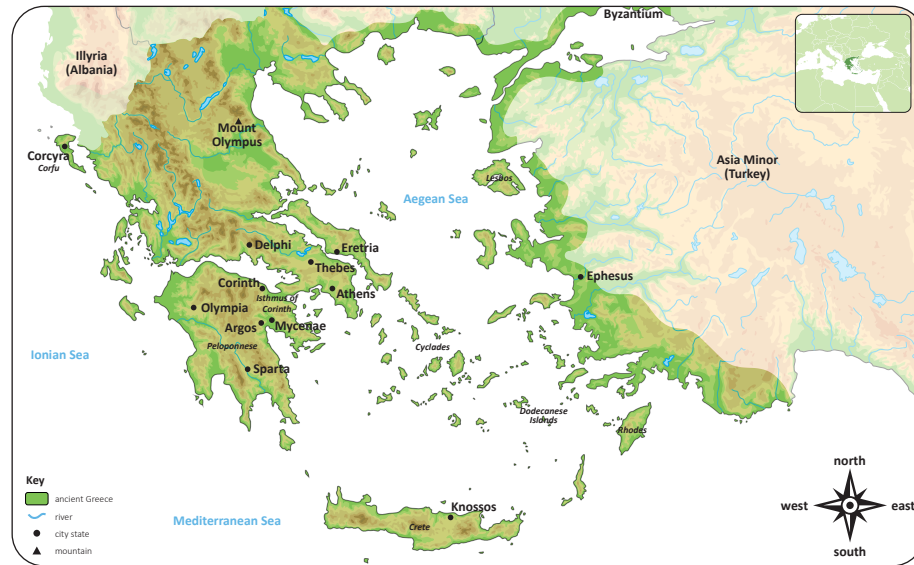


The Greeks: A Lasting Legacy

City states

Ancient Greece was made up of many small areas called city states. Each city state had its own leaders, laws and traditions. City states included Corinth, Sparta and Athens.



Athens

Athens was one of the most important city states. It was famous for learning, art and democracy. The Acropolis stood above the city and the Parthenon was built for the goddess Athena.

Athens became powerful through the Delian League. Other city states paid Athens money, called tribute, for protection, helping it grow richer and stronger. The classical period in Athens, c. 500 BC to 323 BC, was a time of big ideas and cultural development.



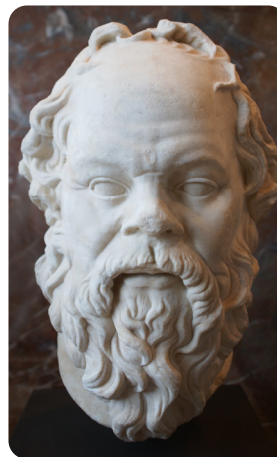
Democracy

The Athenians created the idea of democracy. In Athens, male citizens age 20 or over could meet and vote on decisions affecting the city state. However, Athenian democracy was not fair to everyone: women, enslaved people and people from other countries could not vote. Modern democracies are based on the Greek idea but allow many more people to vote and take part.

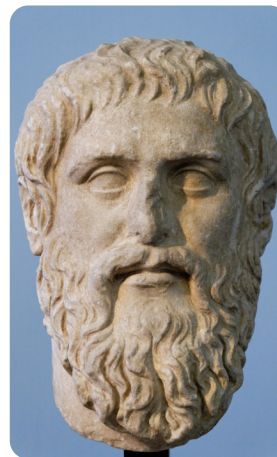
Philosophy

Philosophy means thinking carefully about life, truth and how people should behave. The famous Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle asked thought-provoking questions and shaped ideas about knowledge, justice and science.

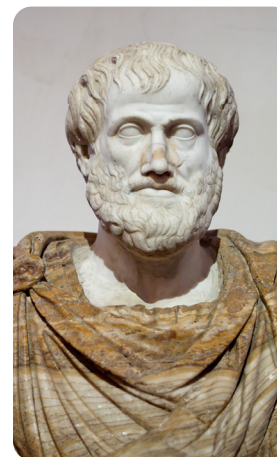
Greek philosophy has influenced education, law, politics and ideas about right and wrong for over 2,000 years.



Socrates



Plato



Aristotle

The impact of Greek ideas on the Western world

The legacy of ancient Greece is still seen across the Western world. Democracy, philosophy, architecture and theatre all began or grew in important ways in Greece. These original ideas have been developed over time, but they still shape how people live, learn and make decisions today.

Architecture

Columns, symmetry and a carved triangular pediment are key features of Greek architecture. The Parthenon is one of the most famous and influential buildings in the world. Its style was copied by the Romans and has influenced the design of museums, banks and government buildings around the world.



Parthenon



US Capitol building

Greek theatre

Greek theatre was performed in large outdoor spaces with circular seating and a stage in the middle. Only men could act and they wore masks and costumes for different characters. A chorus helped tell the story, usually through song. Greek theatre influenced later drama, including modern plays, television programs and films.



Acropolis Theatre of Dionysus

