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opening extract from

Children's Atlas of World History

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Simon Adams

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CHILDREN'S
ATLAS OF
**WORLD
HISTORY**



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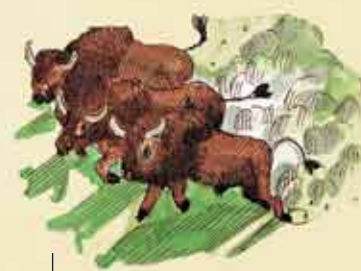
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ANCIENT WORLD



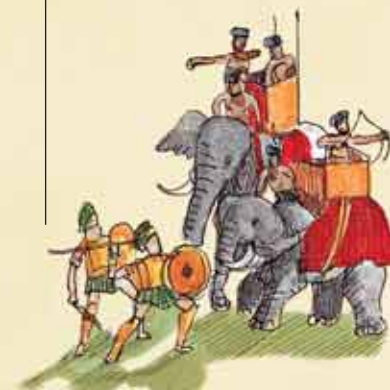
Illustrated by Katherine Baxter



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KEY TO MAPS IN THIS CHAPTER

- NIMRUD Capital city
- Catal Hüyük Other city, town or village
- ▲ Giza Pyramid
- ◆ Uluru Other ancient site
- Empire boundary

The ancient world

Humans have walked the earth for about 200,000 years, at first hunting and gathering their food wherever they could in order to survive. About 10,000 years ago, people learned how to cultivate crops, which meant they could live in settled communities near their fields. From these small villages grew the towns and cities that gave birth to the great civilizations of the ancient world. At first, workers in these civilizations used stone tools, but by 6000BCE copper was in use in the Middle East, followed by bronze and then iron. Each material gave its name to an age or period of history. Not every civilization passed through these four ages: for example in Africa the Bantus went straight from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

Each picture symbol on this world map relates to an ancient civilization you will find later on in the chapter. The page numbers next to each symbol tell you where you should look to find out about each civilization and its people.

DATING

In this book, we use the dating system BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era). We have used this system because the common system that you may find in other books – BC and AD – is a Christian dating system and so is misleading when dealing with non-Christian cultures and civilizations. The date 100BCE is the same as 100BC, while 100CE is the same as AD100.

10000BCE–1000CE

- 10000** Hunter-gatherers roam many parts of the earth
- 9000** Farmers keep herds of sheep in mountains near the Fertile Crescent
- 8000** First settled farming communities in the Levant
- 7000** Settled farming communities throughout Fertile Crescent
- 6700** Catal Hüyük is largest town
- 6500** Pottery in general use throughout Fertile Crescent
- 6200** Copper smelting begins in Anatolia
- 6000** Cattle first domesticated
- 5000** First towns and temples built in Mesopotamia
- 4500** Copper Age begins in Balkans (south-east Europe)
- 4300** Uruk in Mesopotamia is world's first city
- 4000** Pictogram writing begins in Mesopotamia
- 3400** First towns built in Egypt
- 3200** First wheeled vehicles used in Sumer
- 3000** Megaliths built in Europe
- 2900** Cuneiform writing in Sumer
- 2630** First pyramid in Egypt
- 2600** Indus Valley civilization
- 2500** Bronze Age starts in Europe
- 2350** World's first law code written in Mesopotamia
- 2000** Minoan civilization in Crete
- 1800** Sumerian empire
- 1700** Babylonian empire
- 1450** Mycenaean civilization in Greece
- 1000** Iron Age begins in Europe
- 1000** Bantus in southern Africa
- 900** First Greek city-states founded
- 510** Roman republic founded
- 500** Persian empire
- 350** Maya city-states emerge
- 0**
- 100** Axum flourishes in Ethiopia
- 200** Hopewells build mounds in North America
- by **1000** Polynesians reach New Zealand
- 1000**CE



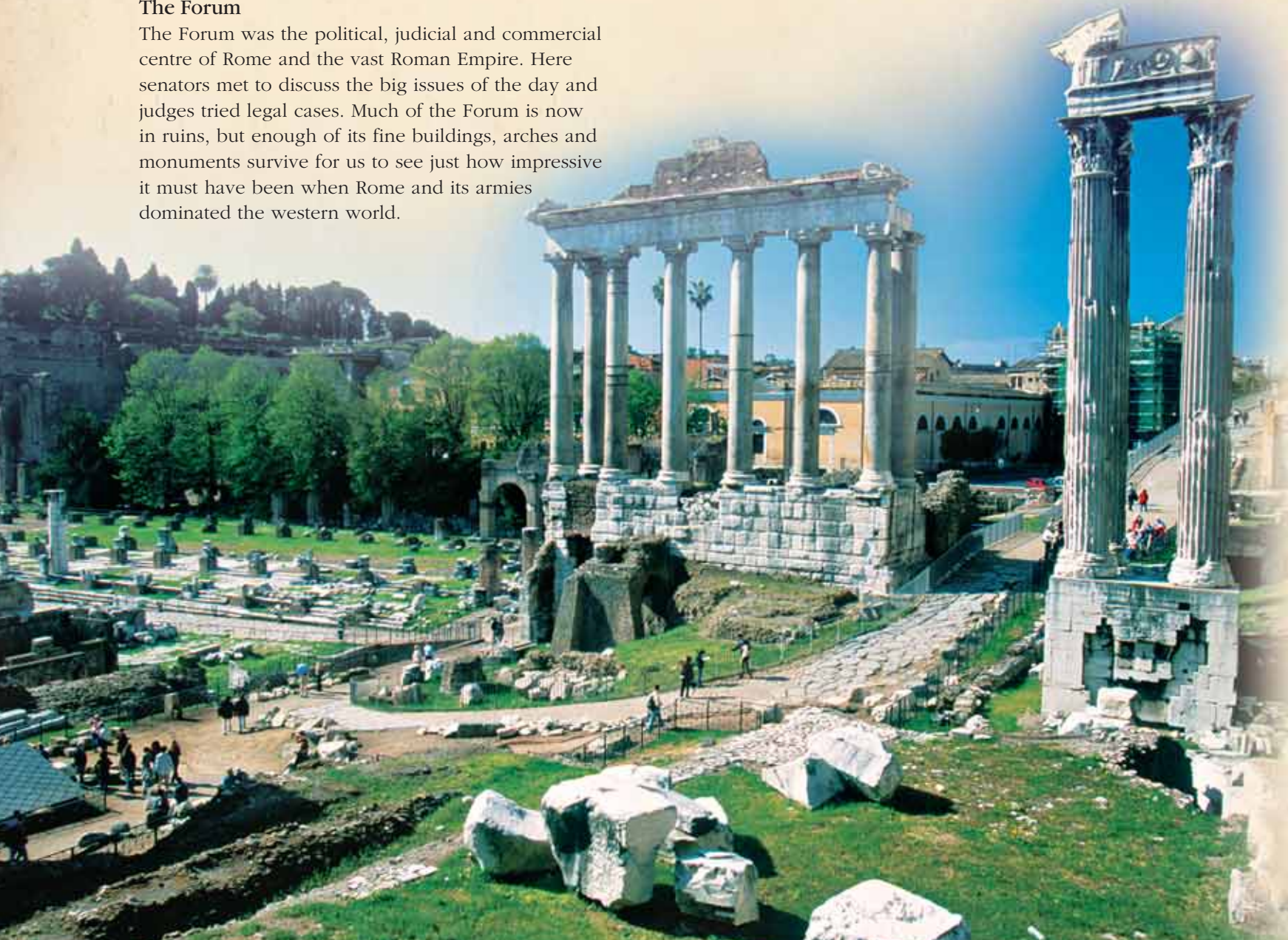
The ancient world:

How we know about the past

Although we cannot travel back in time to speak to people who lived in the ancient world, we can discover much about them from the objects they left behind. Buildings, aqueducts and roads, everyday objects such as pots, tools, coins and writing implements, and luxury items such as jewellery and gold ornaments, have all survived to tell their tale. Some buildings, like the Forum in Rome, are still partly standing, while other buildings and smaller objects were buried for centuries and have only recently been uncovered by archaeologists. All these remains tell us a great deal about the peoples of the ancient world and the lives they led. From them we can piece together a picture of what it was like to live in ancient Rome or China, to march with Alexander's army or sail the Pacific colonizing new islands.

The Forum

The Forum was the political, judicial and commercial centre of Rome and the vast Roman Empire. Here senators met to discuss the big issues of the day and judges tried legal cases. Much of the Forum is now in ruins, but enough of its fine buildings, arches and monuments survive for us to see just how impressive it must have been when Rome and its armies dominated the western world.



Royal music

This silver lyre – a stringed musical instrument – was made in Ur, southern Iraq, about 4,500 years ago. It was found in the Royal Cemetery, a lavish burial site where the kings of Ur were buried with their servants. Its fabulous craftsmanship and its place of discovery suggest that it was played at the royal court, and was buried with the king so that he could continue to enjoy it in the afterlife.



Cuneiform writing

Priests in the cities of Sumer developed the world's first writing around 3400BCE. It consisted of simple pictures, each representing a word or idea. By 2900BCE, this had developed into cuneiform, a writing system using wedge-shaped marks (*cuneus* is Latin for wedge) made by pressing a reed stylus into wet clay.



Hieroglyphics

In about 3300BCE the ancient Egyptians began to use a form of writing known as hieroglyphics. These were more complex than Sumerian picture writing, using about 700 different signs to represent different ideas, words and even individual letters. The hieroglyphs above date from the 1st century BCE.



Mayan writing

Zapotec scribes in the Americas developed their own, unique form of hieroglyphic picture writing in about 800BCE. Later, the Maya used these to develop their own advanced literary language with a glyph for every syllable. Many glyphs have only recently been translated.

Hands-on history

Archaeologists study the evidence left behind by previous generations. They examine a site or object, looking for clues that might tell them how old it is, who made it, and why it was found where it was. Even the tiniest scrap of evidence can provide a vital clue, and archaeology can be a lengthy process. Here, an archaeologist is examining a Roman mosaic uncovered during road construction in Israel.



Chinese coins

We use coins every day, but each coin is a piece of history with a story of its own to tell. They show rulers and important symbols, and we can tell a lot about trade from where they are found. The Chinese have been using coins since the 5th century BCE. These were made with a hole in the middle so that they could be kept on a string.





ANATOLIA

Catal Hüyük
The mud-brick buildings of Catal Hüyük housed 6,000 people between 6700 and 5700BCE. Many of the houses were decorated with wall paintings and sculptures.

Mediterranean Sea

The first towns

In about 8000BCE, people in the Levant made one of the most important discoveries in history. They learned how to cultivate wild cereals such as wheat and barley. This was the beginning of farming, and it meant that people could live in one place near their crops. As a result, permanent settlements grew up here and throughout the Fertile Crescent, the arc of fertile land that stretches from southern Levant to Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. The first farmers built villages and, later, walled towns such as Jericho and Catal Hüyük. In towns, not everyone was a farmer. Townspeople learned new skills such as making pottery and smelting copper, and began to trade. This helped their towns to prosper and expand.

The development of farming

The first peoples were hunter-gatherers who found food by killing wild animals and collecting wild fruits, nuts and cereals. In the Levant, wild crops were so plentiful that by about 10000BCE people did not need to move around to find food. Slowly they learned how to plant and grow wild cereals, so the crops would produce more food and be easier to harvest. Early farmers domesticated sheep, goats, pigs and cattle, so that by 6000BCE, they could feed a large, settled urban population.

Irrigating the land
Farmers began building canals and irrigation ditches in Mesopotamia in about 5500BCE.

Local industry
A pottery industry using local clay grew up in Susa and nearby towns in the 4000s BCE.

Temples
The people of southern Mesopotamia built large temples and grain storehouses in Uruk and other towns after 5000BCE.

Eridu
Eridu, the oldest town in southern Mesopotamia, had a population of about 5,000 in 4000BCE. It traded pottery and other goods with Arabia.

10000BCE–4000BCE

- 10000 Farmers in the Levant first build wooden huts with stone foundations
- 9500
- 9000 Wild sheep herds are first kept by farmers in Taurus and Zagros Mountains
- 8500
- 8000 Barley and wheat are cultivated in the Levant, allowing settled farming communities to develop
- 8000 Walled city of Jericho has 1,500 inhabitants
- 7500 Flax is first used for textiles
- 7000 Settled farming communities flourish throughout Fertile Crescent
- 7000 Goats, sheep and later pigs are domesticated in Taurus Mountains
- 6700 Catal Hüyük, with 6,000 inhabitants, is the largest town
- 6500 Pottery comes into general use
- 6200 Copper smelting begins in Catal Hüyük
- 6000 Cattle are first domesticated
- 6000 Kiln-fired pottery develops at Hassuna
- 5500 Irrigation allows farming communities to flourish in the arid soil of Mesopotamia
- 5000 The first towns and temples are built in Mesopotamia
- 4500 The plough, sail and potter's wheel are in common use in Mesopotamia
- 4300 Copper working for tools and weapons begins in Mesopotamia
- 4000 Sheep are bred for wool
- 4000