

The Landmark Thucydides

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Thucydides called his account of two decades of war between Athens and Sparta "a possession for all time," and indeed it is the first and still the most famous work in the Western historical tradition.

Considered essential reading for generals, statesmen, and liberally educated citizens for more than 2,000 years, The Peloponnesian War is a mine of military, moral, political, and philosophical wisdom.

However, this classic book has long presented obstacles to the uninitiated reader. Written centuries before the rise of modern historiography, Thucydides' narrative is not continuous or linear. His authoritative chronicle of what he considered the greatest war of all time is rigorous and meticulous, yet omits the many aids to comprehension modern readers take for granted—such as brief biographies of the story's main characters, maps and other visual enhancements, and background on the military, cultural, and political traditions of ancient Greece.

Robert Strassler's new edition amends these omissions, and not only provides a new coherence to the narrative overall but effectively reconstructs the lost cultural context that Thucydides shared with his original audience. Based on the venerable Richard Crawley translation, updated and revised for modern readers, The Landmark Thucydides includes a vast array of superbly designed and presented maps, brief informative appendices by outstanding classical scholars on subjects of special relevance to the text, explanatory marginal notes on each page, an index of unprecedented subtlety and depth, and numerous other useful features. Readers will find that with this edition they can dip into the text at any point and be immediately oriented with regard to the geography, season, date, and stage of the conflict.

In any list of the Great Books of Western Civilization, The Peloponnesian War stands near the top. This handsome, elegant, and authoritative new edition will ensure that its greatness is appreciated by future generations.

Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War is one of the great books in the Western tradition, as well as its first true historical narrative. Editor Robert Strassler has annotated this classic text to make it more accessible to modern readers and added dozens of maps for easy reference. A helpful introduction places Thucydides in proper historical context and a series of short appendices focus on particular aspects of life and war during the period. But the bulk of the book itself, where Thucydides chronicles the long struggle between Athens and Sparta, enjoys an unexpected freshness on these pages—partly due to Strassler's magnificent editorial labors, but mostly because it's a great story resonant with heroes, villains, bravery, desperation, and tragedy. Every library should have a copy of Thucydides in it, especially libraries on military history, and The Landmark Thucydides is without question the best version available. Robert B. Strassler is an unaffiliated scholar whose articles have appeared in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*. He lives in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Other Books

Xenophon's History of the Affairs of Greece,

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