Cultures of the Mountains and the Sea

B E F O R E  Y O U  R E A D

In the last section, you read about belief systems in ancient China and the Qin dynasty.
In this section, you will read about the development of culture in ancient Greece.

A S  Y O U  R E A D

Use the chart below to take notes on ancient Greek life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOGRAPHY</th>
<th>MYCENAEANS</th>
<th>DORIANS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mountains and valleys separated areas</td>
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1. Why was sea trade important for the Greeks?

Mycenaean Civilization Develops (pages 124–125)

Who were the Mycenaeans?

A large wave of people moved from Europe, India, and Southwest Asia. Some of these people settled on the Greek mainland around 2000 B.C. They were later called Mycenaeans. They were ruled by powerful warrior-kings.

The Mycenaeans developed a strong culture. They borrowed from the Minoan culture of Crete. They adapted the Minoan form of writing and artistic design. The Mycenaeans also became interested in trade.

According to legend, Mycenaeans fought a long war with the people of Troy, a city in Turkey. This conflict was called the Trojan War.

The war was said to have started because a Trojan youth kidnapped a Greek woman. Her name was Helen. She was the beautiful wife of a Greek king. The Greek army later destroyed Troy.

2. How were the Mycenaeans influenced by the Minoans?

Greek Culture Declines Under the Dorians (pages 125–126)

What was Greece like under the Dorians?

The culture of the Mycenaeans fell about 1200 B.C. Sea raiders destroyed their palaces. A less advanced people called the Dorians occupied the land. For the next 400 years, Greece went into decline. No written records exist from this period. Little is known about this era.

The spoken word lived on, however. A great storyteller named Homer made up epics, long poems, based on tales he heard. Epics are about heroes and their deeds. One of Homer’s great epics was the Iliad. It centers on the heroes of the Trojan War. The heroes of the Iliad are warriors. Homer tells about their courage and noble actions in battle.

The Greeks also created a rich set of myths. These stories explain the actions of gods and events in nature. In Greek myths, gods often act like humans. For example, they show feelings, such as love, hate, and jealousy. Unlike humans, though, the Greek gods lived forever.

3. How did Homer keep Greek culture alive under the Dorians?