

Ancient Civilisations - Our U3A Group Led by Catherine Yates have been exploring this vast subject for the past fifteen years and in the process opening the historical -majesty, complexity, artistry and political organisation of these civilisations.

Generally these Ancient civilizations developed in distinct geographical "cradles" where agriculture, sedentary life, and complex societies emerged independently. These primary locations were usually near major river systems that provided necessary water and fertile soil.



Key Cradles of Civilization

Mesopotamia (Tigris-Euphrates Valley): Modern-day Iraq, often considered the first, beginning around 4000–3000 BCE with Sumer, Babylon, and Assyria.

Ancient Egypt (Nile Valley): Developed around 3100 BCE, recognized for its longevity, monuments, and centralized administration.

Indus Valley (South Asia): Modern-day Pakistan and Northwest India, featuring advanced urban planning (Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro) around 3300 BCE.

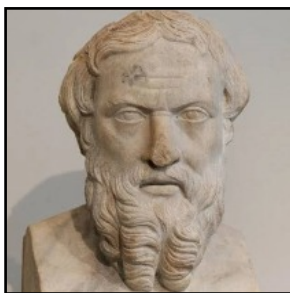
Ancient China (Yellow River Valley): Started roughly 2070 BCE with the Xia and Shang dynasties, developing bronze, silk, and writing.

Mesoamerica (Mexico): Home to the Olmec civilization (c. 1500 BCE) and later the Maya.

Over the past year we have been studying Ancient Egypt (Nile Valley) and in particular an overview of The Great Pharaohs concluding with Cleopatra, the last Pharaoh of Egypt.



Ancient Egypt was a cradle of civilization concentrated along the lower reaches of the Nile River in the eastern corner of North



Our next programme will consider Herodotus, the Father of History. He was a historian and geographer from the Greek city of Halicarnassus (now Bodrum, Turkey). He wrote a detailed account of the Greco-Persian Wars, among other subjects such as the rise of the Achaemenid dynasty of Cyrus. He has been described as "The Father of History", a title conferred on him by the ancient Roman orator Cicero.

