

# Short history of the Amazons

## **Origin:**

The fundament of the Amazon culture is the *matriarchal society* - a society where women predominate. Matriarchal civilization was wide-spread in the neolithic period. At the end of the neolithic and beginning of the early bronze age there happened a significant change. Patriarchal tribes invaded and threatened the indigenous matriarchal people. More and more matriarchal tribes had been conquered by the invaders. Because of this situation some matriarchal tribes decided on a radical way of reaction. They saw the only way to survive by a *complete segregation of men and women* - the way of living as Amazons.

## **Lemnos-Amazons:**

In the third millennium BC the island Lemnos in the northern Aegean was the first stronghold of the Amazons. The ancients called this island '*predominated by women*'. They developed a refined culture with impressive cities, mighty fortresses and mysterious sanctuaries. The most important places were [Poliochni](#) in the east and [Myrina](#) in the west. The construction of the cities is uniform, there seem to be no or only very little social differences which is typical for matriarchal cultures.

Characteristics for the Amazons of Lemnos are:

- Within this region only on Lemnos there have been found arrow-heads at this period - the Amazons have been famous archers.
- On this island there has been discovered a huge number of battle-axes - that was the typical weapon of the Amazons.
- There has been found a great number of delicate tools made of bone and metal like finely shaped needles. They have obviously served for cosmetic purposes - which perfectly fits in this women culture.
- The artifacts and monuments show amazing parallels to those from the Thermodon culture of the second millennium BC in Asia Minor. This culture (also called Dündartepe culture) with its center at the river Thermodon in northern Turkey is considered to be the classical homeland of the Amazons. Its influence was so strong that even the today's Turkish name of the river reflects the old name (Terme Çay = Thermodon).
- Vulva-shaped rock monuments on Lemnos as well as in the Thermodon region give evidence of the cultic adoration of women.
- The fortress construction on Lemnos and in the Thermodon region are almost the same. The identical structures are: rock-cut staircases, platforms, niches, eye-shaped and vulva-shaped slots and drilled holes, walls consisting of boulders.

The great number of parallels between the Thermodon culture and Lemnos proves that the Thermodon-Amazonians were the successive Amazon culture.

Because of its exposed location the island Lemnos was attacked more and more frequently by patriarchal invaders. That is why the Amazonians looked for a more secure home, and they chose the region along the river Thermodon at the southern coast of the Black Sea. Lemnos was abandoned and remained uninhabited for about hundred years.

### ***Thermodon-Amazonians:***

The Amazonians from the river Thermodon have been described in detail by the ancients. Their homeland at the river Thermodon in northern Turkey was very isolated, so it was protected by a swampy coastline and by rather inaccessible mountains in the west, south and east.

The Greek accounts refer that the Amazonians lived in three cities:

Their famous capital was [Themiskyra](#) which was situated near the mouth of the Thermodon. Possible remains of this city have been discovered in the Thermodon lowlands. There was found a monumental construction consisting of boulders. In the rock substructure of this monument there has been cut a vulva-shaped niche - a significant allusion to Amazonians.

The Amazon city [Lykastia](#) is identified with the remains of Dündartepe. Dündartepe was the town, the nearby Tekkeköy was the fortress of Lykastia, and there was also the cemetery.

[Chadesia](#) can be identified either with the ruins of Akalan or with the site İkiztepe near the mouth of the river Kizilirmak. In İkiztepe there have been unearthed a very impressive sepulcher.

The sanctuary of the Amazonians was on the only island along the southern coast - its ancient name was [Aretias](#) (today Giresun Adasi). Very ancient vestiges of workmanship can clearly be seen. This island is even today a place of worship, a large rock called Hamza is a place of pilgrimage for the local people.

It seems that the Amazonians were able to survive till the end of the second millennium BC. According to the ancients an Amazonian troop had taken part in the combat at Troy. They might have been perished in the following immense cataclysm of migration.

Their last refuge was the remote castle of [Karpu Kale](#) in the mountains near the spring of the Thermodon.

Many later reports about the important position of women in this region indicate that matriarchal disposition still persisted, so we hear about many women as martyrs.

The defense of the Ünye castle only some kilometers east of the Thermodon against the Turks was commanded by a woman. The Turks were only capable to capture this castle by treachery. The commanding woman committed suicide to escape her capture. A very similar story is reported from Lemnos. A woman named [Maroula](#) defended the castle Kotsinas for a long period against the Turks.

These medieval accounts seem to be the last aftermaths of the famous Amazonians.