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Nota di contenuto	1. Complexity and its discontents -- 2. Human cultural institutions : critical elements in complex society -- 3. Ancient systems : from forager to state -- 4. Scales of complexity : case studies -- 5. Southwest Asia : ancient Mesopotamia and its neighbors -- 6. The Nile Valley of Egypt -- 7. The Aegean Bronze Age and the Classical world -- 8. The Indus Valley civilization -- 9. Ancient Chinese civilizations -- 10. Empires in Southeast Asia -- 11. The Mississippian system in the American Bottom -- 12. Ancient Mesoamerican cultures -- 13. Andean civilizations and empires -- 14. Why complex societies collapse.
Sommario/riassunto	Ancient Complex Societies examines the archaeological evidence for the rise and functioning of politically and socially "complex" cultures in antiquity. Particular focus is given to civilizations exhibiting positions of leadership, social and administrative hierarchies, emerging and already developed complex religious systems, and economic differentiation. Case studies are drawn from around the globe, including Asia, the Mediterranean region, and the American continents. Using case studies from Africa, Polynesia, and North America, discussion is dedicated to identifying what "complex" means and when it should be applied to ancient systems. Each chapter attempts to not only explore the sociopolitical and economic elements of ancient civilizations, but to also present an overview of what life was like for

the later population within each system, sometimes drilling down to individual people living their daily lives. Throughout the chapters, the authors address problems with the idea of complexity, the incomparability of cultures, and the inconsistency of archaeological and historical evidence in reconstructing ancient cultures.
