

## ADVANCES IN THE COGNITIVE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

Series Editors: Armin W. Geertz, Jesper Sørensen, and Valerie van Mulukom

*Religion Evolving* argues that religions need to be understood as adaptive systems. Drawing from a wealth of ethnographic and experimental evidence, the authors situate religious traditions within their local socioecological contexts, showing how these systems adaptively respond to economic, environmental, and health challenges. Based in the evolutionary, cognitive, and anthropological sciences, *Religion Evolving* offers a holistic approach that attends to the complex, interacting features of religious systems.

"A much-needed synthesis of the recent explosion of work in the scientific study of religion. Sosis and Purzycki's innovation is to see the complexity of religion not as a daunting challenge, but as its defining feature—an adaptive system that generates variation and resilience and allows religious communities to adapt and respond effectively to their environment over time." – *Dominic Johnson, Alastair Buchan Professor of International Relations, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Oxford, UK*

"A must-read for anyone interested in how the evolutionary perspective has transformed our understanding of one of humanity's most persistent mysteries. A groundbreaking synthesis by two of the world's leading anthropologists of religion." – *Ara Norenzayan, Co-director of the Centre for Human Evolution, Cognition, and Culture, Professor of Psychology, University of British Columbia, Canada*

"In this elegant volume, Purzycki and Sosis craft a powerful framework for understanding the function and functioning of religions. Synthesizing decades of work in anthropology, psychology, sociology, demography, and cultural evolution, *Religion Evolving* identifies the building blocks of religious systems, articulates how these systems have influenced humanity's past, and explains why they will continue to play a central role in humanity's present and future." – *Andrew Buskell, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge, UK*

"The idea that religion is adaptive and helps humans deal with social and ecological challenges is steadily gaining ground. In *Religion Evolving*, Purzycki and Sosis—two of the main architects of this view—present a compelling case for religion as an adaptive system that fosters sharedness, regulates social norms, motivates resource management, and adherence to moral norms. This book is a must-have for any scholar interested in the scientific study of religion." – *Helen De Cruz, Danforth Chair in the Humanities-Philosophy, Saint Louis University, USA*

"For anyone who wants to understand how religion evolved and works, this book is essential reading." – *Joseph Bulbulia, Director of The Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research, Professor of Psychology, Victoria University, New Zealand*

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Richard Sosis is the James Barnett Professor of Humanistic Anthropology at the University of Connecticut, USA.