, H. Strasburger, H. Diller et al.] [in German]


G. Rechenauer & V. Pothou (eds.), *Thucydides, a Violent Teacher? History and its Representations* (Göttingen 2011)

E. Foster & D. Lateiner (eds.), *Thucydides and Herodotus* (Oxford 2012)

A. Tsakmakis & M. Tamiolaki (eds.), *Thucydides Between History and Literature* (Berlin 2013)

**Books**

E. Schwartz, *Das Geschichtswerk des Thukydides* (Bonn *1929) [in German]

G. Deininger, *Der Melier-Dialog* (Diss. Erlangen 1939; repr. 1987)


A. M. Parry, *Logos and ergon in Thucydides* (PhD Harvard 1957); repr. with a new introduction by D. Kagan (Salem, NH 1981)
J. Kakridis, *The Thukydideische Epitaphios* (Munich 1961) [in German]
K. von Fritz, *Die griechische Geschichtsschreibung I-II* (Berlin 1975) [in German]
S. Hornblower, *Thucydides* (Baltimore 1987)
G. Rechenauer, *Thukydides und die hippokratische Medizin* (Hildesheim et al. 1991) [in German]
R. D. Luginbill, *Thucydides on War and National Character* (Boulder, CO 1999)
C. Dewald, *Thucydides' War Narrative. A Structural Study* (Berkeley 2005)
J. V. Morrison, *Reading Thucydides* (Columbus 2006)

**Articles and chapters**


L. Edmunds, ‘Thucydides’ ethics as reflected in the description of the stasis (3.82-83)’, *HSCP* 79 (1975) 73–92


P. J. Rhodes, ‘*Biasos didaskolos*? Thucydides and his lessons for his readers,’ in: G. Rechenauer & V. Pothou (eds.), *Thucydides, a Violent Teacher? History and its Representations* (Göttingen 2011) 7–16


**Reception**


A. Rengakos & A. Tsakmakis (eds.), *Brill’s Companion to Thucydides* (Leiden 2006) 693–838 [five substantial chapters on different aspects of the reception history of Thucydides from antiquity to the 20th century]


C. Lee & N. Morley (eds.), *A Handbook to the Reception of Thucydides* (Chichester 2015)