



The Ancient Lydians: The History and Legacy of the Iron Age Kingdom of Lydia

Charles River Editors

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*Includes pictures *Includes accounts of the Lydians from ancient historians and contemporary records

*Includes footnotes, online resources and a bibliography for further reading *Includes a table of contents

“When all these nations had been added to the Lydian empire, and Sardis was at the height of her wealth and prosperity, all the great Greek teachers of that epoch, one after another, paid visits to the capital.” –

Herodotus Of all the empires and kingdoms in the ancient world, few could compare with the Lydians in terms of wealth and opulence. From the early 7th century BCE until the middle of the 6th century BCE, the Lydians played an important role in the history of the eastern Mediterranean region as they took on the role of middleman between the empires of the Near East and the emerging Hellenic civilization in Greece. From their capital in Sardis, the Lydian kings traded and made alliances and war with numerous kings, tyrants, and generals, which ultimately cemented their role as a brief but historically important people and kingdom in the ancient world. An examination of the Lydian people and their kingdom reveals that their power did not materialize overnight, but was instead a long process, dependent upon several factors. The primary factor contributing to Lydia’s success was its wealth. The Lydians were fortunate enough to possess large deposits of precious metals within in their territory, but how they exploited and utilized those resources is what truly made them successful. They were the first people to invent a currency which not only allowed them to create a thriving economy within their own territory, but gave them tool with which to influence both their friends and enemies abroad. The wealth of Lydia impressed non-Lydians to the point that even the most sublime Greek philosophers who generally eschewed wealth, praised the high culture of Lydia and the Lydian people in general and the greatness of their capital city of Sardis in particular. Lydia was also successful because its kings were shrewd, politically savvy men who knew the supreme art of diplomacy. The Lydian kings would make alliances based not only on their immediate interests, but also with a view to the future, as they would often play one kingdom against another. Ultimately, despite their wealth and guile, the Lydians found themselves the victims of the Achaemenid Persian juggernaut, which consumed their kingdom, along with many others, in the mid-6th century BCE. But even after Lydia was conquered by the Persians, the Lydian people, and especially the city of Sardis, continued to play an important role in the history of the region. The Ancient Lydians: The History and Legacy of the Iron Age Kingdom of Lydia looks at the history of one of the most influential empires to ever take root in Anatolia. Along with pictures depicting important people, places, and events, you will learn about the Vandals like never before, in no time at all.

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