

**colony** a settlement under the control of a usually distant country

## 25.4 Starting Colonies

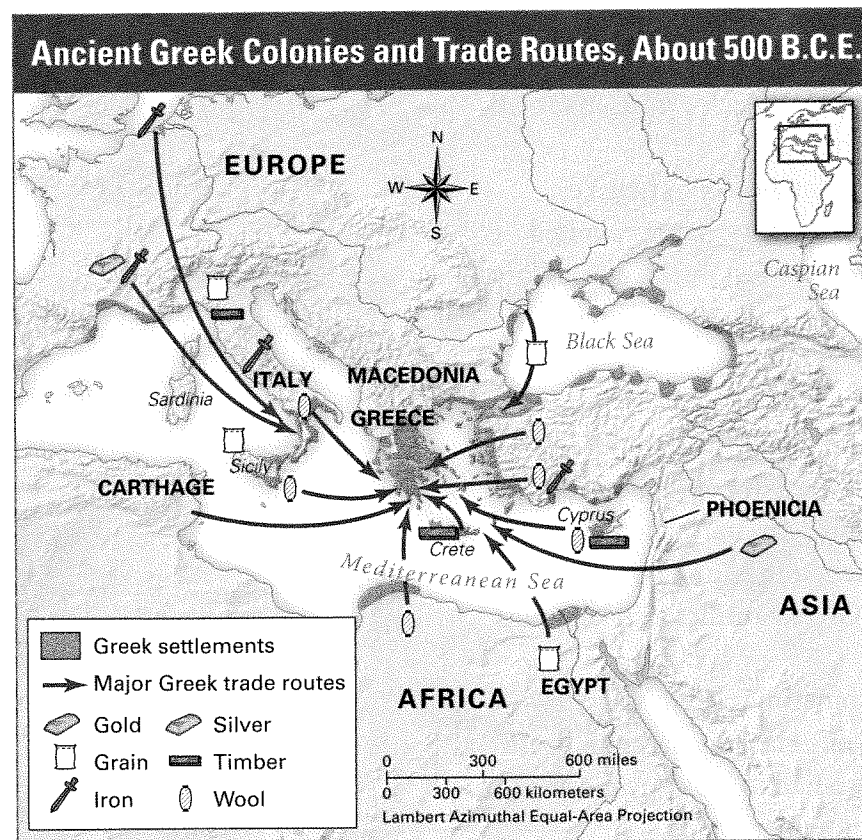
As the populations of Greek communities increased, the existing farmland no longer produced enough food to feed all of the people. One solution was to start **colonies**, or settlements in distant places. Many Greek communities sent people across the sea, in search of new places to farm so that they could ship food back home. People who set up colonies are called colonists.

The ancient Greeks made many preparations before starting a journey to a new land. Often, they began by **consulting** an oracle to ask the Greek gods whether their efforts would be successful. An oracle was a holy person who the Greeks believed could communicate with the gods.

Next, the colonists gathered food and supplies. They took a flame from their town's sacred fire so they could start a sacred fire in their new home.

Greek colonists faced many hardships. They had to take a long sea voyage and then find a good location for their colony. They looked for areas with natural harbors and good farmland. They tried to avoid places where the local people might oppose the new colonies. Finally, they had to build their new community and make it successful.

Many ancient Greeks started colonies across nearby seas in order to farm and trade.



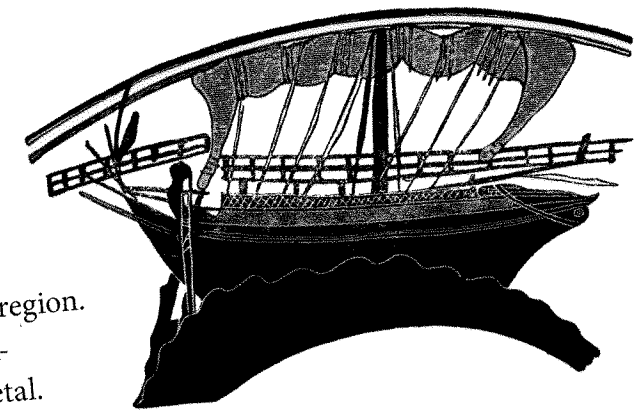
## 25.5 Trading for Needed Goods

Many Greek settlements on the mainland relied on trade with each other to get needed goods. Some had enough farmland to meet their own needs, so they were less dependent on trade.

The Greeks traded among the city-states, with Greek colonies, and in the wider Mediterranean region. Olive oil and pottery from the mainland were exchanged for such goods as grain, timber, and metal.

Most goods were carried on ships owned by merchants. These ships were built of wood, with large rectangular cloth sails. Merchants had ships built, not for speed, but for space to hold goods. Because these ships traveled only about three to five miles per hour, journeys were long. A one-way trip from the mainland could take two months.

Navigating these ships was difficult. The Greeks had no compasses or charts. They had only the stars to guide them. The stars could tell sailors a ship's location, but not what hazards lay nearby. No lighthouses warned sailors of dangerous coastlines. Despite these dangers, adventurous sailors carried more and more goods, and trade flourished along the Mediterranean coast.



Merchant ships, like the one shown here, sailed on the Mediterranean Sea around 500 B.C.E.

## Chapter Summary

In this chapter, you learned about the ways in which geography influenced settlement and way of life in ancient Greece.

**Isolated Communities and the Difficulties of Travel** Greece's steep mountains and surrounding seas forced Greeks to settle in isolated communities. Travel by land was hard, and sea voyages were hazardous.

**Farming in Ancient Greece** Most ancient Greeks farmed, but good land and water were scarce. They grew grapes and olives, and raised sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens.

**Starting Colonies** Many ancient Greeks sailed across the sea to found colonies that helped spread Greek culture. Colonists settled in lands that include parts of present-day Turkey, Spain, France, Italy, and northern Africa.

**Trading for Needed Goods** To meet their needs, the ancient Greeks traded with other city-states, their colonies, and with other peoples in the Mediterranean region. They exchanged olive oil and pottery for such goods as grain, timber, and metal.