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The Devil is in the Details:

A study of how Ancient Greek historian Thucydides' greatest work, the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, changed historiography

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The timeline of events that lead to war is usually straightforward. One event morphs into another that creates a side-effect which becomes a conflict. The reason that war exists is because of a series of events that can then cascade into turmoil, one incident after another until it is impossible to find the starting point. Because of this, the idea of knowing all of history seems impossible because there is no place to begin without the continuous connection of cause and effect through the past; in other words, there is no zero point. How did Event A morph to Event B? How did events of the past affect future events? When does the past become the past? History is influenced in so many ways based on who is telling it and from which source the historian chooses to examine. Moreover, this determines what aspect of a history is considered the “starting point.” With so many different historians, stories, and angles from which a history can be told, it can be difficult to know where to turn in order to get a truthful retelling. Ancient Greek writers were some of the first to know the importance of keeping track of history, but much of the information was lost because there was no one to record it, either from lack of skills or the inability to grasp the importance of the event. So many events in Greek history have had a massive ripple effect on the rest of the world, but without a record of the events as they happened, many of causes and effects were lost with time. Few historians in Greek history would break the status quo of how history was recorded, and those who did would change the way historiography was studied.

In Ancient Greece, The Peloponnesian war was one such major event that rocked the perceptions of what people thought they knew. It changed the way the world looked at government and would not have been possible without one man – Thucydides, a Greek historian. Thucydides was unique in that he did not tell just one point of view – he showed all sides holistically, examining and reexamining evidence, starting from statements of conflict but never offering a definitive conclusion or his personal opinion. This is most pronounced in his greatest work, the *History of the Peloponnesian War*.<sup>1</sup> The war lasted for 27 years and during that stretch of time Thucydides followed it carefully: he left no detail out, recording these annals through his own personal observations as well as sharing the

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<sup>1</sup> The shortened name for the *History of the Peloponnesian War* is known simply as *History* and will be referenced as such throughout this paper.

experiences of those directly in battle.<sup>2</sup> Thucydides keeps the *History* as accurate as possible, creating one of the world's finest recording works that shaped how modern man studies events as they transpire. As history passes, society must learn to draw connections from across time and space in order to gain a better understanding of how events of the past will affect and influence events of the future. In doing so, humanity will learn better ways of documenting historiography.<sup>3</sup> The Peloponnesian War was of particular fascination to Thucydides for this reason; he thought it would have a monumental effect on the world for years to come and that societies would learn from not only the events that transpired but also from the documentation process. Thucydides' hope was that if future historians saw the affect the Peloponnesian war had on the future that they would be able to use his detailed account to better understand the future, as well as follow his example of preserving history through comprehensive and chronological record-keeping. His presumptions proved accurate as the history lived to tell the future not just the historical events as they occurred, but also the importance of the events themselves.

### **The Man Behind the Facts**

Thucydides was born in in 460 BCE in Halimous (modern Alimos.) Very little is known about his early life that he did not specifically say. Much of his personal information, such as his age and location, is an estimation based on the record keeping of time in the *History*.<sup>4</sup> He was primarily a historian but was called to arms in 424 BCE to be a *strategos* (the Greek word for a general, the highest ranked officer) for the Athenian army. As a general, Thucydides was able to come into intimate contact with the war itself and as such was able to gain better access to the battles as they occurred. From these personal experiences, Thucydides provided firsthand accounts of what was happening, and transcribed them into the *History*. He is praised throughout time for his process of

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<sup>2</sup> Thucydides. *The Peloponnesian War*. Translated by Rex Warner. England: Penguin Books, 1954. In Book One, pg. 108 Thucydides uses the firsthand knowledge of Cylon, a victor in the Olympic Games, who attempted to seize the Acropolis and instate himself as dictator. This was an example of early strife and the beginnings of the war, helping to piece together those little moments of history that add up to create the end result.

<sup>3</sup> Note: Historiography is the study of historical writings, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary

<sup>4</sup> Warner, *History*, 10. The quote of "... I myself remember that all the time from the beginning to the end of the war... I lived through the whole of it, being of an age to understand what was happening" (5.26) shows the inferences that could be made about Thucydides based on the clues he gave the reader.

meticulous fact checking and research that makes the *History* as complete as possible.<sup>5 6</sup> While other noted historians of the same era were known for their creative and narrative style of prose, such as Tacitus (writer of the Roman *Annals*) and Herodotus (historian of the *Histories*, a series of works on the Greco – Persian Wars), Thucydides remained dedicated to the facts; all the facts, no matter if they seemed inconsequential. Thucydides saw no reasons for opinions and thought they created a blockade when trying to spread the real message, which were the realities of the events. For this reason, Thucydides had the power to be objective, not detailing his own thoughts in order to see the bigger picture. At the same time, his one-mindedness for detail makes the *History* quite extensive, some say to the point of being excessive with detail.<sup>7</sup> When conflict started to break out between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians, Thucydides predicted that the event was going to spiral into a bigger war and would be unmatched in its importance to all of civilization; affecting countries across the world as well as through time. He thought it would be significant enough to dedicate his life to writing the complete work of its account.<sup>8</sup> This proved to encase his entire lifetime, with Thucydides writing from the start of the war in 431 BCE through the 21<sup>st</sup> year, where the *History* abruptly ends mid-sentence, presumably because Thucydides unexpectedly died. The war continued for 14 more years, ending in 404 BCE.<sup>9</sup> After his death, the *History* was subdivided into eight separate books and given the modern title of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

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<sup>5</sup> Kemos, Alexander. "The Influence of Thucydides in the Modern World." *Point of Interest* 1, no. 4 (1996): 1. Accessed January 12, 2016. doi:<http://www.hri.org/por/thucydides.html>

<sup>6</sup> Basu, Sammy. *Thucydides and the War*. Master's thesis, Willamette University, 2001. Although he was a general in the Athenian army, he was exiled in 424 BCE after a loss in Amphipolis (which is arguably not his fault) and subsequently followed the war freely instead of where his Athenian duties were needed.

<sup>7</sup> Westlake, H. D. "The Mind of Thucydides." *The Classical Review* 32, no. 1 (1982):21. Accessed February 14, 2016. Pg. 21 "A biographical sketch is followed by consideration of the insistence of Thucydides on accuracy, of the various techniques adopted to produce unity, and of the differences between his approach to history and that of Herodotus." While details are important to learning the whole truth of a situation, it can also deviate from the main reason of the record-keeping if swallowed by hundreds of little facts. If a history was to be comprised of random details of everything in the picture, no history would be finished or even written.

<sup>8</sup> Warner, *History*, 16 "The past cannot be cross-examined and Thucydides made it plain at the outset that only the most patient checking and double-checking could reach the truth. Therefore, the past can never be really known."

<sup>9</sup> Warner, *History*, pg. 30. "A number of writers in the fourth century BCE continued the story where he broke off. The one surviving example, Xenophon's *History*, begins exactly at the point at which Book VIII of Thucydides stops" Although Thucydides had no formal successors, the rest of the war is able to be pieced together through works of other historians such Xenophon.

## The Rise of the Conflict

The Peloponnesian War had its roots, as do many wars, in matters that were so many decades in the past, the connection linking the conflicts together seems to be almost non-existent. However, these connections are important in relating the events of the past to historiography as a whole. In the case of the Peloponnesian War, the reasons for it are traced as far back as the democratic reforms of Cleisthenes in the year 508 BCE. Credited with restructuring the hierarchy of ancient Athens which favored the elite to one of more parity, Cleisthenes wanted to increase the power of the general public. Because of his reforms, he is often referred to as “the father of Athenian democracy.” At the time of his influence, Greece was a place of constant struggle, with each city-state fighting its own war, as dictator after dictator was overthrown by a greedy adversary. At the time of the upstart of the democratic struggles, Cleisthenes himself was locked in a war for power with Isagoras, an aristocrat who was Cleisthenes’ most bitter rival.<sup>10</sup> Isagoras was the epitome of what Cleisthenes opposes, as he was of aristocratic background and was in line to become an archon of Greece, as well as one of the nine chief magistrates of Greece.<sup>11</sup> By promising such drastic reforms, Cleisthenes hoped to overthrow the hierarchy, and he knew he could only accomplish this by appealing to the non-aristocratic masses that had congregated in Athens. Isagoras, enraged in possibly being cheated of his title and position, called to the Spartans who were known to be against the democratic reforms that allowed for more independence. This was the first brewing of conflict between the Athenians and Spartans, and while it ended quickly, it caused mistrust to be planted between the two indefinitely. Cleisthenes’ reforms deviated from the social norm of having the rich lead the poor, who would then always be indebted to the aristocracy.<sup>12</sup> Instead, he focused on creating tribal groups and separated people by what they identified with. He made pre-existing villages of the countryside of Athens different units of political organization. From here, those

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<sup>10</sup>Martin, Thomas R. “An Overview of Classical Greek History from Mycenae to Alexander.” *The Perseus Project at Tuft University*. Accessed March 1, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> An archon was chief magistrate of the Greek city-states who also was in charge of civic and religious duties, such as organizing festivals and helping the public run smoothly. The term archon means “to rule” and is derived from the same root as “monarch”.

<sup>12</sup> David, Ephraim. “A Preliminary Stage of Cleisthenes’ Reforms.” *Classical Antiquity* 5, no. 1 (April 1986): 1-13. Accessed February 20, 2016

individual villages became part of the collection of grouped administrations that were known as tribes, and their job was to accurately represent all the people's needs, based off a scale of population. In short, it is the beginning of the democratic process that was established in the United States in 1789. By breaking up existing groups, whether those were based off politics or social standing, Cleisthenes was trying to undermine the standing political alliances that would cause the new democratic process to fail and lead Greece into a more representative governmental system.

Knowing this background on the early development of conflict between the aristocracy and democratic reforms is essential to understand how the Peloponnesian War escalated from a disagreement to a full-blown war. Sparta, a strict diarchical monarchy, always opposed democracy because it threatened their way of life. The democratic reforms of Cleisthenes offered a way of living that did not use violence as a way to handle disputes. In contrast, Spartans only practiced rule enforced by violence and panicked when they learned that their way of life would be disturbed. But early on in Ancient Greece, Athens established itself as a major power in the Mediterranean, creating an empire that dominated the surrounding city-states. Athens wrestled the control of previously independent nations away and, in addition to adding these territories to their domain, instated a democracy modeled after Athens own government. As part of the democracy, Athens' expected these nations to pay taxes and other dues, which created lots of resentment toward the Athenian government.<sup>13</sup> These conquered nations, which were mostly comprised of aristocrats looking to regain their former wealth and livelihood after being driven out by Athenian democrats, desperately turned to Athens' major adversary Sparta, for help regaining their land. Sparta answered the call, aided by the Peloponnesian central Greece states, and Corinth, which became known as the Peloponnesian League. Sparta struck Athens by attacking islands and coastal states that comprised the Delian League in order to free the formerly independent city-states, who were calling for help to stop the spread of democracy and regain their previous prosperity.

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<sup>13</sup> Warner, *History*, pg. 73. "Out of fear of Athens [Aegina] has not send a formal delegation, but behind the scenes they played a considerable part in fomenting ear, saying that they had not been given the independence promised to them by the treaty."

Before the formal declaration of war that would become known as the Peloponnesian War, Athens and Sparta had been in constant conflict for years. In 445 BCE, just 14 years before the Peloponnesian war began, they called a truce – known as the Thirty Year's Treaty – that offered an uneasy peace.<sup>14</sup> As Athens started to become more power hungry, conquering lands left and right to spread their democratic empire, they pushed the boundaries of the Thirty Years' Treaty to the point of breaking it. Sparta threatened war if Athens didn't stop expanding their land, saying Athens was trying to provoke them into breaking the treaty, to which Athens responded with more expansion.<sup>15</sup> With the urging of aristocratic city-states, Sparta attacked Athens and in doing so forfeited the peace treaty. After the initial catalyst, both sides picked different strategies to best see the war through, with the Athenians relying on their money and sea power to outlast the Spartans, who instead opted for the riskier tactic of trying to convince neutral cities to revolt against Athens.<sup>16</sup>

For 27 years, battles raged around the Mediterranean. Most of the fighting was sea based, and took place advantageously around Athenian island towns in the Aegean Sea, as they had the capacity to abruptly defeat fleets of Spartan ships as they enter the channel.<sup>17</sup> The fighting continued through a series of proxy wars that slowly chipped away at the heart of both the empires. Both sides were never truly winning and both continued to spend copious amounts of money for the duration of the war. The war changed to favor Sparta in 430 BCE, when an outbreak of the plague erupted in Athens. Almost one-third of the Athenian public died, which reduced the size of the army considerable and weakened the survivors.<sup>18</sup> The epidemic pushed the Spartans in a position of power and put the

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<sup>14</sup> Bolmarchich, Sarah. "The Date of the 'Oath of the Peloponnesian League'" *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 57, no. 1 (2008): 65-79. Accessed March 1, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Thucydides, *History*, pg. 82. "Most people's views tended to the same conclusion – namely, that Athens was already acting aggressively and that war should be declared without delay." Excerpt from Corinthian speech to rally Sparta.

<sup>16</sup> E-International Relations. "Review- History of the Peloponnesian War." Last modified March 14, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> Warner, *History*, pg. 105. "There are many reasons why [a Spartan] victory should be ours. First, we are superior in numbers and in military experience... As for sea-power, in which they are strong, we shall build ours up both from the existing resources of our alliance..."

<sup>18</sup> Warner, *History*, pg. 151-56. "The bodies of the dying were heaped one on top of the other, and half-dead creatures could be seen staggering about in the streets or flocking around the fountains in their desire for water... [The plague's] full force was felt at Athens and, after Athens, in the most densely populated of the other towns."



already struggling Athenians into a worse strategic station; they simply couldn't keep up with the force of numbers that Sparta possessed. Nonetheless, Athens refused to give up and only surrendered when Sparta had completely surrounded them, cutting off all resources in 401 BCE. The war's end left the Athenian army core eviscerated and Sparta victorious. Not only was its military ruined, but Athens was also decimated in its revenues, social cohesiveness, and power – both international and domestic.<sup>19</sup> The aftermath of the Peloponnesian war left the whole of Greece impoverished and in need of stability. While the war was fought from the Spartan standpoint of ending democracy, history did not pan out as expected. Sparta won the battle but lost the long-term war over democracy as it continued to spread in prominence and the Greek empire moved forward to a new era. All this history, told within 570 pages of the *History*, creates a work of historiography that was necessary to showcase an influential segment of Greek history.<sup>20</sup>

### **The Contribution of the *History* to Civilization**

In order to properly record the history of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides adopted a unique writing style from other historians of the time, choosing to write in a simple sequence of factual events rather than adding his own embellishments and opinions. These recorded facts he either witnessed himself or performed rigorous fact checking with multiple in order to get a complete view of the situation.<sup>21</sup> He wasn't worried about people *liking* his work – history is meant to be a tool to teach rather than an instrument for amusement, as simply stated by Thucydides in the quote, “My work is not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last forever.”<sup>22</sup> He wanted to remain truthful to the events themselves, and his opinions would skew the truth of the facts, so he omitted them from his work. Many scholars have scolded this, arguing that by leaving out his opinions, he is in fact neglecting a huge part of the

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<sup>19</sup> The Perseus Project at Tufts University, the section of *The Peloponnesian War and Athenian Life*.

<sup>20</sup> Note: The 570 page count is in consideration from the Warner translation and excludes the translators note, M.I. Findley's introduction, and appendixes.

<sup>21</sup> Warner, *History*, 16. “The past cannot be cross-examined and Thucydides made it plain at the outset that only the most patient checking and double-checking could reach the truth. Therefore, the past can never be really known.”

<sup>22</sup> Warner, *History*, 48.

*History*.<sup>23</sup> However, because Thucydides was the only person writing on the Peloponnesian War completely at the time, he felt he had to remain objective and tell the facts straight to give future generations a glimpse at a history that is written as unbiased as possible.

Why was this war important? What made it so different from others that Thucydides decided to dedicate his life to its retelling? In Book One, Thucydides states:

“Thucydides the Athenian wrote the history of the war fought between Athens and Sparta... in the belief that it was going to be a great war and more worth writing about than any of those which had taken place in the past. My belief was based on the fact that the two sides were at the very height of their power and preparedness and... the rest of the Hellenic World was committed to one side or the other...” (35)

Thucydides saw the war as an opportunity to document something great that would have everlasting effects on the Greek world, as well as the world beyond. The war started, as we know, from resentment at the expansion of the Athenian Empire and resistance of instating a democracy, but events after the Peloponnesian War tell us that the conflict marked the end of the Greek Golden Age. Split apart in a war-torn country, with anger still fueled from decades of fighting, Greece was completely reshaped. Athens, once a leading empire, was completely devastated and would never regain their pre-war prosperity. Meanwhile, Sparta became the new figurehead of Greece, and the city-states were left to deal with the economic effects of the war. The once stable city-states fell into poverty and many were unable to become financially secure again. Even after the war was officially over, there were still constant clashes over which system of ruling was better; the system of democracy established by Cleisthenes, or Spartan oligarchic method. It was an extremely influential time, ushering in a new era as Athens slowly faded and Sparta took prominence. As we know from Thucydides' *History*, all the incidents and events of the Peloponnesian war built on one other to create an interconnected chain leading to the downfall of one civilization and the rise of another. The war was important for Greek culture because it

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<sup>23</sup> Tannenbaum, R.F. "Who Started the Peloponnesian War?" *Arion: A Journal of Humanities and the Classics* 2, no. 4 (1975): 533-46. By leaving out his opinions, historians believe that Thucydides was taking away the chance for future generations to learn from the personal experiences of people living through the era.

ended the Athenian era, just as the Athenian era had ended the era of the Persians.<sup>24</sup> If the Athenian empire had not been attacked, it would have more likely have kept expanding, leaving Greece in a drastically different place than it was after the war, with the Athenian empire reaching who knows how far. The war not only affected Greece, but the whole world by ushering in this new dominion of Spartan rule, and opened up a new chapter in history.

### **A Comparison of Thucydides to Other Historians of the Time**

While all great historians are open to critique, Thucydides was exceptionally so. His writing style of leaving all the facts on the table was admired, if not copied. Another historian of note from the time period was Herodotus and the both of their individual works are comparative in style. Herodotus was born in 484 BCE, before Thucydides, and thus laid down the groundwork for breaking from the Homeric tradition of historical collection by telling facts rather than relaying stories.<sup>25</sup> While Herodotus had a major influence on Thucydides, both men were given titles of being “fathers of history” for different methods; Thucydides focused on giving scientific sequences of events rather than a literary description of what was happening.<sup>26</sup> Thucydides told the events, step by step, as they happened, leaving the reader to reach their own conclusions about why the events happened the way they did. Herodotus was different in the way that he would give all the details, like Thucydides, but also include explanation for why it was done that way. He found it was important to share his opinions on why the events happened so future generations would have the complete, in-depth explanation for why things were the way

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<sup>24</sup> Flory, Stewart. “Review: The Most Brilliant of Successes, the Most Calamitous of Defeats.” *The Sewanee Review* 112, no. 1 (2004). P. ii, IV, VI. Accessed March 2, 2016

<sup>25</sup>De Ste. Crix, G. E. M. "Herodotus." *Greece & Rome* 24, no. 2 (October 1977): 134-35. Accessed February 29, 2016. Cambridge University Press. “The second of the two great Greek innovations I mentioned is their habit of exact and scrupulous observation: the accumulation of empirical evidence in the human environment is relevant to man’s life under this falls... the historical, anthropological, and ethnographic material presented by Herodotus; and Thucydides’ extraordinary detailed and precise account of the Peloponnesian War and its antecedents.”

<sup>26</sup> Warner, *History*, pg. 15 “Thucydides never mentions Herodotus by name, but there are enough indirect indications that he had read his predecessor with care.”

that they were, rather than a just a complete view of what happened.<sup>27</sup> This is best stated in the quote from Herodotus's own work:

“This is the publication of the research Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that the actions of people shall not fade with time, so that the great and admirable achievements of both Greeks and barbarians shall not go unrenowned, and, among other things, to set forth the reasons why they waged war on each other.”<sup>28</sup>

When historians of today think of Herodotus, they think of someone who helped to put context to the events: someone who explained why the events occurred the way that they did, reasons that would have been otherwise lost with time if they had not been explained. Of course, this also means that Herodotus' explanation can reflect a biased viewpoint, and this can be dangerous when telling history if trying to ensure accuracy. This compares to Thucydides, who did not explain the reasons and rather just told it, leaving the elucidation to the reader. These two styles of historiography are both helpful in different ways and from different views of critic. While in some instancing, explanation of past events can help to clear the clouds that have been put there by time, in others, the reader must delve into the facts for themselves. This would teach individuals of the past as so they don't repeat the same mistakes, and if the readers must take the facts and interpret it for themselves, it can firmly plant ideas of what is right and wrong, good or bad, in their minds. Thucydides left the world a great history that is dissectible; people can examine it from any angle and take from it specific detail they want to examine in depth. This versatile approach shows how historiography can be created in different forms to allow future historians their own interpretations for learning purposes.

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<sup>27</sup> Murray, Oswyn. "Greek historians". *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (1986): 186-203. Accessed March 4, 2016. Note: another difference between Herodotus and Thucydides was that Herodotus would often bring divine beings into his work as contributing to a moral lesson, which Thucydides was completely against.

<sup>28</sup> Herodotus. *The Histories*. Translated by Walter Blanco. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013. Pg. 5

## Some Reasons for Historiography and its Relationships to Time

In ancient time, many people did not see the point to writing and keeping track of history for the sake of learning. During this period of increased historic archiving, the act of record keeping, was starting to gain acceptance and popularity in Greece, which has long been credited as the innovator of historiography.<sup>29</sup> Much of history is fragmented and incomplete, both from sudden deaths as well as lack of record keeping or destruction of recorded stories. The reception of Thucydides work in the Hellenic Era was less than impressed; people did not have the need or put any value in the history as Thucydides had intended it.<sup>30</sup> For this reason, works such as Thucydides' are so precious because their careful documentation and preservation is as complete as possible to show a glimpse into the past of what was.

Thucydides, however unintentional, taught future civilizations many lessons not only on history, but also on philosophy and educated reasoning. Instead of retelling the facts of the war as they occurred, Thucydides made an active point to show, through documented history, the events, that led to wars starting rather than someone's opinion as to why the war was started.<sup>31</sup> This idea helped future historians identify factors of warfare, and Thucydides work had been used by military strategists to examine this further.<sup>32</sup> This different avenue from which historiography can be used shows the multi-dimensional elements that go into history help people to better understand themselves and the world around them. Thucydides wanted his work to last forever so it would help teach new generations what happened in the Peloponnesian War and for the world to know he was

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<sup>29</sup>Grethlein, Jonas. "The Ride of Greek Historiography and the Invention of Prose." *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*. February 2011. Accessed March 3, 2016. "... the rise of Greek historiography against the backdrop of contemporary intellectual developments, and traces back the manifold interactions between the works of Herodotus and Thucydides...It first touches upon the close relationship of historiography to scientific works and rhetoric in fifth-century Greece."

<sup>30</sup> Hornblower, Simon. "The Fourth-Century and Hellenistic Reception of Thucydides." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 115 (1995): 47-68. Accessed March 3, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Tannenbaum, pg. 535 "Impersonality means objectivity and that was what Thucydides strove for in his account of the origins of the war... he succeeded, with the result that we cannot say who is to blame. He did not intent us to. He did not want to tell us who started the war, but to show us how wars start."

<sup>32</sup> Desmond, William. "Lessons of Fear: A Reading of Thucydides." *Classical Philology* 101, no. 4 (October 2006): 359-379. Accessed January 10, 2016.

inspired by the major events of his lifetime. In many ways, the past is a trial run for the future and only when humanity learns from the mistakes of past decisions, will progress or new ways of thinking actually be made.

Western culture takes many of its roots in government from the Greek system of democracy. Thucydides was correct in thinking the Peloponnesian War would be of the utmost importance and people would need to learn from it.<sup>33</sup> It shows the adversity in trying to create a new way of life that compares to the old, and this dissension has been repeated time and again through history, whether it be the United States when debating the best Constitution in 1780 or Nelson Mandela's efforts to overthrow apartheid in South Africa in 1950. These themes of overthrowing oppression and documenting history in order to not echo the mistakes of the past are seen again and again, as plain as in the time of the Peloponnesian war.<sup>34</sup> With these repetition of events, the necessity of historiography is ever more important because it can shed light on how to do things better. Thucydides' perfection of recounting enables the more specific aspects to not be missed, as it is the small details that make up the whole picture.

Having original sources like that of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* have completely changed how the world sees itself. Because of his precise documentation of the event it is easy to see how the future of tomorrow is affected by the past. Without his invaluable works, the world would not know of the Peloponnesian War, and if they did, it would be incomplete or otherwise altered due to storytelling passing through time. The accuracy of his work and use of fact checking with many sources show that Thucydides' dedication to the craft of historiography was ground-breaking during his era, in addition to setting the bar for historiography in the future. What started out as documentation of a time period and of a struggle between oligarchies and democracies, ended as a key tool for the future to figure out their own path based on lessons from their past.

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<sup>33</sup> Flory, Stewart. "Thucydides' Hypothesis about the Peloponnesian War." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 118 (1988): 43-56.

<sup>34</sup> Antholis, William, and Russett Bruce. "Do Democracies Fight Each Other? Evidence from the Peloponnesian War." *Journal of Peace Research* 29, no. 4 (1992): 415-34.

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