

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

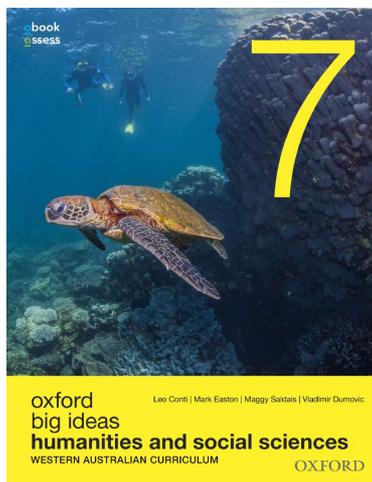
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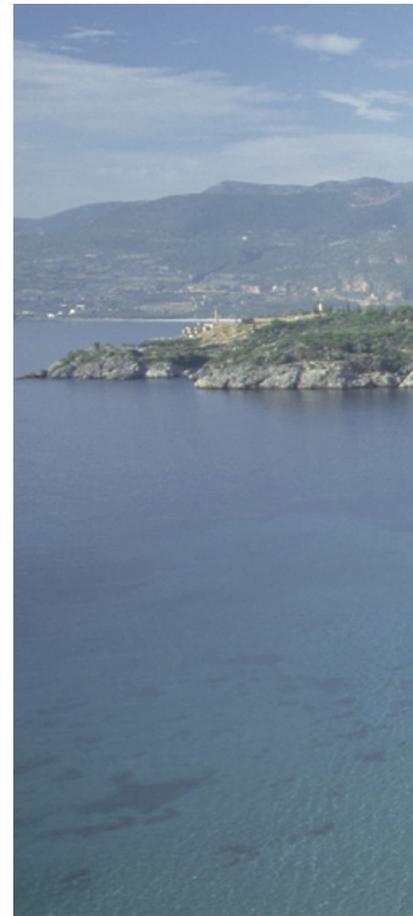
Conti, L., Easton, M., Saldais, M., Dumovic, V., & Kosteci, R. (2016). *Oxford big ideas: humanities and social sciences 7*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

9.2 The impact of geography on ancient Greece

Ancient Greece was located in south-eastern Europe. Its territory surrounded the Aegean Sea (see Source 3). It also included the many islands in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas. Greece's mountainous mainland and mostly unnavigable rivers made travelling difficult. These geographical features had a significant influence on the development of ancient Greek societies and civilisations.

The first known fixed settlements on Greece's mainland were on the Peloponnesian peninsula and on the fertile plains in Thessaly (see Source 1). Evidence has been found of scattered mud-brick villages built around 7000 BCE. There were also ancient settlements on the nearby islands of Crete, and on the Cyclades (a group of about 30 islands).

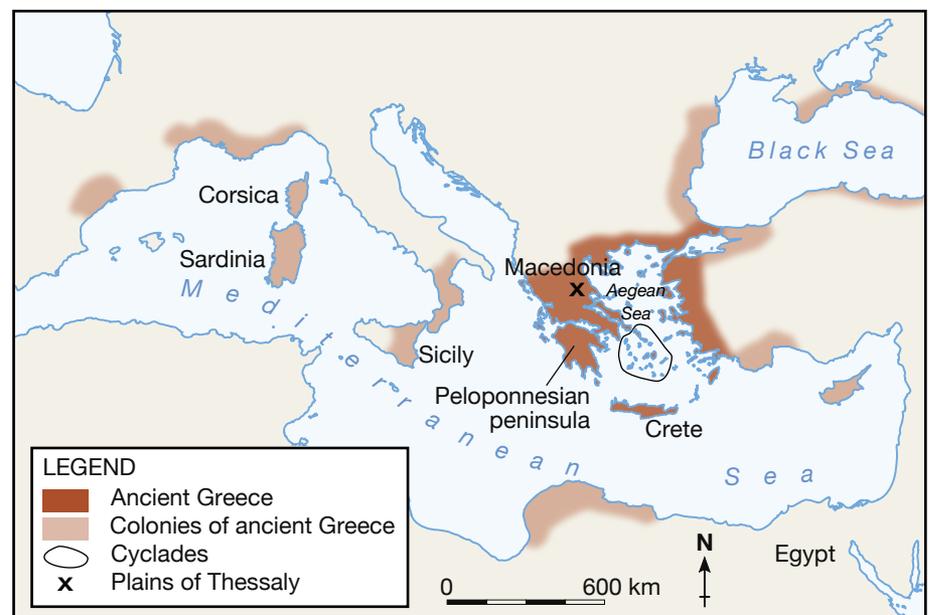
Greece's steep mountains and rugged high country cut off contact between many settlements. These features in ancient Greece prevented people from growing as one nation. Rather, many settlements developed as city-states. This meant there was no single Greek ruler.



City-states

City-states were independent urban centres that generally shared a common language and religious beliefs. Occasionally, some banded together to fight a war or for protection. Now and then, one might dominate for a time. The most powerful city-states were Athens and Sparta. They were also at times bitter rivals.

ANCIENT GREECE AND ITS COLONIES c. 550 BCE



Source 1

Source: Oxford University Press



Source 2 A coastal landscape of Greece, on the Peloponnesian peninsula

ANCIENT GREECE AND SOME OF ITS CITY-STATES



Source 3

Source: Oxford University Press

Check your learning 9.2

Remember and understand

- 1 Explain how Greece's physical features made the ancient Greeks depend on the sea to meet their needs (such as food, transport or trade).
- 2 Look closely at Source 3.
 - a Where are most of the ancient Greek city-states located?
 - b What are the main reasons for this settlement pattern?

Evaluate and create

- 3 Complete a SWOT analysis chart related to city-states in ancient Greece. Use information here and in Source 1 on pages 264–265. Copy a large version of Source 4 onto an A3 sheet of paper to do this activity.
 - a Working in groups of four, with every member contributing in turn, complete the segments of your SWOT chart with as many brainstormed ideas as you can. One example has been provided in each segment to get you started. You need to add more.
 - b Once all groups are finished, discuss your overall conclusions about life in a Greek city-state.

Source 4 A SWOT chart

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each city-state produced its own food, so its people did not have to depend on others. 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agora would have been overcrowded as the population of the city-state grew.
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was possible to form an alliance with another city-state and become more powerful. 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A city-state might be vulnerable to attack if it had no allies.