HIST 40003 Democratic Athens
Paper 2 (3200-3600 words)
Due December 4 by 5 pm

Herodotus was working on his *Histories* from about 440 to 420 BCE. This means that Herodotus was writing and publishing his work during the time when Greece was embroiled in the Archidamian War between Athens and Sparta, the former allies of the Persian Wars.

For this assignment you will analyze Herodotus's *Histories* in the context of his own time and explain how the issues and events going on while he was writing shaped his outlook and the messages and lessons he has for his audience. While many relevant passages of Herodotus were in the class readings at the start of the semester, you should also look over the remainder of book 7-9 that we did not read then. Use Thucydides 1-5.24 to provide the relevant background material and narrative for the Peloponnesian War. Some questions you might wish to consider for your arguments:

- What themes are prominent in the *Histories* that might resonate with an audience in the 430s and 420s? How does Herodotus depict them?
- How does Herodotus portray Athens and Sparta during the Persian Wars, and how might he be using this to comment on the Peloponnesian War?
- How are the issues that come up in Herodotus's portrayals of various "barbarians" pertinent to Greece in the early years of the Peloponnesian War?
- Does Herodotus have anything relevant to say about some of the major issues highlighted in Thucydides, such as justice, democracy, *stasis*, *nomos* v. *phusis*, or empire?
- Why is Herodotus so reticent about referring to events that took place after 479?

You may also want to look specifically at the handful of references Herodotus does make to events surrounding the Peloponnesian War, and consider how his presentation differs from Thucydides's, and why Herodotus might have chosen to highlight them in the way he does. These references are at 6.131 (birth of Pericles), 7.137 (a reference to the execution of ambassadors, cf. Thucydides 2.67), 7.233 (the surprise attack on Plataea, cf. Thucydides 2.2-6), and 9.73 (the Spartan treatment of Deceleia in the Archidamian war).

Limit your analysis to the ancient texts themselves – do not look at modern scholarship. I want to read what you have to say, not what someone else has to say. Looking at other sources or using AI will result in an automatic F on the paper and may result in additional academic sanctions.

Use direct quotes sparingly and when they will specifically illustrate the point you are trying to make. Whenever you are quoting, paraphrasing, or simply referring to something an author says cite the particular passage in you paper. Cite Herodotus and Thucydides by book and chapter number; e.g. "As Thucydides says at 3.5…" or "as explained by Herodotus (8.80)" Don't forget to put a page number at the bottom of the page. Papers should double-spaced, with 1" margins all around. Use Times New Roman or a similar font.

Papers are due on December 4 by 5pm. Upload your paper on BlackBoard. Late papers will not be accepted without prior approval except in cases of documented emergencies.