



SLOconf

SERVICE LEVEL OBJECTIVE CONFERENCE

MAY 9-12th | ONLINE

SPEAKER

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Google Cloud

TRACK: SLO STORIES

SLO Classical Lit



sloconf.com

SLO Classical Lit



Preface:

- Last time: "Left Brain"
SLO Math
tinyurl.com/sloconf-slo-math
- This time: "Right Brain"
SLO Literature

("Classical Literature" as per Western
Liberal Arts)



5 Points from Ancient Greek Literature

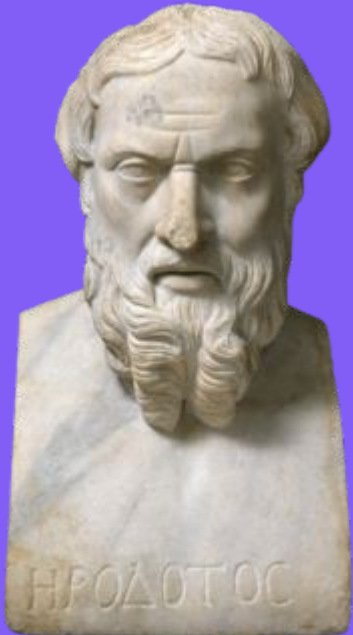


Agenda:

1. **Herodotus** – "The Histories"
2. **Zeno's** – 2nd Paradox
3. **The Odyssey** – The Sirens
4. **Plato's Cave** – Shadows & Forms
5. **The Iliad to The Odyssey** –
Leaving Behind the Bicameral Mind



1. Herodotus: "The Histories"



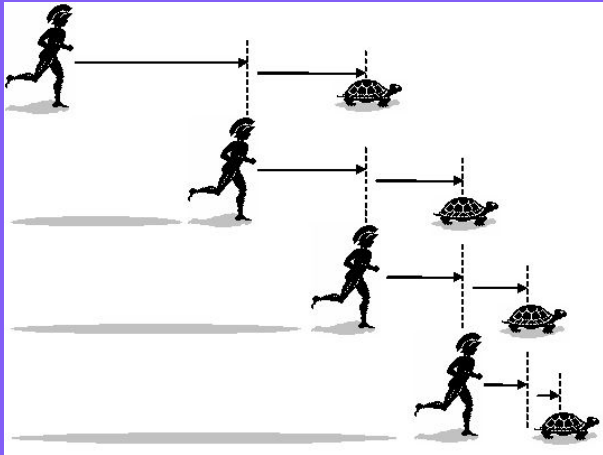
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus

- Considered the first Greek historian
- **Wrote down** what had been only **told verbally** before
- Despite only his second-hand sources, many writings were later verified by archeologists

- SLOs can be the first **codified** (written) account of what was only verbally told or assumed prior
- Written words become **shared understanding** for a group
- SLOs veracity should be **verified** and **updated** as new information presents itself

2. Zeno's 2nd Paradox

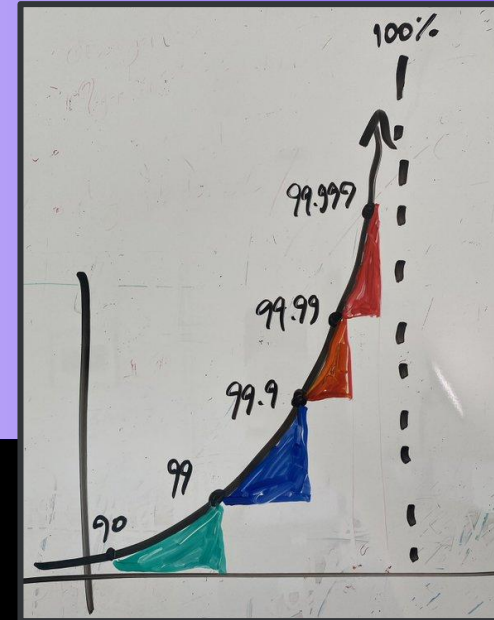
"Achilles and the Tortoise"



ibmathsresources.com/2018/11/30/zenos-paradox-achilles-and-the-tortoise-2/

- A story to describe **asymptotes**
- Seemingly obvious setup (demigod vs animal)
- Subtle questions arise (how close can we measure?)

- Helps us understand the subtlety of "nines"
- i.e. 99.99% is **very close to** 100%, unless you look *closely*
- Each leg of the race gives us **diminishing returns** – just like more 9s



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3. Odysseus and the Sirens

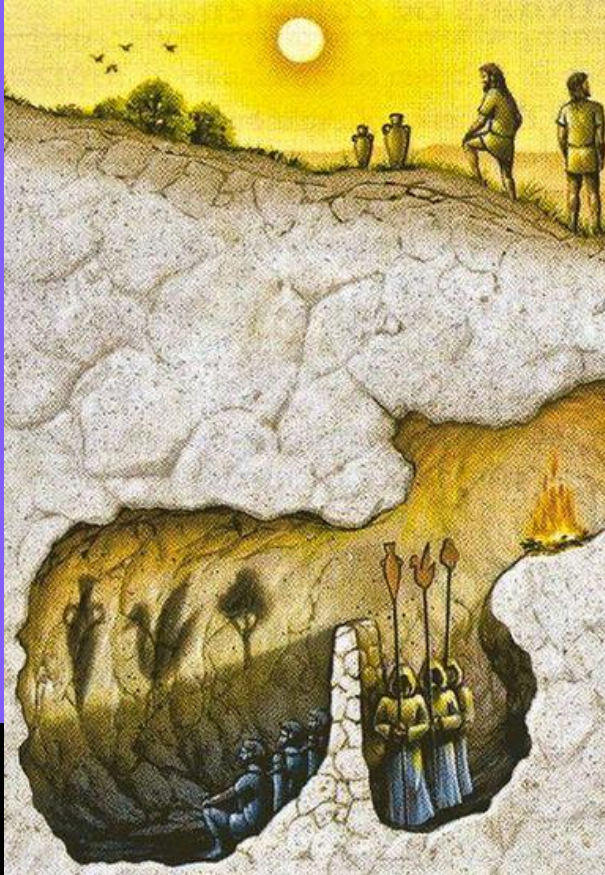


- Odysseus and crew have a **plan** on how to handle disaster
- During the disaster, they stick to the plan, even though The Boss told them not to.
- This is known as a ***Ulysses Pact***

- When defining SLOs, you're deciding what is a disaster and what isn't, and what to do about it.
- If it **isn't** a disaster, don't treat it like one.
- If it is a disaster, **stick to the plan.** (note: *have a plan*)
Focus on bringing the service "back into SLO"
- practice your plan. run drills, develop tools

<GO SLO>

4. Plato's Cave



- Shadows of things != their true nature
- You can see the Shadow, then **imagine** the Form

- Your observations (metrics, logs, traces, events) are **not** the system itself.
- They will only ever represent **partial truth**
- **But that's OK!** As long as you know this and keep it in mind
- This **meta-awareness** helps us improve our interpretation of what we can observe
- Inspires **higher order thinking**: SLOs, not host metrics.

<GO SLO>

5. Self-Volition through Narrative

(stick with me on this one)

- The Bicameral Mind – internal voices drive action
- The Iliad – Gods force men
- The Odyssey – Man (Odysseus) defies the Gods to travel **his own path**
- What changed? Writing, **shared narratives**

- Writing down your intentions with SLOs is important
- Sharing those SLOs with everyone else is **transformational**
- Without a shared narrative, Ops can **fall back** on irrational behavior, shifting blame (to the gods)
- By sharing the plan (the SLOs), we develop **Self Agency**



(HBO)

<GO SLO>



Takeaways



- ❑ Society can see **its modern self** through ancient texts, finding parallels and persistent themes.
- ❑ Each piece of literature does its part to **advance a society** by influencing the way its readers *think*.
- ❑ IT/Ops/SRE **is a society** across many city-states (companies)
- ❑ SLOs can help you develop a **holistic model of reliability** and self-empowerment

τέλος

