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a work of history but also about art and architecture trade and commerce travel and exploration economics and politics this is above all a book about people and how over the millennia they have managed to live closely together from the origins of urbanization in mesopotamia

to the global metropolises of today great cities have marked the development of humankind babylon and nineveh athens and rome istanbul and venice timbuktu and samarkand their very names are redolent both of history and romance the great cities in history tells their story from early uruk and thebes to jerusalem and alexandria then the fabulous cities of the first millennium damascus and baghdad in the days of the caliphates teotihuacan and maya tikal in central america and chang an capital of tang dynasty china the medieval world saw the rise of powerful cities palermo and paris in europe benin in africa and angkor of the khmer in the early modern world we journey to islamic isfahan and agra and prague and amsterdam in their heyday before arriving at the phenomenon of the contemporary mega city london and new york tokyo and barcelona los angeles and são paulo a galaxy of more than fifty distinguished authors including jan morris colin thubron simon schama orlando figes felipe fernandez armesto misha glenny adam zamoyski and a n wilson evoke the character of each place and explain the reasons for its success seeing what each city would have been like during its golden age

list of members in each vol except vol for 1924

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