

Contemporary Chronology

Post by “Don” of December 29, 2020 at 10:56 PM

I've recently been intrigued by online timelines that translate historical dates into more relatable contemporary chronologies to get a better handle on context of historical figures. So, my little project today was putting some Epicurean history into our own timeline.

Since I'm more familiar with American history, I picked 1492 CE as Epicurus's birthdate and put everything in reference to that. So, for example, in 2020, Diogenes Laertius just turned 7 or 8 years old. It'll be awhile until he writes his Lives. I plan to expand this with more dates and people but thought I'd share the work in progress:

If Epicurus was born the year that Christopher Columbus "discovered" North America, then...

- Socrates (1363-1434)
Democritus (b.1373)
- Plato (1405-1485)
Aristotle (1449-1511)
Pyrrho (1472-1562)
Chrysippus (1483-1556)
Epicurus (1492-1562)
Zeno of Citium (1499-1571)
- Metrodorus of Lampsacus (1502-1556)
Hermarchus (1508-1583)
- Apollodorus fl. mid-1600s (succeeded by Zeno as Scholarch of the Athenian Garden)
Zeno of Sidon (1683-1758)
- Philodemus (1723-1798)
Marcus Tullius Cicero (1727-1790)
Titus Lucretius Carus (b. 1739-)
- Quintus Horatius Flaccus ("Horace") (1768-1825)
- Epictetus (1888-1968)
- Diogenes of Oenoanda (wall dated 1950 to 1990)
Marcus Aurelius (1954-2013)
Lucian of Samosata (1958-after 2013)
- Diogenes Laërtius (b. 2013) would now be around 8 years old. He will begin writing his famous Lives within the next 20-30 years.

Post by “Godfrey” of December 30, 2020 at 1:37 AM

This is most interesting for me the bigger the time gap: a way to imagine how much information Diogenes of O or Diogenes L may have had regarding Epicurus. Some sense can be had based on what we know of Columbus, etc. Of course there are lots of differences but it's a nice visualization tool. 👍

Post by “Don” of December 30, 2020 at 7:17 AM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

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Exactly. It's easier to visualize how far away some people were to each other without the bother of the negative BCE dates then moving into CE dates. And we can more intuitively understand how far away they're from each other.

This idea grows out of those factoids like "The Egyptian Pyramids were as old to the Romans as the Romans are to us."