

Ancient West Asian Civilization

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Editors

Ancient West Asian Civilization

Geoenvironment and Society in the
Pre-Islamic Middle East

 Springer

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Preface

The publication of this book is closely related to the symposium “Facilitating the Study of West Asian Civilization: What Does Ancient West Asia Tell Us?” held in Tokyo June 28–29, 2014. The symposium aimed to achieve a wide perspective on West Asian environments and civilizations while gathering the collective knowledge of geologists, archaeologists, philologists, and historians. All of the chapters in the present volume were written by symposium participants. The authors reviewed their work after discussion and exchange of information. Consequently, their contributions reflect the central theme of this book: understanding the essence of West Asian civilization, its geological and geographical foundation, and its significant influence on the modern world.

The editors wish to thank all the authors, as well as other colleagues who gave presentations at the symposium and supported the contents and structure of this book. Publication was carried out as part of an ongoing research project of the Research Center for West Asian Civilization, University of Tsukuba (Ibaraki, Japan), which is financially supported by grants from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Sciences and Technology (MEXT). We are grateful to the staff of the Research Center, which unfailingly assisted us in countless ways.

In today’s immense political turmoil, the Middle East often tends to be talked about for its negative aspects via negative images. However, this region has contributed to the foundation of elements necessary in all modern human societies. Therefore, we hope that the importance of Ancient West Asia is realized again, and if this book contributes to this purpose, we are content.

Tsukuba, Ibaraki, Japan

Akira Tsuneki
Shigeo Yamada
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