



Summary :

Oenoanda, the city of Lycia, in the mountainous region of Cabalitis, was identified with a site near the modern village of Incealiler, 32 km to the W-NW of Elmali. In the 2nd century BC the city belonged to the kingdom of Pergamon and then it became a member of the Tetrapolis under Cibyra. In the 1st century BC it was incorporated into the Koinon of Lycia following all the rest of its member cities. Among the most important archaeological findings is the inscription of the Epicurean philosopher Diogenes of Oenoanda, carved on a public wall and dating from the 2nd century AC. The remains of the city are impressive and include an Agora, a second open area, a theatre, baths and monumental tombs.

Geographical Location

Northwest Turkey, Lycia

Administrative Dependence

Kingdom of Pergamum, Tetrapolis under Cibyra, koinon of Lycia, province of Lycia - Paphlyia

1. Anthropography

The ancient site of Oenoanda is located on the northern borders of [Lycia](#), in the mountainous region of Cabalitis, 32 km to the W-NW of Elmali. The city was built on the secluded side of a hill near the modern village of Incealiler, while the nearest city is Urludja. Below Oenoanda runs the modern highway leading from Fethiye (ancient Telmessus) to Korkuteli and crossing the Xanthos (Koca) River. Three kilometres to the NW of Oenoanda lies the ancient city of Termessus Minor.¹

Oenoanda was built on fertile land and on a strategic site, thus controlling the mountainous passages and the accessible road arteries. The site of the ancient settlement was located in the mid-19th century² and was identified with Oenoanda, the city reported by ancient travellers and historians,³ through inscriptions.⁴

Nothing is known about the exact time the ancient city was founded, for there is little and ambiguous historical evidence from before the 1st century BC. However, the city is evidenced by inscriptions from at least the 3rd century BC.⁵ Historical information about Oenoanda is gained from both the Greek and the Roman literature as well as from Anatolian sources, each one reporting the tradition of the region from their point of view. The Oenoandans, who inhabited the mountainous and unapproachable area of Cabali, as well as the rest of the Lycians are believed to have had different origins.⁶

According to Strabo, the Oenoandans were Solymoi⁷ in origin. The Solymoi were aboriginals who lived in southwestern Asia Minor. In the *Iliad* they are reported to have been hostile towards the inhabitants of Lycia and fought [Bellerophon](#), the representative of the King of Lycia.⁸ The Solymoi were later called Milyai⁹ and ruled the land of Lycia until [Sarpedon](#) together with the Termilians, colonists from Crete, made them withdraw in the mountainous region of Cabalitis.¹⁰

2. Historical Background

The city of Oenoanda is reported by [Strabo](#), [Pliny](#) and Stephanos Byzantios.¹¹ Significant historical information is gleaned by the numerous inscriptions found on the ancient site, most of which date from the Early Imperial period (43 BC-69 AD). They are official administrative texts, honorary inscriptions of public and private character and gravel stelai from the Early Imperial years as well as fragments from the large inscription of the Epicurean philosopher Diogenes.¹² The earliest known inscription dates from the 3rd century BC, being the first written source about the habitation of the city.¹³ There is little historical information about the city concerning the period before the 1st century BC, mainly gained from the study of archaeological findings from the site and the historical framework of the wider district of Lycia.



Although in the 6th century BC the inhabitants of Lycia were subjugated to the Persians, they maintained their identity and their local potentates. Towards the end of the Persian domination over Asia Minor, the district of Lycia was incorporated into the territory of [Mausolus](#), the satrap of Caria. Local dynasties were eliminated and most cities became self-governing. In 334 BC [Alexander the Great](#) occupied Asia Minor. After he died, Lycia was ceded to [Antigonos I Monophthalmos](#) (One-Eyed) (382-301 BC) and then to the Ptolemies of Egypt, remaining under their occupation for the longest part of the 3rd century BC. From then on, the Greek language replaced the local language and the inhabitants of Lycia became part of the Greek world.

In the 3rd century BC (about 225-175 BC) the Termessians, claiming that they shared a common ancestor with the Oenoandans, founded the colony of Termessus Minor on the outskirts of Oenoanda.¹⁴ The city was built on the bank of the Xanthos River, 3 km to the NW of Oenoanda. The social life and organisation of Termessus Minor and Oenoanda are evidenced on honorary inscriptions found scattered around the city, since dedications from both cities were preserved in Oenoanda. As a result, the two cities seem to have had close cultural relations and were united in the Roman years, although they were under different administrations and appeared on inscriptions as two separate demoi, the Oenoandans and the Termessians.¹⁵

In 197 BC the cities of Lycia were occupied by [Antiochus III the Great](#) of Syria (223-187 BC) before ceded to the Romans. The only exceptions were the port of Telmessus and, possibly, Oenoanda, which was incorporated into the territory of [Eumenes II Soter](#) (197-159 BC) of Pergamon, shortly after the [Peace of Apamea](#) (188 BC). The archaeological evidence supports that Oenoanda belonged to the kingdom of [Pergamon](#) after 188 BC. The city's fortification wall, dating from 200 to 150 BC, is quite similar to that of Pergamon and is considered part of the chain of fortifications Pergamon made all over the western Asia Minor from [Attaleia](#) of Pamphylia to [Termessus](#) of Caria.¹⁶

The only known coin from Oenoanda dates from the same period. It is an independent Attic issue, representing the head of Zeus on the obverse and the inscription 'of the Oenoandans' on the reverse, probably dating from the period when the city was under the control of the kingdom of Pergamon and may have been an autonomous administration.¹⁷

Perhaps at the end of the kingdom of Pergamon (after 133 BC) Oenoanda became a member of the Tetrapolis under Cibyra, the other members being Boubon and [Balboura](#). The confederation was disbanded by the Roman general Licinius [Murena](#) around 81 BC, when he subjugated Cibyra at the end of [Mithradatic War I](#) and, as a result, Oenoanda and the other members of the Tetrapolis came under the [Koinon of Lycia](#).¹⁸ In 42 BC Oenoanda betrayed the Koinon and allied with [Brutus](#) during the siege of Xanthos, thus being expelled as punishment. It was finally incorporated into the expanded [province of Lycia and Pamphylia](#) in the 1st century AD. There is little information about the history of the city in the Imperial period, including excerpts from written sources and honorary inscriptions.¹⁹

3. The Koinon of Lycia

The political organisation of the Koinon, which governed Lycia from 169 BC, was based on proportional representation. According to Strabo,²⁰ the cities participating in the Koinon were eligible to vote during the assembly of the confederation in proportion to their population: 3 votes the largest ones, 2 the medium ones and 1 vote the small ones. As for the total number of cities, Strabo mentions only 23 cities; however, the number must have been much higher as groups of smaller cities must have been sharing the same vote.²¹ After [Vespasian](#) (69-79) reorganised the province, the Koinon of Lycia lost its independence, although it remained partly self-governing and its members continued to prosper.

A lot of names appearing on the inscriptions of Oenoanda are related to subsidies. Some wealthy citizens managed through donations and public services to rise socially and have titles, such as the title of "Lyciarch" or the "Archiereus" (chief-priest) of the Augusti. Those country aristocrats often managed to acquire the Roman citizenship. The most known of them was the rich Opromaos from [Rhodiapolis](#), who donated 500,000 denarii between 140 and 143, intended for restorations following an earthquake that struck 28 Lycian cities. Among the benefited cities was Oenoanda, which accepted a generous offer of 10,000 denarii for the building of baths. A special donator from Oenoanda was Licinius Longus, who made generous offers to the Lycian cities and offered public shows.²²



4. Economy

Until the second half of the 6th century BC Lycia was isolated from the rest of the districts. Even when the Lycian coasts drew the attention of the Persians and then the Greeks for strategic and commercial reasons the inland remained isolated.²³ The foreign relations of the Oenoandans did not extend beyond Lycia. As mentioned above, there was only one coinage of the city, minted in a period of autonomy, in the 2nd century BC.²⁴ An inscription from the Imperial years reports a transaction of the city concerning the building of an arena.²⁵ It is worth mentioning that ancient writers make mention of the cedars of the region, without commenting on the issue of trade, though.²⁶

5. Religion

The deities worshipped in Oenoanda and in the wider district of Lycia are descended from Bronze Age Anatolia. However, from the 5th century BC on, the local and Greek deities started to fuse. Plutarch mentions that the Solymoi worshipped Kronos. However, no inscriptions have been found certifying his evidence.²⁷

The deities worshipped in Oenoanda became known through inscriptions and coins. Zeus is the *God Hypsistos* (Highest), while Apollo, Asclepius, Leto, [Mater Dindymene](#), Helios, Selene and all chthonic deities are reported as well. More inscriptions reporting the Epikooi Gods, the Megaloi Theoi (Great gods) and the Dioskuroi were found near Oenoanda.²⁸ The sanctuary of Leto is possibly on the northwestern side of the acropolis. Besides, the worship of the goddess had its ancient origins in the Anatolian religion, while in Oenoanda she was worshipped at least from the 3rd century BC.²⁹

6. Culture

The 2nd century AD was described as a golden age of peace and spiritual regeneration, when the [Epicurean philosophy](#) bloomed and was followed by large communities, especially in Asia Minor. This is evidenced by texts of the philosopher Diogenes of Oenoanda. The detailed inscription of the philosopher (about 25,000 words) was carved circa 120 AD on a wall, in a public place of the city so as to be visible by the people. Only the one third of the inscription has been restored so far. It is a text of unique historical importance, which confirms the second period the Epicurean philosophy bloomed in the 2nd century AD, in a remote region of the Greek-Roman world. Most excerpts come from the two major works of the philosopher, *Ethics* and *Physics*.³⁰

7. Buildings

The acropolis of Oenoanda was fortified and had large water tanks. Its public buildings were made on subsequent terraces directed to the south. The Greek theatre, built on a natural slope, was to the north, at the foot of the hill. The [cavea](#) date from the Hellenistic years (2nd century BC), while the [skene](#) was constructed in the second half of the 1st century AD.³¹ Around 200 to 150 BC a wall of polygonal masonry, 10 metres in maximum preserved height, was built in the southern part of the city. The wall comprised pentagon and circular towers, two of which have been preserved, while the steep outskirts of the city offered additional security.³²

There are important architectural remains of the Agora, which dates from the Imperial years.³³ A paved area was found to the southeast of the theatre and, according to the prevailing opinion, the inscription of the philosopher Diogenes was laid there.³⁴ A large number of statue pedestals were found there as well. The [Nymphaeum](#) must have been to the east of the Agora complex, while the remains of a Doric temple, possibly dedicated to Emperor [Augustus](#) (31 BC-14 AD) were found near the Agora. Among the rest of public buildings are the remains of two [thermae](#) dating from the Imperial years and located to the south of the theatre as well as the remains of an aqueduct crossing the southern part of the city.³⁵

In Late Roman years, in a period of insecurity (second half of the 3rd century AD), a new fortification wall was built with material from



pre-existing buildings. Necropoleis with sarcophagi were discovered in various positions outside the wall, while rock cut temple tombs on the rocky western side of the acropolis were also found. The remains of the marble mausoleum of Licinnia Flavilla, dating from the 2nd century AD, are to the south, outside the walls, while a long genealogical inscription concerning a notable family of the city was also discovered there.³⁶

1. Bean, G.E., *Lycian Turkey. An archaeological guide* (London 1978), p. 170· Smith, M.F., *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 1993), p. 49.
2. The discovery of the ancient location was made by Spratt, T. – Forbes, E., *Travels in Lycia I* (London 1847), p. 172.
3. Strabo 13.4.17· Stephanos of Byzantium, see entry "Oenoanda"· Pliny, *HN* 5.28.101· Ptolemy 5.3.8.
4. In 1885 M.M. Cousin copied in situ the following inscription: *Το Ασκληπιείον κατασκεύασεν τῷ Οἰνοανδέων δήμῳ Καπανεύς γιάτρὸς Οἰνοανδῆς ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων*, see entry Holleaux, M. – Paris, P., "Inscriptions d'Oenoanda", *BCH* X (1886), pp. 216-235· *RE* 34 (1937), columns 2230-2231, see entry "Oinoanda" (W. Ruge). Regarding the first works that were carried out in the 19th century on the city's inscriptions, see Robert, L., "Un oracle gravé à Oinoanda", *CRAI* (1972), pp. 597-601.
5. Hall, A.S., "The Oenoanda Survey 1974-1976", *Anatolian Studies* 26 (1976), p. 197.
6. The citizens of Lycia had their own alphabet and language and they maintained them until the arrival of Alexander the Great, see Bryce, T., *The Lycians. A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 42-98.
7. Strabo 13.4.16· Herodotus 1.173. Researchers particularly relate Solymoi to the areas of Lycia and Pisidia. Strabo said that the people of Termessus, a city of Pisidia, were Solymoi and he added that the mountain that raises above the city was called Mount Solymos. In addition, during the Imperial Period people in the city worshipped Zeus Solimeus. See Bryce, T., *The Lycians. A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 19-20· Chilton, C.W., *Diogenes of Oenoanda. The Fragments* (London 1971), p. XVI.
8. *Iliad* VI.184-185, 203-204· Pindar 1.13.90· Strabo 12.8.5, 13.4.16· Apollodorus 2.3.2.
9. Stephanos Byzantios, see entry "Milyai". The Milyai have been characterized by Pliny as an extinct Asian race. Pliny, *HN* 5.33.127. See also Bryce, T., *The Lycians, A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 19-20.
10. Herodotus 1.173.
11. Strabo 13.4.17· Stephanos Byzantios, see entry "Oenoanda", Pliny *HN* 5.28.
12. See Cousin, G., "Inscription d'Oenoanda", *BCH* XVI, 1892, pp. 1-70· Hall, A., "The Oenoanda Survey 1974-76", *Anatolian Studies* 26 (1976), p. 197· Smith, M.F., *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 1993)· Smith, M.F., "New readings in the Demostheneia inscription from Oinoanda", *Anatolian Studies* 44 (1994), pp. 59-64· Smith, M.F., *The philosophical inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda* (Wien 1996).
13. This inscription comes from the area of the sanctuary of Leti and was found on the northwest of the acropolis hill, see Hall, A.S., "The Oenoanda Survey 1974-76", *Anatolian Studies* 26 (1976), p. 197.
14. Stephanos Byzantios, see entry "Termessus": *Τερμησσός πόλις Πισιδίας. ἔστιν καὶ ἄλλη ταύτης ἀποικὸς καὶ αὐτὴ Πισιδίας, λεγομένη μικρά, ὡς ἡ προτέρα μείζων*. The Termessians believed that they descended from the Solymoi and as a result they are closely related to the Oenoandans, see Bryce, T., *The Lycians, A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 19-20. As to the suggested date for the foundation of Termessus Minor see Coulton, J., "The Termessians at Oinoanda", *AS* 32 (1982), pp. 115-131.
15. Wörrle, M., *Stadt und Fest im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien. Studien zu einer agonistischen Stiftung aus Oinoanda* (Vestigia 39, München 1988), p. 45.



16. See McNicoll, A.W., *Hellenistic Fortifications from the Aegean to the Euphrates* (Oxford 1997), pp. 120-126.
17. Hill dates the coin from the 2nd century BC, see Hill, G.F., *Catalogue of the Greek coins of Lycia, Pamphilia and Pisidia* (London 1889), p. 73.
18. *PECS*, pp. 240-241, see entry "Oinoanda" (G.E. Bean). About the disbandment of Tetrapolis by Murena see Broughton, T.R.S., *Magistrates of the Roman Republic II*, pp. 61-62. The fact that Oinoanda became a member of the Koinon at a later date than the other cities of Lucia is confirmed by the inscriptions, see Holleaux, M. – Paris, P., "Inscriptions d'Oenoanda", *BCH X* (1886), σελ. 223. Furthermore the ancient writers, see Strabo 13.1.17· Pliny 5.101.
19. Honorary inscriptions for Augustus, Septimius Severus, Antoninus Pius and other 34 important people are preserved, see *RE* 34 (1937), columns 2230-2232, see entry "Oenoanda" (W. Ruge).
20. Strabo 14.3.2-3.
21. Jones, A.H.M., *Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces* (Oxford 1971), pp. 103-104.
22. Lang, G., *Klassische antike Stätten Anatoliens* (Norderstedt 2003), p. 190.
23. Bryce, T., *The Lycians. A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 203-204.
24. Hill, G.F., *Catalogue of the Greek coins of Lycia, Pamphilia and Pisidia* (London 1889), p. 73.
25. The bouconisterium was dedicated by a certain Diogenes to Septimius Severus (193-211 AD). According to Heberdey, R. and Kalinka, E., probably with the term bouconisterium they meant the conisterium, that is the conistra, the area of the gymnasium where they kept the thin dust, or sand, that the athletes used to smear their oiled bodies with. Regarding the location of the bouconisterium, it is sought among the various areas of the agora. The architectural ruins that have been attributed to the specific building date, based on a surviving inscription, from between 193 and 211 AD, see Heberdey, R. – Kalinka, E., *Bericht über Zwei Reisen im südwestlichen Kleinasien* (Wien 1896), p. 51, no.70· Coulton, JJ., "Oinoanda: The Agora", *AS* 36 (1986), pp. 70-83.
26. Pliny, *HN* 12.61.132, 13.11.52, 16.59.137· Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum*, 3.12.3.
27. Plutarch adds that Solymoi stopped worshipping Cronus, since the god himself killed their three leaders (αρχηγέτες). Afterwards the three leaders were deified by the Lycians. This tradition, which is narrated by Plutarch, could be related to a battle between Solymoi and Lycians: Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 421 D, see Bryce, T., *The Lycians, A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 20, 190.
28. Regarding the above inscriptions, where the worship of these deities is documented, see *RE* 34 (1937), columns 2230-2233, see entry "Oinoanda" (W. Ruge).
29. Mythology says of the flight of Leto, due to the wrath of Hera, and her arrival to a lake in Lycia with her two babies, Apollo and Artemis. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 6.316-81. Regarding the cult of Leto in Lycia see Bryce, T., *The Lycians, A Study of Lycian history and civilisation to the conquest of Alexander the Great* (Copenhagen 1986), pp. 175-176, note 6.
30. Analytically see Cousin, G., "Inscription d'Oenoanda", *BCH XVI* (1892), pp. 1-70· Chilton, C.W., "The Inscription of Diogenes of Oenoanda", *AJA* 67 (1963), p. 285· Chilton, C.W., *Diogenes Oenoandensis Fragmenta* (Leipzig 1967)· Chilton, C.W., *Diogenes of Oenoanda. The Fragments* (London 1971)· Smith, M.F., *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 1993)· Smith, M.F., *Supplement to Diogenes of Oinoanda the Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 2003)· Smith, M.F., *The philosophical inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda* (Wien 1996)· Warren, J. – Smith, M.F., "The Philosophical Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda", *JHS* 119 (1999), pp. 194-195.
31. See De Bernardi Ferrero, D., *Teatri Classici in Asia Minor 2* (Roma 1996), pp. 89-95· Scaparro, M. et al (ed.), *Teatri Greci e Romani, alle Origini del Liguaggio rappresentato* (Roma 1994), p. 452.
32. See McNicoll, A.W., *Hellenistic Fortifications from the Aegean to the Euphrates* (Oxford 1997), pp. 120-126.



33. More specifically, the porticoes, the arches, as well as the rest of the buildings that surround the market square were constructed during the period of the Antonine (138-192 AD) and the period of the Severan dynasty (193-235 AD), see Coulton, J.J., "Oinoanda. The Agora", *Anatolian Studies* 36 (1986), pp. 61-90.
34. Paved area, polygonal in shape, the so-called esplanade, with porticoes on the north and south side, it is thought likely that it was the earliest market of the city, see Hall, A.S., "The Oenoanda Survey 1974-76", *Anatolian Studies* 26 (1976), p. 194, note 18· Lang, G., *Klassische antike Stätten Anatoliens* (Norderstedt 2003), pp. 190-191· Smith, M.F., *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 1993), p. 54.
35. About Thermae see Farrington, A., *The Roman Baths of Lycia* (British Institute of Archaeology at Anakara Monograph No. 20, London 1995), pp. 155-156· Smith, M.F., *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Napoli 1993), p. 53.
36. Coulton, J.J. – Milner, N.P. – Hall, A.S., "The mausoleum of Licinnia Flavilla and Flavianus Diogenes of Oinoanda. Epigraphy and architecture", *Anatolian Studies* 46 (1996), pp. 111-144.

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	Oinoanda http://www.epicurus.info/picindex3.html

Glossary :

	cavea The auditorium or audience sitting of a theater.
	nymphaeum, the Originally the sacred grotto dedicated to the Nymphs. During the Roman period the Nymphaea were monumental public fountain constructions, commissioned by wealthy citizens.



During the Early Byzantine period they often adorned the fora (public spaces).



scene (lat. scaena -ae)

The stage building of the ancient theaters originally used for storage but provided a convenient backing for performances.



thermae

Building complexes dated in the Roman Period housing the public baths. Within the building there were three rooms, the frigidarium, the tepidarium and the caldarium and several other facilities rooms. The Roman bath-houses were also used as meeting places and they often included a palaestra and a gymnasium.