

# Phenomenons of the Ancient world

## 1. Origins of ancient Greek civilization



### Mythology

The ancient Greek myths are very well preserved in the work of a famous greek poet called *Homer*. In his poems ..... and ..... he had precisely described the world of Greeks before their civilization reached its peak, when the lives of Greeks were closely connected to those of their Gods, heroes and different creatures, unknown to a person living our time. In his stories, he defined the Greek world, reaching from ..... peninsula, across ..... sea and its islands until the coast of the Asia Minor (nowadays Turkey). Main topic of his work was the War of ....., which was discovered in the 19th century, by Schlieman, a german archeologist. He described also the predecessor of Greeks, the Mycenaeans and Minoans.

For a long time Homer's work was considered to be fiction, however some of the places and civilizations mentioned in *Illiad* were discovered by archeologists. Nowadays it is mostly accepted that there was Troy, fortified city on the coastline of Asia Minor, that the labyrinth of *Minotaur* is situated on the island of Crete in the ancient city of Knossoss and many others.

**Q:** Do you know some of the characters showing up in Homer's poems? If so, write them down.

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There is another *myth*, telling us the story of Europa, princess of the city of Tyros (nowadays in Lebanon). She was kidnapped by the god Zeus, while taking a bath and playing with her companions. Zeus took the appearance of a beautiful white bull and the impressed princess approached... They crossed the sea together and landed on the coastline of Crete. And so, our continent got its name.

**Q:** Why do you think our continent is called after a princess of Tyros?

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**Task:** Try to define the word/notion *myth*? Can we trust it as historical source? Give a reason to your response.

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## Two nations

According to archeological findings and written sources, the Greeks were formed from two races: Ionians and Dorians. Ionians were those Mycenaean who survived the invasion of fierce mountain people, the Dorians. After all the center of Ionians became **Athens**, and Dorians set up their stronghold in **Sparta**.

## Questions:

- 1) Look at the maps and describe geographical conditions of Greece.
- 2) Compare it with Mesopotamia and Egypt
- 3) How it could influence their way of life and their culture and civilization?

Map 1



Map 2

