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Sommario/riassunto

This integration of earlier and new scholarship reconceptualizes the origins of civilization, challenging the received view that the ancient Near East spawned the spread of civilization outward from Mesopotamia to all other neighboring cultures. Central Asia is here shown to have been a major player in the development of cities. Skillfully documenting the different phases of both Soviet and earlier Western external analyses along with recent excavation results, this new interpretation reveals Central Asia's role in the socioeconomic and political processes linked to both the Iranian Plateau and the Indus Valley, showing how it contributed substantively to the origins of urbanism in the Old World. Hiebert's research at Anau and his focus on the Chalcolithic levels provide an essential starting point for understanding both the nature of village life and the historical trajectories that resulted in Bronze Age urbanism.University Museum Monograph, 116