

# **Epicurus and the Pompeii Mosaic**

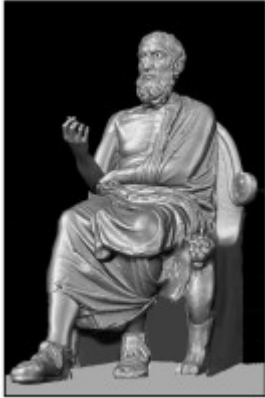
**Post by “Joshua” of December 26, 2022 at 9:46 PM**

[This](#) is the *School of Athens* fiasco all over again. The mosaic:



Appears to portray six Greek philosophers in various attitudes of repose, gathered around a central figure leaning against a tree, and thought to be Plato. As is frequently the case, no one can know for sure who the artist intended to portray. I have seen the second man from the right identified as Epicurus, though this is not the common assessment.

In favor the Epicurus argument is this statue:



In both statue and mosaic, the subject is featured with the right foot forward and the right forearm bent upward, holding a scroll. In the actual statue the head and right arm were lost, and the work was fitted with a different head and different limb. The hypothesized scroll in the hand was of course lost with the limb.

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### **Post by “Joshua” of December 26, 2022 at 10:07 PM**

Also notice the paw footed legs of both the chair, and the curved bench in the mosaic.

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### **Post by “Don” of December 26, 2022 at 10:35 PM**

I found this interesting in one of the papers referenced in the Wikipedia article:

#### Quote

Athens is visible in the upper right background, as well as what might be the Dipylon Gate with its bronze amphorae on top, which was not far from the academy.

The Garden was supposed to be situated near the Dipylon Gate just outside the walls of the city. Plus, those boots on the statue and the shoes on the mosaic person sitting to the right look a lot alike.

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**Post by "Don" of December 26, 2022 at 10:43 PM**

[https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa\\_020.htm](https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_020.htm)

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**Post by "Don" of December 26, 2022 at 11:21 PM**



That guy seated on the left reminds me of Metrodorus from Autun.

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**Post by "Don" of December 27, 2022 at 7:57 AM**

I was completely unaware of this mosaic. Thanks, [Joshua](#), for posting it.

That guy in the gold-colored cloak and a "crown?" on the left is quite striking. Are there any philosophers that fit that kind of description?

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## **Post by “Joshua” of December 27, 2022 at 8:41 AM**

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tainia\\_\(costume\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tainia_(costume))

The headband/circlet/diadem/crown/whatever it is, is something I do see in ancient art but not with any clear connection. Wikipedia suggests it was festival attire, and also used by royalty and athletes. Not sure what the connection is here.

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## **Post by “Charles” of December 27, 2022 at 9:03 AM**

The two figures on the left strike me as Plato & Socrates respectively. Although that's hardly based off of anything. It's too obscure to make any definitive judgement, whether it represents most of the schools much like the School of Athens, or perhaps it's not depicting any one specific philosopher at all.

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## **Post by “Cassius” of December 27, 2022 at 10:10 AM**

Following Charles, it also strikes me that the appearances of all of them seem obscure. The artist seems capable of better representing some of the most famous, if he had wanted to, but none of them seem to bear a striking resemblance to anyone as one might expect, so hard to know what to say.

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## **Post by “Don” of December 27, 2022 at 10:15 AM**

[Quote from Cassius](#)

so hard to know what to say.

Philosophers Rorschach Test 😊