



Weekend Courses 2023-24

Reading Classical Greek: Thucydides: *The Peloponnesian War* Book 7, chapters 42-48, 59-75 and 84-87

Start date: 26 January 2024 **End date:** 28 January 2024

Venue: Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge
CB23 8AQ

Tutor: Dr John Taylor **Course Code:** 2324NRX018

Tutor biography

Dr John Taylor MA DPhil was educated at Balderstone School, Rochdale and Exeter College, Oxford. He was a full time Classics teacher from 1982-2012. He was also Head of Classics at St Francis Xavier's College, Liverpool, from 1986-92; Head of Classics at Tonbridge School from 1992-2012; and a lecturer in Classics at the University of Manchester since 2015. Dr Taylor has also been a tutor at JACT Greek Summer School, Bryanston, since 1986 (where he served as Director of Studies from 1993-2004 and held the post of Director five times between 2007-19). He has been a part-time panel tutor at ICE since 1993.

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	Demosthenes arrives; the night battle
22:00	Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast (for residents only)
09:00 – 10:30	Decision to stay
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Before the great battle
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Free time
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	Battle in the Great Harbour
18:00 – 18:30	Free time
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	'Thucydides in context'
21:30	Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast (for residents only)
09:00 – 10:30	After the battle
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Retreat and slaughter
12:45	Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

The course will allow you to:

- read an extended section of Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War*
- develop your appreciation of Greek prose style
- understand the text in its historical and literary setting

Summary of content:

The reading material is Thucydides' account of how, during a precarious truce in the long-running Peloponnesian War, the Athenians launched a bold expedition to conquer Sicily. This would have been a great coup, but things went wrong from the start. The second half of Book 7 traces the build-up to a decisive battle in the Great Harbour at Syracuse in 413 BC, the defeat of the Athenians and their ignominious retreat. Although the main war was not over (more defeats lay ahead), this narrative provides the tragic climax of Thucydides' magisterial work.

Presentation of the course:

You are asked to read the Greek text in advance of the course, so that the language content of the classes can focus on ironing out any difficulties in the vocabulary, grammar and syntax encountered during preparation, and translating into English (we will aim for fluency without departing too far from the Greek). The classes are led by the tutor, but with full participation from the students, so that you will have the opportunity to take your turn in reading the Greek text aloud, and translating into English, and joining in discussion of the text in its historical setting. After dinner on Saturday, there will be an illustrated talk setting Thucydides in his intellectual context.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, you should be able to:

- recognise new features of Greek language
- recognise more vocabulary
- gain confidence in translation
- gain understanding of the style and preoccupations of Thucydides

Reading and resources list

The text can be read in any version, but the best modern edition is:

Pelling, C, *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War Book VII*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2022)

The best translation is:

Hammond, M, *Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2009)

The best brief introductory book is:

Rhodes, P J, *Thucydides*, London: Bloomsbury (2015)

An excellent new collection of essays is:

Low, P, *The Cambridge Companion to Thucydides*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (ed.) (2023)

Online resources:

Perseus gives access to Greek texts, translations and other resources:

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/collection?collection=Perseus:collection:Greco-Roman>

Note: Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) students are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current ICE course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

(Information correct as of 15 May 2023)