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Trinity Saint David

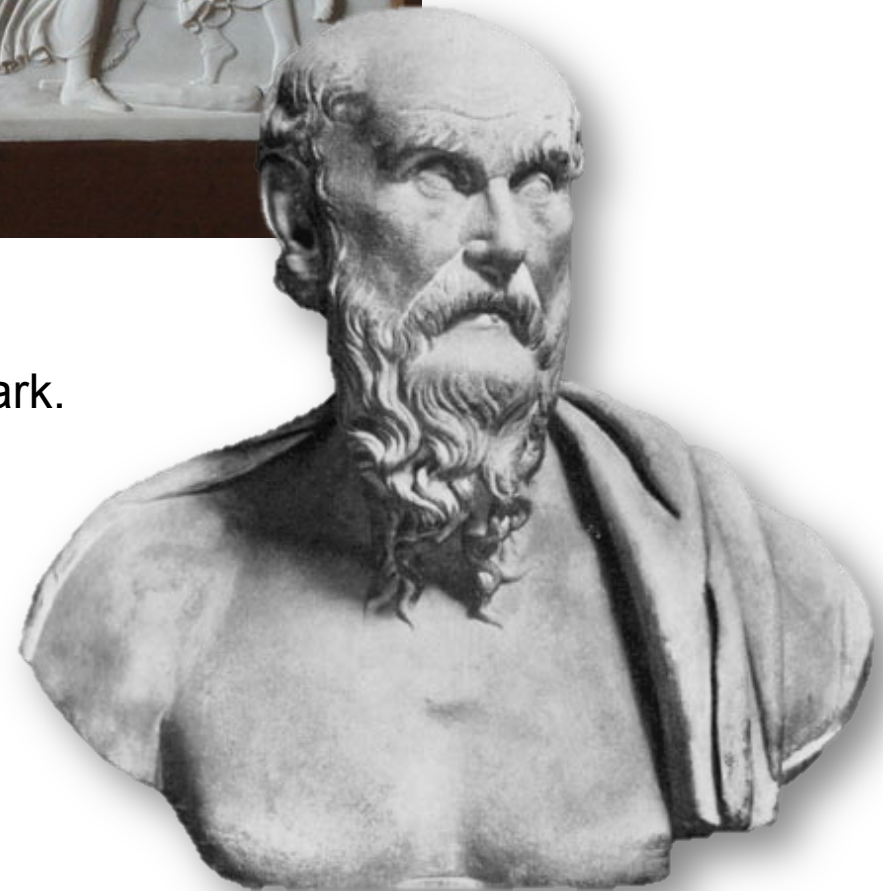
The Sophia Centre for the Study of Cosmology in Culture
School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology
AHAN7024: HEAVENLY DISCOURSES

Week 3:
Hesiod's *Works and Days*
The Labours of the Months

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Tutor: Heavenly Discourses



Dance of the Muses on Mount Helicon, 1807.
Sculptor: Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844)
Thorvaldsen's Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark.

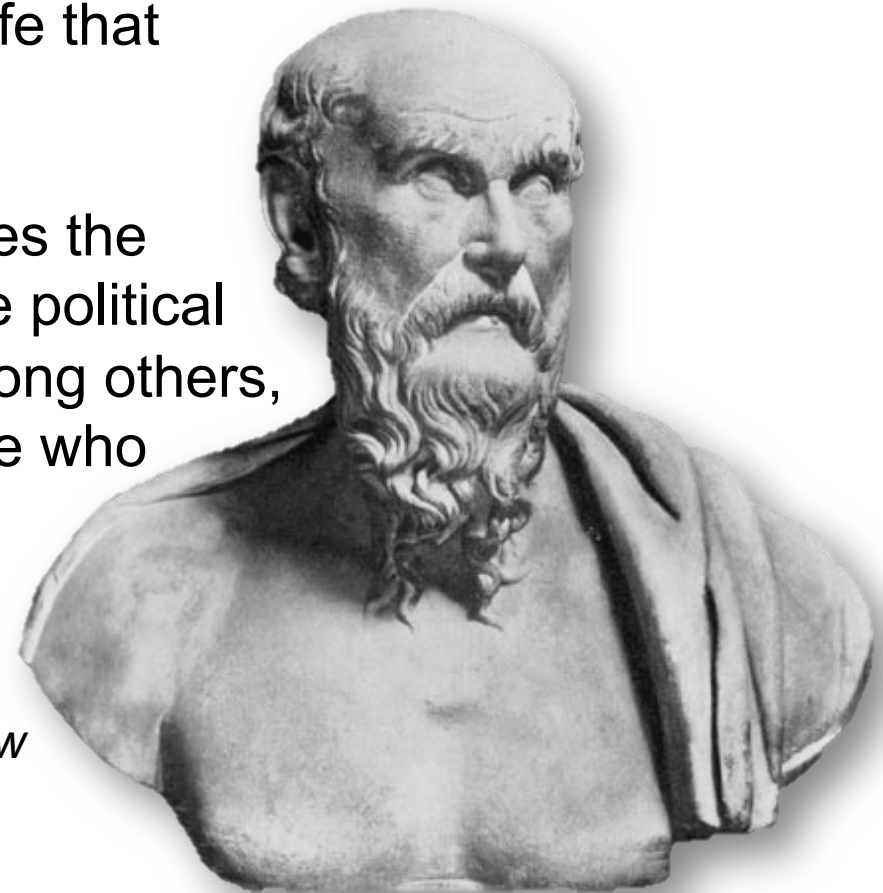


A farmer in Boeotia, central Greece.
Active between 750 and 650 BCE.

‘Hesiod's principal task appears to be the identification (and praise) of the best way of life for his wayward brother Perses, but in carrying out this task, Hesiod speaks of **justice** and its human and divine supports in such a way as to go well beyond what would be of benefit to his brother. For in the course of his analysis of justice, or as a result of it, Hesiod praises also **the life of autonomous understanding**, the life that appears to be poet's own.

In crucial ways, then, Hesiod explores the chief themes of what was to become political philosophy, and for this reason, among others, he deserves the attention of all those who are also concerned with it.'

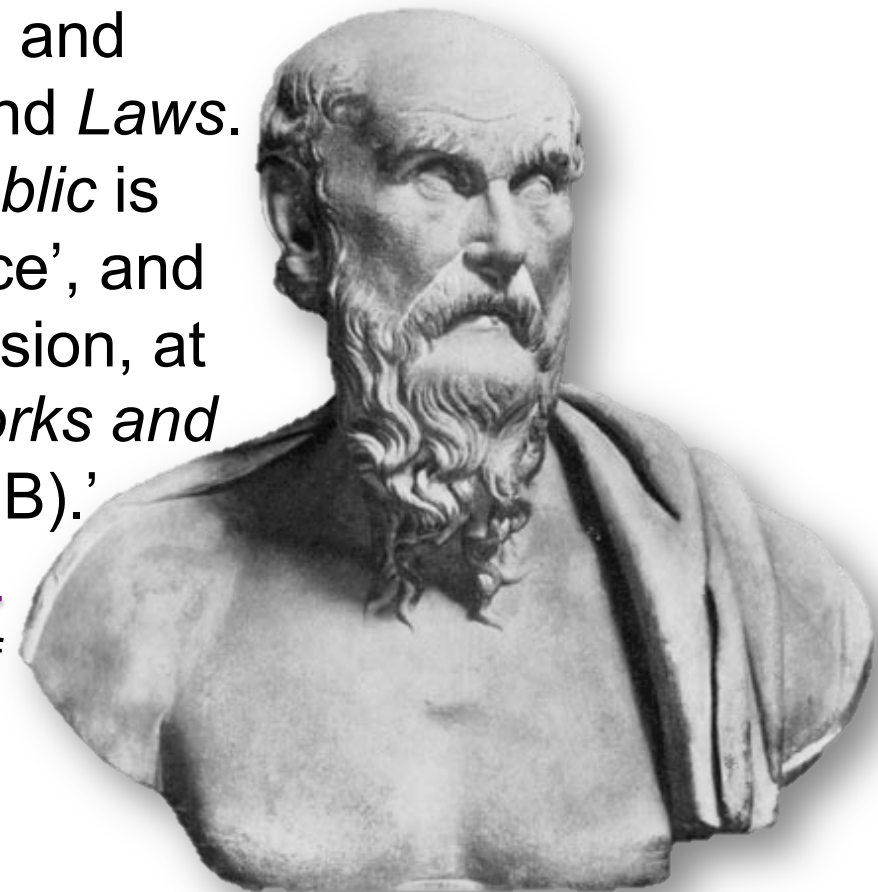
Bartlett, Robert C. 'An Introduction to Hesiod's "Works and Days".' *The Review of Politics* 68, no. 2 (2006): 177-205.



‘Hesiod did not originate, he followed, the tradition of Greek inquiry. But he went further. The present, he declared, is evil, and he asked: ‘How, then, is a good life to be attained?...’

His answer was, **through the establishment of evenhanded justice**. The influence of his conception is manifest in the history of Greek political theory, and especially in Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*. Indeed, the subject of the *Republic* is described as ‘Concerning Justice’, and Plato explicitly linked his discussion, at beginning and end, with the *Works and Days* (Republic II. 363B, X. 612B).’

Teggart, Frederick J. ‘The Argument of Hesiod's *Works and Days*.’ *Journal of the History of Ideas* 8, no. 1 (1947): 45-77.



'Hesiod set before men the first idea of human progress: the idea that **a good life is attainable**; that this attainment is **dependent upon the thought and activity of men themselves**; that the essential requisite is **the actuation of the members of the community by a common regard for justice**.

The second idea of progress, presented by **Thucydides** (460-395 BCE) was that advancement in culture is a growth, and will follow a determinate course, if nothing interferes.

The third idea, that of **Plato** (427 – 347 BCE), was that the organization and maintenance of a good life necessitates the creation of a State in which authority will allot to each individual his special task, and will see that he performs it. In the modern world, men acknowledge in words the validity of Hesiod's argument, but in action show their preference for Plato 's theory of domination.'

Teggart, Frederick J. 'The Argument of Hesiod's Works and Days.'
Journal of the History of Ideas 8, no. 1 (1947): 45-77.

Section I: NARRATOR vs. PERSES (1-382)

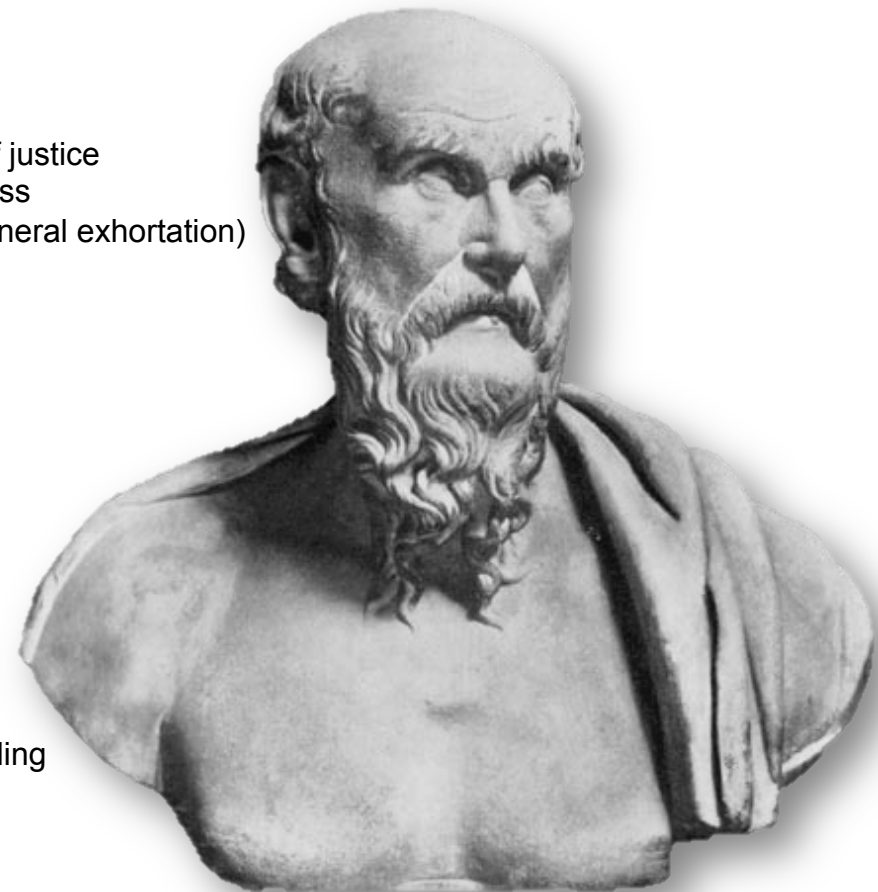
- 1-10: PROEM: Invocation to (Pierian) MUSES
- 11-26: 2 Species of ERIS (strife)
- 27-34: Advice to PERSES: avoid bad strife and pursue good
- 34-41: The quarrel with Perses
- 42-105: PROMETHEUS & ZEUS (exemplum I)
 - 60-104: PANDORA
- 106-201: 5 AGES (genow) of MANKIND
 - 110-126: GOLD/1st: product of Olympians (110) under reign of Kronos (111)
 - 127-142: SILVER/2nd: product of Olympians (128) under reign of Zeus (cf. 138)
 - 143-156: BRONZE/3rd: product of Zeus, warlike bronze ashmen
 - 157-173: HEROES/4th: product of Zeus (157)
 - 174-180: IRON/5th: current age (narrator's view)
- 202-212: HAWK & NIGHTINGALE
- 213-247: ADDRESS to PERSES: HYBRIS and DIKE
- 225-47: TALE of TWO CITIES
- 248-273: ADDRESS to BASILEIS: ZEUS is the guarantor of justice
- 274-319: ADDRESS to PERSES on the path to righteousness
- 319-382: ADVICE (address to Perses gives way to more general exhortation)
 - 327-334 crimes that elicit divine wrath
 - 335-341 exhortation to piety
 - 342-382 household advice

Section II: FARMER'S ALMANAC (383-618)

- 383-492: REAPING, PLOWING, SOWING
- 493-563: WINTER season activities
- 564-617: VITICULTURE

Section III: Miscellaneous Advice (618-828)

- 618-694: SEAFARING
- 632-640: "HESIOD"'S FATHER
- 641-645: PERSES (last mention of him) be mindful of sailing
- 646-653: 'NAUTILIA' (Trojan War).
- 654-659: FUNERAL GAMES for AMPHIDAMOS
- 695-764: RELIGIOUS & SOCIETAL OBLIGATIONS
- 765-828: DAYS OF ZEUS

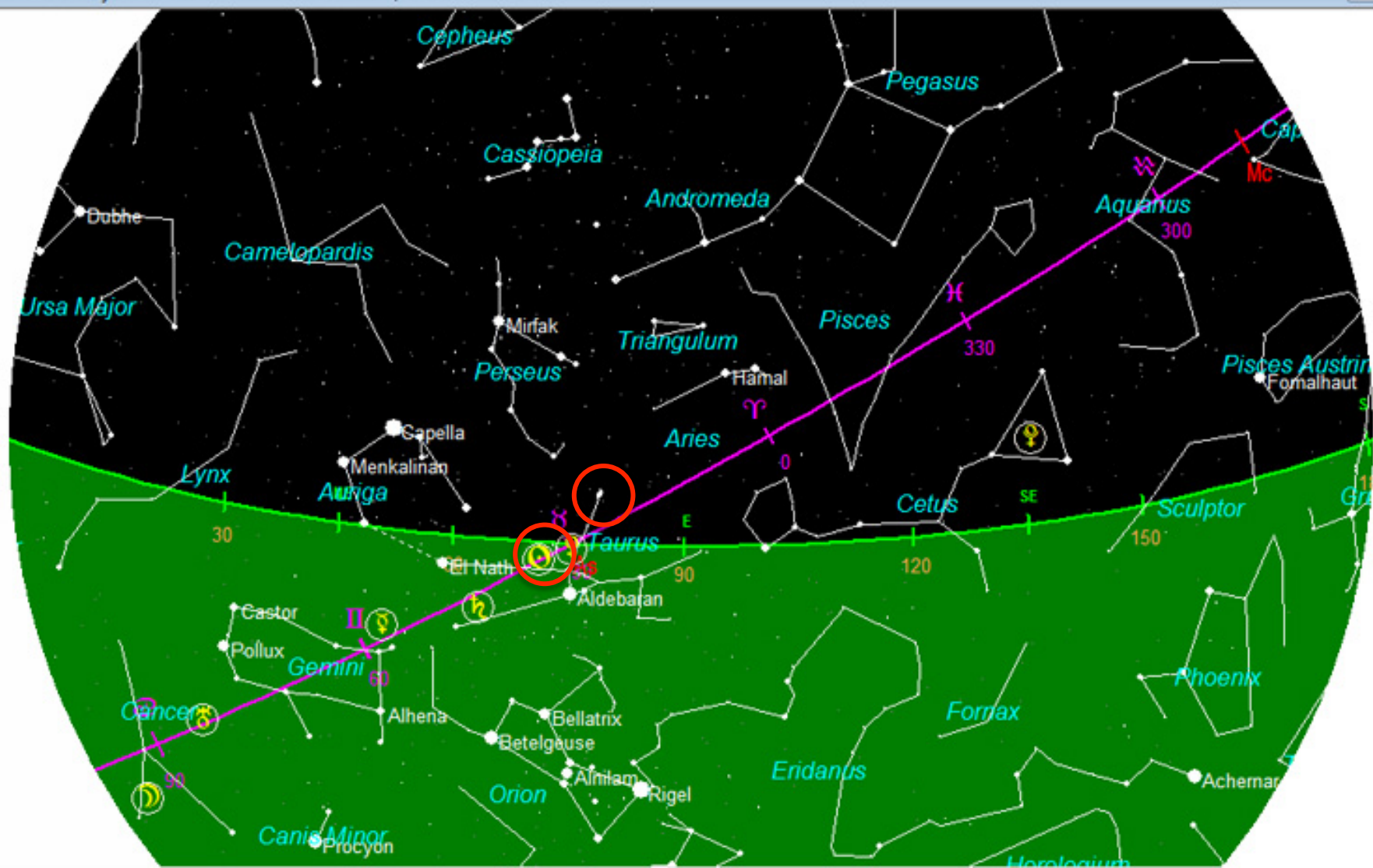


Hesiod. 'Works and Days, Theogony, and the Shield of Heracles.' In *The Homeric Hymns and Homerica*, edited by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications. Inc., 2006.

<http://omacl.org/Hesiod/works.html>

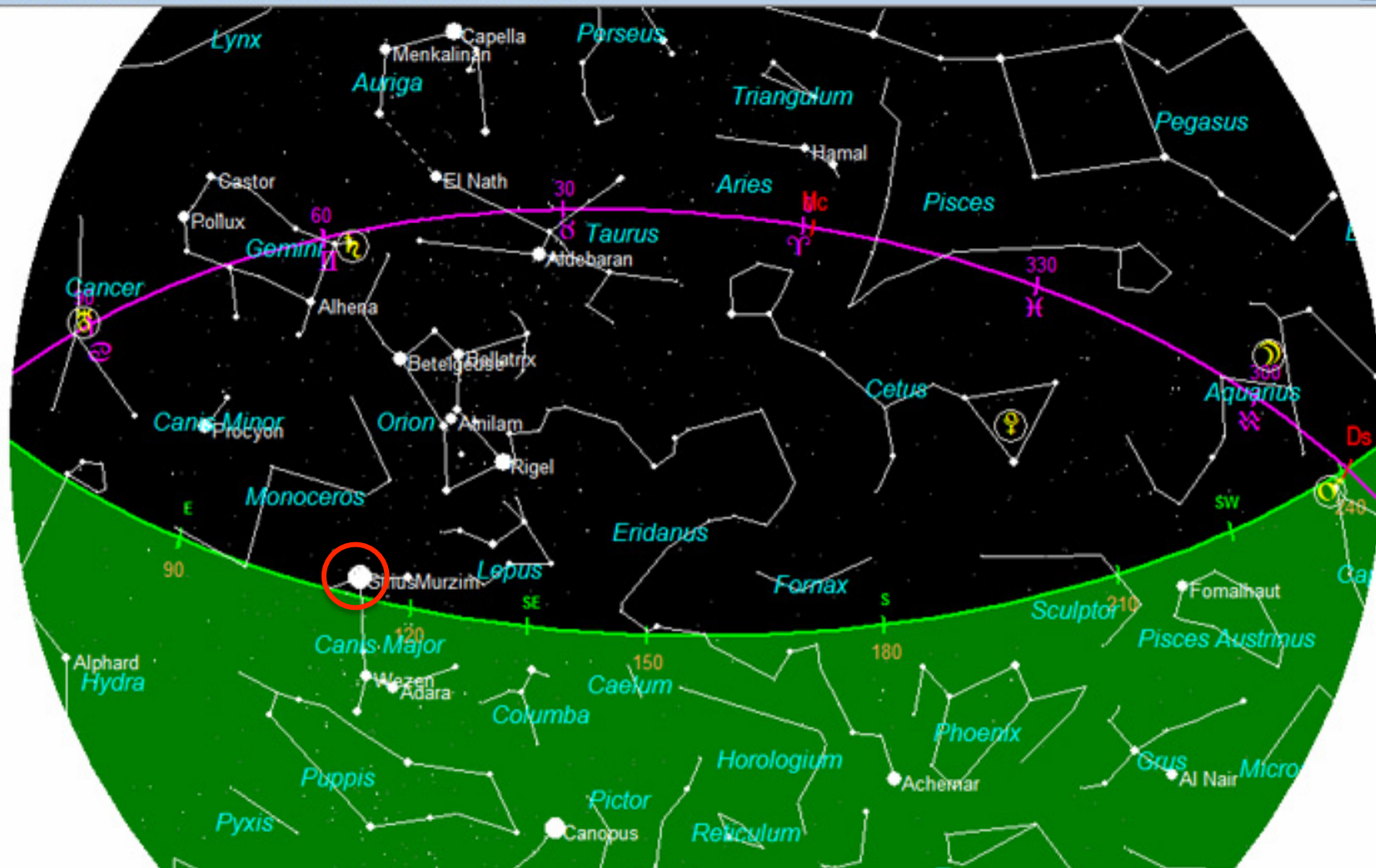
Lines 383-404:

When the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas, are rising [early in May], begin your harvest, and your ploughing when they are going to set [in November]. Forty nights and days they are hidden and appear again as the year moves round, when first you sharpen your sickle. This is the law of the plains, and of those who live near the sea, and who inhabit rich country, the glens and dingles far from the tossing sea, - strip to sow and strip to plough and strip to reap, if you wish to get in all Demeter's fruits **in due season**, and that each kind may grow **in its season**.



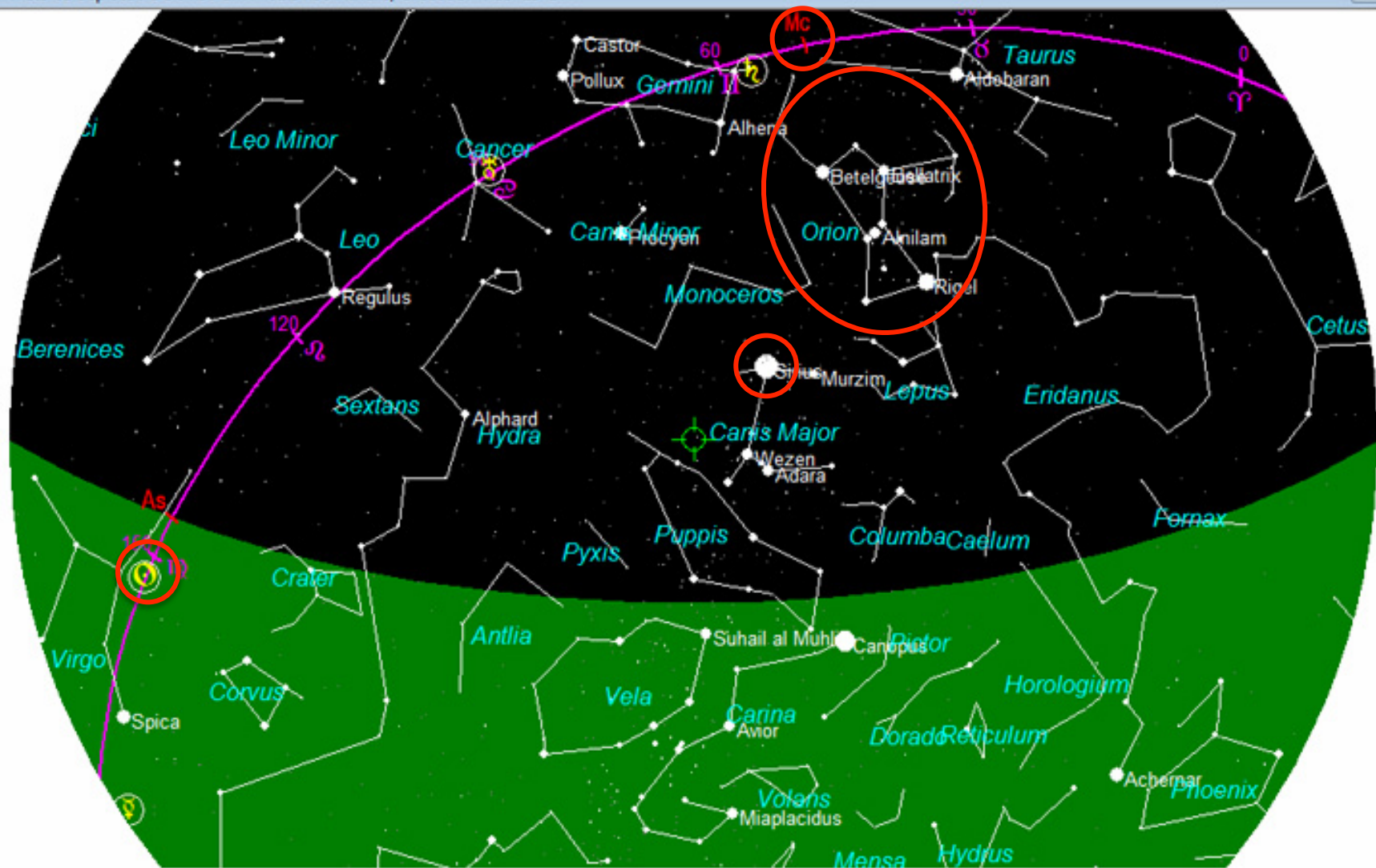
Lines 414-447:

When the piercing power and sultry heat of the sun abate,
and almighty Zeus sends the autumn rains [in October],
and men's flesh comes to feel far easier- for then the star
Sirius passes over the heads of men, who are born to
misery, only a little while by day and takes greater share of
night - then, when it showers its leaves to the ground and
stops sprouting, the wood you cut with your axe is least
liable to worm. Then remember to hew your timber: it is
the season for that work.



Lines 609-617:

But when Orion and Sirius are come into mid-heaven,
and rosy-fingered Dawn sees Arcturus [September],
then cut off all the grape-clusters, Perses, and bring
them home. Show them to the sun ten days and ten
nights: then cover them over for five, and on the sixth
day draw off into vessels the gifts of joyful Dionysus.
But when the Pleiades and Hyades and strong Orion
begin to set [the end of October], then remember to
plough in season: and so the completed year [the
succession of stars that make up the full year] will fitly
pass beneath the earth.





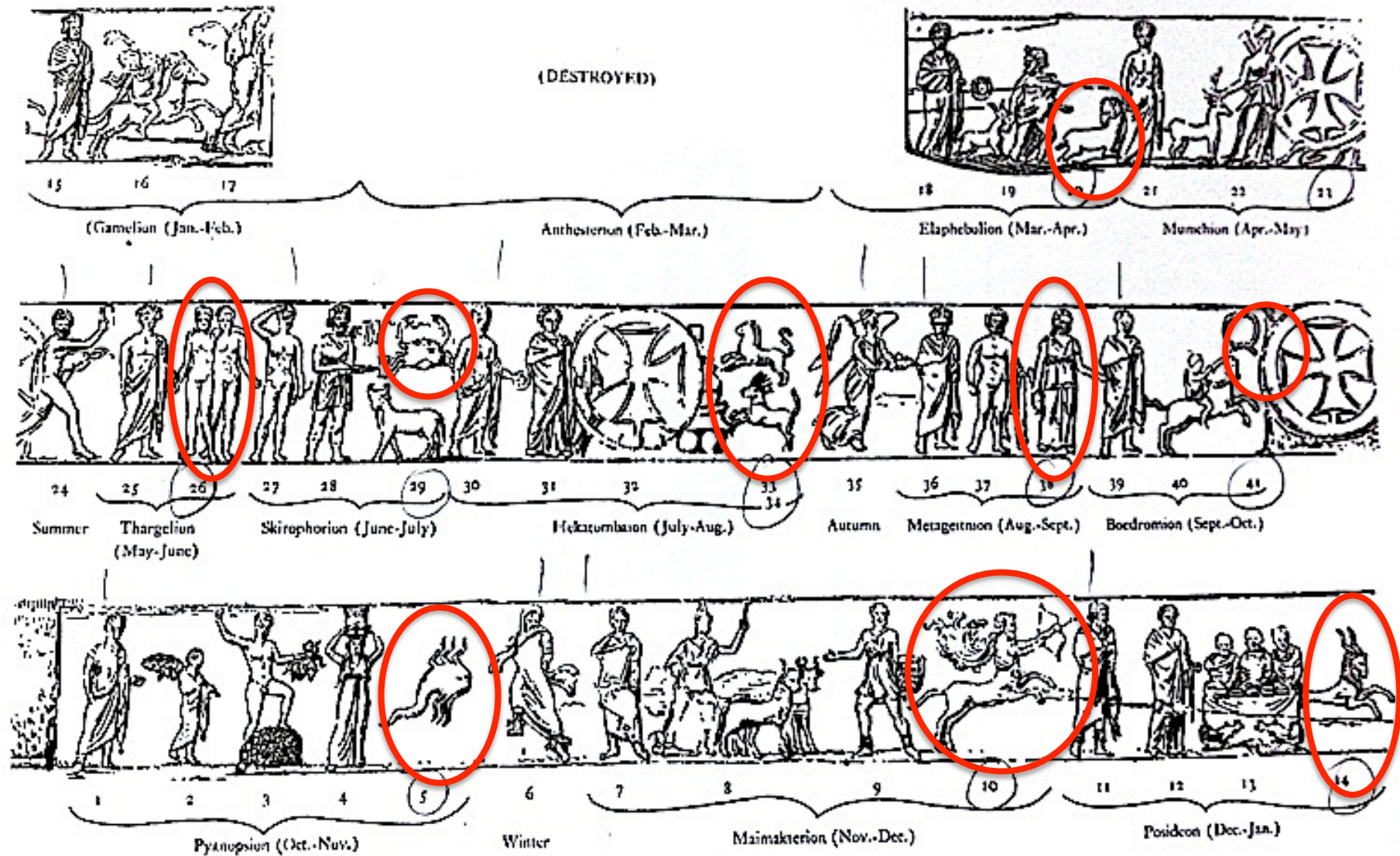
Church of Agios Eleftherios
(St. Eleutherius) in Athens, Greece.

The first expressions of the Labours of the Months appear in sculptured doorways of churches and cathedrals from antiquity to the medieval period are also simplistic and show a recurring pattern involving two elements:

1. The first stemmed from **astronomy** – the desire to make the movement of time memorable .
2. The second was **humanistic**, reflecting man's life on earth.

Hellenistic frieze, Hagios Eleutherios at Athens (c.2nd or 1st century BCE)

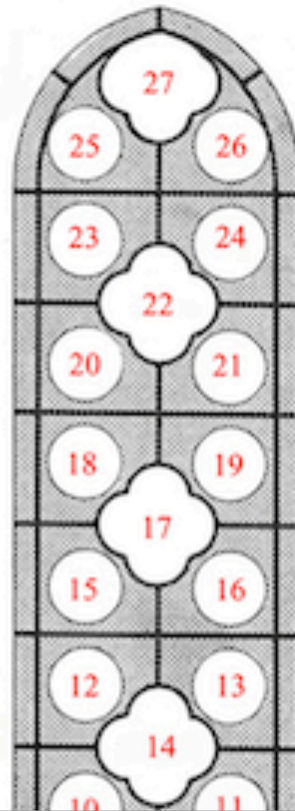
From : Webster, James Carson. *The Labors of the Months*, Northwestern University Studies in the Humanities, Number Four. New York: AMS Press, 1938.



1. Athens, Hagios Eleutherios. Frieze. (After Svoronos.)

Chartres Cathedral Windows: Signs of the Zodiac and Labors of the Months

Deremble- Manhes no. 28a, Delaporte no. 17



- 27. Christ between Alpha and Omega
- 26. Capricorn
- 25. December - Feasting
- 24. Sagittarius
- 23. November – Butchering a Pig
- 22. October - Pouring Wine / Scorpio
- 21. Libra
- 20. September - Wine Making
- 19. Virgo
- 18. August - Threshing Grain
- 17. July - Harvesting Grain / Leo
- 16. Cancer
- 15. June - Mowing
- 14. May - Hunting? / Gemini
- 13. Taurus
- 12. April - Flowers
- 11. Aries
- 10. March - Pruning Vines

But when Orion and Sirius are come into mid-heaven, and rosy-fingered Dawn sees Arcturus [September], then cut off all the grape-clusters, Perses, and bring them home.

<http://www.medart.pitt.edu/image/France/Chartres/Chartres-Cathedral/Windows/Choir-windows/028A-Zodiac/chartres-028AZodiac-main.html>

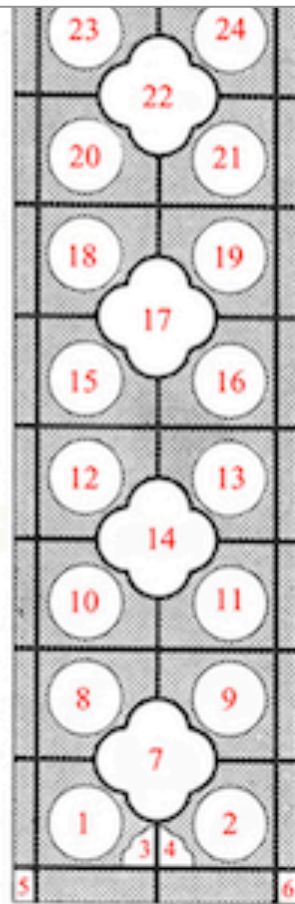
‘But when Orion and Sirius are come into mid-heaven, and rosy-fingered Dawn sees Arcturus [September], then cut off all the grape-clusters, Perses, and bring them home.’ – Hesiod.



Chartres Cathedral Windows: Signs of the Zodiac and Labors of the Months

Dereemble- Manhes no. 28a, Delaporte no. 17

When the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas, are rising [early in May], begin your harvest .



23. November – Butchering a Pig
22. October - Pouring Wine / Scorpio
21. Libra
20. September - Wine Making
19. Virgo
18. August - Threshing Grain
17. July - Harvesting Grain / Leo
16. Cancer
15. June - Mowing
14. May - Hunting? / Gemini
13. Taurus
12. April - Flowers
11. Aries
10. March - Pruning Vines
9. Pisces
8. February - Warming in front of a fire
7. January - Man with three faces / Aquarius
- 4-6. Donors: Vintners
3. Donor: Bell Ringer
2. Donor: Count Thibaut
1. Donors: Vintners

Diagram after Delaporte Flores, p. 227. Panel numbering from Manhes-Dereemble. © Jane Vialat, 2005.

<http://www.medart.pitt.edu/image/France/Chartres/Chartres-Cathedral/Windows/Choir-windows/028A-Zodiac/chartres-028AZodiac-main.html>

‘When the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas, are rising [early in May], begin your harvest.’ - Hesiod



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