

ANCIENT SPARTA



The territory	The people
Sparta (the city itself)	<i>Homoioi</i> (Equals): Spartan citizens, all warriors
Lakonia: the area around Sparta, in the south-east Peloponnesus	<i>Perioikoi</i> (lit., dwellers around): free residents of Lakonia, allied with Sparta (Dorian Greeks); non-Dorians were <i>helots</i>
Messenia: the land in the south-west of the Peloponnesian peninsula	<i>Helots</i> : serfs who gave grain from the land they farmed to the Spartans
Peloponnesian Peninsula (the part of Greece where Sparta lay)	The Spartans formed the Peloponnesian League, a very informal military league of the various city-states in the peninsula

Spartan life was very military:

Mess-hall

Trained at war full time

Gold and silver currency forbidden (iron rods used)

Spartan government:

Two kings (hereditary, from long-standing families)

Council of elders (called the *gerousia*)

Assembly of the *homoioi* elected the elders

Ephors were also elected by the people, as a check upon the kings—they had the right to bring a king to trial, and if found guilty, to deliver a sentence, even death, upon him; they could decide civil suits and distribute the spoils of war also

The existence of the numerous helots on their western border dictated two linchpins to Spartan foreign policy:

1. establish friendly governments in the Peloponnesus (so no city will go to war, and raise the specter of a Helot uprising)
2. avoid long-term commitments away from the Peloponnesus (so the Spartan soldiers won't be away from Messenia for a long time)