

The government of athens and sparthans

Countries



The country of Greece in 400-500 B. C. was led to greatness by two great city-states. These city-states were Athens and Sparta. These two states were as different as night and day. They were rivals and very diverse. As you read you will find out their differences between their form of culture and government.

The city-state of Athens adopted a form of government which is now called democracy. Democracy is when the government is ruled by the people. This government consisted of an assembly, a jury, and there was a council of 500 men over 30. The council decided such matters as to declare war or to spend money. The council was used to make decisions for the Athenian government. All men that were citizens were able to participate in an assembly, hold office, vote, and serve on a jury. Slaves could not do any of these things because they were not counted as citizens. The Athenian government was as similar as the American government today (Meigas 32).

Unlike the government of Athens the government of Sparta flourished as an aristocracy. This type of government is when a place is ruled by a small number of people from the upper class. There was a Council of Elders, an assembly, and the five ephors. The Council of Elders was made up of two kings and 28 men over the age of 60. This council decided on making laws. The assembly was made out of all male citizens over 30. The assembly did many things. It elected government workers and voted on laws that were introduced by the Council of Elders. The ephors were selected by the assembly. The ephors were overseers. They controlled slaves, conducted business with foreign countries, and negotiated with the kings (Hornblower 35).

The men of ancient Athens were very educated. From their childhood until the ages of six or seven the men were taught home by their mother or a male slave. After the age of seven they attended a normal day school. At school they learned drama, public speaking, reading, writing, and mathematics. When they reached the age of fourteen they attended a higher school for four more years. At the higher school they learned more math, more science, and things about the government. When the men reached the age of 18 they were required to attend military school for 2 more years. The Athenian men were skilled architects, poets, and artists. From them is where we get great works known as The Odyssey and The Iliad by the writer known as Homer (Meigas 123).

The men of ancient Sparta were very cunning, slick, and strong. During their childhood the Spartan men were taken away from their parents. Being taken away at the age of seven, they were sent to military school. If a child was not strong, he/she was left on a cliff to die of exposure. In the military school they lived in barracks. They were taught survival skills, the endurance of pain, discipline, and toughness at the school.

They were given little food and were encouraged to steal. If they were caught stealing they would get a beating. They were also beaten up by older children in fights, so they could become tough and strong. At the age of 20 the Spartan men finally became soldiers. Once they got married, they were only allowed to live in their own homes with their family at the age of 30. At this age they were considered equals. The military service for the Spartan men ended at the age of 60 (Connolly 230).

The Athenian women were very literate and educated. The women were not counted as citizens and they were not allowed to hold property. The women received the same education as the Athenian men did. Although the education was the same, the women were not allowed to leave the household. They did not go shopping or to run errands. Their husband did most of these things. The main job of the women was to run the household. She managed the family's money, the children, and the slaves. She also spun wool and created artistic pottery (Hornblower 145).

In Sparta the lives of women were unlike the lives of any other Greek polis. The Spartan state didn't take the academic education of a female seriously. The physical education that the women had was very tough and grueling. They learned gymnastics and aerobics. They also had more freedom than women of other city-states. They were able to move from place to place, do the shopping, and control the house. They also had a lot of freedom from their husbands because their husbands lived in barracks. Most of the time the Spartan women worked on fields and were medics to the injured Spartan soldiers. They were considered as mothers to all Spartan soldiers (Connolly 260).

This is how the culture and the government of the Greek city-states of Sparta and Athens was different. Each state had a different type of education and a different momentum of how the government wanted their polis to be. These city-states again were very diverse and different. In my writing you saw how different they were.