

# **Epicureanism as the spiritual essence or 'religion' of an entire community**

**Post by “Peter Konstans” of September 30, 2023 at 4:48 AM**

I think it's fair to think of ancient Epicureans as de facto atheists the way Plutarch thought of them. The acceptance of the existence of the gods whether honestly or pretentiously was useful in a social context where atheism were discriminated against and associated with a significant degree of social exclusion. Today we often use the term 'social exclusion' lightly and synonymously with 'unfairness' and everybody feels brave enough to 'fight' social discrimination in all its forms but in a pre-modern agrarian society social exclusion meant your very survival was at stake. Why would someone not want to participate in the sacrifices and share in the meat? In the early modern era the Catholic Church tended to regard the beliefs of deists as little more than a damage control cover for atheism and they were basically right. Today deism has essentially disappeared because no damage control is necessary.