

Epicurus and His Influence on History, Ben Gazur,

Post by “Joshua” of March 31, 2025 at 9:41 PM

[Quote from Cleveland Okie](#)

One of the chapters of the book is about Titus Pomponius, “called Atticus for his love of all things Athenian.”Gazur says it is not certain that Atticus was an Epicurean, but at the very least it appears he was interested in Epicureanism and influenced by it. (I noticed there was a thread about him on this forum, and I will look at it after I post this).

The book says that when Julius Caesar came to Athens, he stayed at Atticus’ home. It says Atticus did not take sides in various civil wars and conflicts. It also says, “His refusal to join a band of rich men in raising funds for Caesar’s assassins led to the collapse of the attempt. But when Brutus, who was a close friend, had to flee to exile he sent him money. He would not support a friend for political reasons, but never ignored a friend in need. When Brutus himself had fallen, Atticus extended friendship to the dead man’s mother, despite the risks.”

Today (March 31st) happens to be the anniversary of the death of Atticus:

Quote

[21] # After [Atticus] had completed, in such a course of life, seventy-seven years, and had advanced, not less in dignity, than in favour and fortune (for he obtained many legacies on no other account than his goodness of disposition), and had also been in the enjoyment of so happy a state of health, that he had wanted no medicine for thirty years, he contracted a disorder of which at first both himself and the physicians thought lightly, for they supposed it to be a dysentery, and speedy and easy remedies were proposed for it; but after he had passed three months under it without any pain, except what he suffered from the means adopted for his cure, such force of the disease fell into the one intestine, that at last a putrid ulcer broke out through his loins. Before this took place, and when he found that the pain was daily increasing, and that fever was superadded, he caused his son-in-law Agrippa to be called to him, and with him Lucius Cornelius Balbus and Sextus Peducaeus. When he saw that they were come, he said, as he supported himself on his elbow, "How much care and diligence I have employed to restore my health on this occasion, there is no necessity for me to state at large, since I have yourselves as witnesses; and since I have, as I hope, satisfied you, that I have left nothing undone that seemed likely to cure me, it remains that I consult

for myself. Of this feeling on my part I had no wish that you should be ignorant; for I have determined on ceasing to feed the disease; as, by the food and drink that I have taken during the last few days, I have prolonged life only so as to increase my pains without hope of recovery. I therefore entreat you, in the first place, to give your approbation to my resolution, and in the next, not to labour in vain by endeavouring to dissuade me from executing it."

[22] Having delivered this address with so much steadiness of voice and countenance, that he seemed to be removing, not out of life, but out of one house into another, - when Agrippa, weeping over him and kissing him, entreated and conjured him "not to accelerate that which nature herself would bring, and, since he might live some time longer, to preserve his life for himself and his friends,"- he put a stop to his prayers, by an obstinate silence. After he had accordingly abstained from food for two days, the fever suddenly left him, and the disease began to be less oppressive. He persisted, nevertheless, in executing his purpose; and in consequence, on the fifth day after he had fixed his resolution, **and on the last day of March, in the consulship of Cnaeus Domitius and Caius Sosius [32 B.C.], he died.** His body was carried out of his house on a small couch, as he himself had directed, without any funeral pomp, all the respectable portion of the people attending, and a vast crowd of the populace. He was buried close by the Appian Way, at the fifth milestone from the city, in the sepulchre of his uncle Quintus Caecilius.

-Cornelius Nepos, [*The Life of Atticus*](#)

edit; there is a mention of Lucretius in the same source that I was unaware of;

Quote

He also brought off Lucius Julius Calidus, whom I think I may truly assert to have been the most elegant poet that our age has produced since the death of **Lucretius and Catullus**, as well as a man of high character, and distinguished by the best intellectual accomplishments, who, in his absence, after the proscription of the knights, had been enrolled in the number of the proscribed by Publius Volumnius, the captain of Antonius's engineers, on account of his great possessions in Africa; 5 an act on the part of Atticus, of which it was hard to judge at the time, whether it were more onerous or honourable. But it was well known that the friends of Atticus, in times of danger, were not less his care in their absence than when they were present.