Middle East: Cradle of Civilizations, Part 1

OSHER 795-001
Dates: Tuesdays, 9/22/15-11/3/15, no class 10/13
Times: 5:15PM – 6:45PM
Location: Commander’s House, Ft Douglas
Instructor: Ewa Wasilewska

Course Overview
Clash of civilizations… The more we hear this phrase, the less we remember that civilizations, which are supposedly clashing, they all trace their beginnings to the Middle East. This course is an overview of the ancient civilizations of the Middle East before the Graeco-Roman period. Part 1 focuses on ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Syria-Palestine, and Iran. Part 2 is dedicated to Ancient Egypt.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND DATES:

Week # 1:
Introduction to the Area, Its Civilizations, and Problems with their Discovery and Preservation.

Suggested readings:
Notes.


Week # 2:
The Basics of Civilization: Food production, sedentism and religion.

Suggested readings:
Notes.


**Week #3:**
Divine Economy and Profane Writing (invention of cuneiform script).

Suggested readings:
Notes.

**Week #4:**
Sumerian Ideology: Not so perfect deities and even less perfect humans.

Suggested readings:
Notes.

**Week #5:**
Iran: Cradle of four (plus) civilizations.

Suggested readings:
Notes.

**Week #6:**
The Hittites -- the first Indo-European empire.
Suggested readings:
Notes.