

Hesiod Study Guide
PHIL301
Prof. Oakes
Winthrop University

Reading: Hesiod, Introduction (pp. 1-8, 12-16) and *Theogony*, (pp. 61-90)

Note, too, the helpful Glossary, found on pages 105-128 (at the end of the text).

Our goal is to understand the significance of Ancient Greek philosophy. More specifically, what *logoi* (ideas, concepts) did the Ancient Greeks use to develop *cosmos* out of *chaos*?

Please arrive in class prepared to respond to the following questions.

Hesiod:

(Introduction)

1. Who was Hesiod? What do we know about him and the authorship of *Theogony*? Why are there questions about the identity of Hesiod?
2. Who, if anyone, believed the tales that Hesiod tells in *Theogony*? What do these tales tell us of the religious beliefs of the Ancient Greeks?
3. What is the difference between a “cosmogony” and a “theogony”? Which is provided by Hesiod?
4. In what respect/s, if any, is Hesiod’s *Theogony* a philosophical work?

(*Theogony*)

5. By what means does Hesiod attempt to bring order to our universe? I.e., how does he attempt to explain (a) the existence of the world; (b) the physical make-up of the world; (c) the particular events of the world?
6. To what extent, if any, are Hesiod’s explanations *logical* as opposed to *arbitrary*?
7. What does the *Theogony* tell us about the Ancient Greeks’ understanding of the world around them, if anything?

* An explanation is logical to the extent that some conceptual relation is made between explanatory account (*explanans*) and item explained (*explanandum*); an explanation is arbitrary to the extent that *explanans* and *explanandum* are conceptually unrelated.