



(Hi)story Travels



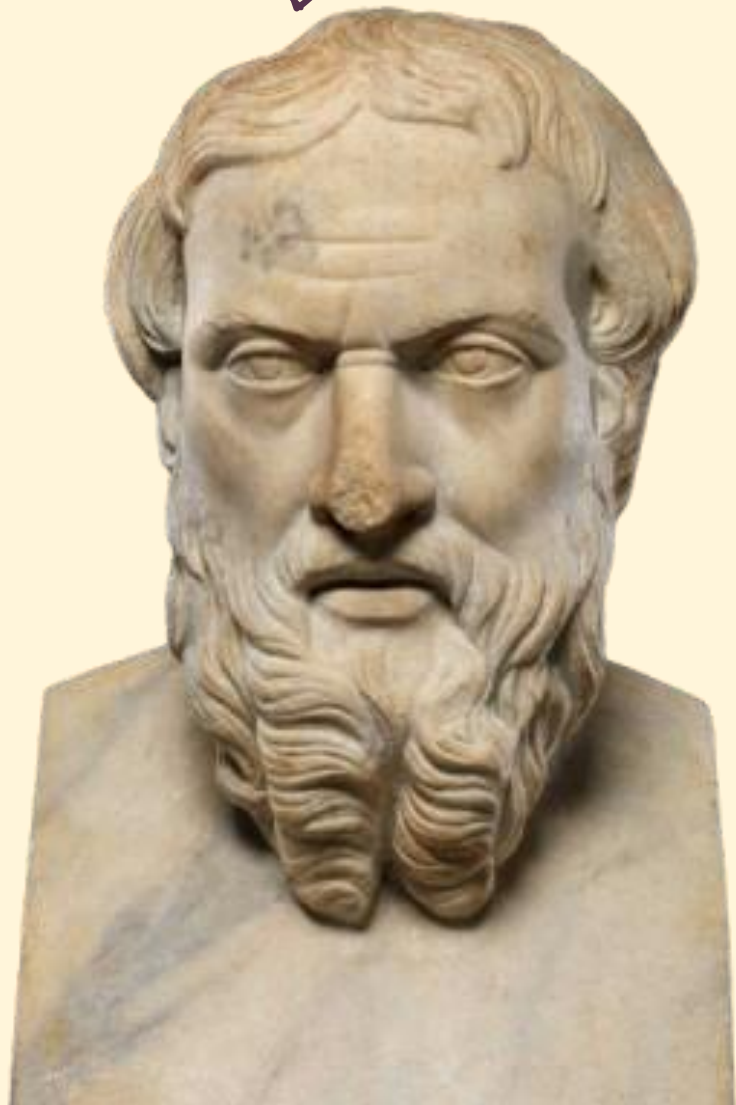
What do you

? ? ? remember from last
time?



Remember these people?

Herodotus

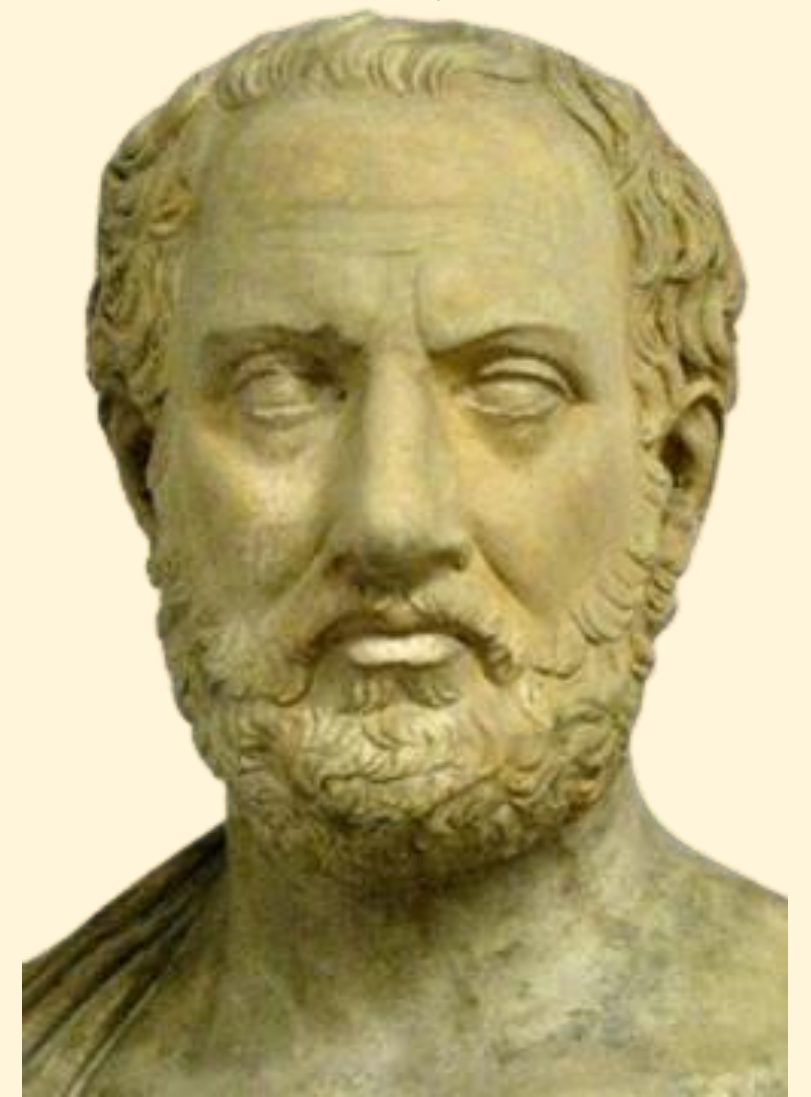


Last time we learned about the **ancient historians** Herodotus and Thucydides.

We looked at some of their writing about the **Graeco-Persian** and **Peloponnesian War** and how it has influenced modern media.

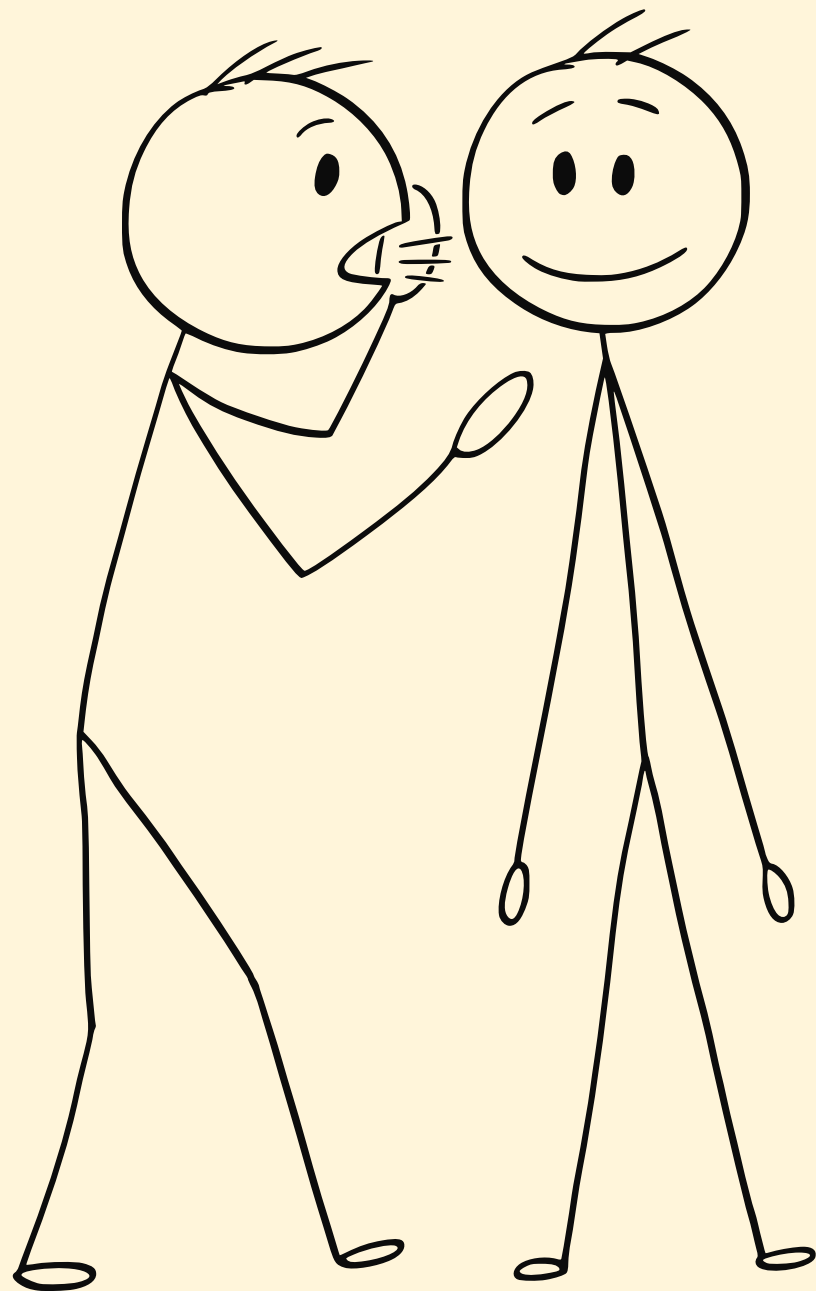
Today we are going to explore their work a little deeper, and look at how their texts have travelled from the past into the present....

Thucydides



Telephone game

Over time, messages and stories can change as they are passed between different people.



Rules

1. Someone in your team will receive a short **sentence** from either Herodotus' or Thucydides' **ancient texts**.
2. They must **whisper** this sentence to the next person in their team.
3. Each player then has to remember the sentence, and whisper it to the next person in line.
4. The last person in line has to say the sentence **out loud**.

The fastest team will get **1 point**.

The most accurate team will get **2 points**.

The most points at the end wins!

REMEMBER?

Who were the Spartans?



Sometimes **Spartan symbols** are (mis)used by extremist groups around the world to serve causes that **divide society** and **challenge democracy**.

We are now going to look at a piece of writing about how the US Alt-Right have misused texts about Leonidas at Thermopylae and Spartan military education.



Trump supporter wearing a replica Corinthian helmet
in front of the Capitol building during the uprising on
6 January 2021.

(Jose Luise Magana/Shutterstock)

“The display of ‘Spartan’ symbols during the insurrection of 6 January 2021 represented the culmination of an increasing recent trend whereby **the U.S. Far-Right has appropriated martial images of the Spartans** (linked especially to the battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC) to support their causes.

Three strands of appropriation have been prominent:

First, exploitation of the **phrase MOLON LABE**, supposedly uttered at Thermopylae by Sparta’s king Leonidas, by the firearms industry and gun-rights activists as a selling-point and a rallying cry against restrictions on gun ownership;

Secondly, use of **imagery from Zack Snyder’s film 300** (2006) by supporters of Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign;

Thirdly, **invocations of ‘Spartan’ military symbols** and Sparta’s martial reputation to mobilise violence against the leftist movement labelled ‘Antifa’.

Hodkinson, Stephen (2022) ‘Spartans on the Capitol: Recent Far-Right appropriations of Spartan militarism in the USA and their historical roots’, in Kim Beerden & Time Epping (eds.) *Classical Controversies: Reception of Graeco-Roman Antiquity in the Twenty-First Century*, Sidestone Press: Leiden, pp. 59–83.

MOLON LABE

MOLON LABE is a Greek phrase that translates to “*come and take them*”.

It is attributed to **King Leonidas of Sparta**, who famously uttered the words in response to a demand from the Persian army to surrender their weapons.



Why do you think Leonidas is said to have uttered this?



What has changed in the use of the phrase in its travel from ancient to modern?

We are now going to look at some social media posts that use ancient texts to comment on present day wars.

By discussing these tweets we are not agreeing or disagreeing with the content being shown, we are looking at these as **historians** researching the reception of antiquity.



**What rules
should we
follow as a
class?**

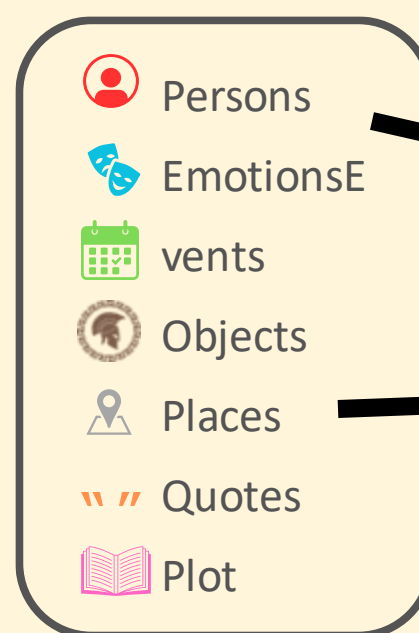
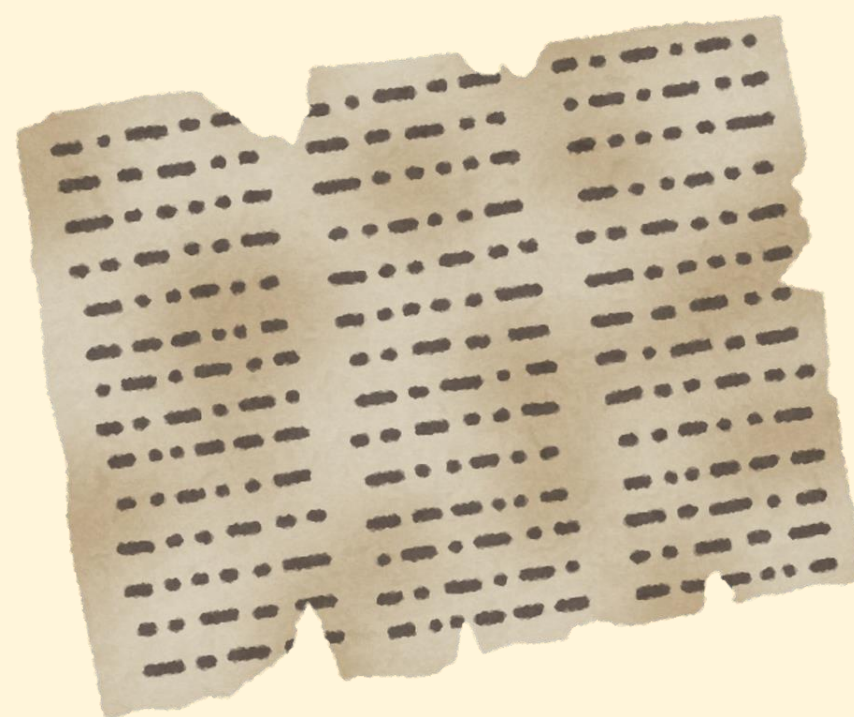


Ancient historical texts travel through the centuries.

The **characters**, the **places**, the **ideas**, even the actual **words** of these ancient texts have travelled a long way and we find them today in films, games, books, and... tweets.

We need to compare the original text to how the text appears in its modern 'destinations'. The modern 'destination' with which we are working are tweets about the **Russian-Ukrainian conflict**.

Let's find out how these texts travel – **what do they bring together and what do they leave behind?**





If you could time travel back to ancient Greece, how would you use social media?

Which **ingredients** are you going to use from the ancient texts?

Which ones are you not going to use?

Why?