

Epicurus' Birthday 2023 - (The Most Comprehensive Picture Yet!)

Post by “Don” of November 30, 2022 at 12:52 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

it seems like he could have easily verified Epicurus', particularly given his popularity and the availability of documentation.

That's assuming Apollodorus *wanted* to verify it.

[Quote from Nate](#)

Apollodorus of Athens could have used the word "seventh" as a gloss to to clarify which month on the Attic calendar corresponded with "Gamelion" because there were dozens of dissimilar calendars in the ancient world and informing the reader which sequentially-numbered month they were in helps provide context.

Remember, too, that Diogenes Laertius (DL) would not have been using the autographs from Apollodorus's own hand. DL was probably using a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of Apollodorus's Chronicle from possibly decades if not hundreds of years later. A later scribe could have easily inserted a 7 or Z or VII or εβδομ* into their copy of the manuscript to make help show what Gamelion was in the ancient Athenian calendar. Especially since Gamelion and similar sounding months were different numbers for different city-states. Maybe Apollodorus never even wrote the word "seven/th"! Then the word or symbol got transposed, misinterpreted, etc., etc., etc. As I understand it, the only "copy" of this Fragment about Epicurus's birthday is preserved in Book 10 of DL's book!!

Another line of interest for me is the line in Epicurus's Will:

καὶ ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν εἰθισμένην ἄγεσθαι γενέθλιον ἡμέραν ἐκάστου ἔτους τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος, ὥσπερ καὶ εἰς τὴν γινομένην σύνοδον ἐκάστου μηνὸς ταῖς εἰκάσι τῶν συμπιλοσοφούντων ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν ἡμῶν τε καὶ Μητροδώρου <μνήμην> κατατεταγμένην.

Epicurus talks about celebrating his birthday on the 20th of Gamelion, ὥσπερ..

ὥσπερ means "like as, even as" the members of the school assemble every month on the 20th in remembrance of Metrodorus and Epicurus. That like as seems to me to say "Keep celebrating my birthday as we have been on Gamelion 20 just like we meet on the 20th of every month to remember Metrodorus and me." The discrepancy of Gamelion 7 and 20 is resolved elegantly by the fact that Gamelion was the 7th month of the Attic calendar in Epicurus's and Apollodorus's

time.

[Quote from Nate](#)

Nearly every day of the Attic month is holy on some level, and has some symbolic meaning, and we already discussed the Attic symbology of the Seventh. It seems to me that Epicurus having been being born on the 20th is what makes the Twentieth significant

That is **exactly** where I'm coming down on this.