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Sommario/riassunto	Mesopotamia was one of the earliest regions to produce writing, literature and the fine arts, as well as being one of the first areas to construct states. This comprehensive and detailed survey of the region's prehistory and protohistory shows how these fascinating developments were possible. Petr Charvat explores the economic, social and spiritual spheres in Mesopotamia from the Palaeolithic to the time of the early states, c. 100,000 BC to 2334 BC. The narrative is supplemented by numerous descriptions of the principal archaeological sites for each phase, and by conclusions outlining the