

AGONISTIC ELEMENTS IN EMPEDOCLES OF ACRAGAS

A pre-conference seminar for
The Fifth Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Heritage of Western Greece,
with special emphasis on
ἀγών agōn: assembly, struggle, contest, trial, conflict, challenge, strife

Exedra Center Siracusa, Via Saverio Landolina 5, Siracusa, Italy
Conference organizer: Prof. Heather Reid
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René Boyvin, University of Michigan Museum of Art

READINGS

(Each is available as a .pdf at <https://voices.uchicago.edu/leonwash/empedocles-seminar-june-2019/>)

- (1) Empedocles. Selections from the fragments and testimonia (from Laks' and Most's Loeb)
Biography: P3a & b, P8a, P10, P12-15, P19, P21-22
Doctrine: D3-10, D17, D21-22, D25-26, D36-D40, D42, D44, D47, D51-54, D57, D60-62, D65-68,
D73-77, D87-94, D101, D149-157, D164, D201, D207, D213-215, D217, D237, D257
Reception: R31, R37
- (2) Selections for some background in prior literature (from Most's Loeb Hesiod and Laks' and Most's)
Hesiod *Theogony* 224-32 and *Works and Days* 11-26; Xenophanes D59-61; Heraclitus D62-63, D76
- (3) Nietzsche, F. (2007). *On the Genealogy of Morality* (Diethe, C., Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Supplementary Material, "Homer's Contest," pp. 174-81.
- (4) ——. (2001) *The Pre-Platonic Philosophers* (Whitlock, G., Trans.). Urbana: University of Illinois Press, ch. 14, "Empedocles," pp. 106-19.
- (5) Schopenhauer, A. (2010). *The World as Will and Representation* (Norman, J. et al., Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. I, pp. 171-2.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- (6) Benzi, N. (2016) *Philosophy in Verse: Competition and Early Greek Philosophical Thought*. PhD diss, Durham University, ch. 4, "Empedocles, the divine poet."
- (7) Griffith, M. (1990) "Contest and Contradiction in Early Greek Poetry," in Griffith, M. and D. J. Mastronarde, edd. *Cabinet of the Muses*. Berkeley, pp. 185-207.
- (8) Hawhee, D. (2002) "Agonism and Aretê," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 185-207.
- (9) Most, G. (2005) "The Stillbirth of a Tragedy: Nietzsche and Empedocles," in Pierris, A. L., ed. *The Empedoclean Κόσμος: Structure, Process and the Question of Cyclicity*. Patras: Institute for Philosophical Research, pp. 31-44.

SCHEDULE

- 15:00-18:00 Monday 10 June: E. in agonistic contexts
- A. The agonistic background: Nietzsche on Hesiod, etc.
 - B. E. and Classical Greek athletic and political agonism
 - B. E. and the agonism of early Greek philosophy
 - i. Philosophy vs. athletics (E. closer to Pythagoras than Xenophanes)
 - ii. Philosopher vs. philosopher and the agony of E.'s rhetoric
- 09:00-12:00 Tuesday 11 June: Agonism in E., or the *agon* of Love and Strife
- A. Prior accounts of strife in Hesiod and Heraclitus
 - B. Terminological considerations: *agon*, *eris*, etc.
 - C. Cyclic agonism and the problem of the cycle
 - D. E.'s proto-Darwinism and Nietzsche's agonistic E.
 - E. Productive *agon* - productive Strife? E.'s similes