

The Ancient Lydians – Outline

I. Early history

- a. Lydians originally from Europe
- b. Small states throughout Asia Minor following fall of the Hittites
- c. 10th century BCE – dominated western Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey)

II. Lydian civilization

- a. 400 years of prosperity
- b. Mineral wealth
 - i. Especially gold and electrum
 - 1. Electrum – mixture of gold and silver found in riverbeds
- c. Controlled Asia Minor’s trade routes
- d. Conquered by Persians (547 BCE)

III. Lydians coined money

- a. Before the Lydians, goods had to be traded for other goods
 - i. Only thing close to money were lumps of gold and silver, which had to be repeatedly weighed and tested for purity
- b. Lydians made standard-sized pieces of gold and silver and stamped them with their value
 - i. Invention of money
- c. Use of money spread quickly
 - i. Helped to spread international trade

IV. Government

- a. Capital – Sardis – trading center
- b. Ruled by a king
 - i. Most famous was Croesus – “as rich as Croesus”

V. Review questions

- a. Where was Lydia located?

- b. What are the Lydians credited with inventing?

- c. What Lydian king is world famous for his wealth?