



CYRTIANS

CYRTIANS (Gk. *Kýrtioi*, Lat. *Cyrtii*), a tribe dwelling mainly in the mountains of Atropatenian Media together with the **Cadusii**, Amardi (or “Mardi”), Tapyri, and others (Strabo 11.13.3). According to Strabo, they were migrants and predatory brigands (11.13.3; cf. 15.3.1). He characterized the Cyrtians living in Persia proper in similar terms. In the Hellenistic period they seem to have been in demand as slingers (Gk. *sphendonêtai*, Lat. *funditores*), for they fought as such for the Median satrap Molon in his revolt against King Antiochus III in 220 b.c.e. (Polybius, 5.52.5), as well as for Antiochus himself in his defeat by the Romans near Magnesia ad Sipylum in 190 b.c.e. (Livius, 37.40.9, 14); they even served in the Roman army as part of the auxiliary troops of Eumenes II in the battle against Perseus at Callinicus in 171 b.c.e. (Livius, 42.58.13).

The Cyrtians had nothing to do with the Carduchi, Cordyaei, Gordyaei, and the like, who lived farther west, but it seems plausible that they may have been the ancestors of the modern Kurds.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[F. H.] Weissbach, “Kýrtioi,” in Pauly-Wissowa XII/1, col. 205 (with references).