

# Reverence and Awe In Epicurean Philosophy

Post by “Don” of December 24, 2020 at 4:26 PM

## [Quote from Elayne](#)

Whenever people start talking about piety, I feel a strong desire to goose them in the ribs. I feel like they are missing the point somehow. Metaphorically, they need a dose of a trickster god. Reality has too much of a ... playful feeling, maybe... for me to adopt piety as a goal. Imo there is enough humorousness in Epicurus' own words that I think he completely got that. Philodemus... I'm not so sure.

I generally agree with what you've posted, [Elayne](#) . I did want to say again (ad nauseum, mea culpa) that I think "piety" is SUCH a loaded word to use for ευσέβεια (eusebeia), the word the author (let's say Philodemus) of On Piety (let's call it 😊) uses in the text. Eusebeias is the "proper observation of tradition in relation to the gods." And Philodemus's text is an apologia of Epicurus's and the founders' eusebeias to counter those who would accuse them of acting otherwise. This was deadly business back then, so Philodemus is deadly serious.

I've read excerpts from some of Philodemus's other works (especially in Tsouna's The Ethics of Philodemus) and see echoes of Epicurus's style there. Likewise, some of Epicurus's quotes on On Piety sound like he took his eusebeias seriously, too, so context is important in these things, too.