# Article information:

Religion without doctrine or clergy: the case of Ancient Greece | Journal of Institutional Economics | Cambridge Core  
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-institutional-economics/article/religion-without-doctrine-or-clergy-the-case-of-ancient-greece/901613496165E373719D3B343E945156>

# Article summary:

1. The Ancient Greek religion did not have a distinct class of professional priests as suppliers of religious goods due to doctrinal and political reasons.

2. Doctrinal reasons include worshiping multiple flawed gods, lack of a founder or scripture, absence of religious doctrine and code of moral behavior, and reliance on local and panhellenic rituals.

3. Political reasons relate to the dominance of the demos in the political life of city-states, preventing other actors like a priestly interest group from challenging its authority.

# Article rating:

May be slightly imbalanced: The article presents the information in a generally reliable way, but there are minor points of consideration that could be explored further or claims that are not fully backed by appropriate evidence. Some perspectives may also be omitted, and you are encouraged to use the research topics section to explore the topic further.

# Article analysis:

The article "Religion without doctrine or clergy: the case of Ancient Greece" explores the absence of a distinct class of professional priests in Ancient Greek religion. The paper argues that doctrinal and political reasons explain why there was no priestly class as suppliers of religious goods. Doctrinal reasons relate to worshiping multiple gods with flawed characters, the absence of a founder of religion and scripture, lack of religious doctrine, and code of moral behavior. Political reasons relate to the supremacy of the demos which prevented other actors like a priestly interest group from challenging its authority.

The article provides a detailed account of salient features of Ancient Greek religion, including its polytheistic nature, local rituals, and openness to new deities. It also introduces a model explaining why a Greek priestly class failed to emerge based on the size of group membership related to political power, number of gods worshiped, elasticity of demand for religious goods, and heterogeneity of the group.

While the article provides an interesting perspective on Ancient Greek religion, it has some potential biases and missing points. For instance, it assumes that competition in the religion market increases religiosity by offering believers greater variety choices without considering other factors such as social norms or cultural values that may influence religious practices. Additionally, it does not explore counterarguments or alternative explanations for why there was no priestly class in Ancient Greece.

Furthermore, while the article acknowledges that religion is a fundamental determinant of social interactions and economic performance, it does not provide evidence for how this played out in Ancient Greece beyond stating that it contributed to social cohesion. It also does not address potential risks associated with having no distinct class of professional priests such as lack of regulation or accountability.

Overall, while the article provides an interesting perspective on Ancient Greek religion's absence of a distinct class of professional priests as suppliers of religious goods based on doctrinal and political reasons, it has some potential biases and missing points that could be addressed in future research.

# Topics for further research:

* Counterarguments for the absence of a priestly class in Ancient Greece
* Social norms and cultural values in Ancient Greek religion
* Risks of having no professional priests in Ancient Greek religion
* Economic performance and religion in Ancient Greece
* Regulation and accountability in Ancient Greek religion
* Role of religion in social interactions in Ancient Greece

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