

Athens had slaves while Sparta had helots. The slaves in Athens did not have rights. They worked in homes, mines, and workshops. The slaves supported the economy in Athens. In contrast, the helots in Sparta were serfs tied to the land. The helots farmed the land for the Spartans. The Helots outnumbered the Spartans. The Spartans harshly subjugated the helots to prevent uprisings.

The education systems differed greatly. In Athens, education focused on thinking and the arts. This created thinkers and philosophers. Subjects like philosophy, rhetoric, and mathematics were taught. Boys had tutors until age 6. Then they went to private or public schools. There they studied reading, writing, math, music, and gymnastics. In Sparta, education focused on military training. This created warriors and soldiers. Boys entered military school at age 7. There they learned discipline, endurance, and battle tactics.

The positions of women contrasted. In Athens, women had limited rights. Men controlled political and social life. Women managed the home. Few Athenian women received formal education. Some learned practical skills at home informally. By contrast, Spartan women had more rights and freedom than other Greek women. With men focused on war, women handled estates and businesses. Mothers rigorously trained sons for the military. Girls also received physical training to produce strong Spartan children.

Athens and Sparta differed greatly. Athens had slaves, philosophers, and restricted women's rights. Sparta had helots, warriors, and empowered women. The two city-states focused on education differently creating contrasting social structures. Yet both left lasting legacies on Western civilization.

Reference:

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