

# Epicureanism as the spiritual essence or 'religion' of an entire community

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 26, 2025 at 11:37 AM

## [Quote from Kalosyni](#)

We do not have evidence of any of the above in ancient Epicureans...

Except now thinking, the only evidence that I can think of is the opening of *De Rerum Natura* which has an invocation to Venus, in which one could consider that ancient Epicureans during the Roman times participated in a kind of prayer, to an existing religion of the ancient time - and a worship of Venus. I found this:

## Quote

But the most important cause of the identification was the reception into Rome of the famous cult of Venus Erycina—i.e., of Aphrodite of Eryx (Erice) in Sicily—this cult itself resulting from the identification of an Oriental mother-goddess with the Greek deity. This reception took place during and shortly after the [Second Punic War](#). A temple was dedicated to Venus Erycina on the Capitol in 215 bce and a second outside the Colline gate in 181 bce. The latter developed in a way [reminiscent](#) of the temple at Eryx with its harlots, becoming the place of worship of Roman courtesans, hence the title of *dies meretricum* (“prostitutes’ day”) attached to April 23, the day of its foundation.

The importance of the worship of Venus-Aphrodite was increased by the political ambitions of the *gens Iulia*, the clan of Julius Caesar and, by adoption, of [Augustus](#). They claimed descent from [Iulus](#), the son of Aeneas; [Aeneas](#) was the [alleged](#) founder of the temple of Eryx and, in some [legends](#), of the city of Rome also. From the time of Homer onward, he was made the son of Aphrodite, so that his descent gave the Iulii divine origin. Others than the Iulii sought to connect themselves with a deity grown so popular and important, notably Gnaeus Pompeius, the triumvir. He dedicated a temple to Venus as Victrix (“Bringer of Victory”) in 55 bce. Julius Caesar’s own temple (46 bce), however, was dedicated to Venus Genetrix, and as Genetrix (“Begetting Mother”) she was best known until the death of Nero in 68 ce. Despite the extinction of the Julio-Claudian line, she remained popular, even with the emperors; [Hadrian](#) completed a temple of Venus at Rome in 135 ce.

## [Source](#)

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3359-epicureanism-as-the-spiritual-essence-or-religion-of-an-entire-community/?postID=34531#post34531>