

# Caesar The Epicurean? A Matter of Life and Death - Volk 2022

Post by "Cassius" of January 16, 2025 at 9:54 AM

Also:

Quote

Caesar also offers a striking argument against the death penalty itself (Sall. BC 51.20):

*de poena possum equidem dicere, id quod res habet, in luctu atque miseriis mortem aerumnarum requiem, non cruciatum esse; eam cuncta mortalium mala dissolvere; ultra neque curae neque gaudio locum esse.*

*About the punishment I can speak according to the facts: in sorrow and misery death is a relief from grief, not a torture. It dissolves all human ills, and beyond it, there is place for neither care nor joy.*

While Sallust is not quoting Caesar verbatim, he presumably availed himself of the senatorial archives in reconstructing the speeches, and the historicity of the remarks on death is confirmed not only by the fact that Sallust's Cato, in responding to Caesar, refers back to them, but crucially also by Cicero's own summary of the discussion in the fourth speech Against Catiline.

As for Cato, he begins his attack on Caesar's proposal as follows (Sall. BC 52.13):

*bene et composita C. Caesar paulo ante in hoc ordine de vita et morte disseruit, credo falsa existumans ea quae de inferis memorantur, divorso itinere malos a bonis loca taetra, inculta, foeda atque formidulosa habere.*

*C. Caesar a little while ago gave this order a well-phrased and well-structured lecture on life and death, apparently deeming false what is said about the underworld, namely, that divorced from the good, the wicked inhabit horrid, desolate, foul and fearful places.*

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