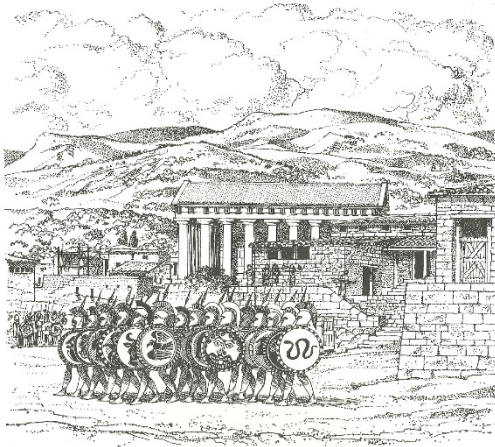


# Sparta



## The city

Sparta had by far the largest amount of territory of any city-state in Greece. The Spartans had obtained all this land by conquering the people who lived around them. Sparta did not have magnificent buildings and the Spartan army was so strong that the city did not have walls around it.

## A city of warriors

Some of the conquered people kept their freedom, but had to fight for the Spartans during wars; others became *helots*, slaves who had to farm the land for their Spartan masters. The helots far outnumbered the Spartans and there was always a risk they might revolt. The Spartans decided that the best way of protecting themselves against revolts was to become excellent warriors.

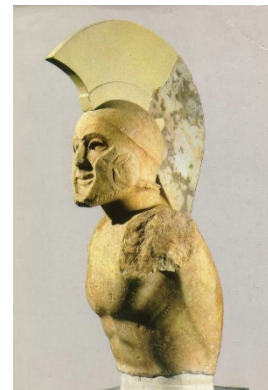
Spartan citizens were not allowed to have any other job except fighting. The city took boys away from their families at the age of seven to train them as warriors. The boys were taught to obey orders without question, to withstand pain and hardship and to kill. The Spartan army was the largest and strongest in the Greek world.

## Women in Sparta

Spartan women lived differently from women in all other Greek cities. Just like boys, the girls went to schools organised by the city. Spartan women took part in physical exercise outdoors and enjoyed a healthy diet. They did not get married until they were 18 so they were usually closer in age to their husbands than women in other city-states.

Women in Sparta were allowed to own land and although they learned how to weave, they did not have to make the cloth or do any other job. The most important job for Spartan women was to give birth to healthy babies, especially baby boys.

## Spartan government



This is a sculpture of a famous Spartan king named Leonidas. Sparta always had two kings: one commanded the army and the other looked after the city. They both acted as priests.

There was also a council of 28 men over the age of 60 who were elected for life. They made all the decisions that the Assembly voted on. The Assembly was made up of male Spartan citizens over 30. They voted to accept or reject the council's decisions, but they did not discuss them. Votes were decided based on who shouted the loudest.

Five officials were elected each year. They were in charge of education, led meetings of the council and supervised the kings.