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978-0-521-15019-4 - Religion in the Emergence of Civilization: Catalhoyuk as a Case Study

Edited by Ian Hodder

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RELIGION IN THE EMERGENCE OF CIVILIZATION

This book presents an interdisciplinary study of the role of spirituality and religious ritual in the emergence of complex societies. With contributions by 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. By exploring such themes as 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.

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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Stanford University



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