EARLY SPARTA

1. A city of Dorians, situated in Lakonia (south-east Peloponnese). The city was sometimes called Lakedaimon, and the population as a whole was called the Lakedaimonians.

2. Social classes:
   (a) Spartiates (citizens).
   (b) Perioikoi (meaning "dwellers around").
   (c) Helots (slaves).

3. Constitution:
   (a) Two kings, of the Agiad and Euryptid families.
   (b) Council or senate of thirty elders.
   (c) Assembly of all citizens.
   (d) Later (perhaps from the late 8th century BC) there were also five ephors, appointed annually.

4. Way of life:
   (a) Weak babies were exposed on mount Taygetos.
   (b) Spartiate boys from the age of seven lived in a large school and were trained in military discipline and endurance. From twenty to thirty a man was an eken, in charge of the boys' training. At thirty he became a full citizen, but still spent his days with the other men.
   (c) Spartiate girls also had a rigorous upbringing.
   (d) Luxuries were forbidden. Communication with foreigners was discouraged.
   (e) Work was done by the Helots. Some farming, trading, and manufacturing was done by the perioikoi.

This system was later attributed to Lycurgos. According to Greek tradition he lived about the 9th century, but modern scholars generally date the introduction of the system in the 7th century.

Xenophon: A brief biography
An Athenian, the son of Gylidas, Xenophon was born about 444 BCE. In his early life he was a pupil of Socrates, but the turning point in his career came when he decided to serve in the Greek contingent raised by Cyrus against Artaxerxes in 401. Xenophon himself mentions the circumstances under which he joined this army (Anab. 3.1). Proxenus, a friend of Xenophon, was already with Cyrus, and he invited Xenophon to come to Sardis, and promised to introduce him to the Persian prince. He accompanied Cyrus into Upper Asia. In the battle of Cunaxa (401 BCE) Cyrus lost his life, his barbarian troops were dispersed, and the Greeks were left alone on the wide plains between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Xenophon was elected one of the generals, and took the principal part in conducting the Greeks in their memorable retreat along the Tigris over the high table-lands of Armenia to Trebizond (Trebius) on the Black Sea. In other ways also he showed himself the prototype of an adventurous leader of condition, with no ties of country or preference of nationality. He formed a scheme for establishing a town with the Ten Thousand on the shores of the Euxine; but it fell through. He joined the Spartans, as has been seen, and he continued in their service even when they were at war with Athens. Agesilaus, the Spartan, was commanding the Lacedaemonian forces in Asia against the Persians in 396, and Xenophon was with him at least during part of the campaign. When Agesilaus was recalled (394), Xenophon accompanied him, and he was on the side of the Lacedaemonians in the battle which they fought at Coronea (394) against the Athenians. As a natural consequence a decree of exile was passed against him at Athens. It seems that he went to Sparta with Agesilaus after the battle of Coronea, and soon after he settled at Scillus in Elis, not far from Olympia, a spot of which he has given a description in the Anabasis. Here he was joined by his wife, Phileia, and his children. His children were educated in Sparta. Xenophon was now a Lacedaemonian so far as he could become one. His time during his long residence at Scillus was employed in hunting, writing, and entertaining his friends, and perhaps the Anabasis and part of the Hellenics were composed here. The treaty on hunting and that on the horse were probably also written during this time, when amusement and exercise of this kind formed part of his occupation. On the downfall of the Spartan supremacy, at Leuctra in 371, Xenophon was at last expelled from his quiet retreat at Scillus by the Eleans, after remaining there about twenty years. The sentence of banishment from Athens was repeated on the motion of Eubulus, but it is uncertain in what year. There is no evidence that Xenophon ever returned to Athens. He is said to have retired to Corinth after his expulsion from Scillus, and as we know nothing more, we assume that he died there some time around 359.