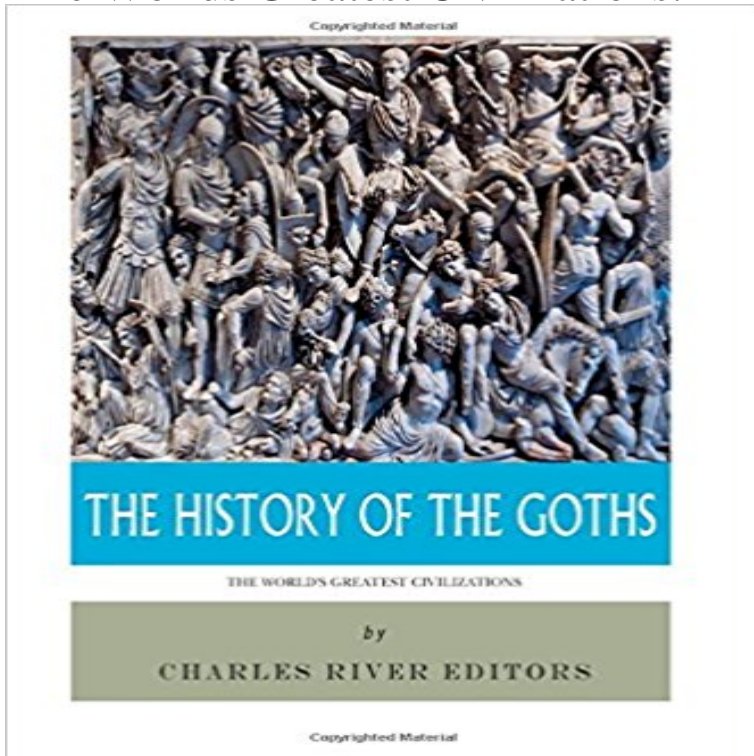


# The Worlds Greatest Civilizations: The History of the Goths



\*Includes pictures \*Includes ancient accounts of the Goths and their history  
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These later divided Gotland into three parts, so that Graip the eldest got the northern third, Guti the middle third, and Gunfjaun the youngest had the south. Then, over a long time, the people descended from these three multiplied so much that the land couldnt support them all. So they selected every third person by lot to leave, with the right to keep and take away with them everything they owned except for their land. They were unwilling to leave then, but went to instead Torsburgen and settled there. But afterwards the country (i.e. Gotland) would not tolerate them, and drove them away. Jordanes, The Origin and Deeds of the Goths

The birth of Europe as people know it today was hardly an easy and effortless process. The Old World was reshaped by centuries of continuous wars, raids, and the falls and rises of empires. The most turbulent of these events happened at the beginning of the Middle Ages, from the 3rd-7th centuries CE. This was the time when the old slave society gave way to the feudal system that marked the latter Middle Ages, and it was also a period of battles between the Roman Empire and various barbarian peoples. The Roman Emperors waged wars, made and broke alliances, and bribed and negotiated with chieftains of various barbarian tribes to preserve the territorial integrity of their Empires, but the razor-edge division between the civilized world of the Romans and that of the savages that threatened their borders was dulling with every decade. In fact, the constant need for army recruits swelled the Roman legions with barbarian foederati , a phenomenon that forced both the Romans and Byzantines to use a very subtle way of playing the barbarian tribes against each other via diplomatic schemes and bountiful

rewards. A new religion was also taking root: Christianity became a reason for both unification and division, as different people adopted different variations of its teachings. It goes without saying that the Goths played an integral part in the history of Europe during this time, and they remain among the most notorious and controversial groups in history. By the 4th century CE, The Goths were among the prominent barbarian groups who became a threat to the Roman Empire, but they also had contacts with the Romans well before then, and they even traded for awhile. The two branches of the Goths that are best known, the Visigoths and Ostrogoths, stared down the Roman Empire as it neared its collapse and supplanted it with a kingdom in Italy in the 5th and 6th centuries respectively. The Visigoth leader Alaric and the Ostrogoth leader Theodoric are still well-known names due to their deeds and reigns in Europe. In addition to the Visigoths conflicts with Rome, the ancient author Jordanes has helped keep the Goths relevant with his seminal work The Origin and Deeds of the Goths, which traces the groups history all the way back to about 1500 BCE and covers their migrations and wars on the European continent. While some still discount Jordanes work as outright fiction, most historians still believe that its a valuable historical work, and they continue to rely on it in attempts to study and trace the history of the Goths and their various branches over time. The Worlds Greatest Civilizations: The History of the Goths looks at the history of the barbarians who brought Rome to its knees in the late 4th century CE and helped bring about the final collapse of the Roman Empire. Along with pictures depicting important people, places, and events, you will learn about the Goths like never before, in no time at all.

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