

# Pros and Cons Of Considering Epicurean Philosophy To Be A "Religion"

Post by "Joshua" of January 23, 2024 at 5:15 PM

Quote

So, within that context, while I (personally) identify significantly more with Lucretius' anti-religious attitude, I think that Epicurus' personal expression of pious devotion might have been (in general) closer to the Roman idea of "religio".

I credit the book [Long Live Latin](#) for helping me to understand this, and I think it's worth considering; Lucretius had a separate word which he used in Book 5 for his understanding of pious devotion. The Latin word is *pietas*, which he contrasts with *religio*. Around line 1200 (Bailey translation);

Quote

Nor is it piety at all to be seen often with veiled head turning towards a stone, and to draw near to every altar, no, nor to lie prostrate on the ground with outstretched palms before the shrines of the gods, nor to sprinkle the altars with the streaming blood of beasts, nor to link vow to vow, but rather to be able to contemplate all things with a mind at rest.

I'll quote my own words from an old thread;

"*Pietas*, then, is not a synonym of *religio* but its true opposite. *Religio* is a kind of madness born of superstition; it is attended by fear, traffics in well-worn lies, and delights in obscurantism and servility. *Pietas* is the spirit of understanding born of inquiry; it brings peace, "reveals darkly hidden things", and delights in clarity and the health of the unburdened soul."

My building has a problem with porch pirates, which is the only reason I haven't gotten your book yet, but I'll find a way to get it soon! Several neighbors have doorbell cameras now so I hope the problem will resolve itself.