

## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## *Historical Writing in Ancient Greece: Thucydides and the Plague - 28618*

*Last update 01-09-2023*

*HU Credits:* 2

*Degree/Cycle:* 2nd degree (Master)

*Responsible Department:* Classical Studies

*Academic year:* 0

*Semester:* 2nd Semester

*Teaching Languages:* Hebrew

*Campus:* Mt. Scopus

*Course/Module Coordinator:* Dr Orly Lewis

*Coordinator Email:* [orly.lewis@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:orly.lewis@mail.huji.ac.il)

*Coordinator Office Hours:* By appointment

---

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Orly Lewis

Course/Module description:

*This seminar will explore historical writing in ancient Greece through the study and discussion of the work of the Greek historian Thucydides on the Peloponnesian War. We will focus on his description of the Plague of Athens that occurred in the 5th century BCE. We will read the original Greek text, analyse various aspects of the plague, delve into the historical writing style of Thucydides, and examine the broader context of history writing and of plagues in ancient Greece.*

Course/Module aims:

*Introduce students to the genre of historical writing in antiquity.*

*Critically examine the historical writing of Thucydides.*

*Provide tools for analyzing historical texts from ancient Greece with different perspectives.*

*Discuss the history of plagues in ancient Greece and their descriptions in written source.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Present the characteristics of historical writing in ancient Greece while discussing the writing style of Thucydides.*

*Translate excerpts from the works of Thucydides.*

*Critically analyze excerpts from Thucydides' work.*

*Present the story of the Plague of Athens and discuss its medical and societal aspects.*

Attendance requirements(%):

*No more than one absence*

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: 1) Instruction based on close reading of the texts - primarily in the original Ancient Greek. You will be required to read, translate, and analyze the text before each class. During the class, you will be asked to translate and participate in discussions regarding the content of the text, grammatical and stylistic issues, and interpretations in scholarship.*

*2) Discussion of research articles about Thucydides and his works. For some lessons, you will be required to read an article in English and actively participate in class discussions about it.*

---

3) *Presentation of lectures ("referat") - you will be asked to give a brief presentation on a topic related to the course's subjects and lead a discussion based on it. The presentation will serve as a foundation for the course's final project.*

*Course/Module Content:*

- *Structure of the treatise.*
- *Thucydides' historical method and his credibility as a historian.*
- *Events and consequences of the Athenian plague.*
- *Comparison of Thucydides' description with other plague descriptions in Greek literature (e.g., Homer, Sophocles).*
- *The influence of Thucydides' description in later writings (reception studies).*
- *Literary and linguistic characteristics of Thucydides' language*

*Required Reading:*

*Will be uploaded to the Moodle.*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Will be uploaded to the Moodle.*

*Grading Scheme:*

*Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 50 %*

*Active Participation / Team Assignment 30 %*

*Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture 20 %*

*Additional information:*

*Open also to third-year BA students.*

*Reading skill in Ancient Greek is required!*