

Distrust of Merchants in Classical (Axial Age) Doctrines

(Judaism, Christianity, Greek Thought, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism)

- ***Information asymmetry***
- ***Potential enemy, source of violence***
- ***Corruptor of elites: providing luxuries, encouraging corruption***
- ***Spreader of discontent and division by introducing foreign religions***
- ***Source of infectious disease, impure***

- ***Examples: Hermes the Greek god (the Roman god Mercury)***
Characteristics: quick and cunning, boundary dweller, protector of thieves, travelers, herdsmen, robber, cattle driver, thief at the gates, amoral
- ***Confucian contempt for “profiteering”; Jesus driving moneylenders out of the temple; monasticism in Christianity; Jewish jubilee; Buddhist Enlightenment rejecting materialism; Buddhist monasticism and bodhisattvas as purifying individuals; Socratic concern for the purity of the soul; “super-virtue” in the classical religions***