

Greek 7171: Thucydides

Jeffrey Rusten (jsr5@cornell.edu), Fall 2021

Tuesdays-Thursdays 9:40-10:55 (planned for in-person instruction); room TBA



Greek helmets dedicated at the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia

Before Canvas is available in August, information will be posted at
<http://jsrusten.com/5-2/upcoming-courses/>

The provisional plan is to cover the themes of the whole preserved work (and theories about its incompleteness) and offer a reading group on the Q list selection (Book 2), ending with a focus on Book 1, the prolegomena to the war, which offers modes of historical discourse different from the rest: the analytical essay (Archaeology), the chronicle of 479-440 (the “Pentekontaeteia”) and the Romance of Pausanias and Themistocles; readings here will be based on my manuscript commentary on Book 1.

Required Books (all available on pdf in Canvas)

- Rusten, Commentary on Book 1 (Manuscript), Book 2 (1989)
- Translations by Crawley, Warner, Hammind and others

Requirements (in addition to faithful attendance and participation in class discussions)

- Responses to questions for discussion for each class
- Reports (on individual vocabulary items, battles, provocative articles or books)
- Final essay (topic to be presented and discussed in final meeting, due Dec. 18 at latest)

Screencasts to view before beginning of semester (available mid-August):

- The different parts of Thucydides' work and its incompleteness
- Six Ages of the ancient world
- The Athenian Century from the introduction of democracy to the end of the Peloponnesian War

Tentative Schedule:

Week I (Thursday Aug. 26): Introduction

Week II (Tues-Thurs Aug. 31-Sept. 2): Books 2-3 (Spartan invasion, Plague, Demosthenes in Acarnania, Plataea, Mytilene x 3, Corcyra)

Week III (Tues. Sept. 7-Thurs. Sept. 9): Book 4 (Pylos, Delion, Brasidas' expedition to the Chalcidice)

Week IV (Tues. Sept. 14-Thurs. Sept. 16): Book 5 (Amphipolis and Peace of Nicias; Battle of Mantinea and Melos)

Weeks V--VI (Tues. Sept. 21-Thurs. Sept. 30): Books 6-7 (Expedition to Sicily)

Week VII (Tues-Thurs Oct. 5-7): Book 8 and Xenophon, Hellenica xx-xx [and Diodorus xx-xx] (Persian Negotiations; Political Instability in Athens)

Weeks VIII-X (Tues-Thurs Oct. 14-28): Speeches and events (2 weeks: Epitaphios and Pericles' last speech; Mytilene; Melian dialogue; Speeches of Alcibiades in Books 6 and 8, possibly others)

Weeks XI-XV (Tues-Thurs Nov. 2-Dec. 2): Book 1 (Preface and Methods; 4 modes of historiography ["Archaeology"; Corcyra and Potidaea; "Pentekontaeteia;" Pausanias and Themistocles])

Week XVI (Tues. Dec. 7): final essay topic presentations (final essay due no later than Dec. 18)