

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

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2022 at 7:25 PM

In preparation for the annual "controversy" of when to celebrate Epicurus's Birthday:

- I'm going with 7 Gamelion as the day.

- I'm using this as my authoritative source for the Athenian calendar:
<http://www.numachi.com/~ccount/hmepa/calendars/700.html>

- Therefore, I'll be celebrating from sunset on Jan. 28 to sunset on Jan. 29, 2023.

- Check out the homepage of the site:

[HMEPA: Hellenic Month Established Per Athens temporary](#)

Especially the "About the Calendar" page.

PS: As of Jan 2023, I'm adding in [this link to the final version of my paper where I've compiled all the findings in this thread in one place](#). Enjoy!

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 23, 2022 at 8:13 PM

I am of the understanding that Epicurus' birthday was January 11-12th 341 BCE. Per Diogenes Laërtius, Epicurus was born “in the **third year of the 109th Olympiad** [...] on the **seventh day** of the month of **Gamelion**”. The third year of the 109th Olympiad began on July 11-12th of 342 BCE. The seventh day of the month of Gamelion is 184 days after the beginning of the third year of the 109th Olympiad; so, 184 days from July 11-12th is January 11-12th.

3rd year		
<i>Begins -342-07-11/12</i>		
<u>Hekatombaion</u> Ἑκατομβαιῶν 30	<u>Metageitnion</u> Μεταγειτνίων 30	<u>Boedromion</u> Βοηδρομιῶν 29
<u>Puanepsion</u> Πυανειψίων 30	<u>Maimakterion</u> Μαίμακτηριῶν 29	<u>Poseideon</u> Ποσειδεῶν 29
<u>Gamelion</u> Γαμηλιῶν 30	<u>Anthesterion</u> Ἄνθεστηριῶν 29	<u>Elaphebolion</u> Ἐλαφηβολιῶν 30
<u>Mounukhion</u> Μουνυχιῶν 29	<u>Thargelion</u> Θαργηλιῶν 30	<u>Skirophorion</u> Σκιροφοριῶν 30

That still begs the question of should we celebrate Epicurus birthdate...

1. On the anniversary of his birthdate (per Diogenes) - *Gamelion 7* - **January 11/12th**?
2. On its *customary* celebration (per his Last Will) - *Gamelion 10* - **January 14/15th**?
3. On the modern Eikas-aligned birthday custom - **January 20**?
4. On the ancient Eikas-aligned birthday custom - *Gamelion 20* - **January 24/25th**?

I submit that Epicurus was born on January 11-12th, and that **we were recommended by Epicurus to continue a customary celebration of his birth on January 14-15th**. Though, it seems that later followers may have merged the celebration with Eikas, in which case, January 24-25th (*ancient*) or January 20th (*modern*) might be appropriate.

My vote is January 14-15th per Epicurus pointing to Gamelion 10 in his will.

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2022 at 8:14 PM

Thank you Don! And you are right we almost have an annual ritual!

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2022 at 8:19 PM

Unless you are on Facebook now (and I don't think you are) I will post this over there for comments and report back.

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2022 at 8:19 PM

Oh no! Now I see Nate's post! The controversy begins!

Post by “Don” of November 23, 2022 at 10:11 PM

btw

Here's the thread from earlier this year with @Nate 's and [Joshua](#) 's excellent detective research on the Date:

Post

[RE: Epicurus' Birthdate](#)

I note that Diogenes documents both dates (the 7th and the 10th) within one page of each other, the first one being a citation to Apollodorus, and the second being a citation of Epicurus' *Last Will*: “He was born, according to Apollodorus in his *Chronicles*, in the third year of the 109th Olympiad, during the archonship of Sosigenes, on the seventh day of the month of Gamelion, seven years after the death of Plato” (498). And then, one page later, “[T]he customary celebration of my birthday each...

Eikadistes

July 8, 2022 at 2:42 PM

Post by “Cassius” of November 23, 2022 at 10:40 PM

[Facebook post](#) -

Time to start our annual quest to answer the eternal question: “What's the correct date to celebrate Epicurus's upcoming birthday this time? I have seen two suggestions so far for 2023:

(1) from sunset on Jan. 28 to sunset on Jan. 29, 2023 based on Gamelion 7 (which possibly comes from Gassendi).

(2) January 14-15 per Epicurus pointing to Gamelion 10 in his will.

We have started a thread to discuss this issue at the link below (linked to this thread), where the reasoning behind these two is explained. I know we have readers in this group from Greece who are all over this issue, so if anyone reading this has a suggestion to support one of these, or another calculation, please let us know!



Post by “Don” of November 23, 2022 at 11:12 PM

LOL! Here we go! 😄

Here also is Gassendi's chapter on the birth of Epicurus (Thanks, [Cassius](#) !)

[Gassendi's Epicurus - Part 1 - Life of Epicurus - NewEpicurean](#)

I like the idea of Epicurus being born on 7 Gamelion due to its association with Apollo Epicurus.

In his will, Epicurus's words convey that somehow the "first tenth" of Gamelion was chosen to customarily celebrate his birthday: τὴν εἰθισμένην ἄγεσθαι γενέθλιον ἡμέραν

εἰθισμένην = "accustomed"

τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος (tēi proterai dekatēi tou Gamēliōnos) "for the first tenth of Gamelion"

BUT (and I can't vouch for the authority here but [Joshua](#) pointed this out, too)

[Calendars Old and New](#)

The 1e DMG has a stern admonition on tracking time "YOU CAN NOT HAVE A MEANINGFUL CAMPAIGN IF STRICT TIME RECORDS ARE NOT KEPT." Emphasis ...

Quote

The first day was the New Moon - Noumenia. Then the first two phases were numbered consecutively from 2nd rising to 10th rising, then 11th to 19th. On the twentieth, the day was called the first tenth. The twenty first was named the last tenth and the numbers decreased from the 9th waning to the last day of the month - Old and New.

But does that mean that Epicurus's Birthday was celebrated *within* the first ten days of the month of Gamelion (ie, actually on the 7th) or it was on the "first tenth" or is the 20th of the month called "the first tenth" like that website says???

LSJ gives an interesting definition (one of them) that δέκατος can mean "festival on the tenth day after birth, when the child has a name given it, τὴν δ. θύειν to give a naming-day feast"

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, δέκα^τος](#)

It definitely appears to me that his actual birthday did not occur on τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος but that it was only celebrated that day by custom. Why else use εἰθισμένην?

Well, unless, his birthday - which did it occur that day?? - was celebrated over the years and it was customary now to throw a party for him *on* his birthday. But that εἰθισμένην gives me pause. BUT Epicurus says in his will to go ahead and keep celebrations going on τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος as we've become accustomed to doing. Maybe I am inclining to celebrate it τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος. Hmmm....

Post by “Joshua” of November 24, 2022 at 12:16 AM

Though I cannot remember the source just now, I read recently that the two days set aside for celebrating Epicurus (his birthday and the 20th) were regarded by his detractors as emblematic of his gluttony. Metrodorus was only given one day, the twentieth, which he shared with Epicurus. 😞

Post by “Elli” of November 24, 2022 at 4:03 AM

I take as correct, the last desire of the Last Will of Epicurus in which he says that his birthday was on the 10th Gamelion. Why the 10th of Gamelion? Maybe, in Epicurus era, there was a big celebration to honor all hellenic gods. And 10th of Gamelion was a favourable date of the year for a boy to be born.

In the profile below, there is a post from the last year, in this post we read:

"Today (12 January), Hemera Hermou [Day of Hermes - Wednesday], beginning at sundown, will be the tenth day of the lunar month of Gamelion.

"The tenth is favourable for a male to be born; but, for a girl, the four of the mid-month." - excerpt from Hesiod, Works and Days

The number ten is associated by the Pythagoreans to the Kosmos, as such today is a good day to honour All the Gods, especially the Gods of the celestial beings and Zeus, King of All".

Below is the profile at FB as they're counting the days of the months according to Ancient Hellenic Counting.

[Log in or sign up to view](#)

See posts, photos and more on Facebook.

www.facebook.com

Post by "Don" of November 24, 2022 at 7:42 AM

OMG! Okay, I went and looked at the Wikipedia article that I think is the one [Joshua](#) looked at and saw (emphasis added - LOOK at the 20th!!):

Quote

To summarise the days with special names.

- The first day: *noumenia*, or new moon.
- The last day: *henē kai nea*, the "old and the new".
- The 21st day: "the later tenth". The Attic month had three days named "tenth" (equivalent in a straight sequence to the 10th, 20th, and 21st days). These were distinguished as
 - 10th: "the tenth (of the month) waxing"
 - 20th: "the earlier tenth" (i.e. waning)

- 21st: "the later tenth" (i.e. waning)

This strange juxtapositioning of the two days called the tenth, the earlier and the later, further highlighted the shift into the moon's waning phase.

SO τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος is NOT "the tenth of Gamelion". It's "the 'earlier tenth' of Gamelion" meaning the 20th!! He's saying right there in his will that his birthday was *customarily* celebrated on the προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ "the earlier tenth" - the 20th! - of Gamelion!

There aren't three dates! There are only two:

1. Epicurus's actual birthday of 7 Gamelion, sacred to Apollo Epicurus
2. the *customary* celebration of his birthday during the regular 20th celebration during the month of his birth.

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, πρότερος](#)

It was right there all the time and it all lines up!

So we could include a celebration of Epicurus's Birthday on the 20th of Gamelion which is Feb 10/11, 2023, or decide *by custom* to celebrate it either at the 20 January or 20 February since the 20th in his will was also *by custom.* The Jan 20 or Feb 20 would definitely be in the spirit of his will.

So, his will then says to me that his birthday was celebrated only on the "first tenth" or 20th of Gamelion, but the school met every 20th to commemorate both Epicurus and Metrodorus.

Okay, I think I've planted my flag on this hill. 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 24, 2022 at 9:01 AM

In Athens, there is the symposium every year on the 20th -- so I vote for February 20th.

12th Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy, February 19-20, 2022 Athens, Greece

Organized by Friends of Epicurean Philosophy Garden of Athens, Garden of Thessaloniki and Municipality of Pallini Under the Auspices of the Region of Attica

Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy

The Symposium is a tribute to our master Epicurus. The Symposium is organized, with free entrance, every year in February by the Friends of Epicurean Philosophy, because Epicurus was born in that month, and always in Pallini, because that particular municipality of modern Athens metropolitan area includes the ancient Athenian demos of Gargettus, from which Epicurus originated.

[Friends of Epicurean Philosophy - Symposium](#)

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 24, 2022 at 9:30 AM

That's an excellent find, [Don](#) that I think definitely explains the discrepancy.

One thing I note is that the months of the ancient Greek Calendar had rotating numbers of days, so any fixed "x of Gamelion" date will always translate as a different date on the Julian calendar depending on your starting point. Since, as Don just demonstrated, Epicurus was, in fact, attesting to the Eikas-aligned celebration of his birthday on "the [earlier] tenth" it would be appropriate to celebrate it in correspondence with our own Eikas-day celebrations.

At the same time, we *could* approach this holiday as a "moving feast" like the Christian celebration Easter which can fall anywhere from March 22 and April 25 depending on the year and the movements of the moon. Celebrating Epicurus' birthday on the "proper", "moving" date could be a fun, educational exercise we can celebrate every year.

2nd year		
<i>Begins 2022-06-29/30</i>		
Hekatombaion Ἑκατομβαιῶν 30	Metageitnion Μεταγειτνίων 30	Boedromion Βοηδρομιῶν 29
Puanepsion Πυανεψιών 30	Maimakterion Μαίμακτηριῶν 29	Poseideon Ποσειδεῶν 30
Poseideon-2 Ποσειδεῶν β' 29	Gamelion Γαμηλιῶν 29	Anthesterion Ἀνθεστηριῶν 30
Elaphebolion Ἐλαφηβολιῶν 29	Mounakhion Μουνυχιῶν 30	Thargelion Θαργηλιῶν 29
Skirophorion Σκιροφοριῶν 30		

Based on the Calendar Don provided (*above*), I believe we are in the 2nd year of the 700th Olympiad, which started on June 29-30th 2022. Today, November 24th 2022 corresponds with the 148th day of the ancient Greek year, meaning "today" is the final day of Maimakterion. This year also seems to have a second month of Poseideon before Gamelion, so the "early 10th of Gamelion" (or Gamelion 20) falls 227 days after June 29-30th is **February 11-12th 2023**.

1st year		
<i>Begins 2021-07-10/11</i>		
Hekatombaion Ἑκατομβαιῶν 30	Metageitnion Μεταγειτνίων 29	Boedromion Βοηδρομιῶν 30
Puanepsion Πυανειῶν 29	Maimakterion Μαιμακτηριῶν 30	Poseideon Ποσειδεῶν 29
Gamelion Γαμηλιῶν 29	Anthesterion Ἄνθεστηριῶν 30	Elaphebolion Ἐλαφηβολιῶν 30
Mounukhion Μουνυχιῶν 29	Thargelion Θαργηλιῶν 30	Skirophorion Σκιροφοριῶν 29

Last ancient Greek year (the 1st year of the 700th Olympiad; *pictured above*), the first month of Hekatombaion began on July 10-11th 2021, and the “early 10th of Gamelion” (or Gamelion 20) fell 197 days after July 10-11th. So, according to my calculations, last ancient Greek “year”, *Epicurus’ Birthday Eikas* would have fallen on **January 23, 2022**.

3rd year		
<i>Begins 2023-07-18/19</i>		
Hekatombaion Ἑκατομβαιῶν 30	Metageitnion Μεταγειτνίων 29	Boedromion Βοηδρομιῶν 30
Puanepsion Πυανειῶν 30	Maimakterion Μαιμακτηριῶν 29	Poseideon Ποσειδεῶν 30
Gamelion Γαμηλιῶν 29	Anthesterion Ἄνθεστηριῶν 30	Elaphebolion Ἐλαφηβολιῶν 29
Mounukhion Μουνυχιῶν 29	Thargelion Θαργηλιῶν 30	Skirophorion Σκιροφοριῶν 29

In next corresponding ancient Greek year (the 3rd year of the 700th Olympiad; *seen above*), the first month of Hekatombaion begins on July 18-19th 2023, and the “early 10th of Gamelion” (or Gamelion 20) will fall 198 days after July 18-19th. So, next ancient Greek calendar year, *Epicurus’ Birthday Eikas* will fall on **February 1-2nd, 2024**.

So based on my calculations:

Epicurus’ Birthday Eikas **2022**: January 23-24th

Epicurus’ Birthday Eikas **2023**: February 10-11th

Epicurus’ Birthday Eikas **2024**: February 1-2nd

I think it is therefore appropriate to celebrate it on one of two days:

1. **January 20th**, aligned with the modern celebration of the Twentiers

2. A "moving feast" like Easter, which will start *Epicurus' Birthday Eikas* (as I count) on February 10-11th 2023.

I am partial to celebrating the "moving feast". It provides an opportunity for modern Epicureans to gain a better understanding of the Attic calendar that organized Epicurus' days. It also reinforces our relative *feeling* of their holidays. There is a slightly different *feel* between contemporary cultures that start their "week" on *Monday* instead of *Sunday*. There is a different *feel* to "beginning" a year in Summer instead of mid-Winter. This helps us look at *time* from the perspective of Epicurus and friends. It also provides an opportunity to focus on Epicurus.

Or we could just do the 20th to make it easy. *Easter's moving date always was kind of weird growing up.*

Post by "Don" of November 24, 2022 at 10:38 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

That's an excellent find, Don that I think definitely explains the discrepancy.

Thanks, @Nate . That means a lot coming from you!

I wanted to share a couple words that struck me in that section of the Will too. The translation runs:

for the meeting of all my School held every month on the twentieth day to commemorate Metrodorus and myself according to the rules now in force.

This sounds so sterile to me, so I looked at the text. There we can find:

ὥσπερ καὶ εἰς τὴν γινομένην σύνοδον ἐκάστου μηνὸς ταῖς εἰκάσι τῶν συμφιλοσοφούντων ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν ἡμῶν τε καὶ Μητροδώρου <μνήμην> κατατεταγμένην.

συμφιλοσοφούντων ἡμῖν (symphilosophountōn hēmin) something literally like "our (not my) fellow "lovers of wisdom"/philosophers" That seems warmer than "school"

σύνοδον (synodon) from sym "with" (as in "sympathy", same sym- as above) + hodos "path, way" This is the word "synod" we know from Christianity. This is the "meeting" in the translation, but I like the connotation of "coming together with others on the path/way."

Those two words for me provide much more color to Epicurus's last will than the usual dry translation.

Post by “Elli” of November 24, 2022 at 12:32 PM

IMO for the word "σύνοδος" the appropriate word in english is "session" i.e. a period devoted to a particular activity.

Also, "σύνοδος" in new greek means: a period devoted to a collective institution. For the english word "institution" in greek is "θεσμός" that means: "a habit with great importance for an individual or small or large group".

So, IMO the appropriate translation in english could be: **For the session of all my School held every month on the twentieth day to commemorate Metrodorus and myself according to the rules now in force.**

Post by “Don” of November 24, 2022 at 1:10 PM

[Quote from elli](#)

IMO for the word "σύνοδος" the appropriate word in english is "session" i.e. a period devoted to a particular activity.

"Session" could work for the reasons you pointed out.

I would prefer a word that gets at the "bringing together" implied by the syn- in synodos. Something like "meeting" or "assembly." "Synod" is too imbued with Christian connotation.

Here's the Etymology Online entry for the word synod:

late 14c., "ecclesiastical council," from Late Latin synodus, from Greek synodos "assembly, meeting; a coming together, conjunction of planets," from syn- "together" (see syn-) + hodos "a traveling, journeying; a manner or system (of doing, speaking, etc.); a way, road, path," a word of uncertain origin (see Exodus). Earlier in English as sinoth (early 12c.). Used by Presbyterians for "assembly of ministers and other elders" from 1593 to c. 1920, when replaced by General Council.

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 25, 2022 at 9:30 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

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The Symposium is a tribute to our master Epicurus. The Symposium is organized, with free entrance, **every year in February** by the Friends of Epicurean Philosophy, **because Epicurus was born in that month**, and always in Pallini, because that particular municipality of modern Athens metropolitan area includes the ancient Athenian demos of Gargettus, from which Epicurus originated.

It would be interesting to know how they determined the birthday of Epicurus.

Also, is it possible in Greece that they have a belief that birthdays should not be observed earlier than the true date of birth? ([Martin](#) mentioned that is the case in either Thailand or in Germany.

Post by “Martin” of November 25, 2022 at 2:52 PM

Germany.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 25, 2022 at 10:02 PM

I believe these calculations are accurate, if I've understood everything presented so far (which I definitely may **not** have, but the attempt at making a chart at least revealed some interesting patterns about the Attic calendar).

For one thing, I found that I was born on the 23rd day of final month of Skirophorion, Day 377 in the 3rd year of the 691st Olympiad. For another, I found that, while my Julian birthdate fell within the *final* month of Skirophorion, it often falls in the following Attic month of *Hekatombaion*, the *first* month of the ancient Greek year.

The same seems to be the case with Eikas, which falls from *mid-January* to *mid-February*.

A **sincere** curiosity I found is the following: of those years where *my* Julian birthdate (July 8th) begins the ancient Greek year (*Hekatombaion* 1), it turns out that Gamelion 20 corresponds with January 20th (or within one day of it).

Those Gamelion 20s that correspond with our January 20ths were marked red below to denote their coincidence.

Based on the shifting patterns of the Attic calendar, the 20th of Gamelion can come as early as Day 196 and as late as Day 228. Specifically, it falls on either Day 196, 197, 198, 199, or Day 226, 227, 228, depending on the year. (The years on the Attic calendar have varying lengths, some containing 355 days, some containing more than 380).

There is a cycle that occurs every 19 years where a set of dates *nearly* restarts. For example (from the bottom, *below*), *Gamelion 20 in 2065 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2046.*

Gamelion 20 in 2064 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2045.

Gamelion 20 in 2063 falls one day earlier than Gamelion 20 in 2044.

Gamelion 20 in 2062 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2043.

Gamelion 20 in 2061 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2042.

Gamelion 20 in 2060 falls one day earlier than Gamelion 20 in 2041.

Gamelion 20 in 2059 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2040.

Gamelion 20 in 2058 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2039.

Gamelion 20 in 2057 falls on the same Julian date as Gamelion 20 in 2038.

Gamelion 20 next year (2023) falls on the same date as Gamelion 20 in 2004; and so on ... every 19 solar years.

The earliest 20th of Gamelion on the Julian calendar **JANUARY 14-15th** (*approx.*)

The latest 20th of Gamelion on the Julian calendar: **FEBRUARY 17-18th** (*approx.*)

I'm sure there are other patterns to be found as well. Regardless, I think I have come to the conclusion that I will look to January 20th to both celebrate the *monthly* practice of Eikas as well the *annual* Birthday of Epicurus.

*My calculations may not be **completely** accurate (I did 80 years of my lifespan and then quit proof-reading).*

OLYMPIAD YEAR 1		<i>Julian Date of HEKATOMBAION (Day 1 on the Attic Calendar)</i>	DAY # <i>(of Gamelion 20)</i>	<i>Julian Date of GAMELION 20 (Epicurus' ceremonial Birthday)</i>
109	3	JULY 11-12th 342 BCE	197	JANUARY 23-24th 341 BCE
...
117	2	JUNE 28-29th 311 BCE	228	FEBRUARY 10-11th 310 BCE
	3	JULY 17-18th 310 BCE	198	JANUARY 30-31st 309 BCE
	4	JULY 6-7th 309 BCE	227	FEBRUARY 17-18th 308 BCE
118	1	JULY 25-26th 308 BCE	197	FEBRUARY 6-7th 307 BCE
	2	JULY 14-15th 307 BCE	197	JANUARY 26-27th 306 BCE
	3	JULY 3-4th 306 BCE	227	FEBRUARY 14-15th 305 BCE
...
127	2	JULY 6-7th 271 BCE	227	FEBRUARY 17-18th 270 BCE
	3	JULY 25-26th 270 BCE	197	FEBRUARY 6-7th 269 BCE
...
691	1	JULY 18-19th 1985	197	JANUARY 30-31st 1986
	2	JULY 7-8th 1986	197	JANUARY 19-20th 1987
	3	JUNE 27-28th 1987	226	FEBRUARY 7-8th 1988
	4	JULY 14-15th 1988	198	JANUARY 27-28th 1989
692	1	JULY 3-4th 1989	199	JANUARY 17-18th 1990
	2	JUNE 23-24th 1990	227	FEBRUARY 4-5th 1991
	3	JULY 12-13th 1991	197	JANUARY 24-25th 1992
	4	JULY 1-2nd 1992	226	FEBRUARY 11-12th 1993
693	1	JULY 20-21st 1993	196	JANUARY 31-1st 1994
	2	JULY 9-10th 1994	197	JANUARY 21-2nd 1995
	3	JUNE 28-29th 1995	227	FEBRUARY 9-10th 1996
	4	JULY 16-17th 1996	197	JANUARY 28-29th 1997
694	1	JULY 5-6th 1997	198	JANUARY 18-19th 1998
	2	JUNE 24-25th 1998	228	FEBRUARY 6-7th 1999
	3	JULY 13-14th 1999	198	JANUARY 26-27th 2000
	4	JULY 2-3rd 2000	197	JANUARY 14-15th 2001
695	1	JUNE 22-23rd 2001	227	FEBRUARY 3-4th 2002
	2	JULY 11-12th 2002	196	JANUARY 22-23th 2003
	3	JUNE 30-1st 2003	226	FEBRUARY 10-11th 2004

	4	JULY 18-19th 2004	197	JANUARY 30-31st 2005
696	1	JULY 7-8th 2005	197	JANUARY 19-20th 2006
	2	JUNE 26-27th 2006	227	FEBRUARY 7-8th 2007
	3	JULY 15-16th 2007	198	JANUARY 28-29th 2008
	4	JULY 3-4th 2008	198	JANUARY 16-17th 2009
697	1	JUNE 23-24th 2009	227	FEBRUARY 4-5th 2010
	2	JULY 12-13th 2010	197	JANUARY 24-25th 2011
	3	JULY 2-3rd 2011	226	FEBRUARY 12-13th 2012
	4	JULY 19-20th 2012	197	JANUARY 31-1st 2013
698	1	JULY 9-10th 2013	197	JANUARY 21-22rd 2014
	2	JUNE 28-29th 2014	227	FEBRUARY 9-10th 2015
	3	JULY 16-17th 2015	198	JANUARY 29-30th 2016
	4	JULY 5-6th 2016	198	JANUARY 18-19th 2017
699	1	JULY 24-25th 2017	228	FEBRUARY 6-9th 2018
	2	JULY 13-14th 2018	198	JANUARY 26-27th 2019
	3	JULY 3-4th 2019	197	JANUARY 15-16th 2020
	4	JUNE 22-23rd 2020	226	FEBRUARY 2-3rd 2021
700	1	JULY 10-11th 2021	197	JANUARY 22-23rd 2022
HERE	2	JUNE 29-30th 2022	227	FEBRUARY 10-11th 2023
	3	JULY 18-19th 2023	198	JANUARY 31-1st 2024
	4	JULY 6-7th 2024	198	JANUARY 19-20th 2025
701	1	JUNE 26-27th 2025	227	FEBRUARY 7-8th 2026
	2	JULY 15-16th 2026	197	JANUARY 27-28th 2027
	3	JULY 4-5th 2027	197	JANUARY 16-17th 2028
	4	JUNE 23-24th 2028	226	FEBRUARY 3-4th 2029
702	1	JULY 12-13th 2029	196	JANUARY 23-24th 2030
	2	JULY 1-2nd 2030	226	FEBRUARY 11-12th 2031
	3	JULY 20-21st 2031	197	FEBRUARY 1-2nd 2032
	4	JULY 8-9th 2032	198	JANUARY 21-22nd 2033
703	1	JUNE 27-28th 2033	228	FEBRUARY 9-10th 2034
	2	JULY 16-17th 2034	198	JANUARY 29-30th 2035
	3	JULY 6-7th 2035	197	JANUARY 18-19th 2036
	4	JUNE 24-25th 2036	227	FEBRUARY 5-6th 2037
704	1	JULY 13-14th 2037	197	JANUARY 25-26th 2038

	2	JULY 3-4th 2028	196	JANUARY 14-15th 2039
	3	JUNE 22-23rd 2039	226	FEBRUARY 2-3rd 2040
	4	JULY 10-11th 2040	197	JANUARY 22-23th 2041
705	1	JUNE 29-30th 2041	227	FEBRUARY 10-11th 2042
	2	JULY 17-18th 2042	198	JANUARY 30-31st 2043
	3	JULY 7-8th 2043	198	JANUARY 20-21st 2044
	4	JUNE 26-27th 2044	227	FEBRUARY 7-8th 2045
706	1	JULY 15-16- 2045	197	JANUARY 27-28th 2046
	2	JULY 4-5th 2046	197	JANUARY 16-17th 2047
	3	JUNE 24-25th 2047	226	FEBRUARY 4-5th 2048
	4	JULY 11-12th 2048	197	JANUARY 23-24th 2049
707	1	JULY 1-2nd 2049	226	FEBRUARY 11-12th 2050
	2	JULY 19-20th 2050	198	FEBRUARY 1-2nd 2051
	3	JULY 8-9th 2051	198	JANUARY 21-22nd 2052
	4	JUNE 27-28th 2052	227	FEBRUARY 8-9th 2053
708	1	JULY 16-17th 2053	197	JANUARY 28-29th 2054
	2	JULY 6-7th 2054	196	JANUARY 17-18th 2055
	3	JUNE 25-26th 2055	226	FEBRUARY 5-6th 2056
	4	JULY 13-14th 2056	197	JANUARY 25-26th 2057
709	1	JULY 2-3rd 2057	197	JANUARY 14-15th 2058
	2	JUNE 21-22nd 2058	227	FEBRUARY 2-3rd 2059
	3	JULY 10-11th 2059	198	JANUARY 23-24th 2060
	4	JUNE 28-29th 2060	228	FEBRUARY 10-11th 2061
710	1	JULY 17-18th 2061	198	JANUARY 30-31st 2062
	2	JULY 7-8th 2062	197	JANUARY 19-20th 2063
	3	JUNE 27-28th 2063	226	FEBRUARY 7-8th 2064
	4	JULY 15-16th 2064	196	JANUARY 26-27th 2065
711	1	JULY 4-5th 2065	197	JANUARY 16-17th 2066
	2	JUNE 23-24th 2066	227	FEBRUARY 4-5th 2067
	3	JULY 12-13th 2067	197	JANUARY 24-25th 2068
	4	JUNE 30-1st 2068	227	FEBRUARY 11-12th 2069
712	1	JULY 19-20th 2069	198	FEBRUARY 1-2nd 2070
	2	JULY 8-9th 2070	198	JANUARY 21-22nd 2071
	3	JUNE 28-29th 2071	227	FEBRUARY 9-10th 2072

	4	JULY 16-17th 2072	197	JANUARY 28-29th 2073
713	1	JULY 6-7th 2073	196	JANUARY 17-18th 2074
	2	JUNE 25-26th 2074	226	FEBRUARY 5-6th 2075
	3	JULY 14-15th 2075	197	JANUARY 26-27th 2076
	4	JULY 2-3rd 2076	197	JANUARY 14-15th 2077
714	1	JUNE 21-22nd 2077	227	FEBRUARY 2-3th 2078
	2	JULY 10-11th 2078	198	JANUARY 23-24th 2079
	3	JUNE 29-30th 2079	227	FEBRUARY 10-11th 2080
	4	JULY 17-18th 2080	197	JANUARY 29-30th 2081
715	1	JULY 7-8th 2081	197	JANUARY 19-20th 2082
	2	JUNE 26-27th 2082	227	FEBRUARY 7-8th 2083
	3	JULY 15-16th 2083	197	JANUARY 27-28th 2084
	4	JULY 3-4th 2084	198	JANUARY 16-17th 2085

Based on Don's original source: <http://www.numachi.com/~ccount/hmepa/>

This was my resource to determine the date of Eikas:
<https://www.timeanddate.com/date/dateadded...aw=&ad=197&rec=>

These measurements correspond with the following scholarship:

“He was born on the twentieth of the month of Gamelion (24 January 341)⁷⁴ [...] ⁷⁴The debate over the exact date of his birth was definitively resolved by Alpers 1968.” (Algra, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* 43)

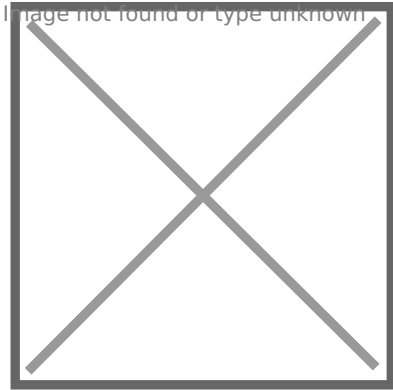
“Date of the birth of Epicurus, according to Apollodorus [...] that is, under the seventh archon from the archon of the year of the death of Plato, Theophilus. The tenth of Gamelion however, January 14, and the twentieth, **January 24**, are also assigned as the dates of birth.” (*Origines Kalendariae Hellenicæ; or, the history of the primitive calendar among the Greeks, before and after the legislation of Solon, Volume 2*, 97; 1862)

Post by “Don” of November 25, 2022 at 10:22 PM

That is VERY impressive, @Nate ! I certainly can't argue with any of your calculations, and, with that, I would concur that Jan. 20 seems to be a preferable *customary* date to celebrate Epicurus's birthday as set out in his Will.

From the articles below, it seems the Athenian calendar was much more fluid than we are accustomed to.

Some of that is laid out in this paper:



[The Athenian Calendar](#)

The Author provides a thorough introduction to the five (5) most commonly used calendars in Ancient Athens through the Roman Period. This paper presents an...
www.academia.edu

And this:

[Calendars of Athens again - Persée](#)

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 7:02 AM

Wow thank you for all that work Nate! A table like that showing the dates each year into the future is definitely something we need to add to a resource list somewhere.

So the column labeled Hekatombaion 1 is the first day of the Greek New Year, and Gamelion 20 is what we believe is the actual birthday, or the 20th closest to his actual birthday? Maybe it would be a good idea to somehow annotate those column headings in case perhaps someone cuts and pastes the table and it gets separated from the text.

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 7:10 AM

Are you all saying it should be January 20th?

Is anyone else concerned that we might end up creating a special "American" Epicurean annual celebration which would be on a very different date than what is currently happening in Athens?

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 7:37 AM

I guess part of the question is "What is 'it'?" Does 'it' mean "our best and most accurate calculation of the day of birth" or "the day we should schedule a group celebration?"

Sometimes I even wonder what the "most accurate calculation" really means. Does it mean the day of the year in which the planets today are most closely configured around the sun in the same positions as they were at the time of Epicurus' birth?

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 7:47 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Is anyone else concerned that we might end up creating a special "American" Epicurean annual celebration which would be on a very different date than what is currently happening in Athens?

Nope.

From what I can see now, Epicurus made provisions in his Will to celebrate his birthday on the 20th day - "the earlier tenth" - of his birth month, Gamelion, as was "customary." From @Nate 's research, it appears Gamelion typically occurs from mid-January through mid-February. Celebrating annually on Feb. 20 seems too late to say it's in Gamelion. It doesn't seem to me there's anything American or Greek or German or any other nationality to the calculations. To me, January 20 would be the closest we could come in modern times to celebrate the spirit of his Will.

I didn't see the modern Epicurean annual symposium in Athens in February was chosen for his birthday, but I may have missed that. And, with all due respect to being located in the land of

his birth, the modern Greeks have no lock on any kind of authority within modern efforts to bring Epicurus's philosophy back to a living philosophy. I certainly respect their scholarship and efforts, but even in ancient times the school seems to have been somewhat decentralized also by Roman times.

I will say I haven't seen anywhere else that has picked up on the "earlier tenth" in the Greek text. Even the Society had the tenth in a write up about Epicurus's Birthday:

[On the Occasion of the Birth of the Hegemon | Society of Friends of Epicurus](#)

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 7:51 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I guess part of the question is "What is 'it'?" Does 'it' mean "our best and most accurate calculation of the day of birth" or "the day we should schedule a group celebration?"

Sometimes I even wonder what the "most accurate calculation" really means. Does it mean the day of the year in which the planets today are most closely configured around the sun in the same positions as they were at the time of Epicurus' birth?

Exactly! It is almost impossible under any definition to pinpoint an exact date correlation between an ancient event and the modern Julian calendar. The best we can do with something like Epicurus's Birthday is to respect the spirit of the Will. Those two papers I posted get at the highly complicated exercise calculations like that would be.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 26, 2022 at 8:10 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Maybe it would be a good idea to somehow annotate those column headings in case perhaps someone cuts and pastes the table and it gets separated from the text.

Great idea! I added a few annotations to clarify the columns.

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

Are you all saying it should be January 20th?

Is anyone else concerned that we might end up creating a special "American" Epicurean annual celebration which would be on a very different date than what is currently happening in Athens?

Yes, I think celebrating Epicurus' *Ceremonial Birthday (Gamelion 20)* on January 20th is the way to go for anyone using the Julian calendar. Furthermore, it is the case that in 1987, 1998, 2006, 2017, 2025, 2036, and 2063, Gamelion 20 actually did/does fall on January the 20th, so there are a handful of days when Greeks who practiced according to the Attic calendar, and modern Twentiers who practice with the Julian calendar would have simultaneous celebrations.

[Kalosyni](#), I note that *while the Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy (PSEP)* is held in February, it occurs on different days every year. For example, this year it was held on the 19-20th. In 2017, it was the 10-11th. In 2016, it was the 6-7th. In 2015, it was the 7-8th. These dates do not correspond with a consistent date on the Attic calendar.

Additionally, while the ceremonial celebration of Epicurus Birthday (on mid-Winter Eikas) sometimes falls in February, it falls in January more often than February. According to my calculations, Epicurus' birth year (Year 3 of the 109th Olympiad, which corresponds with *Summer 342 BCE to Summer 341 BCE*) would host Gamelion 7 on January 11, 341 BCE and would host Gamelion 20 on January 24, 341 BCE). Either way, during the year of Epicurus' birth, both Gamelion 7 and Gamelion 20 fell in the Julian month of January, so I respectfully disagree with the PSEP (and Wikipedia).

I am curious which Attic Year it is that the PSEP considers to be "*the first ceremonial celebration of Epicurus' Birthday*". It probably was not until 310 BCE or later that the annual celebration of Epicurus birth date (Gamelion 7) was re-oriented toward the celebration of mid-Winter Eikas (Gamelion 20) because this represents the beginning of friendship with the Lampsacus crew who would go on to carry his torch; Gamelion 20 of that year fell on February 11th 310 BCE.

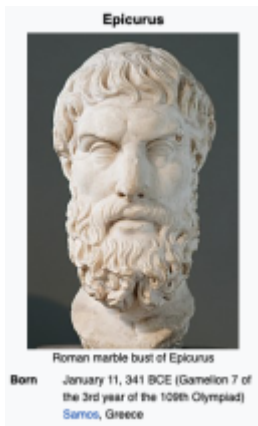
Post by “Eikadistes” of November 26, 2022 at 8:25 AM

We'll see how long this lasts ...

Life

Upbringing and influences

Epicurus was born in the Athenian settlement on the Aegean island of Samos on Gamelion 7 of the 3rd year of the 109th Olympiad (January 11, 341 BCE).^{[1][2]} His parents, Neocles and Chaerestrata, were both Athenian citizens, and his father was an Athenian citizen.^[3] Epicurus grew up during the final years of the Greek Classical Period.^[4] Plato had died seven years before Epicurus was born and Epicurus was seven years old when Alexander the Great crossed the Hellespont.



(Edit: the text was reverted to "February 341 BCE", which we have emphatically demonstrated is **NOT** accurate).

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 9:15 AM

This is a really interesting discussion! If i recall, other than Elli, the person from Greece who has had the most to say about this is [Panagiotis Panagiotopoulos](#).

I have messaged him and tagged him in the Facebook thread and will see if I can get his comment.

[Log in or sign up to view](#)

See posts, photos and more on Facebook.

www.facebook.com

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 9:34 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

I note that while the Panhellenic Symposium of Epicurean Philosophy (PSEP) is held in February, it occurs on different days every year. For example, this year it was held on the 19-20th. In 2017, it was the 10-11th. In 2016, it was the 6-7th. In 2015, it was the 7-8th. These dates do not correspond with a consistent date on the Attic calendar.

Oh wow, thank you for pointing that out. So those dates don't correlate with the Attic calculations?

[Quote from Nate](#)

I think celebrating Epicurus' Ceremonial Birthday (Gamelion 20) on January 20th is the way to go for anyone using the Julian calendar. Furthermore, it is the case that in 1987, 1998, 2006, 2017, 2025, 2036, and 2063, Gamelion 20 actually did/does fall on January the 20th, so there are a handful of days when Greeks who practiced according to the Attic calendar, and modern Twentiers who practice with the Julian calendar would have simultaneous celebrations.

So then it rarely fell on or near February 20th?

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 9:46 AM

I wonder if this might have any bearing on the timing in ancient times:

Quote

Between the Rural and City Dionysia, other two lesser festivals took place in honour of Dionysus: The Lenaia and the Anthesteria. The first took place in Athens in Gameliōn, roughly corresponding to January, while the latter was held each year from the 11th to the 13th of the month of Anthesteriōn, which was named after the festival.

The Lenaia was mostly an agrarian festival, believed to have included a procession, chanting, sacrifices, nocturnal rites and, possibly, special rituals for women. Beginning in the second half of the 5th century BCE, plays were performed, as in the City Dionysia, and awards were given, initially only for comedies, and later also for tragedies.

The Anthesteria were held for three days; the first one was called *Pithoigia* ("Jar Opening"), where libations were offered to Dionysus from the newly opened casks; the second one, called *Choes* ("Wine Jugs"), included wine-drinking contests while on the third day -*Chytroi* ("Pots")- pots of seed or bran were offered to honour the dead.

<https://www.greeknewsagenda.gr/topics/culture...attic-festivals>

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 26, 2022 at 9:49 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

[Quote from Nate](#)

Oh wow, thank you for pointing that out. So those dates don't correlate with the Attic calculations?

That is correct. I suspect that the dates of PSEP's event are determined according to logistical needs rather than symbolic ones. For sure *02/10/17*, *02/06/16*, and *02/07/15* do not correspond with the same date on the Attic calendar.

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

So then it rarely fell on or near February 20th?

Based on my calculations, that is correct: Gamelion 20 *never* fell later than February 19th*, and *also*, there are *never* more than two consecutive February Gamelion 20s in a row, from one year to another.

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 10:24 AM

Gosh we just discussed this as recently as July? [RE: Epicurus' Birthdate](#)

And here's the 2019 version: [Epicurus' Birthday Calculations](#)

Your administrator is falling down on the job and we need to get his better organized. I will add this question to the FAQ and maybe designate one of these threads as a master thread and find a way to highlight it more prominently. I am sure this has been discussed probably at least once a year for the past five years or more and probably will continue to be asked, so it might even deserve a subforum of its own. Let me look into that.

For now here is a FAQ entry and I will feature the FAQ more prominently on the home page: <https://www.epicureanfriends.com/wcf/index.php?faq/#entry-35>

EDIT: Given that this question will keep getting asked, probably makes sense to open a subforum under the "Epicurus" section and try to move all the prior discussions from "General Discussion" into that thread.

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 10:33 AM

I'm hoping to write a quick paper to summarize the "earlier tenth" findings as well as a couple related items. I'll either post here or on the website.

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 10:51 AM

Here's an organizational note: I think the use of a [FAQ](#) is a very good idea given that lots of people probably look for a FAQ rather than trying to use search or otherwise pore thru the menu system or follow links all over the website. The [forum menu system](#) also provides a topic index, but both the FAQ and the Menu get complicated fast. Hopefully it helps that they can be opened and collapsed like outlines.

For better or worse neither the FAQ nor the Menu system lend themselves to updating collaboratively. An admin has to go in and make each change, and that's probably too much trouble for them to be kept up to date easily.

On the other hand as new threads get entered into the "When was Epicurus birthday?" forum then that list will just grow and grow too.

So as a compromise what we can do at present for something like this is:

- 1) The [FAQ](#) is prominently listed in the resource section.
- 2) The FAQ contains a history section with the question "[When Was Epicurus Born](#)" with a quick answer but mainly a link to: (A) [a "lexicon" entry](#) that is editable by all the major participants in this thread which can hopefully be updated over time based on the most recent postings. I will expect to take care of that myself but others who have write access are welcome to update that as well. The FAQ entry will also link to (B) the discussion subforum which will continue to grow over time.

As additional note this is probably the best way to organize [the FAQ in general](#). First provide a concise answer to a question if possible, but then point to [a collaborative document](#) editable by some of our core people, and also to the discussion thread that can be participated in by all registered users.

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 11:19 AM

It is not far off till January 20th -- just under 2 months away and it falls on a Friday.

Are we going to plan anything special on the forum? A special youtube presentation? A panel discussion which we record? An "unveiling" of the Epicurus College?

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 11:23 AM

I doubt we are capable of doing anything much other than a special zoom meeting. Maybe we should record a talk about the Greek calendar and why this is such a complicated question, but I am not sure anyone but Don and Nate is qualified to lead it and they would have to volunteer to be drafted for such a project. :-). I can provide the Zoom channel but we would probably need some graphics like those Nate has posted above.

(And when I write "record a talk" I meant record the zoom session, but of course if anyone wanted to record a special video that would be great too. If so we could watch it together and then discuss it.)

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 11:31 AM

Actually, it just came to me that would be really nice to have a panel presentation by various people, just short segments where everyone explains a little about special projects:

Nate -- the compelation, etc/birthday calculations

Don -- on the Letter to Menoecus translation/Wise man sayings

Cassius -- explaining about the forum, it's development and how it functions as well as the hopes for developing the Epicurus College

It could be just voice only, and then we post it onto Youtube. (just an idea)

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 11:35 AM

I'd be happy to talk about the "earlier tenth" discovery if Nate would expand on his multi-year calculations

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 26, 2022 at 2:30 PM

I'm still in the process of reviewing.

The first 4 columns just organize the data Don shared:
<http://www.numachi.com/~ccount/hmepa/calendars/700.html>.

I added together the fourth column with the second column to create the values in the fifth column; I used this online date calculator to generate the values:
[https://www.timeanddate.com/da...d&ay=&am=&aw=&ad=197&rec=](https://www.timeanddate.com/date/dateconverter.php?day=1&month=1&year=197&rec=)

There may be more intricacies to their calendar than I am aware, so I'm investigating the system in more depth and confirming the work I've already done. I'll probably have more updates.

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 3:12 PM

I will say I am absolutely gobsmacked that no one - academic or lay person - picked up on that "the earlier tenth" before. I've seen some translations use "first Tenth" and similar words, but everyone I've seen simply feels that implies "the tenth day of Gamelion." But it's right there in the Greek in a complete dative phrase. I stand resolved that that equals the 20th.

At the risk of self-horn-tooting, am I the first person to bring this up?? I find that hard to believe but I'm not seeing any evidence to contradict that. If anyone sees a flaw in my interpretation of others who've said it and gone unnoticed, please let me know!

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 3:21 PM

Nate have you ever interacted with Panagiotis as I referenced up the thread? We could also email Christos Yapijakis and ask him- maybe when you get as far as you think you and Don can.

I will check to see if Pan answered my message.

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 3:27 PM

This would also imply that the "annual celebration of the 20th" referenced in philodemus's poem as the invitation to Piso was, in fact, the *annual* celebration of the 20th was in fact the one celebrations Epicurus's Birthday on Gamelion's 20. That resolves the "annual" vs "monthly" conundrum with that poem!

Post by “Don” of November 26, 2022 at 8:33 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

We could also email Christos Yapijakis and ask him

What exactly are we asking him? And that's not meant to be snarky (I see it could be read that way).

Post by “Cassius” of November 26, 2022 at 10:13 PM

No snarkiness issue at all. It's not like anyone needs anyone else's approval or that we are planning on taking some particular immediate action. What I am thinking is that I know for example that Pan has studied this and it would be just to compare thoughts. Not sure if Christos has or not. Mainly thinking that once you and Nate settle on what you think is a final summary that I will just ask them to take a look at it and see if they have any comments. I am thinking Nate says he is still thinking it through (?). And I think you indicated you might do another summary too? I will point them to the full thread but if there is an obvious conclusion summary will link to that too. So in sum just another situation where more eyes is generally good.

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 12:17 AM

By Zeus, I'm finding some REALLY good stuff in French and German academic papers. It looks to me like Epicurus's birthday was accepted as Gamelion 20 since at least 1968 in a paper by Karl Alpers, "Epikurus Geburtstag"

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24813898>

That paper is cited by a French paper in 2016

Déniz Alcorac Alonso. Offrandes funéraires à Thespies : les ἐμπορίδια « sacrifices par le feu » dans IThesp. 215. In: Revue des Études Grecques, tome 129, fascicule 1, Janvier-juin 2016. pp. 63-83.

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.3406/reg.2016.8399>

[Offrandes funéraires à Thespies : les ἐμπορίδια « sacrifices par le feu » dans IThesp. 215 - Persée](#)

I'm still digging around for how Gamelion 7 fits in, and I'm trying to compile all these corroborating papers and evidence. This may take a little longer than I thought! My utter lack of fluency in French and German doesn't help!

So, while I am *definitely* not the first to connect τη προτέρα δεκατη to the 20th, it's heartening to see the corroborations start to line up!

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 8:44 AM

LOL! Mystery solved to, I think, my satisfaction!

In the short note by D.M. Lewis:

Two Days

Author(s): D. M. Lewis

Source: The Classical Review, Vol. 19, No. 3 (Dec., 1969), pp. 271-272

Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Classical Association

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/707723>

Accessed: 27-11-2022 13:19 UTC

Lewis, along with Alpers, is cited in that French paper. Lewis lays out an easy, elegant solution to the multiple dates problem: Gamelion 7, 10, 20.

The Gamelion 7 is from Apollodorus, cited by Diogenes. However, it has been demonstrated that the only month & date birthdays Apollodorus gives are for Socrates and Plato. He gives Epicurus's as occurring in Gamelion with a gloss notation of 7 in the text. Gamelion is simply noted as the ****7th month**** of the Athenian calendar! It's not a date!

The Gamelion 10 date is simply a misinterpretation of πρότερα δέκατη in the Greek as we've been going over and is corroborated by multiple sources now.

Gamelion 20 is Epicurus's Birthday. The "customary" in the Greek is now interpreted by me (and others) to refer to the fact that it was customary to celebrate his birthday annually with certain rites and ceremonies, but that the commemoration of himself and Metrodorus was monthly and used as the regular assembly of his students and members of the school.

All this makes the most sense of all this conflicting data. I'm convinced.

If we want to celebrate the spirit of Epicurus's Will, we should celebrate his birthday on January 20 every year.

If we want a movable feast, we use @Nate 's calculations using the online calendar.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 27, 2022 at 11:42 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

The Gamelion 7 is from Apollodorus, cited by Diogenes. However, it has been demonstrated that the only month & date birthdays Apollodorus gives are for Socrates and Plato. He gives Epicurus's as occurring in Gamelion with a gloss notation of 7 in the text. Gamelion is simply noted as the ****7th month**** of the Athenian calendar! It's not a date!

Can we confirm that Apollodorus was Diogenes' only source for original Epicurus' birthdate?

I am curious – *if* we can demonstrate that Epicurus' actual birthdate is only every attributed to Gamelion 20 (and that the 7th and 10th are misinterpretations) is it the case that (a) we have no record of the actual date of Epicurus' birth and that we only have attestation to the

ceremonial celebration with friends? Or (b) was he, *coincidentally*, born on Eikas?

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 2:22 PM

[Quote from Nate](#)

Can we confirm that Apollodorus was Diogenes' only source for original Epicurus' birthdate?

That's the only reference he gives:

Quote from Diogenes Laertius Book 10.14

He was born, according to Apollodorus in his Chronology, in the third year of the 109th Olympiad, in the archonship of Sosigenes,²⁶ on the seventh day of the month Gamelion,²⁷ in the seventh year after the death of Plato.

[Quote from Nate](#)

(a) we have no record of the actual date of Epicurus' birth and that we only have attestation to the ceremonial celebration with friends? Or (b) was he, *coincidentally*, born on Eikas?

It seems to me that the evidence points to Epicurus actually being born on Gamelion 20 and that was the reason the 20th was chosen as the monthly assembly date, too. I don't think it is coincidental. I think that's the reason it was picked.

Now, whether Metrodorus was also born, or died, or was born *in* Gamelion or some other reason being why the two were both commemorated on the *monthly* 20th, there's no way to tell for now. But, from all evidence I see, Gamelion 20 was an annual celebration with remembrance offerings for the *actual* birthday of Epicurus. And that was what Piso was being invited to by Philodemus.

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 2:38 PM

Oh, and due to the fact that Metrodorus would have been appointed Epicurus's successor had he not died before Epicurus, it makes sense to me that Epicurus wanted to share a commemoration day with him. It seems that Epicurus losing Metrodorus would have been (to Epicurus) akin to the Garden losing Epicurus himself.

Post by “Cassius” of November 27, 2022 at 3:23 PM

Well just fwiw after reading all this, I would say (1) since no one appointed any of us arbiter of anything other than what we do ourselves, (2) it is desirable to have a uniform yearly date as the best celebration date, and (3) that January 20 is the closest date to the "real" birthday, then:

(1) For commemoration purposes it makes sense to honor the decision of the Epicureans to celebrate on the nearest 20th (Jan 20) but that

(2) for the sake of reminding everyone of the calendar issues it would be good to keep up to date a chart such as Nate is working on so that those of us who are most "fundamentalist" will be able to observe every year how the calculation actually worked and consider the weather etc of the period as the closest approximation to what they experienced at the time of the birth of Epicurus.

That should take care of our needs and we can leave for further discussion the burning question of whether our birth sign friends would consider Epicurus to have been a Capricorn, Aquarius, or Pisces!

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 4:10 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Oh, and due to the fact that Metrodorus would have been appointed Epicurus's successor had he not died before Epicurus, it makes sense to me that Epicurus wanted to share a commemoration day with him. It seems that Epicurus losing Metrodorus would have been (to Epicurus) akin to the Garden losing Epicurus himself.

There's this, too:

[Understanding the Birthday Paradox – BetterExplained](#)

Or it could even have been that Metrodorus had his birthday on a different month's 20th. Hard to tell.

Post by “Don” of November 27, 2022 at 6:08 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

(1) For commemoration purposes it makes sense to honor the decision of the Epicureans to celebrate on the nearest 20th (Jan 20) but that

... honor the decision of *Epicurus*... 😊

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 27, 2022 at 6:36 PM

Scholarship seems to reinforce my findings that **Olympiad 109, Year 3, Gamelion 20 = January 24-25th 341 BCE.**

“He was born on the twentieth of the month of Gamelion (**24 January 341**)⁷⁴ [...] ⁷⁴The debate over the exact date of his birth was definitively resolved by Alpers 1968.” (Algra, *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* 43)

“Date of the birth of Epicurus, according to Apollodorus [...] that is, under the seventh archon from the archon of the year of the death of Plato, Theophilus. The tenth of Gamelion however, January 14, and the twentieth, **January 24**, are also assigned as the dates of birth.” (*Origines Kalendariae Hellenicæ; or, the history of the primitive calendar among the Greeks, before and after the legislation of Solon, Volume 2*, 97; 1862)

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 27, 2022 at 8:25 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

That should take care of our needs and we can leave for further discussion the burning question of whether our birth sign friends would consider Epicurus to have been a Capricorn, Aquarius, or Pisces!

I've been thinking, it's like expressing today as "the evening of **Sagittarius the 6th, Super Bowl 61.**"

.. and, for the record, all dates in Aquarius correspond with the range of possible dates for Gamelion Eikas. 😊

Post by "Cassius" of November 27, 2022 at 9:08 PM

I think of all the three signs it is indeed likely Epicurus would be most happy to be associated with Aquarius and the Fifth Dimension song 😊

Except for maybe the "mystic crystal revelations" a lot of the other words fit.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjxSCAalsBE>

Post by "Cassius" of November 28, 2022 at 8:39 AM

Sorry to muddy the water but Pan has responded back to me:

Hi from Athens.

Panagiotis Panagiotis Panagiotopoulos

28 Jan 2023

We have quite a long thread but scrolling back to Nate's chart this is not one of the proposed solutions, or is it?

Post by "Don" of November 28, 2022 at 10:08 AM

Honestly, I'm not as concerned with the floating Julian date as I am with nailing down Gamelion 20. And that's confirmed to my satisfaction. In light of that, celebrating annually on January 20 makes the most sense to me since that gets closest to the spirit of Epicurus's Will because (and I'm stating these as facts but anyone is welcome to contest if they like):

- Epicurus was born Gamelion 20.
- His birthday was celebrated annually during his life and after his death on Gamelion 20.
- The monthly assembly was established in honor of that 20th.
- The celebration of the 20th was lost for centuries and was not celebrated according to any calendar: Attic, Gregorian, or Julian.
- In modern times, we've decided to reestablish observance of the monthly 20th according to our calendar.
- The ancient Gamelion was roughly equal to the time of year we've divided into January (give or take a couple weeks).
- The ancients' celebration of Gamelion 20 was part of their regular monthly assemblies, just with added significance and ceremonies to celebrate the Founder's birth.
- Therefore, according to the custom set forth in Epicurus's Will by Epicurus, we can celebrate January 20 as Epicurus's Birthday and feel that we're honestly sticking to a time-honored tradition to the best of our ability.

Trying to pin down an exact Julian date in modern times for an event that took place 2,000+ years in the past is fraught with danger. In some ways, it's a "how many angels can dance on a pin" question. Even saying something like "Julius Caesar died on March 15" because he was assassinated on the Idēs of "March" is, at best, a rough approximation and convenient shorthand.

But don't misunderstand me! I think it's a fascinating exercise, and I fully support the idea of celebrating a movable observance of Epicurus's Birthday annually. I think that's a very cool exercise, and that's why I've "accepted" the Hellenic Month Established Per Athens website calculations as "good enough" for me on that count:

[HMEPA: Hellenic Month Established Per Athens temporary](#)

It's at least used by a modern Hellenic pagan group to celebrate their festivals, so if they are confident to use it for their re-constituted religion, I'm happy to use it for my purposes.

With the intercalated days and missing lists of Archons and the ancients' adding in days when the needed/wanted, it is well nigh impossible to say "this ancient event happened on March 15 and simply could NEVER have happened on March 14 or 16 in 44 BCE!! Furthermore, in 2022, that date exactly corresponds to March 16!!" It can't be done. Like I said, I think this is a

fascinating, intriguing, enjoyable intellectual exercise, but there's no way - to my mind - that anyone is going to be 100% iron-clad *right* in these calculations.

For me, January 20 is the best date to celebrate the Founder's Birthday that respects the ancient tradition in keeping with Epicurus's wishes as set down in his will. We could honor his wishes and establish a custom for modern Epicureans by observing the Annual 20th on that date.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 28, 2022 at 10:23 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

28 Jan 2023

We have quite a long thread but scrolling back to Nate's chart this is not one of the proposed solutions, or is it?

This is the number Don originally came up with in the original post, but I did not, and I do not know how he did. I calculate that Gamelion 20 this year is the 227th day of an Attic year that began on June 29-30th 2022 with an extra month of Poseideon, so I believe the Gamelion 20 this Attic year will fall on February 11-12th 2023.

Though, I am curious, because if I'm missing something, my chart is based on limited information.

[Quote from Don](#)

Trying to pin down an exact Julian date in modern times for an event that took place 2,000+ years in the past is fraught with danger. In some ways, it's a "how many angels can dance on a pin" question. Even saying something like "Julius Caesar died on March 15" because he was assassinated on the Idēs of "March" is, at best, a rough approximation and convenient shorthand.

[...]

With the intercalated days and missing lists of Archons and the ancients' adding in days when the needed/wanted, it is well nigh impossible to say "this ancient event happened on March 15 and simply could NEVER have happened on March 14 or 16 in 44 BCE!!

Furthermore, in 2022, that date exactly corresponds to March 16!!" It can't be done. Like I said, I think this is a fascinating, intriguing, enjoyable intellectual exercise, but there's no way - to my mind - that anyone is going to be 100% iron-clad *right* in these calculations.

Ultimately, I agree with Don that it is almost impossible to nail down any ancient dates with confidence. The Attic calendar was not meant to be an objective measurement of time, but simply a day-to-day, month-to-month tool that was regularly changed to accommodate the needs of the populace.

Still, I would like to know how you guys (and Panagiotis) came up with January 28th 2023.

Post by “Cassius” of November 28, 2022 at 10:25 AM

Don before I go back to Pan can you summarize where you are currently or point me to the right post?

Post by “Don” of November 28, 2022 at 10:37 AM

[Gamelion, 2nd year of the 700th Olympiad](#)

Gamelion 7 is January 28.

That was my initial take, but I firmly believe that's now wrong in light of the misinterpretation of Apollodorus' reference in Diogenes Laertius per Alpers, Lewis, and others. Epicurus was not born on Gamelion 7. He was born in the 7th month of the Attic calendar, Gamelion. Apollodorus doesn't give a day.

According to the website, Gamelion 20, 2nd year of the 700th Olympiad, will be Feb. 10/11, 2023.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 28, 2022 at 10:41 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

<http://www.numachi.com/~ccount/hmepa/...2.Gamelion.html>

Gamelion 7 is January 28.

That was my initial take, but I firmly believe that's now wrong in light of the misinterpretation of Apollodorus' reference in Diogenes Laertius per Alpers, Lewis, and others. Epicurus was not born on Gamelion 7. He was born in the 7th month of the Attic calendar, Gamelion. Apollodorus doesn't give a day.

According to the website, Gamelion 20, 2nd year of the 700th Olympiad, will be Feb. 10/11, 2023.

That explains it. I was one day off in my calculation due to a moving day.

I'll have to go back and check my numbers and revise the chart.

(Edit: My error in calculation was in adding a +1 to the date of every 20 Gamelion entry. All of the other columns were accurate. I am currently reviewing my BCE dates to make sure they are still accurate given measuring inconsistency).

Post by “Don” of November 28, 2022 at 10:42 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

The Attic calendar was not meant to be an objective measurement of time, but simply a day-to-day, month-to-month tool that was regularly changed to accommodate the needs of the populace.

Well said! You've stated that in a better, clearer, and more succinct way! 👍 👍

Post by “Don” of November 28, 2022 at 11:43 AM

The monthly 20th being based on Epicurus's Birthday also makes sense in light of ancient Greek religion.

The gods all had specific days of the month on which they were celebrated: Apollo, 7th; Aphrodite, 4th; etc. Epicurus was compared to a god (see Lucretius, for example), so establishing his birth date as the day of the month for celebrations makes perfect sense.

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 29, 2022 at 2:54 PM

Recognition that the ancient Greek phrase τη προτέρᾳ δεκατη (“the **early** tenth”) refers to “the twentieth” seems to have been acknowledged by Stephen White, the most recent translator of Diogenes Laërtius with whom I am familiar (2021):

“Out of the revenues we have given Amynomachus and Timocrates, they are to set aside portions, in consultation with Hermarchus and so far as possible, for the sacrificial offerings for my father, my mother, and my brothers, and for conducting the customary birthday feast for us every year on the twentieth of gamelion, and likewise for the gathering of our fellow philosophers held on the twentieth of every month in memory of us and Metrodorus. they are also to join in celebrating the feast day for my brothers in Posideon; and they are to join in celebrating the feast day for Polyaeus in Metageitnion, just as we have done.” (Lives of Eminent Philosophers translated by Stephen White)

Nearly everyone else from Gassendi to Mensch seem to overlook this nuance.

Post by “Don” of November 29, 2022 at 3:04 PM

I'm consolidating some papers and other sources that acknowledge τη προτέρᾳ δεκατη (“the early tenth”) referring to “the twentieth”. My goal is to get this all in one spot about the 7, 10, and 20 of Gamelion.

Over the next few days is the goal!

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 29, 2022 at 3:20 PM

Do we have access to Apollodorus of Athens' *Chronicles* (*Χρονικά*, *Chronika*) that identifies the date of Epicurus' birth?

I can only find the phrase from Diogenes Laërtius who employs the phrase **μηνὸς Γαμηλιῶνος ἑβδόμη**.

μηνὸς (mēnós) – genitive singular: “*month of*”

Γαμηλιῶνος (Gamēliōnos) – genitive singular: “*Gamelion’s*”

ἑβδόμη (hebdómēi) – nominative singular: “*Seventh*”

“μηδὲν ἄλλο ἢ σαφήνειαν ἀπαιτεῖν. καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς ἀντὶ τοῦ Χαίρειν Εὐ πράττειν καὶ Σπουδαίως ζῆν.

Ἀρίστων δὲ φησὶν ἐν τῷ Ἐπικούρου βίῳ τὸν Κανόνα γράψαι αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ Ναυσιφάνους Τρίποδος, οὗ καὶ ἀκοῦσαί φησιν αὐτόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Παμφίλου τοῦ Πλατωνικοῦ ἐν Σάμῳ. ἄρξασθαί τε φιλοσοφεῖν ἐτῶν ὑπάρχοντα δυοκαίδεκα, ἀφηγήσασθαι δὲ τῆς σχολῆς ἐτῶν ὄντα δύο πρὸς τοῖς τριάκοντα. Ἐγεννήθη δὲ, φησὶν Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν Χρονικοῖς, κατὰ τὸ τρίτον ἔτος τῆς ἐνάτης καὶ ἑκατοστῆς Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐπὶ Σωσιγένους ἄρχοντος μηνὸς Γαμηλιῶνος ἑβδόμη, ἔτεσιν ὕστερον τῆς Πλάτωνος τελευτῆς ἑπτὰ. ὑπάρχοντα δ' αὐτὸν ἐτῶν δύο καὶ τριάκοντα πρῶτον ἐν Μυτιλήνῃ καὶ Λαμφάκῳ συστήσασθαι σχολὴν ἐπὶ ἔτη πέντε· ἔπειθ' οὕτως εἰς Ἀθήνας μετελθεῖν καὶ τελευτῆσαι κατὰ τὸ δεύτερον ἔτος τῆς ἑβδόμης καὶ εἰκοστῆς καὶ ἑκατοστῆς Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐπὶ Πυθαράτου ἔτη βιώσαντα δύο πρὸς τοῖς ἑβδομήκοντα. τὴν τε σχολὴν διαδέξασθαι Ἐρμαρχὸν Ἀγεμόρτου Μυτιληναῖον. τελευτῆσαι δ' αὐτὸν λίθῳ τῶν οὐρῶν ἐπισχεθέντων, ὡς φησὶ καὶ Ἐρμαρχὸς ἐν ἐπιστολαῖς, ἡμέρας νοσήσαντα τετταρεσκαίδεκα. ὅτε καὶ φησὶν Ἐρμιππος ἐμβάντα αὐτὸν εἰς πύελον χαλκῆν " <
https://el.wikisource.org/wiki/Βίοι_φιλοσόφων/Ι#p15>

I *would* like to see the original fragment from Apollodorus of Athens if it is available.

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 29, 2022 at 3:59 PM

This is slightly off topic, but wondering ...since they used a lunar calendar...what phase of the moon would it be on the evening of the Twentieth, on each month?

Post by “Don” of November 29, 2022 at 4:31 PM

[Quote from Nate](#)

I would like to see the original fragment from Apollodorus of Athens if it is available.

I get the impression that the Chronicle only exists in fragments, including in Diogenes Laertius

[Apollodorus: Chronicle](#)

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 29, 2022 at 5:01 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

This is slightly off topic, but wondering ...since they used a lunar calendar...what phase of the moon would it be on the evening of the Twentieth, on each month?

Months of the Attic calendar were *supposed* to begin with New Moons.

Names of the days of the month

Moon waxing	Moon full	Moon waning
new moon	11th	later 10th
2nd waxing	12th	9th waning
3rd waxing	13th	8th waning
4th waxing	14th	7th waning
5th waxing	15th	6th waning
6th waxing	16th	5th waning
7th waxing	17th	4th waning
8th waxing	18th	3rd waning
9th waxing	19th	2nd waning
10th waxing	earlier 10th	old and new [moon]

The 20th would *usually* host the beginning of a *waning gibbous* moon:



Post by “Don” of November 29, 2022 at 5:09 PM

@Nate :

καὶ τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, καὶ ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν εἰθισμένην ἄγεσθαι γενέθλιον ἡμέραν ἐκάστου ἔτους τῇ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος, ὡσπερ καὶ εἰς τὴν γινομένην σύνοδον ἐκάστου μηνὸς ταῖς εἰκάσι τῶν συμφιλοσοφούντων ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν ἡμῶν τε καὶ Μητροδώρου <μνήμην> κατατεταγμένην. Usener (*Epicurea*, 405) was distressed but undaunted: ‘an Epicurus die vii natus quod die x susceptus erat, hunc potius diem celebrabat?’, on which Jacoby (on the fragment) only commented that, if this were so, it was a puzzle how Apollodorus knew the true birthday.¹ The trouble is delusory. Though Usener (cf. *Rh. Mus.* xxxiv [1879] 425) thought that the προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ was the 10th, it was in fact the 20th (see, e.g., Meritt, *The Athenian Year*, 46, *T.A.P.A.* xcv [1964], 208 n. 27), which is a long way from the 7th. There were celebrations every month on the 20th, but in Gamelion there were special birthday celebrations and the ἐναγίσματα as well. I take it that Epicurus was encouraged to vary his description of the 20th because ταῖς εἰκάσι looked less uncomfortably singular than τῇ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ. Why did Apollodorus have a different view? The regrettable answer is that he did not. ἐβδόμη is Huebner’s conjecture. Long’s apparatus gives: ἐβδόμη B^{pc}: ἐβδόμης FP: om. B^{ac}. (But see Usener’s apparatus on B, *Epicurea*, 366.) Gamelion is the seventh month of the Attic year and the numeral is a gloss.

Apollodorus is now known to have given dates by month and day only for Socrates (F 34) and Plato (F 37), successive days, with religious connections, and mythical, according to Wilamowitz (*Aristoteles und Athen*, i. 190), and by month only otherwise for Boethos (F 53).

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From Lewis, "Two Days" (1969)

I'm digging into all the citations and references.

Post by "Eikadistes" of November 29, 2022 at 6:02 PM

I'm not convinced by the author's argument. In fact, I can't really *locate* the author's argument.

Quote

"ἑβδόμη [hebdómēi] is Huebner's conjecture. Long's apparatus gives: ἑβδόμη [hebdómē] B^{PC}: ἑβδομης [hebdómēs] FP: om. B^{aC}. (But see Usener's apparatus on B, *Epicurea*, 366.)"

I'm honestly not sure what this means. The authors sentence structure is so badly fragmented with colons and abbreviations and differently-formatted citations, I mean ... this is an example of an academic who needs to be held to task in writing complete sentences with nice subjects, objects, and verb for the sake of clarity.

For my own comprehension, do you think they are indicating the following?

The following is my attempt to paraphrase the author: "*Numerous translators differ about the spelling of the ancient Greek word for 'seventh' as presented in the original text. The difference in translation could be the difference between 'the seventh month of Gamelion' versus 'the month of Gamelion's seventh'. One authority says hebdómēi. Another says hebdómē. Yet another says hebdómēs. As it turns out, I agree with the interpretation that lends credence to the proposition that 'the seventh' is an adjective that describes "the month" and not a noun indicating 'the nth sequential day'.*"

(I HATE it when scholars mix citation formats mid-text as though it isn't wildly obfuscating. Do they expect their readers to speak ancient Greek and can read Usener in Latin without a problem?)

I think I'm just having a tough time accepting this because I hate the way the author writes.

I see how "the seventh" can be seen as a descriptive gloss meant to elaborate upon "the month". At the same time, I can *just as easily* see it as being "the seventh", especially because the noun is in its nominative form, whereas "Gamelion" is in its genitive form, indicating to me that "the seventh" is the object and not "the month".

I'm further suspicious by this reasoning, which I see as being incomplete:

He suggests that "Apollodorus is now known to have given dates by month and day only for Socrates (F 34) and Plato (F 37), successive days, with religious connections, and mythical, according to Wilamowitz (Aristoteles und Athen, i. 190), and by month only otherwise for Boethos (F 53)." *How is this known? By whom? If he gave the days of Socrates and Plato, would it not be reasonable to assume that he would do the same for Epicurus, another Hegemon?*

Post by "Eikadistes" of November 29, 2022 at 10:21 PM

I think I just want more evidence that **μηνὸς Γαμηλιῶνος ἑβδόμη** should be translated to something like "the seventh month of Gamelion" instead of the traditional "month of Gamelion's *Seventh*."

I **do** see a number of reasons that support this hypothesis. The former solves our *birthday discrepancy*. Apollodorus of Athens could have used the word "seventh" as a gloss 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. Hundreds of years later, I imagine biographers, living under different calendar systems, would have found approximations more useful than exact calculations. Early authors ran the same risk of having lost things in translation just as we are now. Similarly, for readers' sense of context, it would have been less helpful to know the date of an unknown time of year, than to know the time of year but not the date.

At the same time, Apollodorus of Athens could have chosen to write an ancient greek numeral instead of the name of the number (I believe "Ζ" for the numeral "VII" or "7"), *or* he could have placed the words **μηνὸς** (mēnós) "month of" and **ἑβδόμη** (hebdómēi) "seventh" together. He was also only born 90 years after Epicurus died, and lived in Athens, so he and his readers would have been familiar with the Attic calendar, and a descriptive gloss may have been unnecessary. Having lived just a century earlier, I imagine that Epicurus' exact birthdate would have been recorded. Given that Apollodorus recorded Socrates' birthdate, who lived 300 years before him, it seems like he could have easily verified Epicurus', particularly given his popularity and the availability of documentation.

Then again, it seems weird to me that 7's would be used so repetitively. It seems more likely that Epicurus' birthday fell on the Twentieth celebration than it does that he was born in the *seventh* day, of the *seventh* month, *seven* years after Plato. Though, I suppose that, too, could have been a coincidence, and such a coincidence is worthy of writing about, so maybe instead of just including the month (and/or date), Apollodorus of Athens also included the Plato fact for rhetorical emphasis. Of course, that may have, itself, been an exaggeration made with a poetic license.

Still, if that is the case, and he was born on Gamelion 7, I think it begs an answer to the question of "Why did Epicurus adopt the the celebration date of the pre-existing cult of the Twentieth when he could have used his birthday?" 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, *sort of* like being born on a February 29th of a Leap Year.

This is why I am still split on what I see as being an unknown.

Post by "Don" of November 30, 2022 at 12:07 AM

You've been busy, @Nate . Let me try and give my responses (if warranted) chronologically from your posts. And I agree that Lewis's short work is obscure and wrapped in the jargon of Academia. I'm working my way through it, but I do find the 7th month idea intriguing to say the least....

Quote

Long's apparatus gives: ἑβδόμη [hebdómē] Bpc: ἑβδομης [hebdómēs] FP: om. Bac. (But see Usener's apparatus on B, Epicurea, 366.)"

Honestly, I got hung up on "apparatus" right away, on top of the abbreviated citations, etc. I had to look it up, and it appears, according to the Oxford English Dictionary: "Materials for the critical study of a document. In full *critical apparatus*: = *apparatus criticus* n." So, it's just shorthand for a researcher's materials they've cobbled together taken as a whole. B, F, and P are all Diogenes Laertius manuscripts:

"B 1. The oldest representative of the first class is B, the Codex Borbonicus gr. iii. B. 29 (formerly 253), a parchment codex of the twelfth century, in the public library at Naples: it was corrected by a hand of the fourteenth century whose readings not infrequently agree with those of Co." (Bailey: *Epicurus: The Extant Remains*) The superscripts of B appear to be different copies of the original B manuscript.

Here is the pertinent section of what I **think** is codex Parisinus gr. 1759 (14th c.) known as P. The 4th line is where the Gamelion line is which looks to me line μηνος γαμηλιωνος *βδομ*... I'm not sure what the superscripts before and after *βδομ* are.

[cdkYjj66QKN0q4CsmR7uFhGqAxWt_S8hqivG4NIQpj1DbKzG8xXw1M21FnjNzfcxX9fc-ve6UrsL7V22N3squBHzea](https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2756-epicurus-birthday-2023-the-most-comprehensive-picture-yet/)

Here is end of the section in manuscript codex Laurentianus LXIX. 35 (14th c.) known as H. This is the top of the folio with the ending of Gamelionos from the previous page: [γαμηλι]ωνος εβδομ**. Again, I'm not sure what to make of the superscripts but it looks to me like -Hς so ἐβδομης which appears to be modifying Gameliōnos. But why would ebdomēs be feminine and the name be masculine? Is it attached to the earlier της? Is it something like "the month of Gamelion, the seventh one" which is not an uncommon construction (e.g., the ball, the red one):

[AxQeO18jxymEeiNB52xaSR1yH0IsgUjsbswQ-gDk232MpOIk5UOXAFnvFBOX-nWSJpRsOWYkLTK-jWsXpk-rVBBtn](https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2756-epicurus-birthday-2023-the-most-comprehensive-picture-yet/)

Unfortunately, I couldn't get to the other manuscripts or they aren't available digitized.

Usener's apparatus on B on p.366 of *Epicurea* reads:

B | ἐν χρονικοῖς om Ff || 16 ἐνάτης] θ̄ Ff | σωσηγένους F || 17 inter
μηνός et τῆς uacuum spatium unius et quod excedit uersus relique-
rat B¹ παπυλεῶνος ἐβδόμη . . . ἔτεσιν ὕστερον suppleuit B² | ἐβδόμη
B²: ἐβδόμης FPQHf || 18 δ'] δὲ Ff | β̄ και λ̄ F | πρωτον ἐν BPQH:

The note on line 17 is the one that is pertinent to the Gamelion 7 issue. Which, using my rudimentary Latin (and Google Translate) reads something like:

"|| 17 between μηνός and τῆς there is one empty space, and what is left in verse B1 παπυλεῶνος ἐβδόμη. ... ἔτεσιν ὕστερον he supplied B2 | ἐβδόμη B2: ἐβδόμης FPQHf"

So, Usener seems to be saying that manuscript B2 had εβδομη while manuscripts F, P, Q, Hf had εβδομης. I have no idea what παπυλεωνος refers to, and Gamelionos makes more sense in context. I'm also now sure how "he" is when Usener refers to "he supplied." Usener seems to think the εβδομης, the genitive singular feminine form of ἐβδομος, is supported by 4 manuscripts while the other is supported by a version of B. Is he saying that "he" supplied εβδομη(ς) in the "one empty space" between μηνός and τῆς which would imply something like "the seventh month of Gamelion"?

I realize I'm not even a couple lines into replying to your posts, but there's a lot here so I'm going to his Reply here and open a new post.

Post by "Don" of November 30, 2022 at 12:32 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

The following is my attempt to paraphrase the author: "Numerous translators differ about the spelling of the ancient Greek word for 'seventh' as presented in the original text. The difference in translation could be the difference between 'the seventh month of Gamelion' versus 'the month of Gamelion's seventh'. One authority says hebdómēi. Another says hebdómē. Yet another says hebdómēs. As it turns out, I agree with the interpretation that lends credence to the proposition that 'the seventh' is an adjective that describes "the month" and not a noun indicating 'the nth sequential day'".

Yes, that's my general take, too.

[Quote from Nate](#)

Do they expect their readers to speak ancient Greek and can read Usener in Latin without a problem?)



LOL. Yes, I do think they expect that! And, most likely, most of them can/could. I doubt they ever considered us lay researchers being interested in their esoteric work!

Here's [a link to Wilamowitz's work Aristoteles und Athen](#). On [p. 190](#) it says:

geburtstage können nur gelegentlich wie bei Epikur und in seinem kreise geschichtlich sein ; Sokrates und Piaton haben mythische.

Birthdays can only occasionally be historical, as with Epicurus and in his circle; Socrates and Plato have mythical ones.

That implies to me that Epicurus's birthday was only considered important within his circle/school. Socrates' and Plato's took on mythic proportions due to their (undue) stature within Greek philosophy.

[Quote from Nate](#)

How is this known? By whom? If he gave the days of Socrates and Plato, would it not be reasonable to assume that he would do the same for Epicurus, another Hegemon?

Epicurus was "the most reviled and most revered" so any number of authors wouldn't feel his exact birthdate warranted mention. I don't see why we would expect every author - [especially the student of Stoics!](#) - to bother with recording Epicurus's birthdate. Plus, Diogenes Laertius included Epicurus's Will which (to me) gives his birthdate anyway. Not everyone wants to acknowledge the importance of Epicurus!

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 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 Ζ 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 συμφιλοσοφούντων 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.

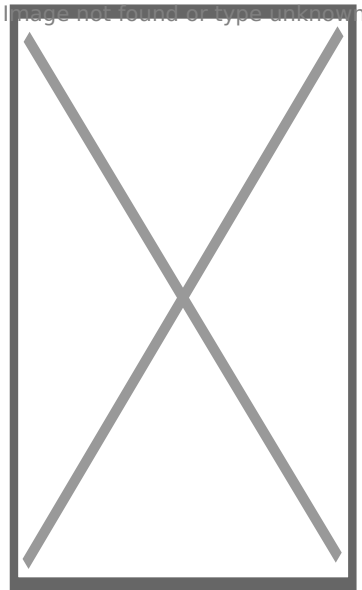
[Quote from Nate](#)

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 born on the 20th is what makes the Twentieth significant

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

Post by “Don” of November 30, 2022 at 1:15 AM

If anyone wants to join in the fun of transliterating ancient Greek manuscripts:



[An introduction to Greek and Latin palaeography : Thompson, Edward Maunde, Sir, 1840-1929 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

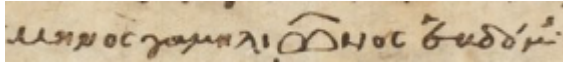
xvi, 600 p. : 26 cm

archive.org

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 30, 2022 at 8:56 AM

This makes a lot of sense. Thank you so much for the sources!

So, as you demonstrated, we have found a documented disagreement between scholars going back at least decades regarding the form of the word "seventh" that was used after **Γαμηλιῶνος** (*Gamēliōnos*) in Diogenes' manuscript. The form of "seventh" will indicate whether or not the author was using "seventh" as a gloss to inform the read which month it was, versus making a point to identify the individual date of the month on which Epicurus was born.



That works for me! Given that the scholars from whom most other academics pull have acknowledged that this is an on-going debate that has not been conclusively resolved, I think it is appropriate to question the prevailing translations of "seventh day" and propose that not only is "seventh month" just as possible, but it is **more** consistent.

Post by "Don" of November 30, 2022 at 9:10 AM

Just this morning, I had a thought on codex Parisinus gr. 1759 (14th c.) known as P.

Look at that manuscript, and it looks like the actual spelling of the word that everyone just translates as "seven/th". To me it looks like:

ευδομ(*superscript*) and not εβδομ/. Well, lol and behold, according to LSJ "εὔδομος" is Boeotian for ἑβδομος!

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, ε , εὔδιά-φθαρτος , εὔδομος](#)

And Boeotia didn't use Gamelion as the name of a month. So, here's my scenario: Somewhere along the line, Apollodorus's work was copied by a scribe from Boeotia who didn't think his readers would know what Gamelion was, so he decided to put in the word "seventh" in his dialect as opposed to "standard" Greek to make sure to specify Gamelion was the seventh month.

All this is wild conjecture on my part, but I've seen academic theories built on less 😊

Post by "Don" of November 30, 2022 at 12:51 PM

Let's pare that pertinent sentence down to its bare bones:

Ἐγεννήθη δέ, φησὶν Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν Χρονικοῖς, κατὰ τὸ τρίτον ἔτος τῆς ἐνάτης καὶ ἑκατοστῆς Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐπὶ Σωσιγένους ἄρχοντος μηνὸς γαμηλιῶνος ἑβδόμη,

Ἐγεννήθη "he was born"

φησὶν Ἀπολλόδωρος ἐν Χρονικοῖς

Apollodorus says in (his) Chronicle

δέ is just the conjunction "and, so, etc."

κατὰ τὸ τρίτον ἔτος τῆς ἐνάτης καὶ ἑκατοστῆς Ὀλυμπιάδος

during the 3rd year (τὸ τρίτον ἔτος) of the 109th Olympiad

ἐπὶ Σωσιγένους ἄρχοντος

in the archonship of Sosigenēs

μηνὸς γαμηλιῶνος ἑβδόμη,

μηνὸς "month" noun singular masculine genitive of μήν

γαμηλιῶνος "Gamelion" noun singular masculine genitive

ἑβδόμη "seventh" adjective singular *feminine* dative

ἑβδόμης adjective singular *feminine* genitive

ἑβδόμη adjective singular *feminine* nominative

Words in ancient Greek have to agree with each other in number, case, and gender. Every permutation I've seen of "seventh" is *feminine*. There's no word in that sentence that seems to fit with being modified by a feminine adjective. There has to be a seventh something. However, used by itself it can mean "the seventh one" as in

ἡ ἑβδόμη "the seventh day". So, my theory continues to be "of (the) month of Gamelion, (the) seventh one (i.e., seventh month).

Post by "Joshua" of November 30, 2022 at 1:17 PM

It's honestly pretty shocking we even have his birth date nearly 24 centuries later. With most people from antiquity we have quite literally *only* their name. Stephen Greenblatt gives a citation in which an ancient writer runs down a list of Latin authors he thought were worth reading. Of some dozen names, only Lucretius' book survived.

Post by “Don” of November 30, 2022 at 1:25 PM

Thanks for that reminder, [Joshua](#) ! You're absolutely right. The fact that we can even have this discussion about *conflicting* ideas from a day 2,400 years ago is amazing!

Post by “Don” of November 30, 2022 at 11:26 PM

I noticed this thread has gotten 1.2K views in a little over a week. Hopefully, we'll make some people take a second look at what's considered "common knowledge" on the issue of Epicurus's Birthday.

Post by “Cassius” of December 1, 2022 at 5:32 AM

That reminds me that I haven't updated the Facebook post I made on this, so to drive the numbers up even further it would be great to have a summary post here in this same thread to which I could point to as a follow-up 😊

Post by “Don” of December 1, 2022 at 8:41 AM

For sources and further explanation, feel free to read through this thread. To summarize the current understanding:

- There are good reasons to believe that the reference to Apollodorus' Chronicle in Diogenes Laertius, Book 10.14 should be translated "he was born in the seventh month of Gamelion" and NOT "the seventh day of Gamelion."

- It is confirmed that the reference to the "earlier tenth of Gamelion" in Epicurus's Will refers to the 20th day of the lunar cycle in the ancient Athenian calendar.

- For this reason, there is his reason to accept that Epicurus's Birthday was actually Gamelion 20, that it was the usual practice to celebrate it on that day, and that is why the monthly assembly of his school on the 20th was established.

- Since the month of Gamelion most closely matches January in the current calendar (give or take a couple weeks), the best way in modern times to keep to the spirit of Epicurus's Will is to celebrate his Birthday on January 20 every year. (It is to this "Annual 20th" that Philodemus was inviting Piso.)

- We can also create a "movable feast day" using a reconstructed Ancient Athenian calendar but we should use Gamelion 20 as the day.

Post by "Cassius" of December 1, 2022 at 8:45 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

monthly assembly of his school on the 20th was established.

From our point of view, what about Jan 20 vs Feb 20?

Post by "Eikadistes" of December 1, 2022 at 9:21 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

monthly assembly of his school on the 20th was established.

From our point of view, what about Jan 20 vs Feb 20?

No matter which date we use (*the 7th, the 10th, or the 20th*), **all three** of the proposed Gamelion dates in the 3rd year of the 109th Olympiad correspond to dates within our month of January. Epicurus was definitely born in January 341 BCE.

Based on my findings, Gamelion 20 corresponds with a January date more frequently than February.

Post by “Don” of December 1, 2022 at 9:22 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

monthly assembly of his school on the 20th was established.

From our point of view, what about Jan 20 vs Feb 20?

Edited the summary above.

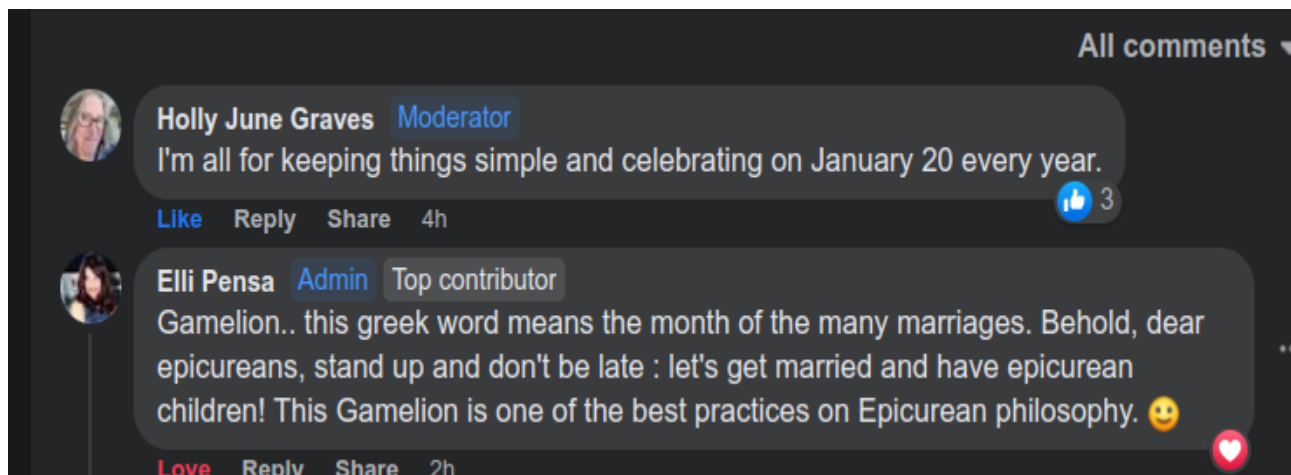
Post by “Cassius” of December 1, 2022 at 10:10 AM

Thanks again to everyone in the thread so far. I have updated the Facebook group [with a new post](#):



Post by “Cassius” of December 1, 2022 at 2:45 PM

I want to be sure these two comments (especially Elli's) get saved:



Post by “Pacatus” of December 1, 2022 at 4:39 PM

I thoroughly enjoyed reading through this thread (although I barely skimmed some of the more esoteric scholarship: especially [Don](#) @Nate 😊).

What I really appreciate is that – even with the sincere investigation and really trying to come up with a meaningful date – it is all more in the nature of *fun*, rather than fundamentalism. (No mention of an Epicurean hell for getting it wrong – unlike some religious disagreements over calendar issues! 😊)

I do have a prophecy, however. This will not be the last year of discussion on the matter – whatever date you hit upon: you all would just miss the sheer pleasure of it too much! 😄 😍

Post by “Don” of December 4, 2022 at 5:56 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

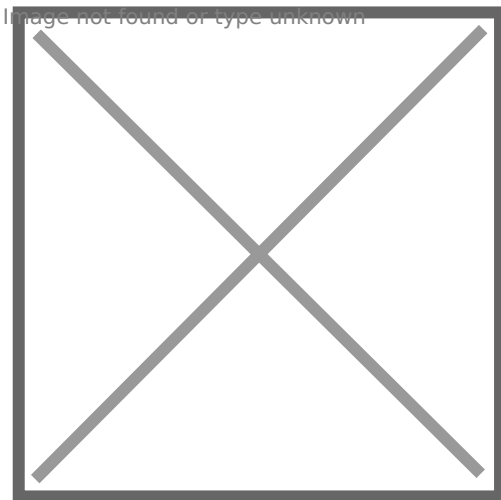
What I really appreciate is that - even with the sincere investigation and really trying to come up with a meaningful date - it is all more in the nature of fun, rather than fundamentalism.

Thanks! That was certainly the spirit.

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

I do have a prophecy, however. This will not be the last year of discussion on the matter - whatever date you hit upon: you all would just miss the sheer pleasure of it too much! 😄 😄

😊 I hear you, but, honestly, I'm getting pretty confident and satisfied with what we've come up with on this thread. Besides there are *plenty* of other obscure details that I want to sink my research teeth into including pinpointing the location of the Garden. Currently, I'm eyeing the site of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Athens:



[Church of the Holy Trinity at Kerameikos · Pireos, Athina 105 53, Greece](#)

★★★★★ · Greek Orthodox church

goo.gl

for various reasons... but that all will be for another thread!

There's also the on-going look at Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics... and I'm also curious to go through the texts to pick out specific foods mentioned in reference to the Epicureans. It goes beyond "bread and water" and cheese.

As for me and Epicurus's Birthday, put me down as a firm "Twentyer" or, in Ancient Greek, ΕΙΚΑΔΙΣΤΗΣ (Eikadistes).

Post by “Pacatus” of December 4, 2022 at 6:19 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

Besides there are *plenty* of other obscure details that I want to sink my research teeth into

I understand, my friend! I understand! 😊 I am slogging (pleasurably) through the dissertation you cited on Greek gardens -- and might actually have a new poem inspired thereby (whether or not it's worth anything will take time to tell). 😞

Post by “Cassius” of December 4, 2022 at 7:08 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

hear you, but, honestly, I'm getting pretty confident and satisfied with what we've come up with on this thread. Besides there are *plenty* of other obscure details that I want to sink my research teeth into

Possibly the key to avoiding the necessity of going through this year after year is being sure that we have an indepth article well linked and very findable to short-circuit the question next time it is asked. I will make sure this thread is findable and we'll highlight it as an article at some point as soon as Don gets finished with the other five articles he is working on. I do think we want a nice colored chart along the lines of what Nate has started for (a few) past and future years and we'll highlight that too.

Post by “Cassius” of December 4, 2022 at 8:16 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

as soon as Don gets finished with the other five articles he is working on.

I see I forgot to put a smiley face on that. I decided to come back and do that! :-). We were talking in the podcast recording today about how some of the texts indicated that some

members of the garden needed more motivation than others and I would not want to imply that Don needs more motivation! He's already tackled learning Greek and poring into the birthday issue and otherwise leaving most all of us in the dust. 😊

Post by “Don” of December 5, 2022 at 7:07 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

an indepth article well linked and very findable to short-circuit the question next time it is asked

LOL! Be careful what you ask for! 😊 I'm in the process of working on a semi-formal paper consolidating all this information about the controversy among Gamelion 7, 10, and 20 with links in the PDF plus image snippets from the manuscripts and a bibliography of sources. Hopefully it'll be complete in the next day or so to get some feedback and then polish.

Post by “Don” of December 5, 2022 at 4:50 PM

btw, definitely knocking down the "7th day of the month of Gamelion" is taking longer to pull together all the references, images, etc. than I expected. I think it is a strong case (especially with Alpers and other scholars weighing in since the 1960s) but I want to be sure to cover all the bases. Basically, so that if someone wants to argue, they aren't arguing with just little old me but with several decades of established scholarship!

Knocking down Gamelion 10 and supporting Gamelion 20 are going to go much faster!

Just a status report on that mythical paper I've claimed to be writing (all physical evidence to the contrary) 😊

Post by “Eikadistes” of December 5, 2022 at 6:01 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from Don](#)

I do think we want a nice colored chart along the lines of what Nate has started for (a few) past and future years and we'll highlight that too.

Here is ****another updated**** draft. Please offer recommendations to organize the formatting.



Post by “Don” of December 5, 2022 at 11:29 PM

Okay, here is the 11-page **DRAFT version** of *Epicurus's Birthday: The 7th, 10th, or 20th of Gamelion? A Mystery Solved*

[Epicurus's Birthday The 7th, 10th, or 20th of Gamelion.pdf](#)

Ready for initial review and comment.

This will be revised into a final version and eventually posted to the Filebase/Library here at the forum. I'm also planning on uploading it to Internet Archive like I did with the Letter to Menoikeus. Maybe Academia.edu since I've seen Hiram post some of his articles there. Why not! 😊

I realize this is a lot of material and ended up more as a collection of notes instead of a linear narrative, but, take a look, let me know what you think and where improvements can be made, what material can be added or subtracted or modified

Hope you enjoy!

PS: One correction done already: Any mention in the PDF of the "first tenth" has been changed to the "earlier tenth."

Post by "Elli" of December 12, 2022 at 5:13 AM

"τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος" as it is mentioned by Epicurus in his Will, maybe it does not mean in the 20th day of Gamelion.

Moreover, I read in a book that there are some academic scholars that do not take Meritts' speculations to be entirely correct concerning the ancient Greek chronology/calendar.

The book is here:

<https://books.google.gr/books?id=pmxPEAAAQBAJ&pg=PA55&lpg=PA55&dq=δεκάτη+προτέρα&source=bl&προτέρα&f=false>

But anyway I think that in Epicurus phrase "τῆ προτέρᾳ δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος" in greek adjective "τῆ προτέρᾳ" the subjective noun that is meant is the word (day/ἡμέρα) and if we want to be precise in the translation from ancient to new greek we place always the subjective noun in parentheses. So, this phrase by Epicurus goes like this "τῆ προτέρᾳ (ἡμέρα) δεκάτῃ τοῦ Γαμηλιῶνος" and in english is: [The (day) before of 10th of Gamelion].

E.g. from the historian Thucydides we read [τῆ δὲ προτέρᾳ ἡμέρᾳ ξυνέβη τῆς μάχης ταύτης...]

in english: [The day before this battle it happened...]

Thucydides mentions the word [day/ἡμέρα] next to the word [before/προτέρᾳ].

And "προτέρᾳ" means "The day before" of 10th of Gamelion" so, IMO Epicurus points out one day before of 10th of Gamelion which is the seventh month as it is said correctly OR Epicurus points out that "προτέρᾳ" maybe means "early in this day".

Since it would be wrong - when Epicurus used with so much clarity the greek words and the experiences/facts - to use two different dates with the same meaning.

"ταῖς εἰκάσι" that means the 20th of every month.

Conclusion: IMO Epicurus in his Will uses two different dates and not one and the same as the 20th. Another day (another fact of experience) was the celebration of his **birthday**; and another day (another fact of experience) was the celebration of memory (that usually is connected with a **death**, i.e here of Metrodorus) and that was of every 20th "eikas".

So, IMO in his Will Epicurus points out clearly that when I will die too, you will have the same comemorate date of remembrance that we were celebrating the death of Metrodorus and this is the 20th of every month.

Concerning "eikas" this also means and something else that is very important, and as Epicurus points out too: So true/real friends we were me (Epicurus) and Mitrodorus to each other and you epicureans will celebrate our commemorate date/remembrance the same date. 😊

Post by “Cassius” of December 12, 2022 at 6:51 AM

Don, I hit the "thanks" on Elli's post but even after reading your very detailed article I don't have the Greek ability (or maybe the brainpower) to assess any of this on my own. Are the two of you together?