

II/05 Lakedaimonian 450 – 222 BC  
All Reg Co; Plains

a) *Spartiates* army 450-403 BC

<i>Spartiates</i> (hoplites)	SpHe	0-7	0-14	0-21
Detach unit from ranks for chasing enemy (Close-in)	SpMe	0-1	0-1	0-1
<i>Periokoi</i>	SpH	0-7	0-14	0-21
<i>Helotes</i> equipped as hoplites	SpHi	0-7	0-14	0-21
League Hoplites	SpH	2-10	4-20	8-30

b) Citizens army 450-403 BC

<i>Helotes</i> equipped as hoplites	SpHi	0-14	0-28	0-42
<i>Periokoi</i>	SpH	0-7	0-14	0-21
League Hoplites	SpH	2-10	4-20	8-30
Other allies and mercenaries	SpM/H	0-10	0-20	0-30
<i>Psiloi</i>	BwL/SpL	0-2	0-4	0-6
Allied Cavalry	CvL/M	0-1	0-2	0-3

c) Greek wars 403-362 BC

<i>Spartiates</i>	SpHe	1-5	2-10	3-15
Detach unit from ranks for chasing enemy (Close-in)	SpMe	0-1	0-1	0-1
<i>Periokoi</i> (1 for each <i>Spartiates</i> )	SpH	1-5	2-10	3-15
<i>Helotes</i>	BwLi/SpLi	0-1	0-2	0-3
<i>Helotes</i> equipped as hoplites	SpHi	1-5	2-10	3-15
League allies	SpH	3-10	6-20	9-30
<i>Psiloi</i>	BwL/SpL	0-1	0-2	0-3
League cavalry	CvL	0-1	0-2	0-3
Other foot allies and mercenaries	SpM/H	0-10	0-20	0-30
Allied cavalry	CvL/M	0-1	0-2	0-3

d) Asian expeditions 403-362 BC

<i>Helotes</i>	SpHi	4-8	8-26	14-24
Mercenaries	SpH	4-20	8-40	14-60
Mercenary <i>peltasts</i>	BwL/SpL	2-4	4-8	6-12
Cavalry	CvLi	1	2	3
Mercenary or improvised cavalry	CvL	0-1	0-2	0-3
Elite cavalry	CvM	0-1	0-2	0-3

e) Later army 235-222 BC

New citizens/ <i>Periokoi</i> (Stubborn)	PkH	8-16	16-32	24-48
Old hoplites and mercenaries	SpM/H	4-8	8-16	12-24
Cretan bowmen	BwL	0-1	1-2	2-4
Tarentine cavalry	CvL	0-1	1-2	2-4

After several quite obscure wars, the city of Sparta emerged as the undisputed ruler over the lands of the ancient Lakedaimon state, that latter became the dominant power in Greece. The Spartans developed a rigidly stratified society, with the full right citizens (*spartiates*) at the top.

The *spartiates* were selected since birth for excellence (the weak were abandoned) and their education consisted essentially of military training. The hardship of their life, living in barracks and warfare casualties, may account for the steady decline of effectives from the VII century BC: initially there were about 9000 *spartiates*, in the V century there were less than half that number and by the time of Cleomenes there were mere 800.

The free population living in the Lakedaimonian territories were the *periokoi*, who had lost their political independence but keeping some personal autonomy. They could be eligible as soldiers.

The *helotes* were serfs, mere slaves, who could be hunt in especial occasions for training. The dominant classes were too aware of the constant threat of a slave revolt. The *helotes* weren't supposed to fight, only to serve, until the increasingly low number of citizens forced their inclusion on the army ranks.

In continental Greece the Peloponnesian armies had a nucleus of Spartans citizens and *periokoi* (no more than 1/3) the rest consisting of allies. It was usually a traditional heavy hoplite army, with few - if any - light troops and cavalry. To chase the pesky skirmishers, the youngest Spartans were usually ordered to break ranks in a running pursuit, but this didn't usually work against experienced light troops.

Groups of *helotes* (*neodamodeis*) were sent in expeditions far from the mainland, with the promise of freedom as a reward for success. In these cases the *neodamodeis* would be the mainstay of the army, with a larger variety of troop types likely, as the local troops joined the ranks. Yet the bulk of the army would still be the hoplites.

*Psiloi* was a collective name for all those troops not heavily armoured, or not belonging to the close-order hoplite phalanx. Here it is used to designate the lighter foot only.

After the Peloponnesian war – and especially during the Asian expeditions – Sparta had access to a large number of mercenaries and cavalry. After the defeat in the war against Thebes, Sparta lost her dominant position and saw her manpower shrink even further, avoiding commitment in any major conflict.

Only with the reforms of Cleomenes would Sparta be once again a significant actor in Greece. In this bold but indispensable act, Cleomenes recognized full citizenry to 5000 *periokoi* and strangers, giving lands to another 15000 *periokoi*, allowing them enough resources to arm and defend themselves. By this period the Lakedaimonian were outfitted in the Macedonian way, armed with the long *sarissa* spear, shield and helmet. We ignore if they had body armour at all, but they would probably wear at least some. A significant number of troops who couldn't afford to be armed in the new fashion stayed in the traditional hoplite attire.

After the exile of Cleomenes, the last kings and Tyrants did little else than to use small bands of mercenaries to stay in power. By II BC Sparta was finally forced to join the Achaean League.

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