

Athens and Sparta  
Similarities and Differences  
By Mike Mizov

One of the greatest city states of all time was the city state of Athens from which we take many of our modern ways. Their government was a full democracy in which they had an assembly was all male citizens over 25 years old, they had the council of five hundred which was chosen by lot of people over 30 and they proposed laws to the assembly. Then there was the court where there were no judges and the juries were very large, the archons which were the nine people with the most power before the assembly took it away from them.

The Athenians descended from the Ionians in the attica region. Their city was mainly located on acropolis'. They had all around education which meant everyone was entitled to education not just the rich. They were also concerned with money and they also had unproductive soil which meant they would have to find other ways to make money, so they became sea traders.

Unlike Sparta their slaves had legal rights which meant they could be freed if the owners of them thought to do so. They also had Draconian laws which were pretty tough laws and sometimes unfair. Since they had slaves they had a lot of time to pursue cultural interests and led their society forward intellectually, so they got into making dramatic plays for their enjoyment.

There were three classes of people in Athens the first class were Citizens which were above age 19, then there were Metics which were considered the middle class. Then there were slaves which was about as low as you could go.

So all in all you will see Athens is a lot different then Sparta which I will tell you about now.

Sparta government was a lot different then Athen's they had the five ephors who were overseers and were the real rulers of Sparta. Then came the council of Elders which was made up of 28 men over 60 and they proposed laws to the assembly. Then there were kings who were elected by the assembly and served as high priests, judges, and army commanders. Then came the Assembly which were all citizens over 30 who elected officials and voted on major policies. Their government was Totalitarian.

The Spartans descended from the Dorians and were located in the Laconia region. Their city was built in a valley and had no walls because they said they could defend from an invaders. Unlike the Athenians their soil supported farming but they were culturally backward, which means we never got anything out of their society's way of life. They had no real family life and were very militaristic. They spoke in Laconic phrases which meant they answered or spoke in as little words as possible (ex. yes, no, maybe, etc.). They were forced to marry at 30 so they could produce as many children as possible and unhealthy children were left to die.

The society of Sparta was composed of citizens which were the direct descendants of the Dorians then there were neighbors which were people from other cities and nationalities living inside their cities who weren't as accepted as the citizens. Then there are the Heilots which were their slaves, compared to Athens their slaves were treated less then dirt. The smart and strong slaves were put to death because of the fear of revolt because slaves outnumbered citizens there. So you can see how culturally oppisate these two people are.

