

Epicurean Communities of the Ancient World

Post by “Eikadistes” of June 6, 2022 at 4:34 PM

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- In 341 BCE, Epicurus was born in an Athenian settlement on **Samos**
- Epicurus began teaching in 311 BCE in **Mytilene** on Lesbos
- The Garden was established in 306 BCE by Epicurus in **Athens**
- School or ancient community with a notable Epicurean presence

School at **LAMPSACUS** (*modern Northwestern Turkey*) Founded by **Epicurus**

The GARDEN (Ο ΚΗΠΟΣ) of ATHENS (*Central Greece*) Founded by **Epicurus**

Community in **CORINTH** (*Peloponnese peninsula, Greece*)

Community in **CHALCIS** (*Euboea island, Greece*)

Community in **THEBES** (*Boeotia, Central Greece*)

Community in **THESSALONIKI** (*Macedonia region, Greece*)

Community in **KOS** (*Southeastern island of Greece*)

School at **RHODES** (*Southeastern island of Greece*)

School at **AMASTRIS** (*Northern Turkey*) Founded by **Tiberius Claudius Lepidus**

Community in **TARSUS** (*Northwest Turkey*)

Community in **PERGAMON** (*Western Turkey*)

Community in **COLOPHON** (*Western Turkey*)

Community in **EPHESUS** (*Southwestern Turkey*)

School at **MILETUS** (*Southwestern Turkey*) Founded by **Demetrius Laco**

Community in **OINOANDA** (*Southwestern Turkey*) Supported by **Diogenes**

Community in **RHODIAPOLIS** (*Southwestern Turkey*)

School at **ANTIOCH** (*South-central Turkey*) Founded by **Philonides**

School at **APAMEIA** (*Western Syria*) Lead by **Aurelius Belius Philippus**

Community at SIDON (Lebanon)

Community at **TYRE** (*Lebanon*)

Community in **ALEXANDRIA** (*City of Alexander III of Macedon in Egypt*)

Community in **OXYRHYNCHUS** (*Southern Egypt*)

School at **NAPLES** (*Southwestern Italy*) Founded by **Siro**

Community in **HERCULANEUM** (*Southwestern Italy*) Lead by **Philodemus**

Community in **ROME** (*Western Italy*) Inspired by **Albucius**

Community in AUGUSTODUNUM (Eastern France) Inspired by **Albucius**

*"[Epicurus'] philosophy rode this tide. It had reached **Alexandria** even before his arrival in **Athens**. By the second century it was flourishing in **Antioch** and **Tarsus**, had invaded Judaea, and was known in Babylon. Word of it had reached Rome while Epicurus was still living, and in the last century B.C. it swept over Italy." (De Witt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* 29)*

*"Both **Thessalonica** and **Corinth** must have been strongholds of Epicureanism." (Ibid. 338)*

*"After the third century BCE there were Epicurean centres in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt: adherents, identified from their cities, came from **Tyre**, **Sidon**, **Tarsus**, and **Alexandria**. Epicureanism also expanded west. [...] The existence of communities in the Naples region is attested by both Horace and Vergil. [...] Epicureanism can be attested in a board variety of locations: **Herculanem**, **Sorrento**, **Rhodes**, **Cos**, **Pergamon**, **Oenoanda** (the Lycus valley), **Apameia** (Syria), **Rhodiapolis**, and **Amastris** (Bithynia). Locations like **Athens** and **Oxyrhynchus** provide evidence for the preservation of Epicurean writing, as well as **Herculaneum**. [...] Asia Minor (notably **Ephesus**, **Alexandria**, and Syria are all suggested as prime candidates for its location." (King, *Epicureanism and the Gospel of John: A Study of Their Compatibility* 11-13)*

*"It will be worth our while to observe how admirably Epicureanism was equipped for the penetration of Asia. As mentioned already, the branch school at **Lampsacus** was strategically situated for dissemination of the creed along the coast of the Black Sea. On the west coast of Asia there was another school at **Mytilene** [...] Still further to the south was the original school at **Colophon**, close to **Ephesus**. [...] The gateway to Asia, however, had been open to the cred of Epicurus for three centuries before Paul's time and **Tarsus** was a center of Epicureanism. [...] Epicureanism was the court philosophy of **Antioch** during the reigns of at least two kings of Syria, **Antiochus Epiphanes** and **Demetrius Soter**." (Ibid. 62)*

*"In it he attests the widespread Epicurean communities of **Athens**, and **Chalcis** and **Thebes** in Boeotia." (The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism 20)*

*"We meet Epicureans not just in **Athens**, where they were amongst Paul's audiences, but we also come across Epicurean communities in the West, in **Herculaneum** or **Sorrento**, in the East, on **Rhodes** and **Cos**, in **Pergamon**, Lycian **Oinoanda**, Syrian **Apameia**, in remote southern Lycian **Rhodiapolis** or in **Amastris** in Bithynia on the Black Sea. (Ibid. 48)*

*"It has recently been discovered that the extensive mosaic floor in the House of the Greek Authors in Autun (ancient **Augustodunum**) includes portraits of Epicurus and Metrodorus (Blanchard-Lemee and Blanchard 1993; Frischer 2006: paragraphs 10-20)." (Gordon, *The Invention and Gendering of Epicurus* 141)*

Post by “Cassius” of June 6, 2022 at 4:50 PM

Thank you for setting this up Nate!

Note also: There is a copy of this map in the Gallery section with several comments here: [Epicurean Communities of the Ancient World](#)

The reason for posting this thread is that the graphic and associated research is apt to draw a lot of comment over time, and it will be easier to keep track of that if we handle it here in a discussion thread

Post by “Eikadistes” of June 8, 2022 at 10:44 AM

I am looking forward to adding more dots on the map!

Post by “Marco” of June 8, 2022 at 12:25 PM

One more dot for the community in Autun- France.

Oh... found it, it's Augustodunum.

Post by “Eikadistes” of April 28, 2025 at 11:49 AM

Just wanted to organize the update here, in addition to the Gallery, for further discussion.

Epicurean Communities of the Ancient World

- Epikouros is born to an Athenian house on the island of **Sámos** in the Winter of 341 BCE.
- In 321 BCE, after two years of conscription in Athens, he moves to **Kolophôn** with family.
- In 311 BCE, at the age of 50, Epikouros begins teaching in **Mytilenē** on the island of Lésbos.
- In 310 BCE, Epikouros moves to **Lámpsakos**. He founds his school one year later, at the age of 32.
- In 306 BCE, Epikouros and his friends move to **Athens**, where he establishes his famous Garden.

* The ancient town of Oxyrrhynchos (corresponding with the modern town of Al-Bahariya, Egypt) is approximately 80 miles south of Lake Qarun, and is located lower than depicted.

