



Religion in the Emergence of Civilization: Çatalhöyük as a Case Study

From Ian Hodder Editor

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This book presents an interdisciplinary study of the role of spirituality and religious ritual in the emergence of complex societies. Involving an eminent group of natural scientists, archaeologists, anthropologists, philosophers, and theologians, this volume examines Çatalhöyük as a case study. A nine-thousand-year old town in central Turkey, Çatalhöyük was first excavated in the 1960s and has since become integral to understanding the symbolic and ritual worlds of the early farmers and village-dwellers in the Middle East. It is thus an ideal location for exploring theories about the role of religion in early settled life. This book provides a unique overview of current debates concerning religion and its historical variations. Through exploration of themes including the integration of the spiritual and the material, the role of belief in religion, the cognitive bases for religion, and religion's social roles, this book situates the results from Çatalhöyük within a broader understanding of the Neolithic in the Middle East.

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Editorial Review

Review

'This collection is an excellent illustration of the current preoccupations of archaeologists interpreting lost civilizations, and of the potential fruits of a collective approach by social scientists to understanding human beliefs.' -TLS

About the Author

Ian Hodder is Dunlevie Family Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Stanford University. He was recently awarded the Huxley Medal by the Royal Anthropological Institute and is the author of various books, including, most recently, *The Leopard's Tale: Revealing the Mysteries of Çatalhöyük* (2006).

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