

HISTORY 440
ANCIENT HISTORY: GREECE
TuTh 9:30-10:45
MJ 101

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MWF 9-10, W 1-2,
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The people we are going to study in this course, the people of ancient Greece, were certainly not the most powerful in the ancient world—at least not in political terms. Only for a brief time (under Philip and Alexander) were the Greeks even united into a powerful political unit. For most of their history, the Greeks were at war among themselves. Nevertheless, with the possible exception of the Hebrews, the Greeks are the most important of the ancient peoples in terms of their impact on subsequent civilization.

The Greeks made important contributions to the visual arts, to sports, to poetry, to theater, to philosophy, to mathematics, to the sciences and (maybe most important!) to history as a discipline. How did the Greeks achieve so much? This course will look at Greek civilization from its beginnings among the Minoans and Mycenaeans, move through the Greek “golden age,” and conclude with an examination of an equally creative period, the Hellenistic Age.

ON-LINE:

My e-mail address is art.marmorstein@northern.edu. For the "on-line" version of this syllabus, follow the links on my Web site, www.marmorstein.website. I've posted some lecture outlines and sample ID's on the site as well. There are Panopto recordings and other supplemental materials available via D2L.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Iliad (Homer)
The Histories (Herodotus)
The Peloponnesian War (Thucydides)
Ten Greek Plays in Contemporary Translation (Levi Lind, ed.)

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS:

8/25	Introduction
8/27	The Minoans and Mycenaeans
9/1	<u>The Iliad</u> (Books I-VI)
9/3	<u>The Iliad</u> (Books VII-XVII)
9/8	<u>The Iliad</u> (Books XVIII-XXIV)
9/10	Sparta
9/15	Athens: Draco to Solon)
9/17	Athens: Pisistratos to Cleisthenes
9/22	The Persian Wars
9/24	Herodotus (Books I and II)

9/29 Herodotus (Book VII)
 10/1 Herodotus (Book VIII)

 10/6 ***** **MIDTERM I** *****
 10/8 Aeschylus Prometheus Bound

 10/13 Aeschylus Agamemnon
 10/15 Sophocles Oedipus Rex

 10/20 Sophocles Philoctetes
 10/22 Euripides Alcestis

 10/27 Euripides Andromache
 10/29 *******MIDTERM II** *****

 11/3 *****Assessment Day: No Class*****
 11/5 The Delian League/Pericles

 11/10 The Peloponnesian War/Thucydides, Book I
 11/12 Thucydides (Books II and III)

 11/17 Thucydides (Books IV, V, and VI)
 11/19 Greek Philosophy I (Meno—Online)

 11/24 Greek Philosophy II (Nichomachean Ethics—Online)
 11/26 *** **Thanksgiving Day: No Class** ***

 12/1 Spartan and Theban Hegemony (Burn, Ch.12)
 12/3 Philip and Alexander (Burn, Ch.15)

 12/8 The Hellenistic Age and the Exciting Conclusion to this course!

FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 11, 2026, 9:45-11:45

GRADING: Your grade for this class will be based primarily on the basis of your midterm exam, your final exam, and your blog contributions, each of which will count approximately 30% when I determine your final grade. In addition, I will take into account attendance, participation, and quiz scores.

PARTICIPATION:

The works we are reading this semester are the most important ever written in their respective fields, and the ideas discussed in these books are important and intrinsically interesting. Homer's poems, the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, the dialogues of Plato, and the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides have inspired the greatest thinkers of each generation for the past 2500 years. Each generation has attempted to answer the questions raised for us by the great Greek writers. Now it's the turn of the great thinkers of Northern. We will look at what the Greeks

had to say about government, about religion, about the meaning and purpose of life, about the roles of men and women in society, etc. I expect each student to contribute their thoughts to discussion, and I expect students to listen carefully to what others have to say and respond appropriately.

In order to make sure students are prepared for discussion, I will make available study questions for each assignment. Many of the study questions are included in this syllabus. Others will be online. Please read the study questions before starting each reading assignment.

EXAM FORMAT:

Midterm I--8 ID's, 1 essay

Final--8 ID's, 1 essay

ID's will be selected from the terms put on the board at the beginning of each class. You will be asked not only to identify the terms, but also to explain their historical significance. I am impressed when students can include plenty of detailed information, but I am even more impressed when students can show how the ID terms relate to important themes discussed in this class.

Essay questions will deal with major themes discussed in the lectures. Often, the exam question will be a generalization I have made in class with the additional word, "comment."

A student who studies hard and does the required reading should have plenty to say in response to each of these questions. You will be given 75 minutes for the midterm and two hours for the final exam. Most students will need the full time to do a good job.

What is a good job? I tell students over and over again that a good essay consists of a series of good generalizations based on the exam question and backed up with specific support from the lectures and the readings. I am particularly impressed when students include in their essays references to primary source material.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TAKING EXAMS:

1. Bring a blue book. Make sure there are no pages torn out.
2. Use pen.
3. Don't sit by anyone with whom you studied.
4. Plan on spending the full time writing your exam.
5. Do the ID terms first.

SHORT ESSAYS:

On each day scheduled for a discussion of primary sources, you should write a short essay and post it to D2L. I will accept late essays for partial credit, but, since the essays will be the basis of class discussion, I won't be as generous with your grade if the essay comes in late.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY:

*Please make sure all electronic devices are turned off and put away before class begins. Cell phones, laptop computers, MP3 players, and similar devices are all distracting to other students. I do **not** allow the use of electronic dictionaries during exams.*

1. NSU DISABILITY POLICY:

Northern State University strives to ensure that physical resources, as well as information and communication technologies, are accessible to users in order to provide equal access to all. If you encounter any accessibility issues, you are encouraged to immediately contact the instructor of the course and the Student Accessibility office.

2. BOARD OF REGENTS ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY:

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the academic dean administratively in charge of the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct run contrary to the purposes of higher education. Cheating includes the use of any notes during the midterm or final exam. Please place no marks of any kind on or in your blue book before I give the signal to begin taking the exam. All exams must be taken on blank bluebooks. On at least one exam, bluebooks will be checked before the exam. Bluebooks that have not been checked, have missing pages, or pages with large erasures will not be accepted.

It is not cheating to study with another student, to share notes, or to prepare essays or ID's together. However, if you do study with another student, be sure you do not sit next to each other during the exam.

Please be especially careful to observe academic integrity standards on the take-home quizzes. The quizzes are intended to make sure you have done the primary source readings, and your comments should be based on your own observations, not someone else's ideas. Plagiarism (e.g. copying material from the internet or recycling work done by another student) is not allowed. I do sometimes allow "group work" on quizzes, but unless I have specifically indicated that you are allowed to work with other students, make sure your quiz comments are entirely your own.

Northern State University's official policy and procedures on cheating and academic dishonesty as outlined in the Northern State University Student Handbook applies to this course. Students caught cheating will receive a zero for the assignment, and, since zeros are worse than F's, they are likely to fail the course as a whole.

STUDY QUESTIONS: THE ILIAD

Potential essay question:

The poems of Homer are the greatest legacy of the "dark ages" to subsequent Greek civilization. In some ways, these books are the closest thing the Greeks had to a Bible. But Homer's works are a very strange sort of Bible indeed. Comment.

Homer's works were in some ways the closest thing the Greeks had to a Bible. If one wanted authoritative teaching about the gods and about their dealings with mankind, one turned to Homer. Passages culled from the Iliad and the Odyssey served as "proof texts" for any point one might try to make. Likewise, Homer's writings were also the starting point for later "inspired" writers--the poets and playwrights of ancient Greece. But Homer's works are a very strange sort of Bible, and it's not always easy to say exactly what his religious views were.

As we read and discuss the Iliad, look for evidence of the greatness of this poem, for evidence that it was a kind of Bible, and for evidence that it was a strange sort of Bible. You might note especially Homer's insights into the behavior and motivation of human beings. You might also note what Homer has to say about such topics as:

1. How to deal with anger
2. How women should be treated
3. The behavior of the ideal man
4. The behavior of the ideal woman
5. How one should face misfortune
6. How one should conduct oneself toward the gods

Discussion I

Please read Books I-VI of the Iliad. Be prepared to discuss the following questions.

1. The Iliad is not story of Trojan War. What is it about?
2. Why is Achilles angry?
3. Who is right in quarrel, Agamenon or Achilles?
4. Given that Achilles is right to be angry, does he conduct himself properly? What are the consequences of his anger?
5. What about the girls (Briseis and Criseis)? What would it be like to be a prize of war? What would it be like to live in a society where one might easily become a prize of war? Are women valued in this society? Are they loved? What does Homer teach about proper conduct toward women?
6. What standards does Homer seem to expect of women? How does an ideal woman behave?
7. To what extent are the goddesses role models for mortal women? Can/should a mortal woman aspire to be like Hera, Thetis, Aphrodite or Athena?
8. To what extent is the position of women in American society like the position of women in Homeric society? Do Homer's own standards seem at all applicable today?
9. What are Homer's gods like? How are they different from the God of the Bible and from the gods of other religions? To what extent are the gods role models for mankind?
10. Is Homer a religious man? Does he believe the gods exist? How does he think one should

behave towards the gods?

11. Do the gods exist? Is there a Zeus, and Apollo, etc.?
12. Which of the characters introduced so far seems to you the most admirable? Why? What qualities does Homer seem to think most admirable?
13. Which character seems to you least admirable? Why? What qualities does Homer seem to think shameful?
14. How are the Greeks and Trojans governed? What does Homer teach about proper relationship to authority, and proper use of authority?

Discussion II:

Please read as much as you can of Books VII-XVII. If you like, you may skim over the descriptions of the actual fighting. These scenes are exciting, but not essential to our discussion. Please read especially closely Books 9,14,15, and 16. Be prepared to continue discussion of the earlier study questions and to discuss the following:

1. Why does Achilles refuse Agamemnon's offer in chapter IX? Is he right to refuse? Would Agamemnon have done better to go to Achilles himself rather than sending Odysseus and Phoenix?
2. How do you explain Homer's description of Zeus and Hera in chapter XIV? Does he really think this is the way gods interact with one another?
3. Note Zeus' complaint about "fate." What is "fate"? Is there such a thing governing the affairs of men and gods? Is fate superior to Zeus, or Zeus to fate? Why does Zeus fail to save Sarpedon from death?

Discussion III:

Please finish reading the Iliad (Books XVIII-XXIV). The final pages are crucial to understanding the work as a whole, and there's not much here that can be skipped. Be prepared to discuss the following questions:

1. Why does Achilles ignore his mother's plea that he not return to battle?
2. How do you explain Briseis' reaction to Patroclus' death (p. 361)? Is Briseis a typical captive?
3. Note how Achilles and Hector encourage their men. Which seems the more admirable leader? Why?
4. Why does Hector choose to stand against Achilles rather than retreat? Is he right to make this choice?
5. Why does Homer end the epic where he does rather than continuing the story to the fall of Troy or at least to the death of Achilles? How do the surrender of Hector's body and the funeral for Hector form an appropriate conclusion of the work?
6. How does Homer view death? What consolation does he have to offer the man who faces death?

STUDY QUESTIONS: HERODOTUS

We will concentrate on Books I and II for our first discussion; Book VII for our second discussion; and Book VIII for our third discussion. The following passages will be especially important to our discussion.

Book I (all, note especially sections 1-14)

Book II (skim all, note especially sections 10-27, 11, 123-131, 160, 174)

Book III (section 80)

Book VII (skim all, note especially sections 10-20, 28, 35, 51, 61, 135, 140)

Book VIII (skim all, note especially sections 50-103)

Book IX (sections 100-122)

As you read, please think about the following questions:

HERODOTUS' ATTITUDES/OUTLOOK:

1. How would you compare Herodotus' worldview with that of Homer? In what ways is his history like the Iliad? In what ways is it different?
2. What are Herodotus' religious views? How do these views affect his history? Do they make him more reliable/less reliable? Do they influence his selection of events? His interpretation of events?
3. What is Herodotus' attitude toward war?
4. What does Herodotus mean by freedom?
5. What form of government does Herodotus think best?
6. What characteristics does he admire most in men? What characteristics does he think particularly despicable?
7. What can you gather from Herodotus' history about the role of women in Greek society? What does Herodotus' own attitude seem to be?

HERODOTUS' TECHNIQUE/PURPOSE

1. What is Herodotus' purpose in writing his history? What audience does he seem to have in mind? Does he have some particular lesson/lessons to teach?
2. What are Herodotus' strengths as a historian? What are his weaknesses?
3. What parts of the history seem most reliable?
4. What parts of history seem least reliable?
5. Why does it take him six books before he begins to describe the Persian War itself?

THUCYDIDES STUDY QUESTIONS

If Herodotus is properly considered the father of history, to Thucydides should probably go an equally distinguished title, the father of political science. He perhaps deserves an additional title as well: the father of scientific history, though whether his history is really more "scientific" than that of Herodotus is a debatable question.

Thucydides addresses political questions on both the "macro" and "micro" level. He takes on the big questions (What is the best form of government? What causes war? What justifies revolution?), but he addresses these questions by looking at specific individuals in specific situations--"political philosophy teaching by examples."

I would like you to read all of Thucydides' history (and all the dialogues of Plato, all thirty two extant Greek tragedies, and all the plays of Aristophanes). For this course, however, you should skim all of Book I and read carefully the following selections from the rest of the history.

II: 34-46	Pericles' Funeral Oration
II: 46-57	The Plague in Athens
II: 57--65	Pericles' justification of his policies
III: 1-85	The revolt of Mytilene, the treatment of Platea, the revolution in Corcyra (skim)
IV: 42-48	End of the Corcyra revolution
V: 18-20	Peace of Nicias
V: 84-116	Melian Dialogue
V: 77-79	Treaty of peace between Athens and Sparta
VI: 89-93	Alcibiades justifies himself

GENERAL:

1. What is Thucydides purpose in writing this history?
2. What are his strengths as a historian? What are his weaknesses? Is he a "scientific" historian? How is he like modern historians? How different? How does he compare to Herodotus as a historian? Better? Worse?
3. What does Thucydides think the ideal form of government?
4. What makes a man admirable in his eyes? What characteristics does he dislike? What does he think are the characteristics of a good leader?

QUESTIONS ON BOOK I:

1. What do you think of Thucydides' treatment of early Greek history? What sources does he use? Could he have done a better job treating this period?
2. How does Thucydides explain the outbreak of the Pelponnesian War? Do you think his explanation a good one?
3. What do you think of the technique of invented speeches? Is this a legitimate device for a historian to use?
4. Where do Thucydides' sympathies seem to lie? Is he pro-Athenian, pro-Spartan or what?

THE PLAGUE:

1. What do you think of Thucydides' account of the effects of the plague on Athenian character? Is this "scientific" history?
2. How does thucydides' treatment of the plague differ from the way Herodotus (or Homer) would have handled it?

THE MYTILENE DEBATE:

1. Did the people of Mytilene have a right to revolt?
2. Did the Athenians have a right to put down the revolt?
3. How should the Athenians have treated Mytilene?
4. Is there any strength to Cleon's argument (37-40)?
5. How does Cleon account for the Athenian change of heart?
6. Is this a problem in democracy?
7. What is Cleon's idea of justice?
8. How does Diodotus defend the orators?
9. How does he defend the people of Mytilene?
10. How does the Spartan treatment of Plataea compare to the Athenian treatment of Mytilene?

THE MELIAN DEBATE:

1. Why is the debate not open to the general public?
2. What is the Athenians justification for requiring Melos to join their alliance?
3. Are the Melesian officials right in refusing to submit to Athenian demands?
4. How do they hope to withstand the Athenians?
5. Are the Athenians right in saying their hopes are misplaced?
6. Should justice and fair play be considerations in international relations?
7. Why do you suppose Thucydides didn't finish his history?

HISTORY 440--MIDTERM I STUDY GUIDE

PART I--ID'S

MINOANS, MYCENAEANS, ACHAEANS, EVANS, SCHLIEMANN, LINEAR B, MICHAEL VENTRIS, CNOSSUS, MINOS

HOMER, ILIAD, DARK AGES, DORIANS, ACHILLES, AGAMEMNON, HECTOR, ODYSSEUS, ATHENA, HERA, ZEUS, APOLLO, APHRODITE, PRIAM, HELEN

MESSENIA, SPARTA, HELOTS, PERIOIKOI, LYCURGUS, GEROUSIA, APELLA, EPHORS, HOPLITE

THESEUS, AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION, DRACO, SOLON, AREOPAGUS, COUNCIL OF 400, ECCLESIA, TECHNE, PISISTRATOS, HIPPIAS, THESPIS, BOULE, COUNCIL OF 500, STRATEGOI, OSTRACISM, CLEISTHENES, CLEISTHENIC TRIBES

HERODOTUS, IONIA, MARATHON, THERMOPYLAE, SALAMIS, PLATAEA, THEMISTOCLES, HERODOTUS STORY I, HERODOTUS STORY II

PART II--ESSAYS

1. We do not know nearly as much about the Minoans and Mycenaeans as we would like. Nevertheless, what little we do know suggests that these peoples did in some way help lay the foundations for later Greek greatness. [Comment](#).
2. The poems of Homer are the greatest legacy of the Dark Ages to subsequent Greek civilization. In some ways, these books are the closest thing the Greeks had to a Bible. But Homer's works are a very strange sort of Bible indeed. [Comment](#).
3. The Spartan political and social system contains many unusual elements, but the Spartan way of life was well suited for securing the stability of the Spartan state. [Comment](#).
4. The men who laid the foundations of Athenian greatness in historic times (Solon, Pisistratos, and Cleisthenes) were, if anything, greater heroes than the legendary founder of Athens. [Comment](#).
5. Herodotus is the first true historian. He is also one of the greatest. [Comment](#).

MIDTERM II STUDY GUIDE

NOTE: THIS MAY BE A “TEAM” MIDTERM WITH EACH TEAM DOING AN IN-CLASS PRESENTATION. MORE INSTRUCTIONS LATER.

PART I--ID’S:

AESCHYLUS, PROMETHEUS, HESIOD, OCEANUS, IO, AGAMEMNON,
CLYTEMNESTRA, CASSANDRA, ORESTES, ELECTRA, EUMENIDES, SUPPLIANT
MAIDENS, LAIUS, OEDIPUS, CATHARSIS

SOPHOCLES, OEDIPUS, JOCASTA, CREON, TIRESIAS, OEDIPUS AT COLONUS,
PHILOCTETES, ODYSSEUS, NEOPTOLEMUS, CATHARSIS, DEUS EX MACHINA,
HERACLES

EURIPIDES, ALCESTIS, ADMETUS, HERACLES, PHARES, ANDROMACHE, HERMIONE,
PELEUS, MEDEA, ION, HIPPOLYTUS, DEUS EX MACHINA

PART II—ESSAY:

- A. Aeschylus is the greatest of the Greek playwrights. [Comment](#).
- B. Sophocles is the greatest of the Greek playwrights. [Comment](#).
- C. Euripides I the greatest of the Greek playwrights. [Comment](#).

FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE

PART I--ID'S

AESCHYLUS, AGAMEMNON, PROMETHEUS BOUND, SOPHOCLES, OEDIPUS REX, PHILOCTETES, EURIPIDES, ALCESTIS, ANDROMACHE

THEMISTOCLES, ARISTIDES, DELIAN LEAGUE, CIMON, PERICLES, (ASPASIA), (ANAXAGORAS), PERICLES, ARCHIDAMUS, MEGARIAN DECREES, CLEON, MYTILENE, NICIAS, ALCIBIADES, ARGINUSAE, MELOS

THALES, PARMENIDES, HERACLITUS, SOPHISTS, SOCRATES, PLATO, MENO, (THE REPUBLIC), ARISTOTLE, (TELOS), (NICOMACHEAN ETHICS), (ARETE), DIOGENES, STOICISM, EPICUREANISM

CRITIAS, THERAMENES, AGESILAOS, EPAMINONDAS, PELOPIDAS, DEMOSTHENES, PHILIP OF MACEDON, CHAERONEA

PHILIP OF MACEDON, OLYMPIAS, CHAERONEA, ALEXANDER THE GREAT, BUCEPHALUS, GRANICUS, (ISSUS), (GAUGAMELA), TYRE, ROXANNE, (OECUMENE), HELLENISTIC AGE, KOINE, EUCLID, ARCHIMEDES

PART II—ESSAYS

1. _____ (Aeschylus, Sophocles, or Euripides) is the greatest of the Greek playwrights. Comment.
2. The story of Athens in the 5th century BC (especially from the end of the Persian war in 479 BC until the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404 BC) has both tragic elements and the elements of a real tragedy, elements that show forth particularly clearly in the pages of Thucydides. Comment.
3. While the Greeks made contributions in many areas, the development of philosophy was perhaps their most important contribution to subsequent civilization. Comment.
4. For all their supposed love of freedom, the Greeks in the period following the Peloponnesian war did not behave in a manner at all appropriate to free men, and it is not surprising that the Greeks soon lost their freedom. Comment.
5. Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander both in some ways deserve the title "the great," if we understand "great" as meaning simply important. But were either of them "great" in any other sense? Perhaps—or perhaps not. Comment.