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Ethics/Philosophy: Hieron & Eros: "In the beginning, there was..." and "In the end, there will be...": Statements from Philosophy and/or Religions on the Beginning (Arche) and Ending (Telos) of The World (Cosmos)

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Abstract

This session explores the different views of the beginning and the ending of the world between the ancient Greek philosophy/mythology, and Orthodox Christianity.

Timescale

One lecture (approximately 90 minutes)

Key Terms

Hieron, Eros, Philosophy, Orthodox.

Key competences / Learning outcomes

Students should achieve:

• By the end of the session the students should have a clear grasp of the diversity of opinions of the beginning and the ending of the world, according to the ancient Greek philosophy/mythology and the Orthodox Christianity.

• They should also be able to spot similarities and differences and think critically about the external factors (historical, societal, cultural, temporal, etc.) influencing the formation and evolution of these worldviews.

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Teaching Steps

Teaching Steps			
Phase/ Time	**Approach**	**Method**	**Social Form/ Tasks for Students**
Introduction – Revision 5 min	The lecturer reminds the students of what we have examined in the previous sessions.	Lecture: Introduction - Revision	**Lecturer**
Beginning of the world (students) 10 min	The students are split into two groups (ancient Greek philosophy & Christian Orthodox theology) and are asked to come up with as many answers as possible on how the ancient Greeks and Orthodox Christians viewed the beginning of the world.	Finding answers on the question: *"What is the beginning of the world according to the ancient Greek philosophers and the Christian Orthodox Theologians?"*	**Group work**
Beginning of the world (presentat ion &	The students are asked to present their answers and debate on them.	Presentation of answers on Q1 and discussion	**Group work**
Beginning of the world (summary) 15 min	The lecturer sums up the students' findings and presents systematically the main views on the beginning of the world from the perspective of ancient Greek philosophy and that of Orthodox Christian theology. Special emphasis is placed on the external factors (historical, societal, cultural, temporal, etc.) influencing the formation and evolution of these worldviews.	Lecture	**Lecturer**
Ending of the world (students) 10 min	The students are split into two groups (ancient Greek philosophy & Christian Orthodox theology) and are asked to come up with as many answers as possible on how the ancient Greeks and Orthodox Christians viewed the ending of the world.	Finding answers to the question: *"What is the ending of the world according to the ancient Greek philosophers and the Christian Orthodox Theologians?"*	**Group work**

Ending of the world (presentation & discussion) 10 min	The students are asked to present their answers and debate on them.	Presentation of answers on Q2 and discussion	**Group work**
Ending of the world (summary) 15 min	The lecturer sums up the students' findings and presents systematically the main views on the ending of the world from the perspective of ancient Greek philosophy and that of Orthodox Christian theology. Special emphasis is placed on the external factors (historical, societal, cultural, temporal, etc.) influencing the formation and evolution of these worldviews.	Lecture	**Lecturer**
Reflection & Discussion 15 min	The lecturer asks the students to reflect on and discuss the learning outcomes regarding the variety of theories on the beginning and end of the world, as well as the importance of the external factors (historical, societal, cultural, temporal, etc.) shaping them. The students also reflect on the importance of respecting the worldviews of others, if they want to live with harmony in this world.	Reflection and discussion on the diversity of opinions of the beginning and the ending of the world throughout history, as well as the importance of the external factors (historical, societal, cultural, temporal, etc.) shaping them.	**Plenary**

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Glossary

Important terms for students

Encounter learning:

Encounter learning refers to the didactically guided and accompanied topic-centred exchange between participants who are as similar in status as possible in a framework that is limited in terms of content, time, and space (safe space), which provides for multi-perspective reflection processes taking into account a conflict hermeneutics that lead to the initiation of content-related and process- related competences. The project "Sharing Worldviews: Encounter Learning for Common Values in Diversity" is based on a 4-phase concept of Encounter Learning: preparation, presentation, exchange, and reflection

Worldviews:

The concept of **Worldviews** has various culturally determined meanings. In our project, we use it as "**Worldviews**" (individual or collective perspective on the world):

World interpretation (dt.: Weltdeutung) Refers to the fundamental anthropological existential that man brings his fellow man, his environment, and himself into an explanatory and interpretive context, regardless of whether this context has religious, spiritual, or secular connotations.

World view (dt.: Weltbild) Coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, of the development of life and the structure of the universe, of a certain image of man and history, etc. from a certain theoretically underpinned (e.g. scientific or mythological, etc.) perspective.

Worldviews (dt.: Weltsichten/ Weltansichten/ Perspektiven auf die Welt) Individual or collective perspective on the world. Worldviews as perspectives can also be shaped by influences (events, media, etc.).

Worldview (dt.: Weltanschauung) Refers to a coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, which shapes one's perception of reality and in turn shapes that perception. Beyond 'worldviews', they are embedded in a specific framework of thought and action and thus also include evaluative statements and corresponding options for action. Worldviews unite their adherents into a secular community (e.g. humanism, atheism, materialism). Such an understanding of worldview is shaped in Europe by the Enlightenment, which sought to free itself from traditional communities (such as religions) and grant the individual more independence from them.