



Lydia, the land of King Croesus, is famous for its gold working, the monumental burial mounds at Bin Tepe, and its wealthy capital Sardis. The Hittite sources, written approximately eight hundred years before the height of Lydian power, indicate that this region was important in the Late Bronze Age period as well, when it was the center of the Seha River Land, one of the major polities of Western Anatolia. Until recently, however, nothing was known about the archaeology of the pre-Lydian era.

Since 2005, the activities of the Central Lydia Archaeological Survey (Boston University) have revealed a network of Late Bronze Age citadels through systematic surface survey that shed light on the early history of the region. This talk will present the preliminary results of the survey and situate them within the broader context of the transition to the Early Iron Age (eleventh to eighth centuries BCE) and the rise of Sardis.