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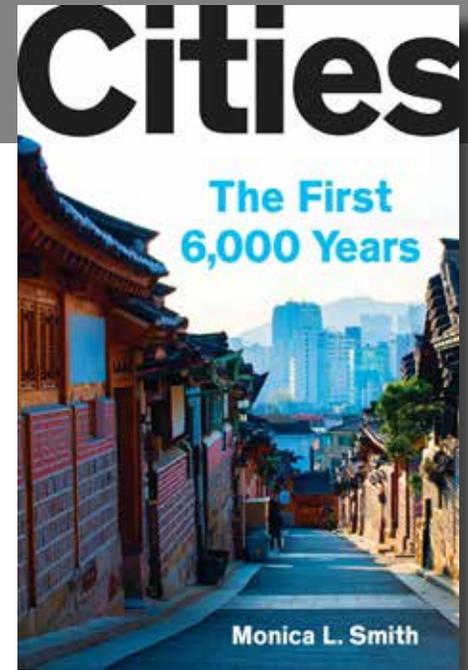
Cities: The First 6,000 Years

by **Monica L. Smith**

Six thousand years ago, there were no cities on the planet. Today, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, and that number is growing. Weaving together archaeology, history, and contemporary observations, Monica Smith explains the rise of the first urban developments and their connection to our own. She takes readers on a journey through the ancient world of Tell Brak in modern-day Syria; Teotihuacan and Tenochtitlan in Mexico; her own digs in India; as well as the more well-known Pompeii, Rome, and Athens. Along the way, she presents the unique properties that made cities singularly responsible for the flowering of humankind: the development of networked infrastructure, the rise of an entrepreneurial middle class, and the culture of consumption that results in everything from take-out food to the tell-tale secrets of trash.

Cities is an impassioned and learned account full of fascinating details of daily life in ancient urban centers, using archaeological perspectives to show that the aspects of cities we find most irresistible (and the most annoying) have been with us since the very beginnings of urbanism itself. She also proves the rise of cities was hardly inevitable, yet it was crucial to the eventual global dominance of our species--and that cities are here to stay.

Publisher's Description



Monica L. Smith is a Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Professor in the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at the University of California, Los Angeles. She holds the Navin and Pratima Doshi Chair in Indian Studies and is the director of the South Asian Archaeology Laboratory at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology. She received her B.A. in Classical Civilizations at the University of California, Santa Barbara; M.A. in Archaeology from UCLA; and Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Michigan. Her field experience includes participation on projects in England, India, Italy, Egypt, Madagascar, Bangladesh, Tunisia, and with the National Park Service in the American Southwest. With her colleague R.K. Mohanty she has co-directed a long-running archaeological research project in eastern India at the sites of Sisupalgarh, Talapada and Ostapur and their environs, supported by funding from the U.S. National Science Foundation, the National Geographic Society, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the American Institute of Indian Studies. She is in her third term as an Academic Trustee on the AIA's Governing Board.

AIA Archaeology Abridged Lecture by Monica Smith: The Secrets of an Ancient Indian City

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKDgW9JZPUo>

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