

## GOVERNMENT IN SPARTA

The Spartan government included two kings, a council of elders, and an Assembly. According to legend, a man called Lycurgus established the Spartan laws and system of government, although experts are unsure whether or not he was a real historical character.

## KINGS AND OVERSEERS

Sparta's two kings belonged to the two most important families, called the Agiads and the Eurypontids. They always ruled together and led the army in war, but at home their powers were strictly limited to religious duties. The actual running of the state was carried out by five ephors, or overseers, who were elected every year.

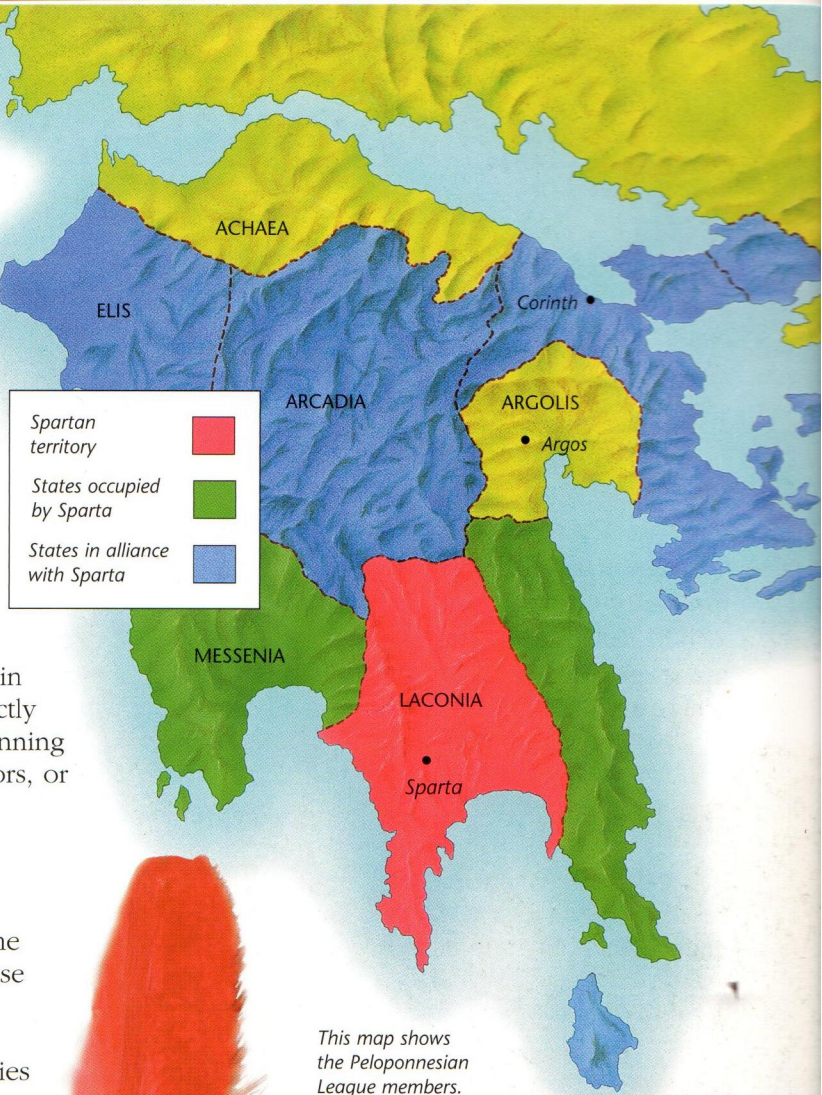
## THE COUNCIL

The Council, or *gerousia*, consisted of the two kings and 28 council members. These were men over the age of 60 who were elected for life. They drew up the laws, acted as judges, and decided what policies the state should adopt.

## THE ASSEMBLY

The Council's proposals had to be passed by the Assembly, or *apella*, which was made up of all citizens over 30. Experts think that the Assembly probably could not debate or amend anything; they could only vote for or against measures. They did this by shouting "yes" or "no", and the loudest group won.

*This photograph shows a man dressed as a Spartan warrior at a Greek Independence Day celebration.*



*This map shows the Peloponnesian League members.*

## PELOPONNESIAN LEAGUE

In the 6th century BC, Sparta was still concerned that it did not have enough soldiers. To remedy this, the Spartans made a series of alliances with nearby states in the Peloponnese (the southern part of Greece). Sparta's new allies remained independent, but promised to give military help when needed. This alliance was known as the Peloponnesian League.

