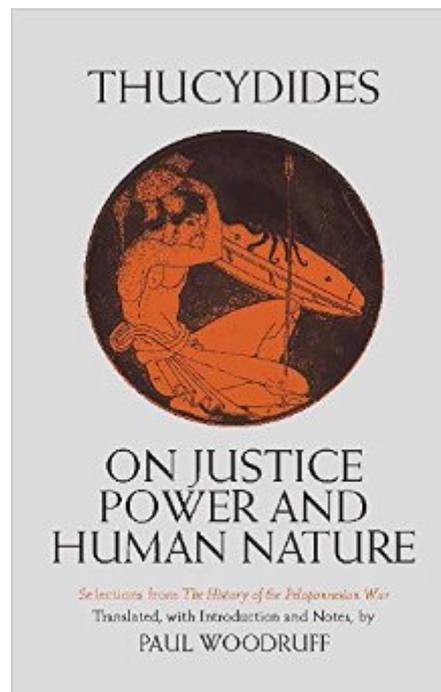


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# On Justice, Power, And Human Nature: Selections From The History Of The Peloponnesian War (Hackett Classics)



## Synopsis

Designed for students with little or no background in ancient Greek language and culture, this collection of extracts from *The History of the Peloponnesian War* includes those passages that shed most light on Thucydides's political theory--famous as well as important but lesser-known pieces frequently overlooked by nonspecialists. Newly translated into spare, vigorous English, and situated within a connective narrative framework, Woodruff's selections will be of special interest to instructors in political theory and Greek civilization. Includes maps, notes, glossary.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I can't think of another abridgment of a classic more after my own heart. I am a passionate believer in reading all of Thucydides, but this book is still the ideal way to get to know what is great about the historian. (And, as our democracy is at war & struggles with imperial entanglements, Thuc. is more relevant than ever.) Basically, Woodruff has an unerring instinct for where Thucydides (not a mere fact-compiler, but one of antiquity's great thinkers) is at his sizzling & profound best. The introduction is a marvelous piece of criticism and analysis: in merely 24 pp. it acquaints the reader with Thucydides' important ideas. The idea of this book is to give you 185 pp. to read cover-to-cover (if not in a single sitting!--what are you waiting for?--do it, and blow your mind). Woodruff's connecting summaries & brief introductory comments to each excerpt make sure that readers will experience the whole coherently. My one quibble is that I'd like to have the defeat of the Sicilian Expedition & its aftermath in all its gruesome detail, but this would have almost doubled the size of

the book and defeated the purposes I've praised above. For a complete translation, try Lattimore (also pub. by Hackett)--or, if 17th c. English doesn't bother you, Hobbes' translation is a real treat to savor.

I agree with the first reviewer: this book is a great condensation of Thucydides' work. The book is edited to retain all of Thucydides' great insights into human nature, power, and politics, but summarized in a way where all of the essential details of the story are left in place. With its sweeping description of events in various areas of the Greece, and its dramatic portrayal of historic figures: the book works as a great description of the nature of politics, democracy and war, and at the same time an engaging study of leadership, and the men who were perported to be great during these times. Daniel Clausen [danielclausen.com](http://danielclausen.com)

Although, like one of the other reviewers on this page, I too am not fond of abridgments, Paul Woodruff's "Thucydides: On Justice, Power, and Human Nature" is an excellent choice for any class on ancient civilization, political theory, or rhetoric [e.g.], in which a number of other readings must be assigned [e.g., from tragedy, comedy, philosophy, depending on the nature of the course]. In clear concise prose, Mr. Woodruff, whose translation aims to clarify any obscurities in the Greek original, focuses on the Athenian historian's "abstract concepts . . . justice, power, human nature, and fear" [viii]--motifs that proliferate the text. Striving to engage the contemporary student, Mr. Woodruff has captured the essence of Thucydides: the historian's analysis of the situation leading to the war; Thucydides' recreations of Pericles' war- and funeral orations as well as those of other politicians including Cleon; the historian's searing accounts of the plague and the Corcyrean revolt; the Plataean and Mytilenian debates; the fruitless "dialogue" between the Athenians and the Melians; the disastrous Sicilian expedition and its aftermath. Mr. Woodruff also writes a splendid introduction, explicating the major issues; he provides footnotes; a bibliography; a welcome glossary of Greek and historically significant terms; maps; and an index. Highly recommended!

Be ware that the Kindle version of this book is broken .. My impression is that the publisher used an automated software to convert a scanned book to Kindle without any quality control at all .. It is unreadable .. Buy the print version! It's a great read but the Kindle version deserves no stars at all ...

For some reason, this book was not transcribed very well to Kindle format. Certain words are broken out oddly in the text, and the flow of the book is therefore disrupted. I tried to fix it by playing around

with the font and size settings, but it didn't work. You can see this problem in the online preview, but I assumed that this would not be the case once I purchased version. I was incorrect. If you would like this book, and want it to be an easier read, buy the hard-copy.

I guess there is no need to write about Thucydides extraordinary talent on explaining the underlying causes of war and his ability to accurately reflect the human nature but as a non native english speaker I should mention that Paul Woodruff's translations and composition of the ancient greek texts are so good and easy to understand for the reader.

The default kindle version for this book has very messed up formatting, HOWEVER, see the other available kindle edition "October 1st, 1993." This version is slightly cheaper, yet very well formatted. The footnotes work properly and the italicized words aren't messed up as in the default kindle edition.

The ebook has random indents throughout, making it impossible to read appropriately. Also doesn't have page numbers. The actual book is interesting though. Just don't buy this copy.

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