

EMILIANO RUBENS URCIUOLI

# Citifying Jesus

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

# Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

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Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli

# Citifying Jesus

The Making of an Urban Religion  
in the Roman Empire

Mohr Siebeck

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## Citification of Religion: Studying Urban Religion Historically

*“This is the challenge of studying urban religion generally: we must read through and across the fantasy of the city as it has emerged over the last two centuries, attending to both the forces that have shaped this fantasy and their impress on the ways in which we construe urban popular experience, religious and secular.” (Orsi 1999a, 12)*

*“Urban religion is neither a pre-modern survival nor just a contemporary accident.” (Rüpke 2022, 896)*

### 1. An Urban Turn to “Lived Ancient Religion”

The path to the study of urban religion has to be cleared. The urban world [...] is alive with the competing and divergent dreams projected onto it and found within it by outsiders. It is crisscrossed by discrepant narratives and fissured by incommensurable visions of what is possible and good in cities. Before we look at cases of religious engagement with the urban world, then, we have to step back and examine what converges on that world; to see what Moishe Sacks, Mama Lola, and the other religious improvisors who appear in this collection of essays made of the city for themselves, we have to consider first the broad outlines of what was being made of the city for and against them, in the plans and programs of others.<sup>1</sup>

These lines are taken from Robert Orsi’s introductory chapter of *Gods of the City*, the collective volume on lived religion in contemporary American cities that, about a quarter-century ago, has sparked the study of “urban religion.”<sup>2</sup> The epistemological barriers created by the academic division of labor probably explain why it took almost fifteen years to fully realize that such statements might hold true also for past cities and ancient religion/s: namely, for “cases of religious engagement with urban world[s]” that are not “alive” and out there, like in social science ethnographies,<sup>3</sup> but dead and retrievable only through archaeological findings and in written records. Spanning from 2012 to 2017, the Erfurt-based project on “Lived Ancient Religion” has shown that religious

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<sup>1</sup> Orsi 1999a, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Garbin and Strhan 2017, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Orsi 1985; D. D. Hall 1997; McGuire 2008.

improvisers and small religious entrepreneurs always existed, as did self-styled religious experts among the urban commoners.<sup>4</sup> Cross-temporal and cross-disciplinary research ranging from Karanis to Palmyra, from Pergamum and Carthage to Pompeii and Rome, has eventually demonstrated that embarking on the search of some ancient Mediterranean “colleagues” of the creative protagonists of *Gods of the City* was a sensible and fruitful enterprise. The unresolved task is rather to foreground the most common and relevant, but rarely explicitly addressed and therefore under-theorized “spatiality”<sup>5</sup> of lived ancient religious practices: that is, to zoom in on “what was being made of the city” that both enabled and constrained the appearance of these religious agents, facilitating and hindering their “job.” It is a foregone conclusion that research on urban religion lacks historical depth<sup>6</sup> as much as the study of lived ancient religion needs an urban turn.<sup>7</sup> This latter must follow up on the key achievements attained by the spatial turn in research on religion.<sup>8</sup>

Bringing together religious studies, sociology of religion, archaeology, and spatial theory, the aim of this long introduction is twofold. First, I will outline a general agenda for the historical study of ancient urban religion. Then I will introduce the specific case study or, perhaps better, the selected set of case studies at the centre of my investigation on ancient urban religion.

This book sets out from the assumption that religion and urban life, that is, “living with distant invisible forces and living with oppressively close people,”<sup>9</sup> are two of the most successful and long-lived cross-cultural strategies of handling, enhancing, and capitalizing on human sociability. It also fully embraces the argument that the institutional differentiation of mutually exclusive religious imagined communities as well as the delineation of what falls outside the realm of religion can be seen and explained as “urban phenomena.”<sup>10</sup> Among many other things, “city” is also a socio-spatial shorthand for the clustering of intellectual processes that, throughout the history of urbanism, have legislated the domains and the meanings of *non-religion* as well as engineered types of *religions*. Yet the book also moves from the observation that, however increasingly refined the archaeological and historical accounts on the genesis, growth, and structuration of urban forms have become,<sup>11</sup> religion still plays a rather standard role in the study of the early urbanizing societies, in general, and in the scholarly imagination of its interaction with urban spaces and forms

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<sup>4</sup> For some collective results, see Gasparini *et al.* 2020; Albrecht *et al.* 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Soja 1985.

<sup>6</sup> Rüpke 2020, 47.

<sup>7</sup> Urciuoli and Rüpke 2018.

<sup>8</sup> See Knott 2010.

<sup>9</sup> Rüpke 2022, 896.

<sup>10</sup> Rau and Rüpke 2020, 676.

<sup>11</sup> Yoffee 2015; Marcus and Sabloff 2008; M. L. Smith 2003a.

of life in the ancient Mediterranean, in particular. In both cases, religion is conceived of as a driving force and stabilizing factor of political integration and social stratification. For too long, research on religion in ancient cities has reduced the role of religion to the construction and stabilization of stratified political communities through ritual and ideological management of the scalar stress, alignment with socio-political structures, and sanctification of the polity’s core values.

The heuristic blind spots and explanatory deficits of this traditional narrative do not live up to its cross-disciplinary interpretive dominance. A decidedly different story needs to be told that articulates a more differentiated view of the co-evolution of religion and urban life. The analytical distinction between “urbanization” and “citification” of religion as two different sets of processes concerning the role of religion in city-space is designed especially for this purpose. In order to justify this differentiation, in what follows I will first embark on a brief world tour in the deep history of the relation of religion and urbanity by sifting through different narratives on the role of religion in the production and maintenance of large, dense, and permanent human agglomerations. Then, calling attention to a specific use of the verb “citify” in contemporary ethnographies of lived religion, I will propose and explain the rationale of using the term “citification” as a technical category for the study of urban religion in a historical perspective. Lastly, I will illustrate how I intend to put this concept into practice for the purpose of my research – through spatially re-assessing and re-writing nine trajectories of emergence, diffusion, transformation, and establishment of a particular religion of the ancient Mediterranean: Christ religion.

At this stage, however, some preliminary terminological clarifications are needed.

(1) *Religion*. My concept of religion is derived from Jörg Rüpke and defined as follows: “religion [is] the temporary and situational enlargement of the environment – judged as relevant by one or several of the actors – beyond the unquestionably plausible social environment inhabited by co-existing humans who are in communication (and hence observable).”<sup>12</sup> Without implying any transcendentalist breach of ontological realms,<sup>13</sup> this notion of an extended environment functions as a shorthand way to include, at once, the enlargement of the pool of addressees and actors, the expansion of the sphere of action through the compression of spatial distance, and the transgression of temporal layers and regimes.

(2) *Christ religion*. I employ the phrase “Christ religion” to designate different (i. e., from mutually ignorant to each other to consciously conflicting) forms of religious communication centered on the figure of Jesus/Christ that emerged

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<sup>12</sup> Rüpke 2015, 348.

<sup>13</sup> Rüpke 2020, 50.

and developed in a period when “Christianity” could only be a misnomer misleadingly projected onto the past.<sup>14</sup>

(3) *Urbanity*.<sup>15</sup> In this book urbanity is ascribed to any representation and practice, assumption, action, and habit that is (implicitly or explicitly, perfunctorily or thoughtfully, durably or situationally) connected with living in a built-up settlement and whose performance affirms a given settlement as a city, or makes it into a city, by mobilizing assumptions about the essence of the city in relation and in contrast to the non-city. Put differently, urbanities are corporeally, verbally, graphically, constructionally, and technologically enacted styles of meaning-making *and* geography-making that express the idea/l of living differently than in other types of settlements, and thus always entail the manufacturing of the non-urban as situationally variable semiotic counterpart. Rural and rurality are oftentimes the most popular candidates for settled versions of the non-urban.<sup>16</sup>

(4) *City*. This clear preference for a social-constructionist approach and practice-centered concept of urbanity makes the longstanding quest for cross-temporal and cross-cultural criteria defining a city less critical and intellectually excruciating than generally assumed.<sup>17</sup> Cities are the products of (differently empowered) historical actors more or less tacitly distinguishing between types of settlements, ascribing a special quality to some of them, and impressing this urban factor upon different matters – including religious matters. Cities, says social geographer Benno Werlen, are the most “prominent historical expression [s] of urbanity,” “the “largely unintended consequences of social actions that establish the (necessary) material conditions and spatial contexts for the formation of urban life forms.”<sup>18</sup> This approach does not imply a clear chronological sequence between physical realities and symbolic categories (which comes first,

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<sup>14</sup> Maier 2018, 28. Instead, “Christ believer(s)”, “Christ groups / assemblies / networks” etc. are to be understood as synonyms of “Christian(s)” / “Christian groups / assemblies / networks” etc., and preferably used instead of the latter.

<sup>15</sup> Although Louis Wirth’s seminal article refers to the city way of life as “urbanism” (Wirth 1938), the Anglo-American urban research has been increasingly resorting to the notion of “urbanity” especially to single out the cultural-symbolic dimension of cities – contrary to the German “Urbanität” which tends to include also the architectural-functional aspects (Rau 2011; 2020).

<sup>16</sup> Rüpke and Urciuoli 2023, especially building on Werlen 2021 and 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Unsurprisingly, the question of how large the population of a settlement must be in order to cross the urban threshold is a matter of argument both in general and in particular spatio-temporal contexts. Scholars of ancient Mediterranean urbanism have proposed figures wavering between 2.000 and 5.000 residents. These parametric numbers do not depart too much from the range proposed for the urban threshold in European societies in general before the Industrial Revolution (de Ligt and Bintliff 2020, 12). For “smallness” as a qualitative aspect of the urban rather than a quantitative hallmark of the non-urban, see Bell and Jayne 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Werlen 2021. For cities as often “the products of rapid, largely unforeseen, aggregation,” see Jennings 2016, 284. Parameters like “a large population size, a dense population nucleation, and a high heterogeneity” in the social role of inhabitants “engaging in activities [...] that affect

city or urbanity?), nor does it allow for a complete analytical disarticulation between the two concepts (is it possible to examine urbanity independently of the city, and vice versa?). The development of urbanities and cities is a multi-faceted process that defies analytical severance and resists oversimplification in a linear fashion. To borrow from philosopher Achille Varzi, ontologically cities are “unfolding processes” like rivers or concerts.<sup>19</sup> What distinguishes a concert from a noisy crowd (i. e., stage organization and show management) is equivalent to what urbanity does to a city: it generates assumptions, negotiates meanings, and stabilizes beliefs about the essence of the city in relation to the non-city. Some of these assumptions and beliefs will be at the centre of this study in that they happen to *significantly mark* religious communication and behaviour.

## 2. Integration and Differentiation: Urbanization via Religion

### 2.1. *Worshipping and Settling Down: Religion at the Dawn of Urbanism*

In his positive review of James Scott’s *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*, archaeologist Steven Mithen levels a passing criticism: Scott “overlooks religious belief” as a possible trigger for the “self-entrapment” of our hunter-gatherer ancestors into a farming lifestyle.<sup>20</sup> A militant counter-narrative of the emergence of statehood via the mainly coercive clustering of people in walled city-states, *Against the Grain* virtually passes over religion. Throughout, Scott dispenses references to unspecified religious activities and roles with extreme parsimony. Religious pursuits are associated with writing and literary competences, on the one side, and administration, on the other, as symbolic assets of a restricted literate establishment.<sup>21</sup> Yet curiously enough, religion does not seem to figure as a crucial department of the early states as “population machines” designed to domesticate subjects in order to control labor.<sup>22</sup> In Scott’s cereal-focused history of the civilizing self-caging of *Homo sapiens*, phenomena-deemed-religious play no role whatsoever.

To amend Scott’s too “secular” plot, Mithen mentions the famous Pre-Pottery Neolithic “sanctuary” of Göbekli Tepe.<sup>23</sup> Excavations begun in 1995 have dis-

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a larger hinterland” can be seen as necessary conditions for the production, validation, and sharing of such a lifestyle (88).

<sup>19</sup> Varzi 2021, 407.

<sup>20</sup> Mithen 2017, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Scott 2017, 141 and 148.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 151. Against the self-caging view of the transition, see Graeber and Wengrow 2021, 229–233.

<sup>23</sup> Mithen 2017, 11.



covered that on this remote hilltop in south-eastern Turkey, starting from around 11,600 years ago, seasonally converging populations of foragers had built up a huge (i. e., 8.9 hectares) set of about twenty circular structures incorporating massive T-shaped monoliths. Measuring four to seven meters in height and demanding no less than six hundred people to transport and erect them, their “T-shape is clearly discernible as an abstract representation of the human form, the enclosures apparently depicting a gathering of these anthropomorphic monoliths.”<sup>24</sup> The faces of many such pillars were carved to display different species of wild and mainly predatory animals together with enigmatic non-figurative depictions and anthropomorphic figures. Ever since its discovery, the megalithic site has been interpreted as the world’s oldest known example of a nondomestic communal cult centre –<sup>25</sup> based on its location and the monumentality of the complex, the architectural layout, and the rich symbolism of its “animate theatre.”<sup>26</sup>

Yet surprises at Göbekli did not end there. In 1997, a team of geneticists identified the wild einkorn wheat still growing on the slopes of the Karacadağ Hills, located only 30 kilometers away from Göbekli, as the oldest progenitor of modern cultivated varieties. Einkorn wheat, they argued, was first domesticated in this area around 11,000 years ago.<sup>27</sup> How to explain the geographical proximity between the oldest ritual complex ever discovered and the birthplace of the ancestors of the modern domesticated cereal? In the wake of Klaus Schmidt, the discoverer of Göbekli, Mithen’s hypothesis is that the need to provide a reliable food supply for the large number of laborers, artists, and worshippers periodically gathering at the site kick-started the practice of cereal farming:

The quantities of food needed to feed the workforce and those who gathered for rituals at Göbekli must have been huge: if the Neolithic gods could persuade people to invest so much effort in construction, and to suffer the physical injuries, ailments and deaths that came along with, then perhaps expending those extra calories in the fields would have seemed quite trivial.<sup>28</sup>

As already explained in his 2003 book *After the Ice*, Mithen argues that cultivation of wheat might have been nothing more than an “accidental by-product of the ideology that drove hunter-gatherers to carve and erect massive pillars of stone on a hilltop.”<sup>29</sup> A “basic factor of the origins of neolithization,”<sup>30</sup> religion occasioned humanity’s unintended upgrade to, or self-entrapment into, a farming lifestyle.

<sup>24</sup> Clare *et al.* 2018, 117.

<sup>25</sup> Schmidt 2000. Against this view: Banning 2011.

<sup>26</sup> Boric 2013, 59.

<sup>27</sup> Heun *et al.* 1997.

<sup>28</sup> Mithen 2017, 11.

<sup>29</sup> Mithen 2003, 67.

<sup>30</sup> Schmidt 2001, 48.

This fascinating hypothesis of agriculture as the “accidental by-product” of religion cannot be easily generalized. Besides, the domestication of animals and plants was most likely “a long-drawn-out process with no clear beginning,” which, as Ian Hodder puts it, makes it “difficult to say which came first, domestication or the symbolic revolution” associated with the emergence of religion.<sup>31</sup> And yet, despite everything, the evolutionary quandary determining which human invention should be credited with historical primacy and civilizing causality is a captivating intellectual activity.<sup>32</sup> This academic game is even harder to resist when: (1) the scale and scope of human cooperation expands, transitioning from occasional mass gatherings at ceremonial sites among individuals living in small farming communities to the establishment of permanent settlements comprising neighboring strangers within large-scale nucleated societies; (2) the civilizational leap is associated with a competition among culturally evolved religions. In other words, when the invention of specific forms of religion is connected to the rise of the earliest cities.

In his hotly debated 2013 book *Big Gods*, evolutionary psychologist Ara Norenzayan takes Göbekli Tepe as the most crucial “historical record” of his sensational argument, which is mostly based on experimental findings and supported by ethnographic data.<sup>33</sup> According to Norenzayan, the emergence of so-called prosocial religions facilitated the earliest experiments of large-scale cooperation among non-genetically related individuals. With “prosocial religion,” Norenzayan means a broad “prosociality-enhancing religious package” that works to foster cooperative behaviors on the part of believers by combining two elements: (1) all-monitoring moralistic gods with interventionist inclinations and (2) costly religious displays attesting credible commitment to the underlying beliefs.<sup>34</sup> For Norenzayan, this type of religiosity was “one critical causal factor that contributed to the rise of large groups unleashed by agriculture.”<sup>35</sup> The process is described as follows:

Prosocial religions, with their Big Gods who watch, intervene, and demand hard-to-fake loyalty displays, facilitated the rise of cooperation in large groups of anonymous strangers. In turn, these expanding groups took their prosocial religious beliefs and practices with them, further ratcheting up large-scale cooperation in a runaway process of cultural evolution.<sup>36</sup>

Concerning Göbekli, it is noteworthy that neither the apparent absence of signs of permanent habitation at the site or in the vicinity nor the lack of evidence of

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<sup>31</sup> Hodder 2011, 112. For the dismissal of formulas like “agricultural revolution,” see also Graeber and Wengrow 2021, 248.

<sup>32</sup> Already Cauvin 1994.

<sup>33</sup> Norenzayan 2013, 118–121 and 132.

<sup>34</sup> Slingerland 2015, 585.

<sup>35</sup> Norenzayan 2013, 121. For the opposite view, see Whitehouse *et al.* 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Norenzayan 2013, 8.

a religious thought-world involving moralizing gods have prevented Norenzayan from putting this regional ritual centre to the service of his “Big Gods theory.”<sup>37</sup>

A few pages later, Norenzayan fleetingly mentions another Anatolian Neolithic site of great archaeological fame and importance located around five hundred kilometers west of Göbekli.<sup>38</sup> It usually features as a textbook case of the deep-historical interplay between religion, the domestication of plants and animals, and large-scale densified settlements leading to state formations. The 9,000-year-old “clustered neighborhood settlement”<sup>39</sup> of Çatalhöyük, in southern Anatolia, is a 14-hectare agglomeration of closely packed houses with rooftop entry containing a high concentration and elaborate nature of art, symbolic expression, and burial. Ever since its discovery in the late 1950s, Çatalhöyük has sparked a heated debate on the origins of urbanism that involved prominent archaeologists (James Mellaart and Ian Hodder), celebrated urbanists (Jane Jacobs), anarchist social theorists (Murray Bookchin), and postmodern geographers (Edward Soja). Here I will not dwell on the question as to whether this settlement, which at its height might have contained up to 8,000 permanent residents, was actually a non-urban, proto-urban, or fully-fledged urban site.<sup>40</sup> Nor will I venture into the related issue of a pre-agricultural inception of the centre. Rather, I will focus on what has been interpreted as “religious life” at Çatalhöyük based on the rich symbolism contained in the 166 excavated houses. This portrait, too, seems to speak for a societally-developing pattern of religious change.

Launched in 2006, a three-phase cross-disciplinary project led by archaeologist Ian Hodder has examined the outstanding findings of Çatalhöyük to draw an increasingly painstaking picture of how religious dynamics can account for the emergence of sedentary and complex forms of societies.<sup>41</sup> To begin with, ceremonial centers seemed to be lacking in Çatalhöyük. In contrast with previous assumptions about distinguishable “shrines” and “priestly quarters,”<sup>42</sup> more recent interpretations from the Çatalhöyük Research Project point to an

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<sup>37</sup> Contrary to Norenzayan, archaeologist Manuel Fernández-Götz, who has applied the same model “from sanctuaries to town” to the Late Iron Age *oppida* of second- and first-century BCE Gaul, does not assume that special beliefs played any causal or enabling role for the development of urban functions out of aggregating activities of a religious type (Fernández-Götz 2014).

<sup>38</sup> Norenzayan 2013, 132.

<sup>39</sup> Düring 2006.

<sup>40</sup> For this latter hypothesis, see Jacobs 1969, 3–48; Soja 2000, 19–70. Against this view, see M. E. Smith 2009, 7–8; Hodder 2006, 98.

<sup>41</sup> Hodder 2010a; 2014; 2018a.

<sup>42</sup> Mellaart 1967.

exclusively house-based and structurally undifferentiated form of religious practice:<sup>43</sup>

All buildings give abundant evidence of both ritual and mundane activity. Indeed, it has become impossible to separate these two spheres. [...] While it is still the case that there are differences between the activities and features in the southern (hearth) and northern (burial) parts of the houses, this is not a distinction between domestic and ritual. [...] generally, every single act that we can observe seems to blur the boundaries between the everyday and the sacred or special.<sup>44</sup>

Interdigitation with the everyday life is only one major aspect of how religion worked in the “house society” of Neolithic Çatalhöyük.<sup>45</sup> A second one is that the symbolism interpreted as “transcend[ing] everyday practice,”<sup>46</sup> that is, the part of the excavated material whose function the Project recognizes as religious, had varied over time both in terms of content and patterns of distribution. Spanning 1,500 years of habitation (ca. 7400–5900 BCE), the stratigraphic sequence of the archaeological records show the early presence of long-term ritually elaborated buildings distinguishable by an outstanding amassing and staged display of objects and artworks. Over the generations, these so-called “history houses” had acquired more memory storage of highly charged events than others had. Their occupants had specialized in the storing, staging, and manipulation of symbolically loaded items (such as plastered human skulls, animal installations, and adult burials). Their families had presumably come to provide ancestors and rituals for a larger kinship set, contributing to create crosscutting ties beyond house-based descent groups.<sup>47</sup> Finally, as Harvey Whitehouse and Ian Hodder have contended, a “gradual shift” had apparently occurred at Çatalhöyük from an “imagistic” type of religiosity, characterized by low-frequency ritual events involving dramatic experiences, to a more “doctrinal” mode of religiosity. The latter not only consisted in increasingly routinized and low-arousal ritual practices but implied the transmission of discursive bodies of religious knowledge, the involvement of authoritative ritual leaders, and the centralization of the social structure.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For the concept of “structural differentiation,” see Stausberg 2010.

<sup>44</sup> Hodder 2010b, 16.

<sup>45</sup> For the concept of “house society,” see González-Ruibal and Ruiz-Gálvez 2016; Joyce and Gillespie 2000.

<sup>46</sup> Hodder 2010b, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Hodder and Pels 2010. Of course, ritual practices and relationships revolving around history houses were not the only means to relieve Çatalhöyük’s “scalar stress” and generate larger cooperative groups at the level of neighborhood and household clusters. For an overview of such mechanisms, see Jennings 2016, 102–108. For the notion of “scalar stress,” see G. A. Johnson 1982.

<sup>48</sup> Whitehouse and Hodder 2010, based on Whitehouse 2004.

History houses never disappear from the building sequences. However, during the last centuries of occupation of the site they seemed to lose their centrality, a process paralleling the gradual erosion of the symbolic and ritual significance associated with every house in Çatalhöyük. As Justin Jennings puts it,

since the practices associated with neighborhood clusters and the house societies were essential for maintaining the cohesion of the settlement, it should come as no surprise that Çatalhöyük started to decline when people began to alter or abandon those practices that had successfully alleviated scalar stress for a millennium.<sup>49</sup>

All things considered, the Çatalhöyük Research Project has shown that religion and the social structure in this “very very large village”<sup>50</sup> were mutually transformative, entangled in one another’s growth. Yet, once again, a precise causal relationship is suggested: “intensif[ying] the production of ‘historical depth’ and ‘attachment to place’ in existing economic structures,”<sup>51</sup> it was religion that “provide[d] the impetus” for the scaling-up of social complexity and the construction of larger crosscutting sodalities between houses.<sup>52</sup> By the same token, the weakening of settlement-wide ties, which eventually led to the depopulation of the site, seems also to be related to the decline of household and suprahousehold ritual activities and unifying ideologies.<sup>53</sup> Social morphology upsized (and downsized) through changes in ritual performances – and not the other way around.

## *2.2. In the Wake of Fustel de Coulanges: Religion and the Making of Citizens*

Whether applied to a nondomestic ceremonial center like Göbekli or to a quasi-city (“aborted city”)<sup>54</sup> without monumental cult buildings such as Çatalhöyük, this explanatory model of societal and cultural change through the upgrading of ritual-religious practices may sound familiar to scholars of ancient Greek and Roman religion. Broadly, this pattern recalls how, about a century and a half ago, French historian Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges (1830–1889) described the generative role played by religion in the growth of societies.

Long overlooked by both archaeologists and ancient historians,<sup>55</sup> Fustel’s masterpiece on *La cité antique* (1864) is not only the earliest reconstructive project of a comparative study of Greek and Roman cities. It represents also the first theorization of a causal relationship between changes in ritual and the

<sup>49</sup> Jennings 2016, 106.

<sup>50</sup> Hodder 2006, 98.

<sup>51</sup> Shults and Wildman 2018, 34.

<sup>52</sup> Whitehouse and Hodder 2010, 142.

<sup>53</sup> For a combination of different “secular” reasons, see Jennings 2016, 106–108.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>55</sup> Yoffee and Terrenato 2015, 6–10; Rüpke 2020, 32–33.

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