

# Early Epicurean Community - Listing of Known Epicureans Throughout History

Post by "Eikadistes" of May 17, 2021 at 1:42 PM

## Unanswered Questions (*an on-going post*):

1. Is "**Theophilia**"—a purported, Epicurean philosopher from Gilles Ménage's *History of Women Philosophers*—a distinct, historical personality? Or is "**Theophilia**" a linguistic corruption of either "**Themista**" or "**Demetria**"?

*answer: YES.* Gilles Ménage verified that the Epicurean philosopher "**Theophilia**" is a distinct historical figure from "**Demetria**" based on a document to which he had access, written by the Roman poet **Marcus Valerius Martialis** (38/41 - 102/4 CE). Additionally, Ménage identifies them as being distinct by listing "**Themist[a]**" immediately before "**Theophilia**". While the proposition that many of the Epicurean courtesans were inventions by detractors holds merit, their attestation in literature by contemporaries is enough to accept their historical existence unless otherwise contradicted. Herein, both "**Theophilia**" and "**Demetria**" have been added to the original post.

2. Is the "**Herodotus**" mentioned in Norman DeWitt's *Epicurus and His Philosophy* - the wayward Epicurean who turned away from Epicurus' teachings with Timocrates - the **same** "**Herodotus**" to whom Epicurus sent his famous letter on physics?

3. What levels of marginalization and persecution did Epicureans face between the 5th and 13th centuries CE? In weeks of research, I have not identified a *single* Epicurean philosopher, follower, or patron between the years 400 and 1200. Were there Epicureans in the Persian and Arabian worlds during the European Dark Ages? Do we have Islamic sources of Epicureanism? Was a globally popular, living moral system truly "**lost**" for 800 years? If so, how?

*answer: **Epicureanism was neither "lost", nor was Epicurus "forgotten."*** Epicurus' history and his teachings were obscured by ideological opponents and neglected by the masses. (Existing sources of Epicurean philosophy are not preserved in Arabic through Islamic sources; our sources come from European scholars who preserved these texts.) Instead being "*forgotten*", Epicureanism was re-branded and its founder's reputation was distorted. Academic and Peripatetic philosophies were useful to the dominant political authority; Epicurean philosophy was antithetical. Thus, Epicurus was re-written as an unworthy buffoon and his philosophy was re-branded as being evil. For the *same* reason that the Christian tradition enjoyed near-universal popularity, Epicureanism suffered ubiquitous scorn.

