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Trade in the Old Greek cities

Trade was an important aspect of the old Greek Civilization and the expansion of various places. There was an increase in the population which required changes to transport system. This led to the trade of goods in one part of the Mediterranean which were produced in a far-flung area of the world (Carlwright). Many things were very much new to the Greeks and exporting things like wine and olives helped to spread the culture of Greeks to a wider world. Initially, there were states which were governed by the separate governments and most of these states were independent cities of Greece. These were called the city states. The history of trade can be dated back to the king Minoan and the times of Bronze age. There were certain goods which were not produced at places where they were used by the people. Examples include Gold, copper and other minerals. The trade did not exist when these civilizations came to a downfall. Many of the Greek cities played important part in the development of trade. Many aspects related to trade can be examined in these cities which include taxes and some relaxations for trade. The Greek cities were the first places where systematic trade took place.

The history of trade can be found in Homer and Hesiod which show that there had been trade and traders in the 8th century BC although they did not allow the activity to the ruling class. Trade developed from the time 750 BCE and there were trade contacts which could go across the Mediterranean Sea (H.Cline). There were specific ships designed to facilitate the trade and there was special place where trade took place. These places were called Emporia where people from different countries conducted their transactions. The port of Athens which was named Piraeus became one of the most important ports in the world in terms of trade from the 5th century onwards.

The city states traded cereals, wine, olives, figs, pulses, cheese and honey. The pottery made in different areas of Greece was also very highly demanded by the foreign world. The country imported wheat, slaves, wood and other goods.

There were loans available to the traders in the name of Maritime loans which enabled people to pay for the transport of goods from one place to another. People did not have to repay loans if their goods could not reach destination safely. The lenders were compensated by keeping the interest at a very high rate and ship was kept as a security to loan. There was a limited role played by the state in the overall trade process. The state deputed a special person or department who looked after the purchase and management of grains. There were certain barriers to the import of grains as well as to its re-exportation. There were special people who were given the responsibility of grain buying. There was a ban on placing any hurdles on the import of grain or to re-export it (Hornblower). There were market officials who ensured that good quality products are sold in the market and grain products were overseen by separate supervisors. There were some steps taken by the company to protect trade along with some taxes and levies. The government taxed traders who were not able to unload a certain percentage of their total cargo weight. There were specialized courts which ensured that more and more traders chose Athens as their trading partner. There were private banks which facilitated currency exchange and other relevant facilities.

When the Greek city states experienced a downfall, the trade was shifted to some other place but many Greek cities continued to be important trading centers in roman times.

# Works Cited

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