

The *Perioikoi*: a Social, Economic and Military Study of the Other Lacedaemonians

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Abstract

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Following recent advances in the study of the *perioikoi* of Laconia, especially those focusing on their political status and their respective *poleis*, I offer the first full-length study of the *perioikoi*, in order to highlight their relevance and positive contribution to the Lacedaemonian state. This work acts both as a stand-alone piece and a supplement to existing seminal studies in the fields of Spartan and helot studies. It looks at Sparta and Laconia from a perioikic point of view, with a focus on the role of the *perioikoi* as a people and as fellow Lacedaemonians. Limited to the classical period, this study examines and analyses all the appearances of Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* in textual sources and in material culture with the aim of shedding more light on what has always been an obscure group.

This study begins with the difficulties posed by both ancient sources and modern scholarship. Since textual evidence for the *perioikoi* is scarce, there have been few studies devoted to them, whereas studies of Spartans and the helots have become ever more common over recent decades. However, when we begin to explore who the *perioikoi* were, in the general sense of the word, and what it meant to be a Lacedaemonian then we can appreciate that these *perioikoi* were a complex group because of their status as Lacedaemonians, something which differentiated them from other *perioikoi* in the Greek world. As Lacedaemonians, they interacted with the many groups that inhabited Laconia, especially the helots, and shared the same objectives as the Spartans when it came to controlling and keeping watch over the helots. Furthermore, they enjoyed a professional and cordial relationship with the Spartans. Most importantly, however, we find that, as fellow-Lacedaemonians, they enjoyed exceptional freedom when operating in the Lacedaemonian army. As individuals they could hold high-ranking positions, command soldiers, and even be trusted with missions that could change the course of action in war; and as collective groups they could fight in strictly elite units. The Spartans knew they could rely on the skills of the *perioikoi* as soldiers. The fact that Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* rebelled extremely rarely is testament to their loyalty not just to Sparta but to Laconia as well.

This study shows that the *perioikoi* of Laconia were not a psychologically, economically or socially subdued group. They enjoyed all the freedoms and advantages of being Lacedaemonians in their own right and by working alongside one of the most powerful city-states of classical Greece, Sparta. It also shows that Laconia was more than just Sparta and the cities that surrounded it. The common link between Sparta and the *perioikoi* was their shared identity as Lacedaemonians. The Peloponnesian War, as we know it today, was fought between Sparta and Athens, but in antiquity it was viewed as Athens against the Lacedaemonians. That is why there existed a Lacedaemonian army, Lacedaemonian religion, and a Lacedaemonian culture.

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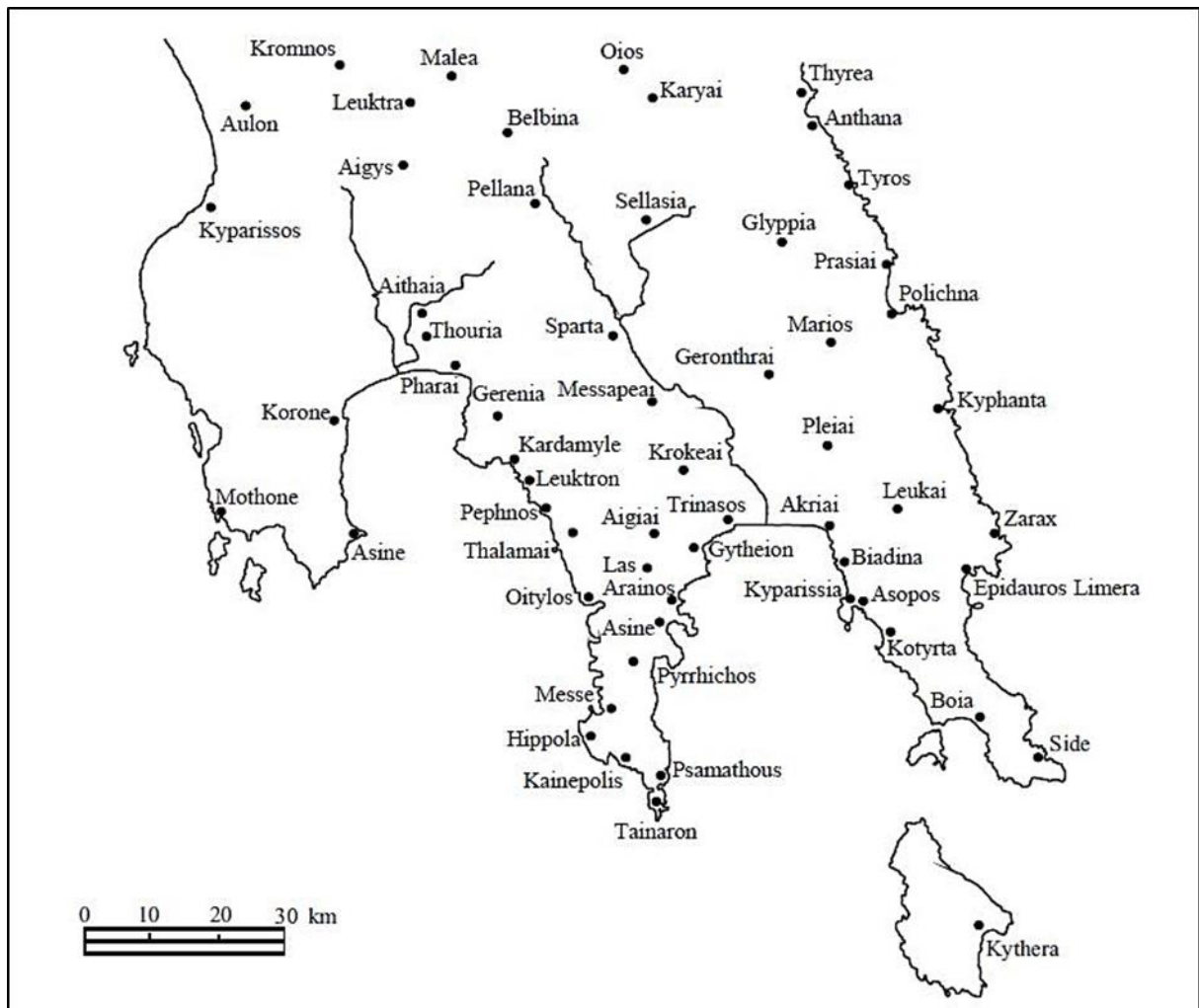
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Abbreviations

All abbreviations, ancient and modern, given in this work follow those used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* and *L'Année philologique*. All dates are BC unless otherwise stated. Loeb Classical Library is the main point of reference for modern translations unless otherwise stated.

<i>AHB</i>	<i>The Ancient History Bulletin</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>Chiron</i>	<i>Chiron: Mitteilungen der Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>CPC</i>	<i>Copenhagen Polis Centre</i>
<i>CPh</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>The Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>Hermathena</i>	<i>Hermathena: A Trinity College Dublin Review</i>
<i>Hermes</i>	<i>Hermes: Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie</i>
<i>Hesperia</i>	<i>Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i>
<i>Historia</i>	<i>Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte</i>
<i>IACP</i>	<i>An Inventory of Archaic and Classical Poleis</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>Klio</i>	<i>Klio: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte</i>
<i>Ktema</i>	<i>Ktema: Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome Antiques</i>
<i>LGPN</i>	<i>Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</i>
<i>LSJ</i>	<i>Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon</i>
<i>MDAI(A)</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
<i>Mnemosyne</i>	<i>Mnemosyne: Bibliotheca Classica Batava</i>
<i>OCD</i> ⁴	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary. 4th edn.</i>
<i>SHHA</i>	<i>Studia Historica. Historia Antigua</i>



Map of Laconia and Messenia

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the *perioikoi* of Laconia and make a better determination of the sort of roles they played in Spartan and Lacedaemonian society. It will primarily focus on the *perioikoi* of Laconia, and even though Messenian *perioikoi* will be mentioned and sometimes analysed, this thesis will not be an investigation of Messenian *perioikoi*. This is, in part, due to the fact that the majority of ancient evidence available concerns *perioikoi* of Laconia. Although there will be some reference to Hellenistic material, its scope is essentially limited to the classical period, when both Sparta and Laconia flourished and became one of the most powerful forces of ancient Greece. That the *perioikoi* are mostly visible in sources pertaining to the classical period is not accidental, and shows that as fellow Lacedaemonians they flourished socially, economically and (especially) in a military environment alongside the Spartans.

The thesis has two main focuses. The first is the social and economic characteristics of the *perioikoi*. In examining this issue it seeks to dispel some modern misconceptions about the *perioikoi* by addressing such questions as the range of economic activities in which *perioikoi* (as free Lacedaemonians) might have engaged and the nature of their interaction with the other main groups in Laconia, the Spartans and the helots. The second focus is on the military dimension of the topic. Most references to the *perioikoi* appear in military contexts, and this thesis therefore devotes considerable attention to their role as fellow members with the Spartans of the Lacedaemonian army. It explores all aspects of the army with the *perioikoi* in mind and addresses a number of important questions such as the status of individual *perioikoi* in the military hierarchy, the nature of perioikic military training, the earliest date for the use of *perioikoi* in the Lacedaemonian army, the way in which perioikic and Spartan troops were integrated in a single fighting force, and the reliability of their contribution to the military defence of Lacedaemonian interests.

Compared to the Spartans and the helots, there has been comparatively little research done on the *perioikoi* of Laconia. Early German scholars such as Benedictus Niese, Franz Hampl, and Fritz Gschnitzer, and later scholars such as R. T. Ridley, Paul Cartledge, Jean Ducat, Mogens Herman Hansen, Jonathan Hall, and Graham Shipley in particular have all made notable contributions to the study of the *perioikoi*. But the great majority of these studies have focused either on the political status of the *perioikoi* or on the geographical identification of their respective *poleis*. More specifically, such studies have been concerned

with perioikic dependency on the Spartans (starting from the presumption that the *perioikoi* were an inferior group ruled by their Spartan masters) or with the task of identifying possible perioikic settlements and deciding whether these were *poleis* or not. While these questions are important, not least to this thesis, there has been no full-length study on the *perioikoi* as a people which properly addresses their role in the Lacedaemonian state.

This study, in a way, is a prolonged thought experiment. It starts from the premise that the *perioikoi* were an important component of the Lacedaemonian state and seeks to discover what happens if one takes that premise seriously. One of the points of a study of this sort is to make oneself see that we can use the same data in different ways in different contexts. A particular piece of evidence may seem obviously to belong to one particular perspective (e.g. the Spartan one). The question is what happens if we make ourselves look at it from a different perspective (e.g. perioikic). It may turn out that there is more to be seen in the body of material available to us (literary, epigraphic and archaeological) than we normally realise, not so much because there are specific hitherto unrecognised references to *perioikoi* to be discovered (though some suggestions of this sort will be made) as because a change of perspective alters the contours of the landscape. Because this is a thought experiment its methodology is inevitably at times speculative; and, because the salient database remains very limited, it must also repeatedly revisit a limited number of individuals and episodes. But the contention is that the process can produce a coherent image of the perioikic world.

In short: what distinguishes this enterprise from the existing state of scholarship is that it looks at Sparta and Laconia from a perioikic point of view. Recent scholarship has articulated some important truths about the *perioikoi*, but this has generally happened in discourses whose focus is elsewhere. The point of this enterprise is to stop the *perioikoi* being peripheral and put them centre stage.

The first chapter identifies and defines the ‘perioikic problem’. Embedded in this (invented) term are the problems we face when studying the *perioikoi*. Specifically, it acknowledges the problems with examining the *perioikoi* both in ancient sources and in modern scholarship. In regard to ancient sources, this chapter highlights the key implications of our having so few clear allusions to the *perioikoi*. Our literary sources on Sparta and Laconia are entirely external and were written by people who sometimes had preconceived ideas about Sparta being a strange place (i.e. suffered the effects of the Spartan mirage). The consequent focus on Sparta tended to exclude the *perioikoi*. This, in turn, had an effect on how the *perioikoi* have been studied in the last century. The latter part of this chapter

examines how the scholars today view the *perioikoi* and how modern scholarship still carries the common misconception that the *perioikoi* were inferior to and subjects of the Spartans.

In the second chapter the term *perioikos*, in the general sense of the word, is analysed and examined. It is compared with other words that contain the same root and its use of other groups in the Greek world is discussed, in order to find out how far such groups were similar to or different from Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*. After looking at the linguistic meaning of the word *perioikos* in relation to the Greek world, this chapter proceeds to examine the *perioikoi* of Laconia in terms of their Lacedaemonian background. It discusses the issues of identity and their status as free Lacedaemonians in order to find out how integrated the *perioikoi* were with the Spartans and Lacedaemonian society as a whole. The next focus of this chapter is on the geographical distribution of the *perioikoi* and their *poleis*. After a brief survey of the data gathered by Graham Shipley in the *IACP*, we look at perioikic *poleis* from a military and defensive point of view. In other words, the chapter analyses the maritime, coastal, and inland strategic importance of the *perioikoi* and how it contributed to the defence of Laconia from internal and external attacks. The last main section of this chapter explores the task of identifying the *perioikoi* in both ancient written sources and material evidence. It asks how and where we can find the *perioikoi* as a collective group and as sporadically appearing individuals and then explores archaeological and epigraphical items of possible perioikic provenance in order to determine whether they could have belonged to or be describing *perioikoi*.

Moving away from issues of definitions and identification, chapter 3 looks at the helots from a perioikic point of view, and explores how the *perioikoi* interacted with the helots. First, it examines the other social groups of Laconia, such as the *neodamodeis*, and then moves on to analyse the helots separately. The nature of the perioikic-helot relationship is assessed and examined from the perspective that the *perioikoi* were above the helots in the social hierarchy of Laconia. It examines the helot-*perioikos* interaction from a military point of view, asks whether the *perioikoi* might have owned their own helots, and explores the strong possibility that the *perioikoi* acted as supervisors and overseers of the helots. At stake here is the extent to which the benefits of being a free Lacedaemonian included exploitation of the helots. Finally, this chapter investigates those occasions on which *perioikoi* rebelled against the Spartans in conjunction with helots. (Other episodes of perioikic rebellion are dealt with later.)

Chapter 4 moves in the opposite direction and analyses the professional and personal relationships between the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. It shows how, as fellow

Lacedaemonians, they interacted locally, at religious festivals and games, and abroad, in military campaigns. It looks specifically at perioikic religious evidence in order to see how Sparta's religious interests overlapped with the *perioikoi*. Most importantly, this chapter also visualises the *perioikoi* from a strictly Spartan point of view with the aim of shedding light on Sparta's attitude towards the *perioikoi*. It analyses the famous passage in Herodotus in which Demaratus speaks about the Spartans and the *perioikoi* and, more generally, investigates the symbiotic relationship between the two groups. In the final section we return to the subject of disloyal *perioikoi*. This time, however, conspiracy with helots is not the issue and the main focus is on the Theban invasion of Laconia, arguably the only context in which there was a genuine Laconian perioikic rebellion against the Spartans. The psychological impact that the Theban attack would have had on both the *perioikoi* and the Spartans made this an exceptional episode, and the chapter goes on to ask whether, all things considered, we should be surprised to see so few perioikic rebellions taking place.

Finally, chapters 5 and 6 deal with the military dimension. Since the bulk of perioikic evidence is found in military contexts, we can safely say that the *perioikoi* played a major role in the Lacedaemonian army. The military aspect of perioikic life features prominently throughout this thesis, but it is in the final two chapters that their link to the army is fully explored. Chapter 5 deals with perioikic presence in the army; it discusses both individual (named) *perioikoi* and the different perioikic contingents that appear in our sources (e.g. the five thousand *logades* at Plataea and the *kaloi kagathoi* who accompanied Agesipolis). An analysis of named *perioikoi* is made in order to find out (i) whether the military roles played by these *perioikoi* were diverse or uniform, (ii) whether perioikic soldiers could climb up the military hierarchy, (iii) whether their military missions were significant or trivial, and (iv) whether perioikic soldiers could command other troops. As for collective groups of perioikic troops, these will be analysed with the sole purpose of establishing whether they were strictly made up of elite or wealthy *perioikoi*. This type of analysis will help us understand the nature of perioikic participation in the army.

Chapter 6, on the other hand, is a re-evaluation of perioikic participation in the army. It analyses all aspects of military life in the Lacedaemonian army from the perspective that the *perioikoi* were indistinguishable from the Spartans by virtue of being Lacedaemonians. In order to understand this indistinguishability fully, the notion that the Spartans were a superior warrior race will be challenged. Questions will also be asked concerning the extent of perioikic military training and the nature of their equipment: did their training take place at Sparta or in their respective perioikic *poleis*; and did the fact that they were indistinguishable

from the Spartans mean that they wore the same military dress on campaigns? This chapter then moves on to examine the reliability of the *perioikoi* as fighters. Using specific examples, it argues against the theory that the *perioikoi* were ineffective – and even inferior – soldiers. In the penultimate section of this chapter, an attempt will be made to determine whether or not the *perioikoi* received the same funerary honours as the Spartans. This will be done using as case study the *en polemoi* ('in war') inscriptions found throughout Laconia. Finally, this thesis will reassess the view that the *perioikoi* only became fully integrated with the Spartans in the Lacedaemonian army around the time of the Peloponnesian War and argue that the integration had already happened by the time of the Persian Wars.

Chapter 1. ‘The Perioikic Problem’

What is ‘the perioikic problem’?

This chapter focuses on ‘the perioikic problem’ and on the issues that surround perioikic studies. The ‘perioikic problem’ is what I like to call the difficulties that arise from studying the *perioikoi* of Laconia. This includes the misconceptions about them in modern scholarship, the failed attempts at identifying who they were, their role in Laconia and Messenia, and the lack of evidence. However, since it is such a specific subject, it is important to attempt to define briefly who the *perioikoi* were and their importance, or lack thereof, both in ancient times and in modern scholarship. The *perioikoi* were just one of various groups of people who lived in Laconia and were closely related to Sparta and its citizen body. The word περίοικοι literally means ‘those who dwell around’. Since it was a generic term it was used throughout the Greek word to describe other marginalized communities that lived outside and around a *polis*.¹ The best known and most frequently mentioned example of *perioikoi* were those that lived in Laconia – a group normally nowadays regarded as the free inhabitants of Laconia who were subordinates but not subjects of Sparta. They had no say in matters of Spartan foreign policy but nevertheless were autonomous and self-governing, unlike the helots, who were slaves of the Spartans and had no power whatsoever.²

It is safe to say that these definitions do not offer much insight into what are unarguably the most obscure and elusive inhabitants of Laconia. The truth is that we cannot expect much from the ancient sources since they tend to mention them only in passing; when they do mention the *perioikoi*, it is usually in a restricted context (i.e. for military purposes). As a matter of fact, sources frequently use the more generic term Λακεδαιμόνιοι, a term that embraces both Spartiates and *perioikoi*. The existence of this term is both a help and a hindrance. On the one hand, it is a problem that the *perioikoi* are elided into another group, because we would like to see them for themselves. On the other hand, it is helpful because it does mean that every time we read about the Λακεδαιμόνιοι we might be reading about the *perioikoi*. This is just one of the reasons why studying this group has proved to be challenging for modern scholarship and why less has been done on the subject than one might expect. This is, of course, part of the ‘perioikic problem’ and I shall be discussing this matter

¹ For an examination of the term *perioikoi* and non-Laconian *perioikoi* see chapter 2.

² For similar definitions see LSJ ‘περίοικος’ and Paul Cartledge’s definition in OCD⁴.

at length in the course of this chapter. It will be divided into two parts: (i) the problems we encounter in the ancient sources and (ii) the problems in modern scholarship.

Problems with ancient sources

Ancient sources cannot be blamed for the way in which references to the *perioikoi* have reached us today. I shall argue in this thesis that the fact that the *perioikoi* are not much mentioned is not due to their absence in military conflicts, as is believed today,³ but to the fact that they are Lacedaemonians, just as the Spartans were.⁴ It was easier to mention the Lacedaemonians, as the sources did the majority of the time, than mention the Spartiates and the *perioikoi* separately. Scholars today have failed to grasp this connection, partly because they too readily rely on the few obvious and explicit examples that we have of the *perioikoi*. They are apt to deny any perioikic presence or participation in an ancient passage just because sources do not often use the words ‘perioikos’ or ‘perioikoi’. The *perioikoi* are there in the sources, we just need to look carefully and thoroughly in order to find them. Still, one cannot deny that the *perioikoi* are hard to identify in our sources. There are two main reasons for this. First, even those ancient sources that mention the *perioikoi* explicitly tend to do so in passing. Their appearance in a text rarely involves an extensive narrative about their activities. Secondly, the contexts in which they are mentioned are mostly limited to military ones.

Irrespective of the obstacles we face when searching for them, the *perioikoi* are nonetheless important. The fact that they are people who live in the margins does not mean they did not play a significant role in Greek history, let alone in Spartan history. Thucydides’ famous contrast between Spartan supremacy and Spartan architecture is an accurate portrayal of Sparta.

For I suppose if Lacedaemon were to become desolate, and the temples and the foundations of the public buildings were left, that as time went on there would be a strong disposition with posterity to refuse to accept her fame as a true exponent of her power. And yet they occupy two-fifths of Peloponnese and lead the whole, not to speak of their numerous allies without. Still, as the city is neither built in a compact form nor adorned with magnificent temples and public edifices, but composed of villages after the old fashion of Hellas, there would be an impression of inadequacy.

(Thuc. 1.10.2)

³ See Lazenby 1985, who strongly argues that if the *perioikoi* are not mentioned in a specific battle it is probably because they are not present.

⁴ This will be discussed comprehensively in chapter 2.

Ironically, the same can be said of the *perioikoi*. Just as Thucydides says there is a mismatch between the visual effect of Sparta and its actual importance, so there is a mismatch between the small explicit impact of the *perioikoi* in our sources and their actual importance. If we were to assess the matter on the basis that they are hardly mentioned in the sources, we should conclude that they were of little importance to the Spartan military and economic machine.

Yet, when we analyse them closely, we discover this not to be the case. The *perioikoi* occupied a large part of the Peloponnese, were part of the most successful army in ancient Greece, and Sparta's supremacy would have been very different without them. The problem is that, while scholars agree with Thucydides' statement when it comes to the city of Sparta, they do not seem to apply the same sentiment to the *perioikoi*. This is partly because of their cameo appearances in the sources that have reached us today. Nonetheless, they do not figure prominently in our sources not because they are mysteriously absent from them but because of their relationship to Sparta. This relationship has its advantages (for them at least, as I shall discuss later on) and disadvantages. The most obvious one, which surprisingly often escapes scholars today, is that they are *perioikoi* in Laconia. By that I mean that their history, activities and day-to-day life were always going to be linked with Sparta. But almost everything that we know of Sparta comes from outside sources. Therefore, if what has reached us of Spartan history is very limited, then we should expect to receive even more limited evidence of the *perioikoi*. The *perioikoi* were not Spartans, and their home was not Sparta, yet their daily life, not to mention their economic and military one, most definitely revolved around Sparta.

Another significant problem with our ancient sources has to do with the military aspect of the *perioikoi*. Around ninety per cent of references to the *perioikoi* are related to warfare in one way or another. The problem is that when it comes to describing battles or wars, ancient sources notoriously give us very few details.⁵ They are good at describing in detail the build-up, anticipation and aftermaths of battles, but when it comes to describing the battle itself they often fall short. That is why the *perioikoi*, to no surprise, are the ones who often become victims of poor war reporting. One good example of this is the battle of Plataea. Arguably this was one of the most important battles of antiquity, yet Herodotus' account of the battle itself is too short to appreciate what really happened. So far as the *perioikoi* are concerned, we know that five thousand of them fought at Plataea because Herodotus says so

⁵ For the problems of reconstructing ancient battles see Whatley 1964.

(9.11), but at the end of the battle, when he is describing the tombs and burials of the dead, he does not mention them. He mentions the tomb of the Spartans and even that of the Helots (9.85), but there is no mention whatsoever of the tomb of the *perioikoi*. Herodotus specifically uses the term Σπαρτιῆται, not the general term Λακεδαιμόνιοι, which would have included the *perioikoi*. There is no question that he is talking about a specifically Spartan tomb. So where are the perioikic war dead buried? It is a question that will never be answered. One can think of many theories, that Herodotus failed to mention them (likely), or that not a single *perioikos* of the five thousand died (highly unlikely) because of their position in the battle (which we do not know). The truth is that this example is a perfect representation of the ‘perioikic problem’.

Another major, but often overlooked, problem has to do with the Spartan mirage. Because most of our sources for Sparta were non-Spartans, over the years from the beginning of the classical period to the time of Plutarch a certain image had been building up with a view of the Spartans that was often exaggerated or simply not true. Plutarch’s *Apophthegmata Laconica* nicely exemplifies the point. These Spartan sayings have often been used to describe what Spartan life was like and, more worryingly, they have also been used as evidence for the Sparta of the classical period. However, these sayings are not classical. Hodkinson says that ‘...recent studies have clearly demonstrated both the non-Spartan origin and the fictitious, pseudo-historical nature of these Hellenistic anecdotes’.⁶ The mere existence of certain anecdotes (from the Hellenistic period) and someone’s decision to assemble them into a single collection (during Roman times) makes a particularly strong mirage-imbued impact. The Spartan mirage made the Spartans more individualistic, more militaristic and definitely more segregated than they really were. This is probably one of the reasons why the *perioikoi* do not figure much in our sources. They have been marginalized by the Spartan mirage and rendered almost invisible, when in reality they interacted with the Spartans much more than our sources acknowledged.

Finally, when it comes to archaeology we encounter similar problems. Archaeological investigation of the *perioikoi* or perioikic settlements is very scarce.⁷ There is a clear absence

⁶ Hodkinson 2009b, 254.

⁷ Shipley 2006b, 71-2 has suggested that in terms of archaeology much is still to be done. He says that ‘such work [archaeological], particularly if it included excavation of perioikic towns, would help us to identify local differences in material culture’. He admits, however, that archaeology in Laconia is in decline: ‘For too long it has been the poor relation in Peloponnesian archaeology’. Shipley mentioned back in 2006 that an objective of the British School at Athens is the creation of a Sparta Study Centre, but already in 2015 this is still to be seen. Nigel Kennell in his 2010 monograph has up-to-date information on archaeology being done on certain perioikic settlements (i.e. Geronthrai).

of archaeological remains concerning the *perioikoi* due to either the problem of associating any existing material culture with the *perioikoi* or because archaeological excavations at perioikic settlements in Laconia have been virtually non-existent. This is a clear problem because the lack of both textual and archaeological material makes the task of studying the *perioikoi* of Laconia very arduous.

Historiography and scholarly context

This section addresses the ‘perioikic problem’ in terms of historiography and scholarly context, and looks at some common misconceptions about the *perioikoi*. There has been a substantial growth in Spartan studies over the past three decades.⁸ This has benefited the Spartans themselves and the helots, but not the *perioikoi*: while focusing on the two ends of the status spectrum and the perennially interesting question of their interaction most scholars have lost sight of the group in the middle.⁹ What I wish to address now is the modern misconceptions that have arisen out of this lack of evidence.

The most common misconception has to do with the economic role of the *perioikoi* in Lacedaemonian society. The traditional view – present throughout most of the nineteenth and twentieth century – is that the *perioikoi* were exclusively traders and craftsmen devoted only to industry and trade.¹⁰ This traditional focus has overshadowed the non-economic roles of the *perioikoi*, most notably their military role. The reason for this picture of the *perioikoi* as simple craftsmen or traders was probably that scholars were too quick to assume that Spartans did not engage in manual labour, especially if they had the helots and the *perioikoi* to do it for them. What is clear is that we should not readily assume that the Spartans never engaged in any type of manual labour and that they left it *all* in the hands of the *perioikoi* and the helots. In the third quarter of the twentieth century one can notice a shift of scholarly thinking regarding perioikic occupations. Shipley acknowledges Cartledge as one of the first scholars to break from this tradition, but others before him, such as Forrest, Larsen and Ridley were already dissatisfied with such views.¹¹ It is now more widely accepted that the

⁸ Literature on Sparta is extensive, but see Poralla 1985; MacDowell 1986; Cartledge 1987 and 2002; Powell 1989; Powell and Hodkinson 1994; Cartledge and Spawforth 2002; Whitby 2002; Powell and Hodkinson 2002; Figueira 2004; Ducat 2006a; Hodkinson 2009b and 2009c; Hodkinson and Powell 2006 and 2009; Powell and Hodkinson 2010; Kennell 2010. On the helots, see Roobaert 1977; Ducat 1990; Whitby 1994; Luraghi and Alcock 2003; Hunt 2006; Cartledge 2011.

⁹ Shipley 1992, 212.

¹⁰ For the traditional view of the *perioikoi* as traders and craftsmen see Grote 1884; Toynbee 1913; Glotz 1938; Chrimes 1949; Michell 1952; Bolkestein 1958; Ehrenberg 1960; Cooke 1962; Finley 1968. See also Appendix B for the list of perioikic professions according to modern scholarship.

¹¹ Shipley 1992. See also Forrest 1968; Larsen 1970; Ridley 1974; Cartledge 2002.

perioikoi were not restricted to trading or crafting, but that they also practised farming, fishing, herding, and were self-sufficient. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that they may have owned helots and chattel slaves, which is a theory I completely agree with and will explore further in chapter 3.¹² Additionally, it is now also believed that some *perioikoi* could have been wealthy and aristocratic.¹³ This range of perioikic occupations is, of course, not exhaustive, which is why I shall suggest further new ones in this thesis.

Another common misconception has to do with the relationship between the *perioikoi* and Sparta. For long scholars have portrayed the *perioikoi* as a subjugated and subdued population. Douglas MacDowell, for instance, claims that ‘the *perioikoi* were subjects to the Spartiates’, that they were required ‘to perform military service’ and pay tribute and tax to Sparta.¹⁴ A. J. Holladay frequently referred to the Spartans as the masters of the *perioikoi* and claimed the latter existed in a ‘position of political subjection and social inferiority’.¹⁵ It would not be surprising if they were even compared to the helots. But more recent scholarship has disproved many of these early misconceptions. For example, it was traditionally supposed that the *perioikoi* were bound to Sparta by treaty. But recent research has shown that this is not true. The commonly accepted view now is that the *perioikoi* were not allies but part of Laconia.¹⁶ This is one of the reasons why this thesis argues that the *perioikoi* enjoyed a good relationship with the Spartans. They always fought alongside them and in very few cases do we actually see them revolting against the Spartans, unlike the helots who rebelled against their masters on many occasions.¹⁷ There is no reason to believe that there existed a dangerous animosity between the *perioikoi* and the Spartans.¹⁸

Inherited misconceptions still affect how the *perioikoi* are portrayed in today’s scholarship. Peter Hunt, for example, says that ‘The Spartan army was also distinguished by the fact that every front-rank fighter was an officer of some sort and certainly a Spartan rather than a soldier from the *perioikoi* or helots’.¹⁹ Implicit in Hunt’s assertion is the false idea of *perioikoi* as inferiors; in addition, his assertion assumes that a *perioikos* could not hold important positions in the Lacedaemonian army, but, as we shall see in chapter 5, this is not

¹² Cartledge 2002; Shipley 2006b. See also chapter 3 for a detailed analysis of slave ownership by the *perioikoi*.

¹³ Forrest 1968, 30; Ridley 1974; Shipley 1997; Cartledge 2002; Gallego 2005. These wealthy *perioikoi* are most of the time assumed to be the only perioikic members of the Lacedaemonian army. But in fact, as we shall see in chapter 5, the Lacedaemonian army was more diverse than previously thought.

¹⁴ MacDowell 1986, 27-8.

¹⁵ Holladay 1977, 121-3.

¹⁶ Shipley 2006b, 67.

¹⁷ Talbert 1989, 27-8; Hunt 1998, 62-5 and 2006, 21-3.

¹⁸ I shall discuss the Spartiate-perioikic relationship in detail in chapter 4.

¹⁹ Hunt 2007, 130.

the case. If one looks at specific examples of *perioikoi* in the Lacedaemonian army, one quickly realises that they could occupy vital positions. The negative undertones of the early studies mentioned above somehow still find their way into recent arguments such as that of Hunt.

Even though the extensive studies recently done on the Spartans and the helots have touched on who the *perioikoi* were, the fact is that not enough has been done exclusively and purposely on the *perioikoi* as a topic in their own right. The subject has only recently begun to interest modern scholars, and there is as yet no single study that covers the whole history of the *perioikoi*. Shipley claims that Cartledge's book *Sparta and Lakonia* brought the *perioikoi* 'back into the limelight'.²⁰ I cannot say I completely agree with Shipley because, even though Cartledge dedicates a chapter to the helots and *perioikoi*, the truth is he does not actually say very much about them. Ironically, the real starting point is the article in which Shipley makes this statement about Cartledge: for '*Perioikos: the discovery of Classical Lakonia*' is the first modern study that attempts to identify who the *perioikoi* were, discuss their treatment in modern literature, and evaluate their place in Laconian society.

Since Shipley's groundbreaking 1992 article, there have been other studies that deal directly with the *perioikoi*.²¹ The main, indeed the only, debate that has placed the *perioikoi* at the centre of attention over recent years involves the political status of the perioikic communities. Some argue that perioikic communities can be regarded as city-states in their own right which were at the same time dependent on Sparta,²² whereas others believe that perioikic communities could not have been city-states, because the idea of citizenship, implicit in designation of a community as a *polis*, was not appropriate to such small communities and villages.²³ This has generally been rejected, and there is now a consensus in favour of the former view. Classical authors used the word *polis* to describe those settlements that were indeed city-states, and, since perioikic communities were called *poleis*, they too were city-states. The problem is not classifying perioikic settlements as *poleis*, which is what they were, but explaining what the Lacedaemonian state was.²⁴

²⁰ Shipley 1992, 214.

²¹ See Shipley 1997, 2002, 2004a, and 2006b; Hall 2000; Hansen 2004; Eremin 2002; Mertens 2002; Gallego 2005; Wallner 2008; Ducat 2008 and 2010.

²² For the view of perioikic communities as autonomous city states see Shipley 1997 and Hall 2000.

²³ For this view of perioikic settlements as villages or *komai*, not city states see Mertens 2002 and Eremin 2002.

²⁴ Hansen 2004 agrees with the Shipley/Hall model and writes a direct response to Mertens' argument. Ducat 2010, 187, 203 also agrees with the Shipley/Hall model but emphasizes that scholars need to come to term with the term Lacedaemonian state. On the Lacedaemonian state see Ducat 2010, who ultimately disagrees with Hall's view about pan-Lacedaemonian citizenship. For a discussion of Lacedaemonian citizenship see p. 24 below.

The *perioikoi* have, thus, now come to the attention of scholars. But one may ask why it took so long for this to happen. The answer is that the earlier historiography of ‘the perioikic problem’ was less successful and more negative. The study of the *perioikoi* since 1985 is completely different from that written before that date.²⁵ Before c. 1985, articles, monographs and studies focusing only on the *perioikoi* were virtually nonexistent.²⁶ Shipley says that the problem originates in the ‘student textbooks on Classical Greece produced in the UK’.²⁷ These textbooks either mention the *perioikoi* briefly or ignore them altogether. On top of that, scholars – even Spartan specialists – did not contribute much to the study of the *perioikoi*, regardless of their vital role in Spartan society, simply because they were more interested in the Spartans, and the *perioikoi* perhaps disrupted their well-organized view of Laconia. The problem is that neglect of the *perioikoi* or (worse) inaccurate statements about them continue to have an impact. The issue of perioikic economic activity provides a clear example. Even though Forrest, Ridley and Cartledge had reiterated that the *perioikoi* were not exclusively traders or craftsmen, Shipley observed that in 1992 this had still not become the standard view.²⁸ I strongly believe that those who are interested in Spartan history must study the *perioikoi* alongside the Spartans: it is simply impossible to say you are an expert in Spartan studies without doing so. Their importance in Spartan history is as fundamental as that of the helots.

Shipley wrote this article more than twenty years ago and scholars’ view on the *perioikoi* have changed, even his own, judging from his more recent articles on the *perioikoi*.²⁹ Smaller, yet informative studies have been done on the *perioikoi* since the mid-nineties which do already take for granted that the *perioikoi* were not just traders or craftsmen. But work on the *perioikoi* still lags far behind that on the Spartans and even the helots. Even some recent articles explicitly about the *perioikoi* still follow another traditional

²⁵ It is important to acknowledge early twentieth century German authors, as mentioned in the Introduction, who wrote implicitly and explicitly on the *perioikoi*, such as Niese 1889, 75-9; Niese 1906 (who builds on Niese 1889); Hampl 1937; and later Gschnitzer’ seminal 1958 work, which focuses on the *perioikoi* in 61-7.

²⁶ Hampl 1937 and Ridley 1974 explicitly wrote about the *perioikoi* of Laconia. Larsen’s 1970 ‘perioikoi’ entry in OCD² also deserves credit for being one of the first to offer a more complete and accurate view of the *perioikoi*. See also n. 25 above.

²⁷ Shipley 1992, 212.

²⁸ Shipley 1992, 221. This, he says, can clearly be seen in the ‘standard bibliography’. Shipley says that most post-war books on Sparta are outdated when it comes to their view of the *perioikoi* and that it is these books which students and non-specialists consult because they are always available.

²⁹ For example, in his 1992 article Shipley believed that the Spartans restricted the economic growth of the *perioikoi*, whereas in his 2006 article he admits he no longer adheres to that view.

but outdated view of the *perioikoi*, viz. Lacedaemonian army that the *perioikoi* were not integrated into Spartan troops until after the start of the Peloponnesian War or even later.³⁰

We can now begin to understand how ‘the perioikic problem’ arose and how it is still present in today’s scholarship. The classic example of how the *perioikoi* are always overlooked is when scholars make reference to the Lacedaemonian army. Almost everyone today, with a few exceptions, refer to it as the ‘Spartan army’, yet nowhere in our sources it is called that way. Instead, it should be called the *Lacedaemonian army*,³¹ which is completely accurate since the term Lacedaemonian included both Spartan and *perioikoi*, and the Lacedaemonian army most certainly included the *perioikoi*.

In conclusion: a brief examination of how the *perioikoi* are represented in ancient sources and modern scholarship highlights a ‘perioikic problem’ – one created by the ancient sources and still perpetuated in some modern scholarship. But thanks to the work of scholars such as Graham Shipley, Mogens Herman Hansen and Paul Cartledge we can now start to break away from traditional views and look at the *perioikoi* from their own perspective and as a group that was as important to the Lacedaemonian state as the Spartans themselves. The ground has been laid, but further analysis and a closer look at the evidence in our sources is required, and that is what this thesis does. Whereas Shipley’s overall focus has been on perioikic *poleis* and settlements, the focus here will be on the *perioikoi* themselves and on Lacedaemonian society from a perioikic point of view.

The main objective of this thesis is not just to debunk all the myths and misconceptions that surround the *perioikoi*, but to assert their integral role in the complete panorama of historical Laconia. For long overlooked, unacknowledged, misunderstood, and relegated to footnotes, they contributed as much as the Spartans and the helots to the success of the Lacedaemonian state (not least through its military arm) and deserve a comparable degree of careful study.

³⁰ For the view that perioikic troops were incorporated much later than the Peloponnesian War see Hawkins 2011, who builds on Lazenby 1985. In chapter 6 I propose that this is a far-fetched and outdated view. Instead, I make the case that the so-called integration occurred much earlier than believed, as early as the Persian Wars.

³¹ Henceforth referred to as Lacedaemonian army.

Chapter 2. The *Perioikoi*

In the first chapter, ‘the perioikic problem’ was introduced and defined. It looked at how the *perioikoi* are represented in our sources and how modern scholarship addresses and interprets ancient views on the *perioikoi*. The *perioikoi* of Laconia are one of the most elusive groups of the classical Greek world and they are mostly encountered in cameo appearances in sources whose principal interests lie elsewhere. Only a handful of texts (all from Thucydides and Xenophon) refer to individual named *perioikoi*.¹

This chapter begins with a close analysis of the term *perioikos*. Being a *perioikos*, in the general sense of the word, was one thing, but being a Laconian *perioikos* was a completely different matter altogether. Thus, the *perioikoi* from other parts of the Greek world will also be discussed briefly and compared with Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*. This chapter also goes beyond the Spartan perspective and analyses what it meant to be a Laconian if you were a *perioikos*. In addition, it places the *perioikoi* geographically, emphasising not so much where they lived, but the importance of *where* they lived. In the last section of the chapter, an attempt will be made to identify the *perioikoi* in both written sources and in material evidence in order to locate those with a possible perioikic background. It is easy to identify a *perioikos* or a perioikic group if the source mentions them as such,² either by using the term or by linking the people in question to a place that we can identify as perioikic.³ Scholars tend to discuss only those *perioikoi* who are described as such, seldom looking beyond those obvious examples. However, as we shall see later on, most of the time it is impossible to say for certain whether a particular individual was a *perioikos* – and also impossible to say that he was not. Every Spartan was a Lacedaemonian but not all Lacedaemonians were Spartans. The other Lacedaemonians by default and by elimination were none other than the *perioikoi*.

The term *περίοικος*: in Laconia and beyond

The problems with the *perioikoi* start with the terminology itself. The word *περίοικος* is a bland and generic term; it is not a special term the way *helot* is. A *helot* can be identified as a

¹ One such case is Dexippus, who also appears in Diodorus, Diod. Sic. 13.85, 87, 88, 93, 96.

² Dexippus, Xen.*An.* 5.1.15; 6.1.3; 6.6 (passim); Eudicus, Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.39; Phrynus, Thuc. 8.6.4; Diniades, Thuc. 8.22.1. See also figure 4 below. All of these cases will be analysed later on in this chapter.

³ The most up-to-date record of perioikic settlements, *poleis*, territories, etc. can be found in Hansen and Nielsen 2004. For the purpose of this thesis, only the chapters ‘Lakedaimon’ and ‘Messenia’, 2004a and 2004b respectively, by Shipley are used.

member of the slave class of the Lacedaemonians simply by the use of the word.⁴ Περίοικος, on the other hand, is not a special, interesting or linguistically peculiar term.⁵ It is a combination of two words, the preposition περί and the verb οἰκέω. Thus it is by no means an exclusive word; it is itself part of a linguistic class. According to Cartledge, it ‘shares the same root, *oik-* (dwell), as *apoikoi*, *epoikoi*, *paroikoi*, and *metoikoi*’.⁶ As illustrated in figure 2 below, these definitions are not too different altogether. A person or a community could have easily belonged to several of those groups at any given time. Judging purely from the definitions alone, the words *perioikoi* and *paroikoi* could have similar meanings. Again, we know that the *perioikoi* served as *apoikoi* at least on one specific occasion, when Thucydides (3.92.5) says that both Spartans and *perioikoi* were sent to found the colony of Heraclea. Here Thucydides unequivocally mentions the *perioikoi* separately from the Spartans, not leaving any doubt as to who participated in the founding of Heraclea (οικήτορας αὐτῶν τε καὶ τῶν περιοίκων, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ἑλλήνων).

Name	Definition
Perioikoi	dwelling round, neighbours, neighbouring countries
Apoikoi	colonists, settlers, away from home, abroad
Epoikoi	settlers, sojourners, strangers, aliens, colonists, neighbours
Paroikoi	dwelling beside or near, neighbouring, neighbours, foreign, aliens
Metoikoi	settlers from abroad, alien residents in a foreign city

Figure 2. Group belonging to *oik-* root.

Cartledge adds that ‘it [the word *perioikoi*] bore both a purely descriptive topographical sense and a derived political-juridical sense’.⁷ That is probably why ancient sources usually used *perioikoi* to describe peripheral or neighbouring communities that lived in the outskirts of a specific place.⁸ Nonetheless, what is particularly interesting about this term is that it was available both for entirely generic use and for repeated use in certain specific circumstances. On the one hand, we have passages in which an author just uses

⁴ For the term helot see Ducat 1990, 7-12.

⁵ Gyax 1991, 116 sees it as a purely technical term.

⁶ Cartledge 2010, 213.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Most notably in Herodotus: 1.166.1; 1.173.3; 1.175.1; 3.159.2; 4.31.2; 4.90.1; 7.201.1. All of these are passages in which the author simply uses a phrase involving *perioikoi* to mean vaguely the people of a region. The important point is that the word is used to refer to neighbours, and has nothing to do with the *perioikoi* of Laconia.

perioikoi as a convenient word to mean neighbours in order not to have to specify who the neighbours are. On the other hand, we have particular places where for one reason or another one is inclined to think that the term has a more embedded usage. This is the case with the *perioikoi* of Crete, Lycia, Argos, Elis, and Thessaly, for which we can observe a pattern where the term is used more than once. Even though this study is only concerned with the *perioikoi* of Laconia, we still need to acknowledge, albeit briefly, the existence of other *perioikoi* beyond Laconia.

Each perioikic community was different. The best textually attested example of *perioikoi* outside Laconia comes from Aristotle's description of Cretan *perioikoi*.⁹ Aristotle (*Pol.*1271b) states that 'the Cretan organization is on the same lines as that of Sparta. In Sparta the land is tilled by the Helots and in Crete by the serfs (οἱ περίοικοι)'. Surprisingly, Aristotle compares Cretan *perioikoi* with the Helots, which implies that the status and condition of the former was more in tune with that of the latter. What is even more bizarre is that Aristotle makes no mention of Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* even when he continues with his comparison. An alternative interpretation of the passage might be that Aristotle deliberately makes no mention of the *perioikoi* of Laconia because he is simply talking about the tilling of the land. In other words, that the *exploitative* side of agriculture and the toughest manual labour is done by the helots and not the *perioikoi*. This is perhaps why he compares the helots to Cretan *perioikoi*, because the latter, being classified as a slave class even though they are called *perioikoi*, do the kind of work that the helots do and not the kind of work that Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* do. Aristotle, knowing that Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* were not slaves, but rather far from it, probably refused to involve them in any discussion of serf or slave classes. Jacob Larsen suggests that '...[Aristotle] in the *Politics* uses περίοικοι to designate a class that corresponds to the helots of Sparta and so seems to imply that Crete had no class corresponding to the Spartan perioeci'.¹⁰ This seems to be the case, not least because Aristotle explicitly says that the Cretan *perioikoi* did not take part in foreign affairs (*Pol.*1272b), whereas Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* did participate in national and international military campaigns and could be said to have a more direct role in Sparta's foreign policy. Unfortunately, when it comes to other perioikic groups, the limited available evidence hinders any attempt to piece together their lives and livelihood. For instance, we know Thessalian *perioikoi* existed, but we know virtually nothing about them.¹¹ Xenophon refers to

⁹ For Cretan *perioikoi* see Larsen 1936; Willets 1955; Wallace 2010.

¹⁰ Larsen 1936, 11.

¹¹ For Thessalian *perioikoi* see Helly 1995 and Morgan 2003.

the Thessalian subjects as *perioikoi* (*Hell.*6.1.19). Morgan argues that a ‘formal dependence’ existed ‘between the communities of the Thessalian heartland and the *perioikoi* who surrounded them’,¹² but the only thing we can safely say about them is that they lived in scattered communities and lived side by side the Thessalian tribes. Further afield we find traces of Lycian *perioikoi*. These are atypical because they are mostly attested in the Xanthus Trilingual Stele, which dates to 337/336.¹³ The view taken by scholars such as Gygax is that, judging from the epigraphical evidence, what sets these *perioikoi* apart from others is that they were citizens just as the Xanthians, and they were also active in decision-making processes.¹⁴ But these views are speculative and can only be extracted from the inscriptional evidence. Perhaps unsurprisingly, what we can say for certain about Lycian *perioikoi*, according to Gygax, is only that they were inhabitants that dwelled around the main *polis*.¹⁵ Regardless of the scarcity of evidence, we can at least make an approximate comparison between the existing *perioikoi* of ancient Greece. What these examples all have in common is that they have nothing in common except for the fact that they are called *perioikoi* and that these groups lived around a major settlement or city.

Even perioikic groups closer to home, such as Elean and Argive *perioikoi*, were different from Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*. When it comes to the Elean *perioikoi*, we also know very little.¹⁶ Their existence is acknowledged by a passage in Xenophon where he says that after the Peloponnesian War, the Spartans ordered the Eleans to give their *perioikoi* autonomy (*Hell.*3.2.23). Elean *perioikoi* apparently had a fractious relationship with Elis. According to Roy, Elis was unable to control their *perioikoi* because the perioikic territory was extensive. He says that their ‘control of the *perioikoi* was fragile’, and reached a breaking point during the war against Sparta, where the ‘*perioikoi* were ready to defect from Elean control’.¹⁷ The differences from the Laconian situation are already visible. The Spartiate-perioikic relationship was at the opposite end of the spectrum from fragile and at breaking point. The *perioikoi* and the Spartiates enjoyed a positive relationship on a more personal level than one would enjoy with an ally, for example.¹⁸ As will be discussed in other chapters, an enemy would prefer to burn a perioikic settlement than offer it terms of surrender

¹² Morgan 2003, 12.

¹³ For a study of Lycian *perioikoi* see Gygax 1991. Wörrle 1977 and 1978 has published third century texts that include the word *perioikoi*.

¹⁴ Gygax 1991, 120.

¹⁵ Gygax 1991, 119.

¹⁶ Cf. Roy 1997, 298.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ It also goes without saying that in my reconstruction the Spartans did not control Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* nor did they ever feel the need to.

and submission because they knew any attempt to win the *perioikoi* over would be futile. Finally, the case of the Argive *perioikoi* deserves mention because if they were slaves, they were again completely different from Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*. Of course, it is difficult to know for certain if they were actual slaves. Anthony Andrewes says that ‘whereas for Sparta and Elis there is evidence from the classical period...those of Argos were liberated after the battle of Sepeia, and there is no knowing in detail how they fared before that’.¹⁹ Already in the 1970s Tomlinson shows the complexity of the issue, but it is more probable that the term *perioikoi*, in regards to the Argive case, denotes a combination of serf and slave class, similar to the Cretan case. Even though Andrewes is sceptical about whether the term here ‘conveys any specific implication about the status of those to whom it is applied’,²⁰ from the available evidence we can infer that Argive *perioikoi* were either slaves or serfs who lived around Argos before the Battle of Sepeia (494).²¹ They were freed after the battle and incorporated into the main *polis*, but were finally driven from Argos by the now grown-up children of the previous citizens.²²

The brief survey above shows the dilemmas and contradictions presented by the term *perioikoi*. In Laconia the term refers to its free inhabitants who were neither Spartans nor Helots. For other parts of the Greek world, however, it is a different story altogether. Greek authors seem to use the term more freely; and it is used to describe serfs, slaves, and free people. This does not happen in Laconia. Greek authors at least are in consensus when referring to Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*; they know they are neither slaves nor Spartans but they also know Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* are free people. Yet this is no consolation for the fact that, in terms of language, they get the same treatment from ancient sources as other *perioikoi* throughout the Greek world, because there is no specific term, word or expression for them. No matter how different, how free or important they are in comparison to the rest, they are still just *perioikoi*. In analysing this term we realise that we are dealing with a word that is not intrinsically appropriate to any place or time; it is suitable in any context in which

¹⁹ Andrewes 1990, 174. For Argive *perioikoi* see also Willets 1959; Forrest 1960; Tomlinson 1972, 97-9.

²⁰ Andrewes 1990, 171.

²¹ For the battle of Sepeia see Hendriks 1980.

²² Hdt.6.183.1-2; Arist.*Pol.*1303a6-8.

people use the Greek language.²³ We know what the word means, but now we need to break down the technical barrier in order to understand who these Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* were.²⁴

The crucial point here is that being labelled *perioikoi* does not make them less important than the helots or even the Spartans. Shipley suggests: ‘Although we are stuck with the name, we should not be hoodwinked by this piece of ‘Spartocentric’ terminology into forgetting that the *Perioikoi* had a life and culture of their own’.²⁵ No matter how obscure the perioikic ethnos is, if it indeed can be called that, scholars today fail to recognise that the *perioikoi* of Laconia are the most well-known and attested in the Greek world. What makes Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* unique and interesting is the fact that irrespective of being called *perioikoi* by outsiders, inside the intricate circle of Lacedaemonian society, they were also Lacedaemonians and Laconians. There is no reason to believe that the Spartans’ technical term for ‘the other Lacedaemonians’ was simply *perioikoi*. Even if Xenophon, who was more familiar with Sparta than probably any outsider, uses the term regularly we should not automatically assume that so did the Spartans. However knowledgeable Xenophon was when it came to Spartan matters, he was still an outsider and Spartan day-to-day practices and customs were not necessarily adopted by him. Also, we must remember that there is not a single case in our sources of a Spartan or Spartans referring to non-Spartan Lacedaemonians as *perioikos* or *perioikoi*. They did not need to use a technical term to refer to their neighbours because the *perioikoi* were more than neighbours, they were Lacedaemonians.

Being a (perioikic) Lacedaemonian

Being Lacedaemonian gave the *perioikoi* an identity that, apart from the Spartans, no other Greek had. It made them different and it made them belong to the biggest territory occupied by a single *polis* in all of Greece, i.e. the territory comprising Laconia and Messenia.

Jonathan Hall mentions a Lacedaemonian identity that was shared by both Spartiates and *perioikoi*; it was this identity that bound Sparta and the perioikic communities together.²⁶

This identity stemmed from the simple notion that both Spartans and *perioikoi* were

²³ A general search of the word περίοικ- in the TLG produced surprising results in terms of its usage throughout time, ranging from the classical period to the Roman period – including the writings of Patristic or Early Church Fathers.

²⁴ The absence of a peculiarly Spartan technical term for them is notable, especially given the source tradition’s predilection for preserving odd Spartan terminology. Perhaps this silence shows that the Spartans did not need a term for them; they were conscious that these people were fellow-Lacedaemonians.

²⁵ Shipley 1992, 225.

²⁶ Hall 2000, 88.

Laconian/Lacedaemonians.²⁷ Therefore, in order to understand who the *perioikoi* were and the origin of this shared identity, it is important to understand what it meant to be a Lacedaemonian. The purpose of this section is to show how they were part of Laconia and not the ‘others’ of Laconia (as it is often wrongly assumed).

One thing we know for certain about the *perioikoi* is that they were both Laconian and Lacedaemonian. Xenophon, when describing Dexippus, says that he was a Λάκωνα περίοικον (*An.5.1.15*). This is the only example of the phrase ‘Laconian *perioikos*’. Fortunately, out of all surviving classical sources, Xenophon is the most versed in all things Spartan. Throughout his adult life he associated with Spartans and fought with Spartans. Therefore, if anyone knew about Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* it would have been him. By describing Dexippus as a Laconian, Xenophon is acknowledging the fact that Dexippus was a free inhabitant of Laconia. After all, the term Λάκων could have been simply a colloquial short form, or alternative, of Λακεδαιμόνιος.²⁸ Dexippus was a mercenary and one of the Ten Thousand, therefore he would have enjoyed the same liberties and privileges as the Spartans who were part of the Ten Thousand. Even though the majority of the time our sources describe the *perioikoi* as περίοικοι and not by their respective place of origin (e.g. Geronthrai, Asine, etc.), this description of Dexippus at least tells us that they knew that some *perioikoi* were Laconian, just as the Spartans were. Being Lacedaemonian meant that you belonged to the same region as the Spartans. As far as we can tell, the only other major inhabitants of Laconia were the *perioikoi*. We know that the *perioikoi* were free and that their *poleis* enjoyed local autonomous authority with the exception of foreign policy, which was controlled by Sparta. Even though the *perioikoi* were not citizens of Sparta,²⁹ they enjoyed the freedom of any regular Greek citizen because they were citizens of their respective *poleis*.³⁰ Scholars argue today that the *perioikoi* did not enjoy any political freedom in Sparta;³¹ but why would they if they were not Spartans? Spartans controlled perioikic foreign policy but as far as we know this only extended to military purposes. As far as we know Spartans did not hold permanent political offices in perioikic territories.³²

²⁷ Figueira 2009, 223 also argues for an ‘identity of perioecic Laconians’ but with respect to emancipated helots.

²⁸ According to the *LSJ* Λάκων means a Laconian or Lacedaemonian, akin to calling a Lacedaemonian or Laconian woman Λάκαινα, which is the term ancient authors preferred for Lacedaemonian women.

²⁹ They did not need to be Spartan citizens because they were not Spartans.

³⁰ Cf. Austin and Vidal-Naquet 1977, 85.

³¹ See for example van Wees 2004, 45 and more recently, Kennell 2010, 88.

³² One could argue that the Κυθηροδίκης (a Spartan official sent to Sparta on an annual basis) mentioned by Thucydides (4.53.2) is an exception. Nonetheless, we do not know enough about the Κυθηροδίκης to make the case that his position was political or permanent. We only know they were sent annually but for what reasons and for how long remains a mystery. The Κυθηροδίκης will be discussed below.

Therefore, we can establish that the *perioikoi* were free. The only requirement was their participation in the armed forces; but that was part of being Lacedaemonian, and the Spartans were also required to take part in the army. As mentioned in the first chapter, the Lacedaemonian army was never called the Spartan army. The reason for this is twofold: first, because it was made up of both Spartans and *perioikoi* and not by Spartans alone. Second, because its implicit purpose was not to spell out who belonged to it, but to show the geographical entity the army belonged to, and therefore to show the territory it was meant to protect. We should refer to it as the Lacedaemonian army because it was just that, the army of the Lacedaemonians, and the Lacedaemonians were the inhabitants of a much larger territory called Λακωνική.³³ Therefore, the main purpose of the Lacedaemonian army was the protection of Laconia, which of course included both Sparta and its perioikic neighbours. Being Laconian meant being called up to fight for your country, which in the case of the *perioikoi* was Laconia. That is why calling it the Spartan army is wrong, because it is not made up strictly by Spartans, it does not belong to Sparta alone, and finally because its purpose is not to protect Sparta alone but the whole of Laconia.

This goes back to the whole notion of being Laconian. Many factors set the *perioikoi* apart from every non-Spartan in Laconia. First, their sheer number; as we shall see in the next section below, the *perioikoi* lived throughout the whole of Laconia, north, south, east, and west; they were everywhere in Laconia except Sparta. The fact that Herodotus (9.11.3) mentions five thousand *logades* at Plataea means that there were many more perioikic soldiers to choose from.³⁴ Second, Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* enjoyed a unique style of freedom seldom seen elsewhere in the Greek world. They were free but had to answer Sparta's call whenever they were needed for military campaigns. They were also required to attend the funerals of Spartan kings (Hdt.6.58.2), but this is to be expected since Spartan kings were kings of the Lacedaemonians and not kings of the Spartans alone. This should not be seen as an example of the *perioikoi* being subjects of the Spartans because it would have been a requirement for the Spartans as well to attend the funerals of their kings. It is also now believed that they were not bound to Sparta by treaty.³⁵ And finally, what makes the *perioikoi*

³³ See Xen.*Hell.*6.5.24, who uses the word Λακωνική: 'Laconia was said to be exceedingly difficult to enter'. The English word for Λακωνική is Laconia, which is the word used throughout this work. Although, it must be noted that 'Laconia' is a post-ancient invention in its English form. I would like to thank Professor Graham Shipley for pointing out this observation. For a discussion on the word Λακωνική and Laconia see Shipley's definition in Cavanagh *et al.* 2002, 1 n. 1, which explains that 'the name 'Laconia' is post-classical; the regular ancient name for Sparta's territory, whether E or W of Taygetos, was Lakônîkê, ἡ Λακωνική'.

³⁴ These will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

³⁵ Shipley 2006b, 67.

stand out from the rest of the non-Spartan inhabitants is their remarkable contribution to the Lacedaemonian army. Throughout the classical period we have sporadic examples of Helots, allies, mercenaries, and ex-helots fighting in the Lacedaemonian army, but the *perioikoi* are the only ones with a continuous presence from the Persian Wars to the disaster of Leuctra.

All the examples above are what make the *perioikoi* stand out in Laconia and what makes them unique by comparison with the rest of the inhabitants of Laconia.

Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* were known to ancient sources as Laconians or Lacedaemonians, they were part of the Lacedaemonian Army and described alongside the Spartans as Lacedaemonians and this cements their status as Lacedaemonians. They are an entity that, alongside the Spartans, made the whole of Lacedaemon work efficiently. The LSJ defines Λᾱκεδαίμων as the capital of Laconia but also as Laconia itself. Therefore there is no doubt that the *perioikoi* were Laconian in every sense of the word. They did not belong to the Spartan state, as Ridley once mentioned,³⁶ but they were part of the Lacedaemonian state, where even though Sparta always took centre stage, the *perioikoi* were nonetheless free inhabitants and members of such a state. They should therefore be considered citizens of Laconia or citizens of the Lacedaemonian state. Hall speaks of a ‘Lakedaimonian citizenship’ held by Spartiates and the *perioikoi*.³⁷ In a sense one could say that it was a type of dual-citizenship; a *perioikos* could hold Lakedaimonian citizenship but also citizenship of his own *polis*.³⁸

Many scholars tend to focus on the fact that the *perioikoi* were not Spartan citizens, as mentioned above,³⁹ and claim that this somehow made them ‘second-rank citizens’ when compared to the Spartans.⁴⁰ But it has nothing to do with *not* being Spartan citizens because the *perioikoi* were not Spartans. Spartans were citizens of Sparta, Prasians would have been citizens of Prasiai, and the same with those from Kythera, and the rest of the perioikic *poleis*.⁴¹ By being citizens of their own *poleis*, both Spartiates and *perioikoi* automatically attained membership of the Lacedaemonian state. That is what made them Laconians and Lacedaemonians above everything else. It is true that some cities were more influential than

³⁶ Ridley 1974, 281 refers to them as ‘the most mysterious element in the ancient Spartan state’.

³⁷ Hall 2000, 80.

³⁸ Ducat 2010, 188, does not agree with Hall’s view of a pan-Lacedaemonian citizenship and does not believe that there is a ‘single Lacedaemonian society’.

³⁹ Powell 2001, 251.

⁴⁰ Austin and Vidal-Naquet 1977, 85. In Cartledge’s OCD⁴ definition he says that the *perioikoi* ‘can be considered at best half- or second-class citizens of Sparta’. Cf. also Van Houten 1991, 37-38 who compares Laconian *perioikoi* with the Gibeonites and Canaanites of ancient Israel. She refers to the *perioikoi* as second-class citizens as well.

⁴¹ Shipley 2006b, 58 lists the perioikic settlements that were definitely *poleis*.

others, but that is true of any state; it does not necessarily mean that some were enfranchised and some disenfranchised simply because they belonged to a particular city. The *perioikoi* should not be seen as disenfranchised, or as second-class citizens simply because Sparta made the important decisions.⁴² Sparta was in charge of major affairs because it served as a quasi-capital, but it was still part of the Lacedaemonian state. A modern state can be a nation or a territory under one government. If we analyse Sparta and the Lacedaemonian state then we can find parallels with modern examples of states. In order to understand what the Lacedaemonian state was and how it may have operated it is perhaps worth comparing it to the modern United States of America (USA). The USA as a territory is comprised of fifty states, but foreign policy is carried out by its capital Washington D.C. States such as California, for example, belong to and are citizens of the USA, but they cannot dictate foreign policy on their own. Yet, that does not mean that they are second-class citizens or inferior to those in Washington D.C. This just means that the inhabitants are both citizens of the USA and, in their case, residents of their respective states. Therefore, we can definitely find parallels in Lacedaemonian society, where, as I have already mentioned, perioikic *poleis* belonged both to the Lacedaemonian state and to their own individual *poleis*, thus possessing a pan-Lacedaemonian citizenship, whether judicial, formal, or cultural, and a citizenship of their own *poleis*. Therefore, we can definitely visualise the existence of a Lacedaemonian state, which was made up of Sparta (the ‘capital’) and the perioikic *poleis*. Another view is that a perioikic *polis* was a dependent *polis* (ὐπήκοος πόλις), and that this automatically meant inferiority to Sparta. However, this was probably not the case. Dependency does not mean subjection or inferiority. Hansen says that ‘this concept...is very complex: dependent poleis existed in many different shapes and sizes...’.⁴³ There are many ways in which perioikic *poleis* may have depended on Sparta without negative implications: just as the states of the USA *depend* on their capital and their government to make good decisions (foreign matters, military, economic) on behalf of everyone, so too the *perioikoi* depended on Sparta to make decisions that affected the whole of Laconia (i.e. when to go to war).

To conclude so far, what the Spartans and *perioikoi* have in common is that they are both citizens of the Lacedaemonian state, which shows that they are in the same position. That some members or citizens would have been more advantaged than others had nothing to do with being from Sparta or any perioikic *poleis*. Shipley rightly says that seeing

⁴² This is the view taken by Hall 2000, 79-80.

⁴³ Hansen 1997, 29. On ‘dependent poleis’ see also Gschnitzer 1958 and Perlman 1996.

Lacedaemon as ‘*polis*-state and a *polis*-town’ strengthens ‘the picture of a “state of the Lakedaimonians” to which *perioikoi* belonged on the same footing as the *Spartiatai*’.⁴⁴

Placing the *perioikoi* geographically

Now that we have established how the *perioikoi* fitted into Laconia and were, in effect, citizens of Laconia (not of Sparta), it is important to pinpoint their exact location in relation to the geography of Laconia (see figure 1 above). Shipley’s studies of the last two decades and the works of the CPC have truly opened up the world of the *perioikoi* in relation to their geopolitical space and their habitation.⁴⁵ These studies have successfully placed the *perioikoi* geographically to a degree that we can know pinpoint the exact location of many, if not most, perioikic settlements.⁴⁶ For example, we know now that there were at least fifty-three perioikic settlements.⁴⁷ Shipley acknowledges that because of the nature of the textual and epigraphical evidence available, we know much more about those that were situated on the coasts of Laconia.⁴⁸ However, various questions arise from the analysis of Shipley’s assembled data. Why do coastal perioikic settlements figure more prominently in ancient sources? What similarities and differences exist between a perioikic city in Southern Laconia and one from North-Eastern Laconia, for example? What purpose did they serve, if any?

The purpose of this section is to make sense of the importance of having so many perioikic settlements located in such a diverse landscape as Laconia. Thanks to Shipley’s pioneering systematic study of perioikic settlements, we can now begin to understand the importance of these settlements and trace their geographic relevance in relation to Sparta and the Lacedaemonian state. The common trait that binds all of these scattered settlements together is their strategic position in Laconia. We need to go beyond just knowing where they lived. Rather, we should uncover and highlight the advantages of having so many perioikic settlements strategically dispersed throughout Laconia. A quick glance at a physical map of Laconia (see figure 3 below) reveals just how important perioikic cities are to the protection and defence of Laconia. They can be found in the coast between mountains and the sea (e.g.

⁴⁴ Shipley, 1997, 207. See Ducat 2008, 82, who disagrees and argues against such view. According to him, ‘il n’existait pas de «cité de Lacédémone», dont les Périèques auraient été des membres passifs, politiquement exclus; il n’y avait qu’un ensemble de cités associées à Sparte, privées d’une partie importante de leur souveraineté, et dont ils étaient les citoyens’.

⁴⁵ See Shipley, 1997, 2004a, 2004b, and 2006b.

⁴⁶ Earlier scholars also deserve credit for doing the fundamental and pioneering studies on the topography of Laconia. For example, see Curtius 1851-2; Niese 1906; Wace and Hasluck 1907-8; Hope Simpson and Waterhouse 1960 and 1961; Pritchett 1965-89; and in Messenia, Valmin 1929.

⁴⁷ Data obtained from Shipley 2004a.

⁴⁸ Shipley 2006b, 58.

Prasiai and Kyphanta), inside the Gulf of Laconia (e.g. Gytheion), inland but still relatively close to the sea (e.g. Las), overlooking Messenia (e.g. Aigys, Leuktra and Kromnos), in northernmost Laconia (e.g. Sellasia) and deep in mountainous regions (e.g. Marios). What we can gather from Shipley and the CPC's findings is that perioikic settlements – some more than others, of course – served a strategic purpose in the protection of Laconia from external (i.e. other Greek *poleis*) and internal (i.e. helots) enemies. Essentially, the *perioikoi* were the peripheral watchmen of the Spartans and the 'gatekeepers' of Laconia. Even though scholars have mentioned this strategic importance, none have thoroughly examined what this meant both for the Spartans and the *perioikoi*.⁴⁹ It is important, therefore, to analyse the significance and potential of each settlement/*polis* posed not only for Laconian security but for every type of Laconian activity: military, economical, or social. This will now be discussed in detail.

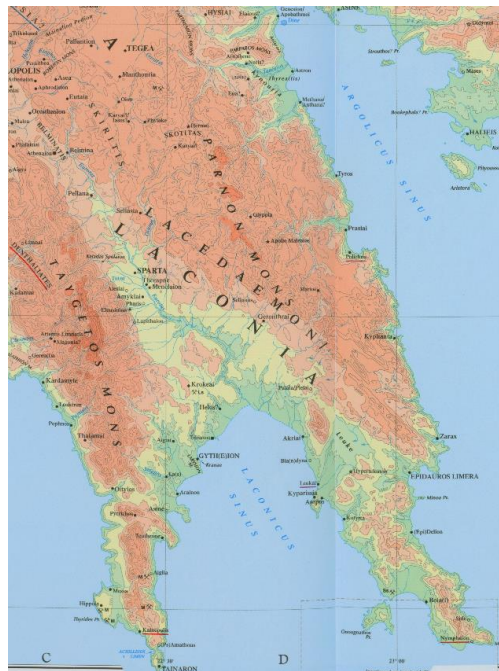


Figure 3. Physical map of Laconia.

The military possibilities of perioikic territory are plentiful. Any imminent threat of attack coming from the Aegean or the Mediterranean would be detected first by the *perioikoi* living in coastal *poleis*. If the Spartans were careful and smart in war, and they were, it is probable that they would have had trained perioikic runners stationed in many of these coastal *poleis*. The Spartans needed 'eyes and ears' at all times, and no other group in the

⁴⁹ Mertens 2002, 294 and Powell 2010, 105 mention the strategic importance of Kythera in passing; Cartledge 2001 also briefly mentions the importance of perioikic territories in regard to conflicts; Shipley 2006b, 69 mentions that perioikic settlements in Messenia would have had a 'policing function' over the helots.

southern Peloponnese was better equipped to do this than the *perioikoi*. The inhabitants of Kythera, Tainaron, Epidauros Limera, Gytheion, and the rest of the coastal cities would have included expert seafarers and fishermen. This being so we would expect coastal *perioikoi* to have a major role in all the Spartans' maritime business. It is no surprise that landlocked Sparta had its dockyards in *perioikic* (I stress) Gytheion. Xenophon (*Hell.*6.5.32) mentions that the Spartans had their dockyards at Gytheion. Thucydides (1.108.5) describes how the Athenians under Tolmides burnt the dockyards of the Lacedaemonians (τὸ νεώριον τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων) (presumably at Gytheion).⁵⁰ Elsewhere Thucydides (4.16.1) relates how the Spartans should bring to Pylos 'all other warships in Laconia'. Understandably the Spartans were not the best seafarers or the best at naval warfare, but the truth is that they did not need to be, because they had the *perioikoi* to maintain their dockyards and to take care of everything sea-related.⁵¹ One of the handful of named *perioikoi* is the *perioikos* Diniades, whom Thucydides describes as the commander of a fleet (8.22.1).⁵² It would not be surprising if the *perioikoi* were considered to be the Lacedaemonian army's experts in naval warfare. One could even go further and suggest that the *perioikoi* might have trained Spartans in maritime affairs, especially when it came to war. Reciprocal military training could have served as a *quid pro quo* between Spartans and *perioikoi*; on the one hand the former teaches the latter how to be a heavy-infantry soldier, and on the other hand the latter teaches the former how to be a mariner. Judging from their coastal positions in Laconia alone, we can infer that the *perioikoi* included experts in naval matters, whether in peace (fishing or trade) or war. Sources, however, further support this theory. Thucydides tells us that a whole fleet was under Diniades, while the land army marched alongside the shore under Eualas, a Spartan. This passage alone tells us that individual *perioikoi* were more than capable of leading a whole fleet.

In the *Anabasis*, Xenophon tells us that Dexippus was put in charge of a fifty-oared warship in order to collect transport-ships for the rest of the army but that instead he took the ship himself and sailed away out of the Black Sea (5.1.15). Dexippus is often characterised as a mercenary, but he was a *perioikos* first and the fact that he can take charge of a single ship and use it for his own purposes shows that he was a skilled seafarer. One can add that not only were some *perioikoi* seafarers but would undoubtedly have been shipbuilders as well.

⁵⁰ Pausanias (1.27.5) alludes to the same episode and specifically says that Tolmides burned the dock-yards at Gytheion.

⁵¹ On Lacedaemonian dockyards see Falkner 1994. On dockyards and shipsheds in general see Blackman and Rankov 2014.

⁵² Diniades will be discussed further in chapters 4 and 5.

Lawrence Tritle says that triremes were fragile and therefore would have needed secure harbours.⁵³ Gytheion would have provided the very best security for the warships of the Lacedaemonians. Gytheion was not on the east coast of Laconia, where it would have been too open from attacks from the Aegean. Instead, it was comfortably located in the Gulf of Laconia, where it would have been shielded from the Aegean, from bad weather and from surprise attacks. Moreover, in case of emergency the Spartans could surely reach Gytheion quickly, as it was situated ‘some 40 km to the south of Sparta’.⁵⁴ Here the *perioikoi* could maintain and build ships comfortably. As a matter of fact, Xenophon tells us how Alcibiades directed his course straight to Gytheion in order to take a look at the thirty triremes which he heard the Lacedaemonians were making ready there (*Hell.*1.4.11). Since he says ‘Lacedaemonians’ we can infer that there were *perioikoi* there in command of preparing the ships, though there were probably also Spartans overseeing this task. The consensus among well-informed scholars is that the *perioikoi* included not merely traders and merchants, but also miners, craftsmen, farmers, fishermen, manufacturers, blacksmiths, among other things.⁵⁵ Therefore, if they practiced a whole range of professions, there is every reason to believe that coastal *perioikoi* would have been in charge of building the triremes and maintaining the Lacedaemonian navy.⁵⁶

The Spartans above everyone else appreciated how crucial perioikic cities were to their economy and especially to their war effort. A perfect example is the island of Kythera. The earliest reference to its importance can be found in Herodotus (7.235.1-3). Demaratus explicitly tells Xerxes that he should send a fleet to Kythera because, if he captures it, all of Laconia will be neutralized. He tells Xerxes the story of how Chilon, the sixth-century Spartan sage, once remarked that the Spartans were better off with Kythera beneath the sea than above it. This passage alone shows the jewel that was Kythera in the Lacedaemonian crown.⁵⁷ Even though Herodotus does not mention the *perioikoi*, we know Kythera was perioikic because Thucydides specifically says that it was the *perioikoi* who lived there (4.53.2). But what is interesting is how Thucydides says that the Spartans truly valued Kythera. He says the Spartans ‘took great care of the place, since it was the port for merchant

⁵³ Tritle 2006, 215.

⁵⁴ Shipley, 2004a, 569.

⁵⁵ Cf. Grote 1884; Toynbee 1913; Glotz 1938; Chrimes 1949; Michell 1952; Bolkestein 1958; Ehrenberg 1960; Cooke 1962; Forrest 1968; Finley 1968; Larsen 1970; Ridley 1974; Shipley 1992 and 2006b; Cartledge 2001.

⁵⁶ For scholars who specifically mention the *perioikoi* as wood workers see Glotz 1938 (wood industries) and Michell 1952 (crafters of objects of wood).

⁵⁷ How and Wells 1912, 7.235.2 also picked up on the importance of Kythera when commenting on this passage: ‘The value of Cythera as a naval base of operations against Laconia is obvious’.

ships from Egypt and Libya and also served as protection for Laconia from attack by pirates from the sea – which is its one vulnerable point, since the whole of Laconia juts out into Sicilian and the Cretan seas’ (4.53.2-3). When one looks at the geographic position of Kythera on a map one can immediately understand why the Spartans valued this off-shore island so much.⁵⁸ Thucydides himself says it had a dual purpose: as a port for merchants coming from Egypt and Libya, and as a sort of stronghold for Laconia. Kythera was so important to Sparta that Thucydides emphasises how Sparta at one period regularly sent a garrison of heavy infantry to the island. Having a garrison present at the island might seem obvious, given the economic importance of the island and that, as we can infer from Thucydides, it was often attacked by pirates; but there could also be other reasons for this. Maybe the garrison was sent to relieve perioikic soldiers already stationed in the island or as reinforcements.

Ironically, during the Theban invasion of Laconia, when the enemy came from the north and not from the sea, Kythera was seen as the farthest one could go to escape from the chaos; and the Spartans exploited this. Plutarch tells us that ‘Antalcidas, who was an ephor, secretly sent his children away to Cythera, so full of fear was he’ (*Ages.*32.1). Plutarch makes it sound as if Kythera was the safest place at that particular moment, which is also another reason why Kythera was so important to the Spartans. Both Thucydides and Plutarch give us a glimpse of the strategic importance of Kythera during the classical period. Perioikic inhabitants of the island therefore had a role to play both economically and in the protection of Laconia. To add some mystery to the uniqueness of Kythera, Thucydides (4.53.2) mentions how the Spartans annually sent an officer called ‘the judge of Cythera’ (Κυθηροδίκης).⁵⁹ This officer was sent to Kythera from Sparta, but unfortunately Thucydides does not elaborate any further than this. This is the only instance where we find the Greek term for this officer: the Κυθηροδίκης. Therefore, it is impossible to know who the Κυθηροδίκης was, the limits of his authority, and why he was being sent to Kythera on an annual basis. We can only infer that he was some sort of overseer. It is also unclear whether he was sent to oversee local Kytheran laws, to revise current laws (like the *nomothetai* at Athens), or to oversee local criminal courts.⁶⁰ On the other hand, given the military and

⁵⁸ Another notable example can be found in Xenophon (*Hell.*4.8.7-8), where in 393 Pharnabazus and Conon installed a governor after landing on the island. This shows the pattern often taken by foreign invaders during the classical period of using the island as a headquarters before attacking the mainland.

⁵⁹ Cf. MacDowell 1986, 29-30.

⁶⁰ On the *nomothetai* see Hansen 1991; Blackwell 2003; Harris 2006. On another note, the obvious linguistic parallel is the office of *Hellanodikai* (principal judges at the Olympic Games) at Olympia, but since we know so

strategic importance of Kythera, an alternative interpretation is that the term *Κυθηροδίκης* has military connotations: there is no reason to rule out that he might have been a military commander, like a *harmost*. Perhaps, due to the uniqueness of Kythera, in this case *δικ-* does not necessarily imply judicial function, but a military one, or a combination of the two.

Being on the coast was not the only advantage that perioikic cities had; having so many perioikic cities scattered around meant that Laconia was truly a connected place. Shipley says that the *perioikoi* ‘may have constructed and maintained the road network which...united the various parts of Lakonike with each other and with places outside and gave practical effect to Spartan power’.⁶¹ Fortunately we have evidence of roads in Laconia between Sparta and perioikic cities.⁶² Xenophon, for example, attests to the existence of a wagon road from Sparta to Aulon when writing about the conspiracy of Cinadon. In the passage, the ephors say that they would send three wagons, so that they would not have to bring back the prisoners on foot (*Hell.*3.3.9). Xenophon also mentions a road from Sparta to Gytheion taken by the invading Thebans in the fourth century (*Hell.*6.5.32); elsewhere he mentions a wagon-road to Kromnos, another perioikic city (*Hell.*7.4.22). Pausanias also mentions a road in Laconia that runs from Pellana to Gytheion, which is notable because here we have mention of a road from a former perioikic city to another (3.21.3-4). The *perioikoi*, even more so than the Spartans, would have been familiar with all roads leading to Laconia, leading out of Laconia, and especially all those roads from perioikic cities that lead to and from Sparta. An interesting example of such a road can be found in Xenophon (*Hell.*7.2.2-3), a passage which further illustrates the knowledge the *perioikoi* had of communications within Laconia. He says that, during the Theban invasion, the Phliasians needed to get to Sparta as quickly as possible because they were the last to arrive to Prasiai, and the rest of the allies, led by a Spartan officer, had gone ahead to Sparta. Prasiai was definitely a perioikic city, so the guide they hired there was surely a *perioikos*;⁶³ and by hiring such a guide the Phliasians were able to get to Sparta without being detected, which shows that the guide knew every possible route, obvious and hidden.

little about the Spartan judge at Kythera any attempt to compare these two would be futile. On the *Hellanodikai*, see Christesen 2007.

⁶¹ Shipley 2006b, 69.

⁶² It is worth mentioning the various modern studies on ancient roads in Laconia, especially Pikoulas 2012. For reviews of this book, see Shipley 2014 and Roy 2014.

⁶³ Prasiai is one of the eight coastal perioikic settlements that the *IACP* lists as definitely being a perioikic *polis*. Also cf. Shipley 2006b, 58.

Thus, we can say for certain that already by the classical period, a network of roads existed in Laconia which connected many of its cities.⁶⁴ In his review of Pikoulas' book *The Road-Network of Lakonike*, Roy concludes with the question: 'why did the Spartans need so many roads?'⁶⁵ The answer is that Laconia, not just Sparta, needed so many roads simply because it depended on the Spartans and the *perioikoi* to keep the Lacedaemonian state functioning properly; and to do so they needed roads in order to interact with each other more easily on a daily basis. So, it should really *not* come as a surprise that Laconia had so many roads.

Finally, another major strategic feature of Sparta and Laconia was the cities of Pellana, Sellasia and Oios. These were the northernmost perioikic cities of Laconia in the direction of Sparta's nearest foreign neighbour, Tegea in Southeastern Arcadia, and were particularly important because they controlled land access to Laconia: they were, in effect, the gateway to Laconia, and they had as important a role as the coastal cities in protecting the region from external threat. Pellana, in particular, may be considered crucial because it sits in the Eurotas valley and in order to reach Sparta from the north, in all probability an enemy had to go through Pellana first. In addition, Sellasia's close proximity to both Pellana and Sparta may have played an important role in providing reinforcements to Pellana and receiving reinforcements from Sparta.⁶⁶ Life would definitely have been busy at these perioikic cities, whether for better or for worse. We know that Sellasia was sacked and burned to the ground during the Theban invasion of Laconia in 370 (Xen.*Hell.*6.5.27) and that Oios played a role in the same campaign (6.5.24-26). Perioikic cities all around Laconia served different purposes, their unique and scattered geographic locations allowed them to assume different roles both for the economy of the whole of Laconia and for military purposes. These perioikic cities acted as gateways to Laconia, as ports between the Peloponnese and places such as Egypt, and also controlled access both from the Mediterranean and the Aegean. It is no surprise that Laconia was hard to enter and to conquer, since to reach Sparta from North, South, East, and West any invader had to go through perioikic territory; and these *perioikoi*

⁶⁴ Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is no way of knowing how or by whom these roads were maintained. There is a short passage in Hdt.6.57.4 which says that Lacedaemonian kings are responsible for 'cases concerning public roads'. As the kings ruled over all of Laconia we have to assume that their jurisdiction extended to roads in perioikic territory. Pikoulas 2012, quoted in Shipley 2014, also alludes to this passage and notes that this responsibility fell on the kings due to the size of the task of maintaining this network of roads.

⁶⁵ Roy 2014, 491.

⁶⁶ Shipley 2006b, 62, 69-70, says the easiest way to access Sparta was from Arcadia, and that Pellana and Sellasia controlled this access. He also notes that 'at certain periods Sellasia controlled access to Sparta by foreigners approaching from the north, even for peaceful purposes'.

had no problem either getting word to Sparta or getting to Sparta themselves as quickly and effectively as possible.

Identifying the *perioikoi*

Textual evidence

Identifying the people called ‘*perioikoi*’ in ancient Greek sources is a laborious task which needs to be done patiently, carefully and with precision. It is not enough to look at those examples where the word ‘*perioikoi*’ or ‘*perioikos*’ appears. We need to look for those instances where an individual is being described as Laconian, Lacedaemonian and from a specific place in Laconia (e.g. Gytheion or Prasiai). After all, there is only a handful of examples where the *perioikoi* of Laconia are mentioned, and even fewer examples of individual *perioikoi* being labelled thus. We must not forget that ‘Lacedaemonians’ is the standard term used by authors to refer to Spartans; and the same can be said of the *perioikoi*. There are more instances of Spartans being labelled as Lacedaemonians than as Spartans. The key to understanding how the *perioikoi* are represented in our sources lies not just with the term *perioikoi* but with the term ‘Lacedaemonian’.

Two questions always arise when one studies the *perioikoi*: who were the *perioikoi*? And in what contexts do they appear in our sources? The basic answer to the last question is that the *perioikoi* mostly appear in two contexts: military and geographical. As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, the military context is much the most common reason why they are mentioned. In terms of the geographical context, the *perioikoi* (not as individuals but their cities) figure in the texts of Pausanias and Pseudo-Skylax.⁶⁷ For example, there are occasions in Pausanias where he mentions a place as being a perioikic city, but continues with his description without offering any type of insight into their culture or character (e.g. 3.2.5-6). The same can be said of Pseudo-Skylax’s description of Lacedaemon as a community filled with cities (46): ‘there are also many other cities of the Lakedaimonioi (Lakedaimonians). And in the interior is Sparta, and many others’ (46.2). Sparta is only one of many cities in Lacedaemon, whereas the others are all perioikic; and this is what makes his description unique. Pseudo-Skylax’s stress on the multiplicity of *poleis* is remarkable. When reading his description of Lacedaemon, one gets a sense that it is a place replete with cities.⁶⁸ When one

⁶⁷ For the text and translation of Pseudo-Skylax, I use Shipley 2011. Strabo also mentions the *perioikoi*, but he will be discussed in chapter 4.

⁶⁸ Interestingly, this passage is comparable to Homer’s description of Crete as also having many cities (*Od.* 19.172-175). I would like to thank Professor Christopher Tuplin for suggesting this comparison.

compares the author's description of Lacedaemon to that of Attica, one finds that for the latter there is no suggestion of saying there is anything in Attica that resembles a *polis* except Athens and a few places on the coast (57). This description of Lacedaemon creates an accidental impression that Sparta is somehow an afterthought, which of course can be treated as an accident due to the author's fixation on coastlines.⁶⁹ Analysing these geographical works is useful for understanding this aspect of the perioikic settlements, but if we really want to understand them as a people then we need to look beyond these geographical descriptions.

Leaving aside the abstract representations of collective geographical descriptions, we can now move on to analyse the *perioikoi* as peoples. The sporadic appearance of the *perioikoi* in written sources has led scholars to interpret this comparative silence as proof that they are different from the Spartans. This perceived difference (which, I stress, did not really exist) has led many scholars to see the *perioikoi* as being the subjects of the Spartans.⁷⁰ But one should not interpret cameo appearances as evidence of inferiority. We first need to ask ourselves why our sources are mostly silent about the *perioikoi*. This is not because these sources did not know who the *perioikoi* were or because they were oblivious of their existence. Far from it, Greek writers such as Thucydides and Xenophon knew more about the *perioikoi* than scholars today give them credit for. I believe this is one of the reasons why they figure so little in our sources, because Greek writers did not at times distinguish *perioikoi* from Spartans. In the external ideology of what Sparta was supposed to be and how she operated, Sparta is always depicted as the main operator of Laconian affairs. It is therefore no surprise that Greek writers always talk about the Spartans and not about the *perioikoi* separately. The *perioikoi* were not the ones who dictated foreign policy in Laconia, this was the job of the Spartans. This does not, on the other hand, make them different from the Spartans. Perhaps our sources did not write that much about the *perioikoi* because they must have believed that in many contexts the distinction was not significant. Except in cases where the *perioikoi* are specifically identified as such, we have no true way of distinguishing between *perioikoi* and Spartans. As we shall see in chapter 6, in battle they were indistinguishable and there is no reason to think that in daily life the situation was much different: they probably did not even dress in markedly different fashion. The only difference is that they were not Spartans because they did not belong to Sparta, just as the Spartans did not live in Gytheion, and therefore were not Gytheians. They were both Lacedaemonians, and

⁶⁹ Shipley 2011, 123 says, 'the selection of towns reflects a coastal bias...'

⁷⁰ Cartledge 2002, and Shipley 1992 and 2006b.

if we treat Laconia as a Lacedaemonian state, with the main power being Sparta, but all its citizens being Lacedaemonians, there is no reason to treat the citizen inhabitants as different from each other.

The *perioikoi* lived side by side with the Spartans; they fought together, they attended each other's religious festivals,⁷¹ and attended the funerals of kings (Hdt.6.58.2), and most probably went on hunting expeditions together. The advantage of having them described as *perioikoi* is that because that term is so technical and general, maybe sources use it to describe non-Spartan Lacedaemonians. It is important to remember that most of the time, when the *perioikoi* are mentioned it is in a context which also includes Spartans, and in which the Spartans are the main focus of attention. As mentioned above we do have the example of Dexippus who is described as a Laconian *perioikos*. One could change this to 'Lacedaemonian' and would mean the same, but here Xenophon is being specific for unknown reasons. All Spartans were Lacedaemonians but not all Lacedaemonians were Spartans. The same can be said of the *perioikoi* from Geronthrai, for example; they were Lacedaemonians but not all Lacedaemonians were from Geronthrai. The only stark difference between Lacedaemonians is their geographical location in Laconia, but nothing else. Sparta was indeed superior but she was only superior in the sense that she dictated foreign policy and, we can confidently infer, looked out for the interest of Laconia, not just Sparta. Every country has a main hub, a capital, if you will, and Sparta could be compared to a capital in the sense that it is the centre of Lacedaemon as a country or region.

One group which was definitely not Lacedaemonian was the helots. They are completely different from the *perioikoi*; we know much more about them, they have their own name, which is not attested anywhere else in the Greek world, and sources knew that they were different. In fact they had their own identity, a Messenian identity, which is both ideologically and geographically different from a Laconian identity.⁷² The Helots were different from the Spartans and our sources usually like to emphasize this difference: they were Messenians, they were slaves/serfs, and they were prone to rebelling. Even though they do not figure as prominently as the Spartans in our sources, in a way it is easier to identify them because they were not Spartans, but most importantly, they were not Lacedaemonians. One can identify a sense of otherness in the case of the Helots, but the same cannot be said of the *perioikoi*. Helots were different and looked different, they wore rough clothes and a

⁷¹ See Cartledge 2002, 165.

⁷² See Luraghi 2008 and Luraghi and Alcock 2003.

mandatory ‘special uniform’ made up of animal pelts and dog-skin caps.⁷³ Even though we have no such information for perioikic dress we would need only to look at how Lacedaemonians dressed, in order to find an accurate picture of how a *perioikos* would have dressed. In other words, whatever evidence we have of Spartan dress (Laconian shoes, military red cloaks, shields bearing a lambda for Lacedaemon, instead of a sigma for Sparta) could definitely be applied to the *perioikoi*. The reason we have more information on the Helots than on the *perioikoi* is because sources knew that the Helots were different and thus had to describe them separately.

Ancient Greek sources never write of the ‘otherness’ of the *perioikoi* nor do they write about how different they were from the Spartans, or from any other people for that matter. Not even Herodotus, who is known for emphasizing the peculiarities of other peoples, wrote about the *perioikoi* in that sense. At first glance, it may appear that Herodotus did not know much about the *perioikoi*, but I doubt this is true, bearing in mind that he gives us information about them that nobody else does: he knew about the numbers they contributed in Plataea (9.11.3), and he even knew that the *perioikoi* attended the funeral of kings (6.58.2). Therefore it is not enough to say that Herodotus, or any other Greek source, did not know about the *perioikoi* and that is why they did not write as much about them as they did about the Spartans. Sources knew that they were also Lacedaemonians and therefore similar to the Spartans. The only source that hints at the *perioikoi* being socially different and inferior to the Spartans is Isocrates (12.181) when he mentions that ‘Ephors have the power to put to death without trial as many as they please’, but it is generally agreed that this is an exaggeration prompted by the rhetorical context.⁷⁴

As we have seen, there is no single piece of textual evidence that portrays the *perioikoi* as being different from the Spartans in almost all respects. As will be discussed in detail below, the evidence from the *en polemoi* inscriptions found at Laconia (not just Sparta but at perioikic places as well) gives us a glimpse of the equality and togetherness that existed among the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. The fact that commemorations (*mnemeia*) were ascribed to Spartans and *perioikoi* alike shows that they were truly indistinguishable from each other. What we do find in Laconia is diversity, which is completely different from difference. The *perioikoi* were not different from the Spartans, but that is not to say that there was no diversity in Laconia. The amount of diversity between the various perioikic

⁷³ David 1989, 12-3.

⁷⁴ See Cartledge 2002, 154; Hansen 2004, 161; Shipley 2006b, 68. This passage from Isocrates will be discussed in chapter 4.

settlements and Sparta is what made Laconia prosper. As mentioned above, the Spartans were soldiers by trade, but the *perioikoi* could be fishermen, sailors, and soldiers as well, and so they contributed to the diversity in Laconia. But this is something we can deduce from a careful analysis of our sources and not something they explicitly tell us is. So the reason why it is so difficult to identify the *perioikoi* in our sources is not because they were so different that the sources chose to omit them. Quite the opposite: they are so similar to the Spartans that sources simply preferred to mention the Spartans or Lacedaemonians because they knew that this also included the *perioikoi*.

Having analysed the *perioikoi* primarily as a group of unnamed people, one can now move on to analyse those instances of named *perioikoi* that appear in our sources. In the whole Greek corpus we only have four individuals who are both mentioned by name and said to be perioikic (see figure 4 below). Unfortunately, three of them are only mentioned once (i.e. Eudicus, Phrynīs and Diniades), whereas Dexippus is mentioned numerous times and across different sources. Even though we only have these four examples, when one analyses them closely one realises that each of them is linguistically unique.

Eudicus (Xen.*Hell*.5.4.39) is described as one of the *perioikoi* (τῶν περιόικων ἓνα) involved in Agesilaus' war against Thebes in 378. Xenophon acknowledges the fact that Eudicus is one of the many *perioikoi* present at that particular time and moment. In addition, semiconsciously embedded in this formulation is a sense that the *perioikoi* are rather a big set within Agesilaus's force and that Spartiates are not. Eudicus is described immediately after Xenophon mentions two Spartiates: Cleas and Epicydidās. Here Xenophon is being as specific as he can be; he mentions Spartiates and *perioikoi* separately, without using the word 'Lacedaemonians'. Xenophon evidently wanted to be very clear about who had died after the Theban assault, though why this should be so it is impossible to say. Elsewhere in *Hellenica* *perioikoi* are only mentioned collectively and anonymously.

Named perioikos	Reference	Profession
Dexippus	Xen. <i>An</i> .5.1.15; 6.1.3; 6.6 (<i>passim</i>) Diod. <i>Sic</i> .13.85, 87, 88, 93, 96	Soldier/mercenary
Eudicus	Xen. <i>Hell</i> .5.4.39	Cavalryman

Phrynīs ⁷⁵	Thuc.8.6.4	Soldier/spy
Diniades	Thuc.8.22.1	Commander of a fleet

Figure 4. Named *perioikoi* in written sources.

Phrynīs (ἄνδρα περίοικον) (Thuc.8.6.4) and Diniades (Δεινιάδας περίοικος) (Thuc.8.22.1), on the other hand, are mentioned with *perioikos* in the singular. Thucydides alludes to both as named individuals and not as part of a collective group as we saw with Eudicus in Xenophon. In the case of Diniades the context resembles that in Xenophon in that Diniades, like Eudicus, is mentioned alongside a Spartiate (ἦρχε δ' αὐτοῦ Εὐάλας Σπαρτιάτης, τῶν δὲ νεῶν Δεινιάδας περίοικος), and that in both cases we are dealing with military events; in Xenophon the individuals involved are cavalrymen, here the Spartiate is a commander of the land forces while Diniades commands the fleet. The only difference is that Xenophon describes fallen soldiers, whereas Thucydides is merely mentioning who is in charge of the forces. We cannot know whether or not there is a link between the military context and the style of mentioning them separately but what we can say for certain is that both Thucydides and Xenophon knew that these characters were *perioikoi*.

Phrynīs is not mentioned alongside a Spartiate but, interestingly enough, the context does use the term Lacedaemonians.⁷⁶ Thucydides says that the Lacedaemonians sent Phrynīs, a *perioikos*, to assess the situation at Chios. Not much else can be said of this example in terms of identifying a *perioikos* except for the curious fact that Thucydides uses the phrase ἄνδρα περίοικον, something that is not seen anywhere else in our sources.

Of all the four examples, one could say that Dexippus is the one that stands out in terms of the linguistic terms used to describe him. Dexippus really is the ‘Rosetta Stone’ of individual *perioikoi* in Greek sources. He is described by name, said to be a *perioikos*, and not only a *perioikos* but a Laconian *perioikos* (Λάκωνα περίοικον) – as mentioned above, something peculiar to this case. He is also mentioned numerous times not just by Xenophon, but by Diodorus as well, and in a different context altogether from the events of the *Anabasis*.

⁷⁵ Perhaps it is worth noting that Phrynīs is a very unusual name. According to the data gathered in the *LGPN*, Phrynīs is both a male and female name, it is only attested once in Laconia (our example), and less than a handful of times in Euboea, Thessaly and South Italy. The only place where it seems to be a common name is in Sicily, particularly in Tauromenion.

⁷⁶ We cannot rule out that the principal point of calling him a *perioikos* might be to say that he was not a Spartiate.

Perhaps what is most peculiar in the case of Dexippus is that in Xenophon he is described as a Laconian *perioikos* but in Diodorus he is always described simply as a Lacedaemonian (Δέξιππός τε ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος); the latter never uses the word *perioikos* or *perioikoi*. This prompts the question: if we did not have Xenophon's evidence, would we know that Diodorus' Dexippus was a *perioikos*? The answer must be no; scholars would certainly have assumed that he was a Spartan, and I would have classified him as one of the many 'possible *perioikoi*' who are described simply as Lacedaemonians and not as Spartiates or *perioikoi*. This example illustrates the fact that external sources were liable to see *perioikoi* as Lacedaemonians and to label them accordingly.

The trouble is that, in the absence of the sort of information provided by Xenophon about Dexippus, the task of identifying *perioikoi* amongst the numerous people labelled by Greek sources just as Lacedaemonians is very difficult.⁷⁷ Nor is it only Lacedaemonians. Xenophon has the habit of using the term Laconian as well. We have seen that Dexippus is described as Laconian, but other individuals are also described in this way. For example, Demaratus is referred to as 'Demaratus the Laconian' (Δαμαράτου τοῦ Λάκωνος) (An.2.1.3), Cheirisophus as 'the Laconian' (Χειρίσοφον τὸν Λάκωνα) (2.1.5), and Clearchus as 'the Laconian' (Κλέαρχος Λάκων) (2.5.31). These three characters are undoubtedly Spartiates, but Xenophon, for reasons known only to himself, prefers to call them Laconian. But these are not the only cases. We also have Leonymus, a Laconian (Λακωνικὸς) who fought and died bravely (4.1.18), Nicander (Λάκωνος), who interestingly enough is the one that killed Dexippus (5.1.15), and Charminus and Polynicus (Λάκων), two Laconians from Thibron's army (7.6.1).

It is unclear whether Charminus and Polynicus are Spartans: they are never described in such terms, and it is not impossible that Thibron thought a pair of *perioikoi* were adequate to deal with the situation – the acquisition of a mercenary force from Seuthes for use in a new war against Tissaphernes. Xenophon is certainly capable of labelling *perioikoi* simply as Laconian: that is clear not only from the case of Dexippus (where he uses both labels together) but also that of Neon. Xenophon regularly describes Neon, a soldier in Cheirisophus' contingent, as being an Asinean (Νέων ὁ Ἀσινᾶϊος).⁷⁸ Asine is an attested perioikic settlement,⁷⁹ and scholars today agree that Neon was a *perioikos*.⁸⁰ Yet, elsewhere

⁷⁷ The notion that certain individuals described as Lacedaemonians/Laconians could be perioikic instead of Spartiates will be discussed in chapter 6 with regard to the Lacedaemonian army.

⁷⁸ Xen.An.5.3.4; 5.6.36; 6.4.11; 7.1.40; 7.2.1. These are all the instances Neon is described as an Asinean.

⁷⁹ Shipley 2004a, 2004b and 2006b, 59.

in the *Anabasis* (7.2.29) he is described as a Laconian.⁸⁰ Whatever Xenophon's reason for doing this,⁸² it is another reminder that the status of Charminus and Polynicus should not be taken for granted. The question cannot perhaps be resolved, but it is certainly important to appreciate that both possibilities exist. The inclination many will feel to identify them as Spartiates simply begs questions about the potential roles of *perioikoi* in Spartan official business; and one of the purposes of the present study is precisely to invite historians *not* to beg such questions.

Instances of an individual being called Laconian (Λάκων) are relatively isolated (Xenophon may simply have had a purely personal tendency towards the term) and we hear far more about groups of people called 'Lacedaemonians' (Λακεδαιμόνιοι) than 'Laconians'. The problem is that the term 'Lacedaemonian' (Λακεδαιμόνιος) is used so many times that it is difficult to distinguish between Spartan and *perioikoi*. (One can appreciate this by observing that substituting 'Lacedaemonian' for either 'Spartan' or 'perioikos' rarely, if ever, produces a result that looks odd.) Therefore, it is difficult to identify possible *perioikoi* among these cases. But it is certainly not always impossible, because in cases where there is no firm reason to classify 'Lacedaemonians' as *perioikoi*, one must admit that there is no firm evidence that they were Spartiates either.

Yet scholars have tended to approach the evidence by assuming that Lacedaemonian is an alternative for Spartiate, not for both Spartiate and *perioikos*. While this is true in some obvious cases, there are many cases where we cannot say for certain that sources are referring only to Spartans, and there are cases where they are most probably referring to a combination of both Spartiate and *perioikoi*. I believe the latter to be true for the majority of the cases. Noreen Humble notices the shift in terminology in Xenophon's *Lakedaimonion Politeia*. She says that 'the term Lakedaimonioi is favoured by Xenophon from Chapter 11 on, whereas he seemed to have preferred the term Spartiates prior to that'.⁸³ Both Humble and Proietti agree that this happens because Xenophon at this point starts to include the other Lacedaemonians

⁸⁰ In n. 6 to the Penguin edition of the *Anabasis*, Cawkwell admits that Neon was a *perioikos* because Asine was 'one of the surrounding towns of Sparta' (1972, 248).

⁸¹ Interestingly, there is a small debate concerning the real provenance of Neon because of the fact that there was one Asine in Laconia and another Asine in Messenia. For the belief that Neon was from Laconian Asine see Roy 1967, 303; Lendle 1995, 350; Stronk 1995, 89; Lee 2007, 60. For the belief that he came from Messenian Asine see Cartledge 1987, 320; Shipley 1997, 209 and 2004b, 559.

⁸² Shipley 1997, 209 thinks there might be a reason behind this sudden change. He notes that, 'the variant occurs, interestingly, at the only point where he is being named in a passage of direct speech, perhaps because Xenophon represents himself addressing a Thracian envoy to whom a local ethnic from within Lakedaimon might be obscure'.

⁸³ Humble 2006, 222.

as well, meaning the *perioikoi*.⁸⁴ When one attempts to identify the *perioikoi* in written sources, one realises that they are visible in diverse ways: there are (i) named *perioikoi*, (ii) *perioikoi* described by their city of origin, (iii) *perioikoi* described collectively as a group, and (iv) *perioikoi* described as Laconian or Lacedaemonians. The common thread is that they are almost always described in a context which also includes the Spartans. This is not because they were dependent on the Spartans, but because they lived and functioned alongside the Spartans. The perioikic communities and settlements and its peoples had always been part of Laconia. We can only attempt to identify the *perioikoi* once we come to the realisation that they were Lacedaemonians; it is only then that we can begin to come to terms with the fact that there are more *perioikoi* in our sources than we have been taught to believe.

Material evidence

The other main problem we encounter with the *perioikoi* is the material evidence, or lack thereof, left behind by them. It is bad enough that the Spartans did not leave any writing or structural remains behind as the Athenians did, but with the *perioikoi* it is even worse, simply because the majority of the time they are just mentioned in passing and not in great detail. Shipley says that ‘most inscriptions from outside Sparta are not classical but hellenistic and Roman’.⁸⁵ To make matters worse, the limited amount of material remains we do have can only be identified as perioikic through a process of association or elimination, and not because we know it for a fact. We can only deduce that an archaeological object belonged to the *perioikoi* and not to Spartans if (i) it is found in an identified perioikic settlement, (ii) if it names a perioikic settlement or (iii) if it uses the term Lacedaemonian instead of Spartiate or Spartan. To date, there is no inscription, relief, stele or other archaeological object with the word ‘perioikos’ or ‘perioikoi’. Just identifying where the *perioikoi* lived is a problem in itself. We know there were more than fifty-three perioikic settlements, but we simply do not know all their names.⁸⁶ Furthermore, many of the settlements for which we have names attested, cannot be physically located.

There is also the matter of inscriptions and reliefs. It may be possible to identify the *perioikoi* through this visual medium, especially if the evidence is found in perioikic territory. For example, a late fifth- or fourth-century stele simply bearing the name ‘Hybrion’ has been found in what is now firmly identified perioikic Sellasia (see figures 5a and 5b below).

⁸⁴ Proietti 1987.

⁸⁵ Shipley 2006b, 56.

⁸⁶ See n. 41 and n. 47 above.

Starting from the assumption that the stele is classical and from a perioikic city, it is possible, though obviously not conclusively, to identify Hybrion as a *perioikos*.⁸⁷ Even though this idea has not been entertained before, it has been suggested that he could have been commemorated as a fallen soldier, which leads me to the next category of inscriptions.⁸⁸



Figures 5a and 5b. Grave-stele of Hybrion.

We have a decent number of funerary inscriptions relating to those who died in war. Commonly known today as the *en polemoi* (in war) inscriptions, these are scattered all over Laconia and usually include a person's name followed by *ἐν πολέμῳ*.⁸⁹ Scholars tend to agree that this is a Laconian practice found nowhere else in the Greek world.⁹⁰ These inscriptions have been found not only in Sparta, but in nearby locations as well, where the *perioikoi* lived, such as Sellasia and Geronthrai. According to Pritchett:

The only Lakonian funerary inscriptions in the Corpus associated with war (IG V. 1. 701-710, 918, 921, 1124, 1125, 1320, 1591) are a series in the form of *nomen en polemō*. The *ἐν πολέμῳ* are for the most part small stelai and are found scattered over a wide area of Lakonia: Sparta, Magoula, Amyklai, Geronthrai, Sellasia, and Georgitsion. The provenance

⁸⁷ Another interpretation might be that he was neither a Spartan nor a *perioikos*, but a helot.

⁸⁸ Details of the inscription can be found on <http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/Laconia/Inscription02.html>. The description of the inscription reads: 'Hybrion is an unattested name. The Spartan custom was that only soldiers killed in battle, and women dying in childbirth, were named on gravestones, so this man could be a casualty of warfare, perhaps one of the known campaigns in the area of Sellasia'. Shipley 2013, 9-10, n. 65 adds: 'To what social class he belonged remains unknown; Spartiates who died in battle were allegedly commemorated with a gravestone (Plut. Lyc. 27.1), and the battlefield of Sellasia is close by, but the lettering may be Classical. His name is oddly derogatory and the carving, to all appearances, not that of a professional letter-cutter'.

⁸⁹ The inscriptions in the context of honour among the *perioikoi* will be discussed in chapter 6.

⁹⁰ Low 2006, 90-1.

of some is not known. They date from the fifth to the end of the third century.⁹¹

Most of the places Pritchett mentions are in fact perioikic settlements. One has to be careful when analysing these inscriptions with the *perioikoi* in mind because, as mentioned above, we have no definite way of distinguishing between *perioikoi* and Spartans.⁹² There is some hope, however, and it comes in the form of inscription IG V, 1 1124 (see figure 6 below). Out of all the *en polemoi* inscriptions this one is definitely the most illuminating. First, it is from Geronthrai, an important perioikic city due to its proximity to Sparta, which has also given us more perioikic inscriptions than any other. Second, it names the specific battle where Eualkes – the soldier commemorated in the inscription – died. I take it that Eualkes was a *perioikos*, but as mentioned earlier, there is no true way of knowing. This inscription has been mentioned and studied by scholars such as John Lazenby, Paul Cartledge, Polly Low, and especially Nicholas Sekunda.⁹³ One group of scholars firmly believes that Eualkes was a *perioikos*, while the other is not so sure. For example, Cartledge says that ‘he [Eualkes] was a *perioikos* commemorated exactly as if he had been a Spartiate’.⁹⁴ Lazenby, on the other hand, says that ‘while the natural assumption, since the inscription comes from perioecic Geronthrai, is that Eualkes was a *perioikos*...he may have been a Spartiate, whose estate, for example, lay near Geronthrai’.⁹⁵ Low does not entertain the possibility of him being a *perioikos*. She says that ‘the body of Eualkes of Geraki is perpetuating the Spartan presence at Tegea, at the same time as his memorial is perpetuating his own memory, and the status of his family back in Laconia’.⁹⁶ Low is more neutral; she neither confirms nor denies that Eualkes could have been a *perioikos*. So, was he a *perioikos* or not? It is my belief that there are slightly more chances of him being a *perioikos*, not only because the inscription was found in Geronthrai, but because the *perioikoi* fought alongside the Spartans on many occasions, and I have no doubt that they would have been worthy of having their own funerary inscriptions. They were, after all, part of the Lacedaemonian army and may have been honoured with such honorary inscriptions and in the same way as the Spartans were.

⁹¹ Pritchett 1985, 244-5. Pritchett only mentions eighteen inscriptions, while Low 2006, 86 says that there are twenty-four known and twenty published.

⁹² The issue of indistinguishability between the Spartans and the *perioikoi* will be discussed at length in chapter 6.

⁹³ Lazenby 1985; Cartledge 2002; Low 2006; Sekunda 2011.

⁹⁴ Cartledge 2002, 220, 268.

⁹⁵ Lazenby 1985, 15, 42, 85.

⁹⁶ Low 2006, 101.



Figure 6. Gravestone of Eualkes, Geronthrai c. 418.

Nonetheless, inscription 1124 presents another problem which has nothing to do with the debate of whether Eualkes was a *perioikos* or not but with the battle of Mantinea itself. Sekunda is far more concerned with the dating of the battle than with the classification of Eualkes.⁹⁷ However, he starts from the premise that Eualkes was a *perioikos* because he wants to accommodate *that* battle of Mantinea in a period where the *perioikoi* were already incorporated in the Lacedaemonian army. Sekunda does not believe Lazenby when he says Eualkes may have been a Spartiate because for Sekunda ‘there is no evidence that epitaphs of this type were restricted to Spartiates alone, as opposed to all Lakedaimonians, *perioikoi* as well as Spartiates’.⁹⁸ Sekunda does not dwell on the debate about whether or not Eualkes was a *perioikos*. Instead, he already assumes Eualkes was one, and from there tries to figure out in which battle he would have taken part as a *perioikos*. This is an example of a successful outcome when analysing evidence with the *perioikoi* in mind. Therefore, it is important to identify all material evidence that could possibly be of perioikic nature and from there analyse it from a perioikic point of view.

This brings one to the next examples, two hero reliefs from Laconia. Hero reliefs can also be seen throughout Laconia, and they usually depict a nude ‘person’, weapons, and snakes, all which represent the heroized dead.⁹⁹ The relief in figure 7 below is of interest because it was found in Charuda near Areopolis in the Mani peninsula which is an area full of perioikic settlements. Sekunda illustrates this relief and says it depicts a *perioikos*, without giving any sort of explanation or reasons why he believes that. In his own words, he describes it as a ‘stele from ancient Areopolis, dating to the first half of the fifth century, showing a young *perioikos* warrior’.¹⁰⁰ Sekunda automatically assumes it was a *perioikos* by association given that the relief was not from Sparta but from a perioikic settlement. The earliest

⁹⁷ Sekunda 2011, 719. Discussed also below in Chapter 6, 156.

⁹⁸ Sekunda 2011, 721.

⁹⁹ See Salapata 1997 and Hibler 1993.

¹⁰⁰ Sekunda 1998, 59.

publications of this relief do not mention anything about it representing a *perioikos*.¹⁰¹ They describe the relief in detail but never mention the possibility of it being a *perioikos* – though they do not assert that it is a Spartiate either. The artistic details have always been more important than the actual content of the scene: ‘A fine ‘Hero’ relief from Charuda. The nude hero stands, with his shield on his arm and his helmet at his feet, before a serpent’.¹⁰² Again, there is no mention of the *perioikos* when there is a strong case to argue that it does indeed depict a *perioikos*. First, it does not come from Sparta but from Charuda, an area that by the time of this relief (it is Archaic, if we are to believe these original publications) was occupied by *perioikoi*. Second, the *perioikoi* participated in many Spartan campaigns and being ‘Lacedaemonians’ they would have been commemorated in the same way as Spartans. Therefore, it is completely possible that they fought and died valiantly in battle, and were worthy of having a hero relief erected in their honour.



Figure 7. Hero relief from Charuda.

The next hero relief (see figure 8 below) is not a typical hero relief and comes from an already familiar place; it is from Geronthrai, like the inscription of Eualkes. This relief, however, has not received much scholarly attention since it was published back in 1904, and even in those same publications, again, there is never any mention of it portraying a *perioikos*.¹⁰³ The descriptions are very short and focus again on the artistic representations.

¹⁰¹ Schröder 1904, 44-6 and Paton 1904, 360.

¹⁰² Paton 1904, 360.

¹⁰³ Schröder 1904, 42-4 and Paton 1904, 360.

For example, the one from *AJA* describes it as follows: 'A very rude 'Hero' relief from Gerakion (Geronthrae), showing the hero seated and approached by two nude adorers. A snake drinks from the hero's bowl'. Unlike the one from Charuda, I have not come across it in modern publications, which to me is surprising because it is a most unusual hero relief (very different from the Charuda one) and the fact that it is from Geronthrai makes it even more alluring and worth investigating. Its provenance makes it completely possible for this relief to be depicting a *perioikos* instead of a Spartan: indeed the case is arguably stronger than with the one from Charuda, since Geronthrai is a more familiar perioikic city and as I mentioned earlier it has given us more perioikic inscriptions, including *en polemoi* inscriptions (IG V. 1 1125), than any other perioikic city.



Figure 8. Hero relief from Geronthrai.

These hero reliefs and the Eualkes inscription show us that the problem of identifying perioikic peoples extends to the archaeological record as well. In the case of the hero reliefs, many hypotheses and theories, albeit circumstantial and speculative, can be made: the fact that they were found in perioikic settlements hints at a the possibility for these reliefs to be depicting *perioikoi*, being made by *perioikoi*, or even being given as gifts to the *perioikoi* (from the Spartans?). Today, we have to be open to the possibility that not all life in the southern Peloponnese revolved around Sparta. Laconian and Lacedaemonian identity was far stronger and ever-present than an individual Spartan or perioikic identity.

It is very important to at least try to make a distinction between what is Spartan and what is perioikic. It is not enough to label something simply as Laconian or Lacedaemonian without trying to find out to what exact group it could have belonged. Once we can grasp both the meaning and the implication of being a *perioikos* then we can truly begin to understand the place of such people in Lacedaemonian society. Being a Laconian *perioikos* carried a completely different set of rules and mind-set from being a *perioikos* in Crete or Argos, for example. Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* were a complex group due to their geopolitical status and their status as Lacedaemonians. Having established the status of the *perioikoi* as Lacedaemonians, it becomes easier to identify this group that is hiding in plain sight. As we have seen, the moment we accept that the *perioikoi*, as free Lacedaemonians, had a role to play in Lacedaemonian society, then we can truly begin to understand that perhaps there are more than a handful of examples out there.

Chapter 3. The *Perioikoi* and the Helots

To some Greeks, like the Athenians, the southern Peloponnese might have embodied a mysterious land and might have even seemed foreign to some. But, actually, Laconia was more vibrant and connected than people today realise. As we now know, the network of roads that traversed Laconia gives us a picture of a region that, even though might have seemed isolated to many Greeks, was very active and dynamic.¹ However, the presence of roads that connected Sparta to the sea and to many perioikic cities is not the only reason why Laconia was a vibrant place. Life in Laconia involved different groups of people interacting with each other on a daily basis. We like to think of the Spartans as controlling the southern Peloponnese but ultimately belonging to Sparta alone. That the Spartans ‘controlled’ Laconia and Messenia from Sparta is a modern misconception that should be addressed properly. Though the evidence for Spartan interaction with other groups of Laconia is limited at best, it would not be wrong to assume that they were part of Laconian life just as much as the *perioikoi* and even the helots. While these groups all interacted with each other in different ways the focus of attention for scholars in recent years has been the relationship of master and servant, that is, of Spartans and helots.

It is tempting to compare two completely opposing groups, because in a sense Spartans and helots can be described as the two ends of the spectrum. Traditionally, the helots are seen as the slaves and subjects of the Spartans, who in turn are their masters. But life in Laconia and the interactions between the three major groups consisting of Spartans, *perioikoi* and helots was, in truth, diverse and not so simple. For example, helots could become free and fight in the Lacedaemonian army, thus becoming *neodamodeis* (new members of the demos). This shows that life in Laconia was more diverse and that Laconia was not inhabited only by these three major groups. This chapter will take into consideration these other groups and analyse their place in Laconian society and how they interacted with the *perioikoi*. This chapter will also examine and analyse a darker aspect of Laconian society: slavery. Scholars have often placed the *perioikoi* somewhere in the middle between the helots and Spartans, but as this chapter will show, their relationship with the Spartans and their place in Laconia as free citizens and members of the Lacedaemonian army meant that they too had a role to play in the subjugation and controlling of the helots. It also shows that the

¹ For Laconian roads, see ‘Placing the *perioikoi* geographically’ in the previous chapter.

perioikoi, contrary to the traditional view, were more similar to the Spartans when it came to interacting with the helots and with slaves in general.

Social groups of Laconia

Over the past centuries scholars have traditionally divided the inhabitants of Laconia into Spartans, helots and *perioikoi* without taking into consideration other less known and more elusive groups of Laconians and classes within the Spartans themselves.² Figure 9 below lists the complex social classes and divisions within these groups. Looking at the table one can appreciate the severity of the class situation in Laconia. Ridley rightly points out that ‘there is the complexity of grades within the Spartans themselves – the *neodamodeis*, *mothakes* and *hypomeiones* about whom we know little’.³ We can add to Ridley’s list at least three more groups: the *nothoi*, the *trophimoi* and the *tresantes*.⁴ The most common are, of course, the Spartiates, the helots, and now the *perioikoi*, but the lesser known groups deserve some kind of attention as well. However, I would understand, to some degree, if scholars overlook these groups simply because of their elusiveness in Greek texts. Take for example the *hypomeiones*; they only appear once in the Greek corpus (Xen.*Hell*.3.3.6), which, in turn, makes it close to impossible to figure out successfully who they were or what their role was in Spartan/Laconian society. In contrast, the *neodamodeis* figure more prominently in ancient texts, yet we still do not know if these liberated helots acquired full citizenship of Sparta (making them Spartiates) or if they simply became Lacedaemonians with a similar status to that of the *perioikoi*. My view is that they probably became quasi-Lacedaemonians at best because, unlike Spartiates or *perioikoi*, they did not have civic status.

I have included the *tresantes* – literally ‘tremblers’ – because even though they were not an official class of Spartans (like the Spartiates), they did exist, and once they were classed as a ‘trembler’ they definitely belonged to a much lower social class in Spartan society.⁵ In other words, it was easy to know who was a trembler; they had to wear special clothing, they were shunned from social events, they were ignored by other Spartiates, they could only shave one side of their beard. There even existed laws which deprived them of

² Sealey 1976a, 67-8: ‘The basic structure of the state recognized people of three different status, namely, Spartiates, perioeci, and helots.’

³ Ridley 1974, 292.

⁴ For the *neodamodeis* see Willetts 1954 and Hunt 1998; for the *mothakes* see Lotze 1962; for the *trophimoi* see Humble 2004. Cf. also Hodkinson 1997.

⁵ For a thorough analysis of Spartan tremblers see Ducat 2006b. See also MacDowell 1986 and Hodkinson 2009b.

many benefits enjoyed by the Spartans, such as running for office, and marrying other Spartan women.⁶

Terms	Definition (approximate)
Spartiates (Σπαρτιᾶται)	citizen class of Sparta
Neodamodeis (νεοδαμώδεις)	liberated helots
Hypomeiones (ὕπομειόνες)	‘Inferiors’. Spartans of less inferior status or who possibly lost their citizenship.
Helots (εἰλωτες, εἰλώται)	the slave/serf class in Sparta and Messenia
Perioikoi (περίοικοι)	‘those who dwell around’
Nothoi (νόθοι)	sons of Spartiates by helot women
Mothones (μόθωνες)	young servants (helots?) charged with domestic tasks for young Spartans during their education
Mothakes (μόθακες)	possibly freeborn helots or <i>hypomeiones</i> who were not citizens of Sparta but shared all the education which is given to the free citizens.
Tresantes (τρέσαντες)	literally ‘tremblers’, or cowards in battle who sometimes fled.
Trophimoi (τρόφιμοι)	foreigners/strangers that were brought up at Sparta and went through the usual course of Spartan discipline. (Xenophon's own sons belonged to this class)

Figure 9. Classes or groups within Laconia.

Today the identification of these other inhabitants of Laconia presents a problem because all of our sources for Sparta and Laconia are, in effect, non-Spartan and non-Laconian.

Therefore, we have to assume there were even more groups that most likely did not figure in the texts we have. For example, Athenaeus describes the different classes of slaves there existed in Sparta:

The Lacedaemonians often emancipated their slaves, and some of them when emancipated they called Aphetae, and some they called Adespoti, and some they called Erycteres, and others they called Desposionautae, whom they put on board their fleets, and some they called Neodamodes, but all these were different people from the Helots. And Theopompus, in the seventh book of his history of the Affairs of Greece, speaking of the Helots that they were also called Heleatae...

(271f-272a)

⁶ Hdt.7.231-32; Xen.Lak.Pol.9.4-6; Plut.Ages.30.2-6.

This small but dense and informative account gives us an idea of how varied the different statuses of slaves were in Sparta and Laconia. The *desposionautae* are particularly interesting because, if they were put on board the fleets of the Lacedaemonian army, it makes one wonder whether they operated under perioikic command.⁷ After all, the *perioikoi* were the true seafarers of Laconia and were often in command of the naval forces of the Lacedaemonian army. Yet, this account of Athenaeus only covers the slave class, which prompts the question: were there different classes or statuses within the *perioikoi* themselves? If so, did the Spartans or the *perioikoi* themselves ascribe different names to such groups? The primary answer would be yes because you can have Gytheians, Prasians, Sellasians, among others. The *perioikoi* are a naturally diverse community because they come from many *poleis*, but they are also diverse economically. We know there were wealthy as well as poor *perioikoi* around Sparta just as there were wealthy and poor Spartans. Therefore it remains to be seen if the Spartans had special labels for wealthy or reliable *perioikoi*.⁸ Also, if there existed groups that were defined by having a Spartiate father and a helot mother then it would not be farfetched to have instances of relationships between Spartiates and perioikic women as well. Both were Lacedaemonians and both were free, which is why it may not have been seen as a taboo. This is probably why we do not have any distinctions in our sources regarding relationships between the *perioikoi* and Spartans, precisely because these relationships did not make a separate category.⁹

Therefore, scholars should be careful when describing the inhabitants of Laconia and Messenia as simply either Spartans, helots or *perioikoi*.¹⁰ Suffice to say that much has been done over the past two decades on the Spartans, which in turn has led to extensive studies dedicated to the helots.¹¹ The helots were once thought to be too elusive and obscure to study. However, due to the rising popularity of the topic of ancient slavery, helot studies have flourished in recent years. Of course, I believe this is due, in part, to the fact that there is no

⁷ Unfortunately, since this is the only instance where we find the word *desposionautae* in the Greek corpus, there is no way of knowing the relationship (if any) between them and the *perioikoi*.

⁸ Xenophon, of course, mentions perioikic *kaloi kagathoi* (*Hell.*5.3.9), but this is a qualitative judgment and not an official denomination.

⁹ There are examples of Spartan men liaising with free women. The Hellenistic Spartan king Cleomenes III takes a Megarian free woman as a concubine (*Plut. Cleom.*29.2). Even though the Megarian woman is not a *perioikos*, she is still free, just like other *perioikoi*. Furthermore, ‘the most beautiful woman in Aulon’, described by Xenophon (*Hell.*3.3.8), could have been a *perioikos*, especially since Aulon was perioikic. This last example was a cause of concern for the Spartan authorities because she was ‘corrupting’ many a Lacedaemonian. Cf. Pomeroy 2002, 101-103, who discusses relationships between Spartans and helots/lower-classes but does not include the *perioikoi* in this matter.

¹⁰ The tendency is understandable, of course. Shipley 2004a, 570 argues that this simple division is made because most of the population of Laconia was made up of exactly these three groups.

¹¹ For a groundbreaking study on the helots see Luraghi and Alcock 2003. For a more recent study see Luraghi 2008 and Cartledge 2011.

ambiguity when it comes to identifying the helots in ancient texts. In other words, one will always find them mentioned as helots because ancient sources had a specific single name for them, unlike the *perioikoi*, for whom there are multiple names – Λάκωνες, Λακεδαιμόνιοι, or their various *polis ethnika*.

Nonetheless, this tripartite division of Spartans, *perioikoi* and helots, as Hall likes to call it,¹² was ever-present in Laconia during the classical (and perhaps archaic) period. It is important, however, to identify the place of the *perioikoi* in a society where two of these groups were constantly clashing (i.e. the numerous conflicts between Spartans and helots). Even though the *perioikoi* were Lacedaemonians and part of the Lacedaemonian army, they are often pushed to the side when scholars examine the conflicts between Spartans and helots. It is unlikely that the *perioikoi* took a neutral stance when clashes amongst these polar opposites ensued. Therefore, the *perioikoi* must have had a role in them. Cartledge calls them the ‘‘third force’ in Lakonian political and economic development’, the other two obviously being the Spartans and helots.¹³ If they were the ‘third force’ then the *perioikoi* had a much larger role to play in Spartiate and helot affairs than both ancient sources and modern scholarship like to admit. But this role must be defined in terms of how the *perioikoi* interacted with these two groups. We have to remember that this so called tripartite division does not mean that at one end of the spectrum stood the helots, at the other end the Spartans, and in the very middle the *perioikoi*. The evidence points to the *perioikoi* being situated somewhere closer to the point of the spectrum occupied by the Spartiates. Their relationship with the Spartans will be discussed in chapter 4, but because this chapter deals with the helots, it is important to establish what sort of relationship existed between the *perioikoi* and the helots.

Helots

As established in chapter 2, the *perioikoi* were free-born inhabitants of Laconia. They enjoyed autonomous freedom in their own *poleis*, and held a type of dual citizenship (Lacedaemonian and from their own *poleis*). Taking these factors into consideration one can start seeing the *perioikoi* as having a similar mentality as the Spartans. Both groups will have similar objectives and interests to help achieve prosperity for Laconia, be that economic or military prosperity. And one way of achieving this was through their mutual interest and use of helots. But before one can attempt to address any connection between the helots and the

¹² Hall 2000, 74.

¹³ Cartledge 2002, 84.

perioikoi, one needs first to address the helots themselves. Were they as unfortunate and ill-fated as they are often portrayed as being? It is true that not a single helot is named by our surviving sources.¹⁴ Moreover, if we are to believe our sources, Spartan treatment of the helots could be classified as hostile and outright degrading.¹⁵ Thucydides (4.80.3-4) famously relates how the Spartans tricked the strongest helots into thinking they would be freed, but instead killed them all, two thousand in total.¹⁶ Elsewhere, Plutarch (*Lyc.*28.1-2) gives a graphic description of the institution of the *Krypteia*, wherein young Spartans are tasked with the covert killing of helots during the night. Many of these instances of Spartan cruelty towards the helots survived long after the classical period. For example, Athenaeus quotes Myron of Priene (fourth-third century) when he said that:

That the Lakedaimonians treated the helots with exceeding arrogance Myron of Priene also records, writing in the second book of his Messenian History as follows: ‘They impose on the helots every outrageous practice that leads to every conceivable disgrace. For they ordered that each helot necessarily wear a dogskin cap and be clothed in a leather jerkin and receive a fixed number of blows each year, even when having done no wrong, so that they never forget that they are slaves. In addition, if any of them was in appearance robust beyond that which was fitting for a slave, they imposed the death penalty on them, and they fined their masters, for not having cut short their vigorous growth.

(Myron BNJ 106 F 2)¹⁷

Perhaps the strongest statement in this passage is when Myron says ‘so that they never forget that they are slaves’.¹⁸ Unlike the *perioikoi*, who were Lacedaemonians and may have easily blended amongst the Spartans to a point that they were indistinguishable, there was never any doubt as to who was a helot. A helot could never be a Spartan, even if he was freed and fit for military duty. The fact that these passages were written much later should, of course, serve as a *caveat*.¹⁹ But in the end, there is no denying that the helots and the Spartans never enjoyed an amicable relationship.

¹⁴ Urbainczyk 2008, 73-4, says we do not know the names of prominent helots.

¹⁵ Cartledge 2002, 152 says that ‘in short, the characteristic attitudes of the Spartans towards the Helots were scorn and contempt.’

¹⁶ This story also appears in Plutarch’s *Lucyrgus* 28.3. For a modern analysis of this episode see Harvey 2004 and Paradiso 2004.

¹⁷ Quoted from Athenaeus 14.74.657c-d.

¹⁸ Cf. Ducat 1974, 1458.

¹⁹ Myron’s accuracy is doubted by Pausanias (4.6.4): ‘One may realize in others of his works that Myron gives no heed to the question of his statements seeming to lack truth and credibility, and particularly in this Messenian history’ (Μύρωνά δὲ ἐπὶ τε ἄλλοις καταμαθεῖν ἔστιν οὐ προορώμενον εἰ ψευδῇ τε καὶ οὐ πιθανᾷ δόξει λέγειν καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα ἐν τῇδε τῇ Μεσσηνίᾳ συγγραφῇ).

Nonetheless, helots could be freed,²⁰ and ultimately become *neodamodeis* and fight for the Lacedaemonian army.²¹ Armed ex-helots were, therefore, not an uncommon sight in late fifth- and early fourth-century Sparta.²² During the Peloponnesian War, the Spartan general Brasidas took with him a force of seven hundred helot soldiers (Thuc.4.80.5); and after the peace of Nicias in 421 those same helot soldiers were freed and allowed to live wherever they wanted (Thuc.5.34.1).²³ Some helots were even trusted enough by the Spartans to hold high or reputable positions. At the battle of Plataea there were seven helots for each Spartan present (Hdt.9.10.1, 9.28.2, 9.29.1).²⁴ This means that the thirty five thousand helots that took part in the battle of Plataea played an important role and may have been handpicked by the Spartans for this monumental task. Although there is no way of knowing – for Herodotus does not elaborate on their role – we can perhaps infer that these specific helots were chosen for a reason.²⁵ Interestingly enough, helots could even act as harmosts. According to a Theban ambassador in a speech in Xenophon: ‘...it is their Helots whom they deem it proper to appoint as governors, while toward their allies, who are free men, they have behaved themselves like masters since they have achieved success’ (ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὲν εἴλωτας ἄρμοστὰς ἀξιοῦσι καθιστάναι, τῶν δὲ συμμάχων ἐλευθέρων ὄντων, ἐπεὶ ἡτύχησαν, δεσπότην ἀναπεφύνασιν) (*Hell.*3.5.12).²⁶

During the Theban invasion, we hear of (presumably Laconian) helots being enlisted to defend Sparta from the approaching Thebans (Diod.15.65.6; Xen.*Hell.*6.5.28). According to Xenophon, the Spartan authorities proclaimed that if any helot ‘wished to take up arms’ (βούλοιτο ὄπλα λαμβάνειν) they would be rewarded with freedom. Cawkwell finds this ‘astonishing’ and rightly asks ‘what had these Helots to gain from Sparta which they would not gain from the Thebans?’²⁷ The answer to this question is loyalty. This commitment shows that some helots, after all, could be loyal to Sparta. Many probably believed that if they defected to the Thebans they would have betrayed their loyalty to the Spartans. The matter of identity perhaps also played a role: even as a disadvantaged class, their sense of who they were was so bound up with Laconia and its history of inviolability that they would tend to

²⁰ We know that the majority of liberated helots gained their freedom due to their military service in the Lacedaemonian army. See Thuc.5.34.1; Poll.*Onom.*3.83; Xen.*Hell.*6.5.24.

²¹ See Furuyama 1988 on the liberation of helots and the *neodamodeis*.

²² Hunt 2006.

²³ Thucydides says that they were settled at Lepreum, with the other *neodamodeis*.

²⁴ On the helot attendants during Plataea see Hunt 1997.

²⁵ Cartledge 2011, 84 believes that the helot entrusted to guard the imprisoned Cleomenes (Hdt.6.75) was an ‘exceptionally trusted helot’.

²⁶ This makes one wonder, if the helots could act as governors, then surely so too could the *perioikoi*. As a small caveat, however, it should be noted that this is a prejudicial source.

²⁷ Cawkwell 1983, 391.

identify with the view that Thebans were damnable outsiders. If many helots chose to defend Sparta at a time when she was most vulnerable and when it would have been the perfect time for revolting or running away, then we cannot say that all helots would have relished the opportunity to ‘eat Spartans raw’ (ὥμῶν ἐσθίειν αὐτῶν) (Xen.*Hell.*3.3.6). But the helots were slaves, above all, and as will be explored below, one has to be open to the possibility of a slave/master relationship between a slave helot and a free *perioikos*.

Helots as slaves of the *perioikoi*

For long scholars have extensively studied the relationship between the helots and the Spartans, but the idea of the *perioikoi* owning or at least interacting with the helots has never been analysed fully. Two situations can be explored when one thinks of the helots and the *perioikoi*. First, that the *perioikoi* might have owned helots, and second, that the *perioikoi* could have been employed as overseers of the helots; both scenarios are analysed in detail in this chapter.

The idea of the *perioikoi* owning helots or chattel slaves is not new; in fact it has been suggested by scholars that they did. On the one hand, Cartledge believes that only wealthy *perioikoi*, in order to be free from manual labour and therefore fit to serve in the army, owned chattel slaves, but not helots.²⁸ Shipley, on the other hand, believes that not only did the *perioikoi* own chattel slaves, but that they probably ‘controlled their share of helots, like the Spartans’.²⁹ I agree with the latter view. It is now widely believed that the helots were state-owned and therefore loaned by the state to the Spartiates. They were, in effect, public slaves.³⁰ If this is true, then there are grounds to argue that helots could have also been loaned to some *perioikoi* for different reasons (e.g. military or financial). The Spartans relied on the *perioikoi* for various reasons: to fight with them in battle, to take care of trading and manufacturing, farming, and many other economic activities.³¹ Therefore, the need of helots for these activities is definitely a plausible scenario. Plato refers to wealthy Lacedaemonians owning lands and slaves, including of the helot kind.

For in this respect you have only to look at the wealth of the Lacedaemonians, and you will perceive that our riches here are far inferior to theirs. Think of all the land that they have both in their own and in the

²⁸ Cartledge 2002, 154.

²⁹ Shipley 2006b, 69.

³⁰ Cartledge 2011, 79.

³¹ See Ridley 1974, where he makes a case for social and economic diversity among the *perioikoi*. See also Appendix B for the list of perioikic professions according to modern scholarship.

Messenian country: not one of our estates could compete with theirs in extent and excellence, nor again in ownership of slaves, and especially of those of the helot class...

τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ εἰ ἐθέλεις εἰς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίων πλούτους ἰδεῖν, γνώσῃ ὅτι πολὺ τάνθάδε τῶν ἐκεῖ ἐλλείπει: γῆν μὲν γὰρ ὅσῃν ἔχουσιν τῆς θ' ἑαυτῶν καὶ Μεσσήνης, οὐδ' ἂν εἰς ἀμφισβητήσῃε τῶν τῇδε πλήθει οὐδ' ἀρετῇ, οὐδ' αὖ ἀνδραπόδων κτήσῃ τῶν τε ἄλλων καὶ τῶν εἰλωτικῶν

(Pl.*Alc.*1.122d)

We know that there were wealthy and possibly aristocratic *perioikoi*,³² so Plato could be referring here to the ownership of both chattel and helot slaves by the *perioikoi*.³³ Even though there are some strange things in this part of *Alcibiades* I, this specific assertion is the sort of thing that might be true in an otherwise exaggerated context. Moving on, it would not be surprising to see perioikic soldiers employing helot attendants during battle, just as the Spartans did on occasions (Hdt.9.10.1, 9.28.2, 9.29.1). It is well-known that the helot population far outnumbered the Spartan one, but, if we look closely, so did the perioikic population. There were far more *perioikoi* in Laconia than there were Spartans. For this reason, we must assume that this large perioikic population will have needed helot labour, especially since the general consensus today is that many *perioikoi* were farmers. That helots worked on perioikic farms is therefore completely possible.

Perioikic professions aside, we must remember that the *perioikoi* were free people and any free citizen with sufficient amount of wealth could own slaves.³⁴ The fact that they were also (free) Lacedaemonians means that they may have shared the same practices as the Spartans. Both belonged to and were citizens of the Lacedaemonian state, which makes one wonder, which state owned and loaned helots? Was it the Spartan state or the Lacedaemonian state? If the latter, then we have to assume that if the Spartans had helots working their farms and working in their homes, then so did the *perioikoi*. Just as there was a hierarchy of classes in Sparta³⁵ so too there was in perioikic Laconia. That is why we cannot say that all *perioikoi* were in possession of helots; presumably not all Spartans were automatically given the right

³² E.g. the *kaloi kagathoi* mentioned in Xenophon (*Hell.*5.3.9). See also the τοῖς χαριεστάτοις τῶν περιόικων ὀπλίτας mentioned in Plutarch (*Cleom.*11).

³³ Cf. Luraghi 2009, 295, n. 112.

³⁴ This goes for both Laconian and Messenian *perioikoi*. Welwei 1974, 109, n. 5, believes Aulonite *perioikoi* could have owned helots.

³⁵ By the fourth century Xenophon was already complaining that the imbalance of wealthy and poor Spartiates in Sparta was a direct rejection of the Lycurgan reforms (*Lak.Pol.*14). Also we have the case of the *hypomeiones*, which can be roughly translated as Spartans of less inferior status. It must be noted that Spartans could lose their rights and citizenship if they did not contribute to the *syssitia*. Even the *tresantes*, or tremblers, were considered inferior.

to own helots either, except maybe *homoioi* in good standing. But what is important is that the *perioikoi* would have had the right to own helots given their status as free Lacedaemonians.

It is often said that Sparta would not have functioned without helot labour, but it is more complex than that. The Spartans needed the helots to work Spartan lands and produce food. But the Spartans needed the *perioikoi* to watch over the helots while these carried out their labours. These *perioikoi*, in turn, needed helots to fulfil the economic and commercial obligations. As complex as it may sound, what this basically means is that there was no such thing as a Spartan system. Instead, the real machine was the Lacedaemonian state. In order for the Lacedaemonian state to function properly the Spartans and the *perioikoi* needed each other, and harsh as it may sound, they eased this need by both using helot labour.

In regards to chattel slaves, if the *perioikoi* owned such slaves, then we can add another profession to the list of perioikic professions: slave-dealer.³⁶ Surely, any transactions made regarding the sale and acquisition of slaves in Laconia will have been taken care of by the *perioikoi*. It is generally agreed that the Spartans did not own chattel slaves, since they had a large amount of helot labour available.³⁷ But the *perioikoi* lived in autonomous city states which probably had their own regulations regarding the ownership of chattel slaves. Just because the Spartans did not have chattel slaves it does not follow that the same applied to the *perioikoi*. It could be that with the *perioikoi* we have a unique case of a people having use of both public and private slaves.

There is a small amount of epigraphic material which sheds light into the ownership of slaves by the *perioikoi*.³⁸ A fifth century inscription (IG V,1 1155) from Gytheion, cut into the existing rock, states that it prohibits anyone from defacing (or cutting) the stone; whoever does so, slave or master, will pay:

με̃δένᾱ vac.
ἀποστρυθεῖται·
αἱ δέ κα ἀποστρυ-
[θ]εῖται, ἀφατᾶται
ἔ̃ ho δο̃λος·

³⁶ If the *perioikoi* could be slave-dealers, then perhaps they could also be employed as λαφυροπῶλαι. This obscure group is not much mentioned in our sources but when they are it is always in a Lacedaemonian military context (Xen.Lak.Pol.13.11; Xen.Ages.1.18). The λαφυροπώλης was a seller of booty with close ties to the Lacedaemonian king. Pritchett 1991, 404 says that ‘Sparta is the only state of which we are told that λαφυροπῶλαι were part of an official retinue on campaigns and were charged with the responsibility for booty’. Since the *perioikoi* could be both merchants and soldiers, one could say that they are a perfect fit for this profession, since being a λαφυροπώλης is a combination of the two.

³⁷ Luraghi 2009, 282 says that ‘we do not seem to find chattel slaves in the Spartiates’ service during the fifth and fourth centuries’.

³⁸ See Boring 1979, 30-1 and Cartledge 2002, 154.

[—]ραι δὲ ἡόπε
νόμος, vac.
ἀποστάτο, vac.

This inscription is crucial for two main reasons. First, Gytheion was a well-known perioikic city; after all, it was the naval base of the Lacedaemonian army. Second, the inscription attests the existence of slaves in Gytheion at least during the fifth century. The inscription uses the general word for slave, δόλος, and, although we cannot preclude the possibility that it refers to helots, it is perfectly possible that it has in mind chattel slaves owned by the *perioikoi*.³⁹ Other inscriptions provide more information regarding the presence of slaves in perioikic towns. Six stelae (IG V.1.1228-33) from the sanctuary of Poseidon at perioikic Tainaron can be best described as manumission inscriptions. All six inscriptions follow the same format: a slave is freed and dedicated to the god Poseidon. All of this is then overseen by the ephor. Because Tainaron was another well-attested perioikic settlement, we are free to assume that the people freeing the slaves are *perioikoi*. Cartledge argues that the slaves are chattel slaves when he says that, despite the fact that ‘the transactions are dated by the eponymous Ephor at Sparta and that Helots used Tainaron as an asylum...from all we know it was the Spartan state alone, and not individual Spartiates, that could manumit Helots’.⁴⁰ But how can we be so sure these slaves are chattel slaves?

Just as these manumission stelae show that the *perioikoi* owned slaves, it is equally important that they mention the ephors as well. The fact that these transactions are dated by ephors shows that the *perioikoi* had to adhere to the regulations and conventions of the Lacedaemonian state. Perhaps the presence of the ephors shows that these slaves were helots after all, and their participation in these transactions is evidence that it was the state that could manumit helots. We must understand that we have very limited information on how Sparta or the Lacedaemonian state operated, especially when it came to owning and using helot labour. It may well be that these *perioikoi* in Tainaron were freeing helots in order that they could become *neodamodeis*. After all, these inscriptions are all from the fifth century, a time when we see an influx of freed helots becoming *neodamodeis*. Unbeknown to us today, this could be the very same process in which helots could become *neodamodeis*. It must be stressed that most of the evidence that we have of helotic slavery is textual and often too

³⁹ It is worth noting a unique passage in Thucydides (5.23.3), where the helots are referred to as ἡ δουλεία and not as helots. This means that saying that slaves are chattel slaves because they are not mentioned as helots is not as straightforward as one might think. This inscription could still be referring to chattel slaves in the end, but we cannot completely rule out possible helot origin.

⁴⁰ Cartledge 2002, 154. See also Cartledge 2011, 80, n.17.

vague and unclear. Although we cannot know for certain how slavery operated in Laconia, we do know it did not just involve master/Spartan and slave/helot relationships. The *perioikoi* need to be included in this equation as well since they were probably in the unique position of owning helots and chattel slaves. The study of helotic slavery has focused too much on the Spartiates and the helots; it has always been the case of how the Spartans acted towards the helots or how the helots conspired against the Spartans. But helotic slavery has never been studied with the *perioikoi* in mind as well. If we take into account the participation of the *perioikoi* in helotic slavery, then we can begin to understand better how the Lacedaemonian state operated towards slavery.

The *perioikoi* as overseers of the helots

The other case where we can see *perioikoi* interacting with helots is completely different from the one discussed above. Although there is no explicit example in Greek texts that mentions *perioikoi* as overseers of helots, we can assume from the strategic geographic positions of their cities that the *perioikoi* had a role to play in the control of the helots. It is plausible to imagine a scenario in which some *perioikoi* acted as overseers of the helots. Although this has been suggested before, this picture of the *perioikoi* guarding helots is important because it gives us an insight not just into perioikic mentality, but into Spartan mentality as well.⁴¹ It therefore deserves further exploration.

Loyalty to Sparta and Lacedaemon was the main priority of most *perioikoi* in Laconia. The mutual dependence of Spartans and the *perioikoi* was vital for the prosperity of Laconia and for the Lacedaemonian state's maintenance of its position in the Greek world. In these terms it was in the best interest of the *perioikoi* that the potentially disruptive helots were kept at bay. The Spartans needed the *perioikoi* to help them watch over the helots, given that there were insufficient Spartans to accomplish the task by themselves; and the *perioikoi* needed the Spartans to take care of foreign affairs. We can even say that the helots would probably have revolted more frequently than they did were it not for the fact that the *perioikoi* kept constant watch over them.

Nonetheless, we need to ask ourselves in what specific scenarios could we imagine the *perioikoi* acting as overseers of the helots. We need to understand first that the helots in Messenia probably needed a different kind of 'policing' than the helots of Laconia. Sparta's

⁴¹ Shipley 2006b, 69 says 'the perioikic *poleis* situated in Messenia will have had a kind of policing function, ensuring secure control of the helot farms there'. Cartledge 2002, 155 also suggests that 'A second related function of the *Perioikoi*, but antedating the seventh century, was to serve as a kind of territorial reserve against the Helots'.

‘Achilles’ heel, as Cartledge once called Messenian helots,⁴² were more prone to conspire and revolt against the Spartans, given that there were more helots in Messenia and they were more isolated and cut off from Sparta because of their geographic position on the other side of the Taygetos. Therefore, one can imagine that overseeing the helots of Messenia required a more ‘hands on’ approach. But an important question arises: were the *perioikoi* in charge of policing Messenia Laconian or Messenian ones? It is important to be clear that just as Messenian helots were presumably different from helots raised and living in Laconia, so too were Messenian *perioikoi* different from their Laconian counterparts.⁴³ And there is a difference too when it comes to the supervision of helots. In Laconia one is dealing with a large free Laconian population and a relatively small helot population. In Messenia it is absolutely the other way around, because the helot population is much larger than the perioikic population; therefore the dynamic is necessarily quite different from that in Laconia. Even though some perioikic settlements in Messenia (places like Aulon or Asine⁴⁴) could have served a strategic purpose in relation to irregular helot activity, many Messenian *perioikoi* were sympathetic to the anti-Spartan sentiment of the Messenian helots.⁴⁵ Shipley says in passing that it would have been up to perioikic settlements in Messenia to police the helots.⁴⁶ But one cannot automatically categorise these settlements as loyal to Sparta. I am not thoroughly convinced that the Spartans would have completely trusted these Messenian *perioikoi* to oversee this important task. That is why it was highly unlikely that many Messenian *perioikoi* were employed by the Lacedaemonians to watch over Messenian helots.

The more probable scenario is that Laconian *perioikoi* would have taken precedence over Messenian *perioikoi* for the task of overseeing Messenian helots and making sure that any disruption to Lacedaemonian rule would be kept to a minimum. But in what capacity do we imagine the *perioikoi* fulfilling such a difficult task? Even though the evidence on the *perioikoi* is scarce there are some things we can infer both from their geographic location in Laconia and their various positions in the Lacedaemonian army. We know that many of them were maritime people; not only did they serve as commanders of fleets (Thuc.8.22.1) but

⁴² Cartledge 2002, 189.

⁴³ Apart from the data collected Shipley in the last decade, Messenian *perioikoi* have received even less attention than Laconian *perioikoi* probably because we know so little about them. Luraghi 2002a, 57 also notes that ‘the presence of *perioikoi* in Messenia has not received much attention in modern research...’

⁴⁴ We now know there were at least ten perioikic settlements in Messenia. For more details see Shipley 2004b.

⁴⁵ This animosity towards the Spartans from both helot and perioikic Messenians is discussed in the next section below.

⁴⁶ Shipley 2006b, 69.

many perioikic cities were also coastal cities. Since Messenia had a long coastline as well,⁴⁷ it is not hard to imagine perioikic soldiers or even civilians policing the waters of Messenia. It would not have been unthinkable to have helots sending distress signals or secret messages via the sea. In such cases the Lacedaemonians would have needed troops or lookouts to quell these kinds of activities, and it is not farfetched to think that the *perioikoi* were more than capable of doing so. Thus, in effect, one of the services of the Laconian *perioikoi* was to block the coastline to prevent helots from escaping by sea to other parts of the Mediterranean and to stop helots sending out messages to sympathizers.

Another capacity in which the *perioikoi* could have acted as overseers in Messenia was as local or regional governors. In other words, as a sort of quasi harmosts. We know that harmosts were Lacedaemonian governors abroad.⁴⁸ But there is evidence for the existence of harmosts closer to home. A fourth-century inscription (IG V, 1 937) places a Spartan harmost in Kythera, which is both part of the Lacedaemonian territory and perioikic. This inscription is rather cryptic since it is only composed of three lines and it is from Kythera, a place one does not normally associate with having harmosts. Nonetheless, in terms of the language, it could not be any clearer: it contains a Greek name and the word harmost (i.e. Μένανδρος ἄρμοστῆρ Τινδαρίδαις). Therefore, if we assume that Menander was a Spartan harmost at Kythera we have to assume that such office could be held in other parts of Laconia and Messenia.⁴⁹ W. G. Forrest suggests that even though we have this piece of evidence, it is still ‘unlikely that such officials regularly governed the towns of the *perioikoi*’.⁵⁰ One may add that this was also highly unlikely because the *perioikoi* were Lacedaemonians and one could hardly think of a reason to have a harmost in autonomous perioikic territories. Therefore, just as the Κυθηροδίκης, this harmost could have been placed at Kythera for specific strategic reasons, and not because it was perioikic. Messenia, on the other hand, although under the control of the Spartans, was seemingly foreign and inhabited by Messenians, not Lacedaemonians. This means that it was perfectly possible to have perioikic harmosts operating locally. The fact that the Messenian helots did not revolt as much as one would

⁴⁷ Luraghi 2002a, 57 summarizes: ‘perioikic towns were scattered along the coast of the Messenian Gulf, from Kalamai, the modern Eleochorion (formerly Yiannitza), at the end of an important route crossing the Taygetos, to Pharai, on the site of modern Kalamata, and Thouria, further inland on a ridge dominating the Pamisos valley but probably extending its territory to the coast, then Asine, south along the Akritas peninsula, Mothone on the other side of it, and north of Mothone, Koryphasion and Kyparissiai, on the west coast of Messenia, and finally Aulon, controlling the access to the region from the valley of the Neda’.

⁴⁸ See Parke 1931; Bockisch 1965; Cartledge 1987, 91-2. See also Schol on Pind. *Ol.* 6.154.

⁴⁹ Of course, there is no way of knowing whether Menander was simply a harmost-rank Lacedaemonian in Kythera, simply passing through, or a *de facto* harmost of Kythera.

⁵⁰ Forrest 2012.

imagine means that any overseeing that took place either by the Spartans or the *perioikoi* was successful.

When it comes to Laconian helots, or Messenian helots living and working the farms in Laconia, the approach to keeping watch over them will have been different from that in Messenia. This time it was different because it was the helots who were living in ‘foreign’ territory. In other words, any helot living and working in Laconia was going to be surrounded either by Spartans, or most probably by the *perioikoi*. Thus, any attempt to control or keep watch over them will have been easier, or at least safer. There is no way of knowing for certain how many helots lived under Spartan rule.⁵¹ In fact, according to Scheidel, ‘the actual size of the Helot population at any particular point of Spartan history will forever remain unknown’.⁵² Yet, it has always been assumed that they greatly outnumbered the Spartans. But this limited view only takes into consideration Spartan numbers vis-à-vis helot numbers. It never acknowledges that Lacedaemonian *perioikoi*, who were loyal to the Spartans, and were in all probability far more numerous than both the Spartans and the helots. We can therefore suggest that the Lacedaemonians greatly outnumbered the helots in Laconia.

Starting from this assumption we can begin to piece together in what capacity the *perioikoi* acted as overseers and kept watch over the helots in Laconia. Since there were many *perioikoi* we can imagine their role in the supervision of helots in Laconia was more varied than in Messenia. One probable occupation was manning the various fortifications of Laconia. If we look at the evidence prior to the classical period, we see that fortifications were present at Laconia even before the Lacedaemonians came to inhabit the Peloponnese. For example, the acropolis at Geronthrai was fortified as early as the Early Helladic II period.⁵³ A few millennia later, Pausanias (3.22.6) describes how Geronthrai was ‘inhabited before the Heracleidae came to Peloponnesus, but the Dorians of Lacedaemon expelled the Achaean inhabitants and afterwards sent to it settlers of their own’. He also says that during his time it ‘belonged to the free Laconians’. We can assume that these Ἐλευθερολακῶνες were none other than the *perioikoi*. But in earlier times there were also fortifications in Laconia. There are forts attested at Agios Konstantinos in Sellasia and in Epidaurus Limena, which were definitely archaic and classical.⁵⁴ Shipley rightly suggests that the *perioikoi* ‘may themselves have built the various fortresses that appeared from the late archaic period

⁵¹ See Figueira 2003, 195-8.

⁵² Scheidel 2003, 240.

⁵³ See Forsén 2010, 61.

⁵⁴ See Shipley 2006b, 62, 66-7.

onwards'.⁵⁵ However, he believes that the main purpose of these forts was to protect Laconia from outside – and invading – forces. While this is definitely true, it was not going to be the only purpose.

These forts – presumably occupied by local *perioikoi* – also served a more immediate and local purpose. It is possible that they found more use towards the overseeing of the helots than to the threat of outside forces. The Spartans were not the only ones prepared for a surprise helot revolt. Perioikic troops stationed at different forts across Laconia were also prepared for any surprise or imminent attack from the helots. By manning these forts they would have the capacity to withstand any threat from the helots at least until Spartan – or even perioikic – reinforcements arrived.

Such forts could also serve as boundaries between neighbouring helots. Cartledge suggests that 'forts at Kosmas and Trinasos prevented the Helots from communicating with the outside world respectively across Parnon and by sea'.⁵⁶ The same applies to Messenia. Cartledge says that 'the fort at Vasiliko divided the Messenians from the south-west Arkadians, and Aulon blocked the way to Triphylia and Elis'.⁵⁷ The forts were, therefore, multi-functional and would have acted as a defence against conspiring helots. One can also imagine that these forts had a psychological effect on the helots. Forts are meant to be seen by the enemy. But in the case of the helots they would have acted as watch towers as well. The knowledge that the *perioikoi* were always keeping watch would have been sufficient to quell the thought of any revolt.

What about the *perioikoi* who worked amongst the helots? We cannot assume that those keeping watch on the helots only did so from the comfort of forts. The great majority probably worked in close proximity to the helots; specific groups of *perioikoi* keeping close watch on small groups of helots. Most helots worked the farms of their masters in an agrarian capacity. In the past decade there has been much discussion of the helots who worked on Spartiate farms at home (i.e. Sparta) and further afield (i.e. Laconia and Messenia). Using relevant comparative material and ancient evidence, Hodkinson has tried to piece together the supervision – or lack thereof – of helots working Spartiate lands.⁵⁸ He realises that the general pattern seen in societies that used the system of slavery is that 'absentee' slave owners relied on slave overseers, and he classifies Spartan landowners as absentees.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Shipley 2006b, 69.

⁵⁶ Cartledge 2002, 155.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Hodkinson 2003 and 2008.

⁵⁹ Hodkinson 2003, 265, 267.

Understandably, he asks ‘how absentee Spartiate citizens could ensure the effective management of their distant estates’.⁶⁰

The evidence he uses comes in the form of an entry in Hesychius’ lexicon. The Greek term *mnôionomoi* has come to mean ‘leader of the helots’.⁶¹ While Hodkinson agrees there are different types of *mnôionomoi*, due to the varied locations of Spartiate lands,⁶² he assumes – following Ducat – that the *mnôionomoi* were themselves helots. However, we have to consider perioikic involvement in the practice of overseeing the private lands of Spartiates, in whatever capacity. In fact, we have to assume that many of the helots supervised by *mnôionomoi* worked perioikic lands, but we shall come back to that soon. One explicit solution to Hodkinson’s question about Spartan supervision of their distant estates is that they employed *perioikoi* as *mnôionomoi*. Hodkinson mentions the *perioikoi* but only in passing and not as possible *mnôionomoi*, but as supervisors of the *mnôionomoi*: ‘it is possible (though by no means certain) that, in order to monitor the activities of *mnôionomoi* under distant estates, some wealthy Spartiates may have appointed outside agents, most plausibly, perhaps, drawn from among the *perioikoi*’.⁶³

We can definitely envisage a scenario in which careful Spartiates would have hired their fellow Lacedaemonians to – in a sense – watch the watchmen. After all, if there was a group in Laconia that the Spartiates could definitely trust it was the *perioikoi*. Therefore, by having perioikic personnel as supervisors of the *mnôionomoi*, the Spartiates could rely on the *perioikoi* to make sure that the *mnôionomoi* were doing their jobs of overseeing the helots.

Nonetheless, the topic of land ownership in Laconia has for too long been treated as though the Spartiates were the only ones who could own lands. But it is now generally accepted that the *perioikoi* were also landowners.⁶⁴ This means that, if a *perioikos* lived in a perioikic *polis* but had land on the outskirts or in another part of Laconia, then it is possible that he employed *mnôionomoi* as well. Whether he himself employed other *perioikoi* to watch over the *mnôionomoi* is, of course, another matter. But we cannot disregard the possibility that: (i) perioikic landowners with lands abroad employed *mnôionomoi*; (ii) they could have employed other *perioikoi* as supervisors of the *mnôionomoi*; and (iii) that these *mnôionomoi* could have been perioikic as well.

⁶⁰ Hodkinson 2003, 268.

⁶¹ See Wilamowitz-Moellendorff 1924, 273 for the emended version of the phrase.

⁶² Hodkinson 2003, 268-9.

⁶³ Hodkinson 2003, 269.

⁶⁴ See Larsen 1970; Ridley 1974; Cartledge 2002.

This brings one to the next point. What evidence do we have that the *mnôionomoi* were strictly helots? According to the LSJ the $\mu\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ was a class of serfs or vassals. Ducat uses the poem of Hybrias (in Athenaeus 695f-696a) as evidence that the $\mu\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ were slaves working an estate.⁶⁵ Hodkinson analyses the role of the *mnôionomoi* starting from the assumption that they were helots. He says the privileged relationship between Spartiates and the *mnôionomoi* ‘reinforced the authority of wealthy helot households’, and that ‘the influence exercised by those prominent helots...may in turn have contributed towards the maintenance of order and the stifling, for the most part, of protest against Spartan rule’.⁶⁶ If we follow this theory then two possibilities arise. First, that the majority of the *mnôionomoi* were privileged helots chosen probably for their proven support of the Lacedaemonians. Secondly, that Spartiate masters who did not fully trust their *mnôionomoi* might have employed perioikic overseers on a permanent basis, or at least until the *mnôionomoi* had proved that they could be trusted by their Spartiate masters.

However, even if Hodkinson usually refers to them as helot *mnôionomoi*, there is still the possibility that the *mnôionomoi* were perioikic.⁶⁷ If a *mnôionomos* was strictly a leader of the helots, or, in today’s term, an overseer of the helots, then there is reason to believe that the *perioikoi* could have also been leaders of the helots. Why appoint *perioikoi* as watchers of the *mnôionomoi* if they could perform the job themselves? Just because the term $\mu\nu\omicron\iota\alpha$ denotes a class of serf or vassal does not mean that the *mnôionomoi* have to be helot overseers of other helots. The *nomos* part of the word just expresses you are in charge of something; it does not imply that you are part of the something or identical with it. On the contrary, if anything it implies one is external to it. In a sense, Hodkinson is contradicting himself when he compares the *mnôionomoi* with the *paidonomos*;⁶⁸ the *paidonomos* is not a *pais*, so why should the *mnôionomos* be a *mnôia*?⁶⁹ It makes more sense for a free person to oversee a group of slaves; and besides a Spartiate, no other group would be more qualified than the *perioikoi*. Perhaps a reason why there should be a special name for people in charge of the helots is precisely because those people are *perioikoi*. Laconia is a unique place for

⁶⁵ Ducat 1990, 63, 74. See also Hodkinson 2003, 268-9 and 2008, 308-9.

⁶⁶ Hodkinson 2003, 277-8.

⁶⁷ Linguistically speaking, the word itself does not have to be restricted to helots.

⁶⁸ Xenophon’s definition of the *paidonomos* can be found in *Lak.Pol.2.2*, which clearly states that the position was held by an adult and not a child. On the *paidonomos* see Ducat 2006a and Kennell 2013.

⁶⁹ Specifically, Hodkinson 2003, 268, n. 44 says, ‘the term *mnôionomoi* itself implies a controlling and supervisory role, just as the *paidonomos* had charge of and responsibility for the youths in the Spartiate upbringing’.

sub-classes and many special names and particular categories. Hence, the theory of perioikic *mnôionomoi* is entirely plausible.

The analyses above point to the *perioikoi* having a direct role in the maintaining and controlling of the helot population in Laconian and Messenia. This means that any helot thinking of revolting or conspiring against the Spartans would think twice before asking a Laconian *perioikos* for help. But there are always dissidents and traitors in any society, and Laconia was no exception. In order to grasp a full picture of the role of the *perioikoi* in Lacedaemonian society we must also look at the small – and mainly Messenian – group of *perioikoi* disloyal to Sparta.

Choosing helots over Spartans: rebellious *perioikoi*

Just as there was a Lacedaemonian identity felt by the Spartans and the *perioikoi*, we need to acknowledge a Messenian identity as well.⁷⁰ This identity – like the Lacedaemonian one – also included *perioikoi*, but this time Messenian *perioikoi*. It is now widely agreed that the treacherous *perioikoi* our sources wrote about were mostly Messenian *perioikoi*.⁷¹ Luraghi states that ‘Some of these *perioikoi* participated with the Helots in the revolt after the earthquake, and...that they played a key role in the emergence of the Messenian identity of the rebel’.⁷² This is why we cannot categorise the *perioikoi* as a homogeneous group. Perioikic settlements and *poleis* were autonomous and self-governing. We cannot, therefore, assume that they all felt closely related to each other just because they were *perioikoi*. Shipley says that ‘assuming the *Perioikoi* were not, culturally speaking, perfectly homogeneous, there may have been no great fellow-feeling (let alone solidarity) between men from different places’.⁷³ He is right when he says the *perioikoi* may not have been homogeneous, but he may be overemphasizing difference by saying ‘there may have been no great fellow-feeling (let alone solidarity)’ between them.

Finding nothing in common with one group does not mean that there was automatically antagonism or animosity between them. An ordinary Athenian might not have found anything in common with an Ionian, but he knew that they were both Greeks, and during the Ionian Revolt they showed great solidarity for them due to their shared

⁷⁰ On Messenian identity see Luraghi 2002a, 2008 and 2009.

⁷¹ It is unfortunate that we know so little about Messenian *perioikoi*. How one pictures the internal demography and relationships between people within Messenia is still a mystery. We know what happens when the Messenians occasionally rebel. But in all the long years when they are not rebelling, how many Spartans or Laconian *perioikoi* were there in Messenia?

⁷² Luraghi 2002a, 45.

⁷³ Shipley 1992, 224.

‘Greekness’. In the case of Laconian *perioikoi*, even though they might have lived far apart and in their own autonomous *poleis*, one common trait that all possessed was a Lacedaemonian identity. Hall says that ‘the *perioikoi* were...*conscious* conspirators in the Spartan promotion of a Lakedaimonian identity...’⁷⁴ The key word there is conscious; not only did Laconian *perioikoi* support and push for a Lacedaemonian identity, they willingly promoted it. Fortunately, the textual evidence supports this. Most scholars today agree that Laconian *perioikoi* stayed loyal to the Spartans until the collapse of Sparta in the fourth century; and those who rebelled were almost exclusively Messenian *perioikoi*.⁷⁵ In fact, not once did Laconian *perioikoi* rebel against the Spartans in the fifth century. The only time they rebelled *en masse* was in the fourth century during the Theban invasion of Laconia.⁷⁶

The same cannot be said of the *perioikoi* of Messenia. If two ordinary Laconian *perioikoi*, apart from their Lacedaemonian identity, found nothing else in common with each other, then we can suppose that Messenian *perioikoi* had nothing in common with Laconian *perioikoi*. They did not even have shared identity with each other, as the Laconians had. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the majority of instances of rebellious activity from the perioikic sector comes from those of Messenian ethnicity. Even though they were free, they found more common ground – culturally and ethnically – with the unfree helots of Messenia than with Laconian *perioikoi*. What they also probably shared was the animosity and hatred sometimes felt towards their Spartan neighbours. Messenian *perioikoi* will have perceived their Laconian neighbours as completely different from them. Luraghi even admits that, in regards to Messenian *perioikoi*, ‘the extension of their presence makes it hard to believe that they might all have come from Lakonia’.⁷⁷ Therefore, some of them probably never experienced life in Laconia and only interacted with native Messenian helots.

This explains why during the famous helot revolt in the aftermath of the earthquake of c.464/5, the only perioikic people to join the revolt against the Spartans were Messenian. Cartledge says this is the only time before the Thebans liberated Messenia that we see the *perioikoi* joining the helots in a revolt.⁷⁸ Thucydides names – and in a sense shames – the participating perioikic settlements of Aithaia and Thouria (1.101.2): he says both helots and these *perioikoi* retreated to Ithome, where they stood their ground for ten years before

⁷⁴ Hall 2000, 87 (my italics).

⁷⁵ Shipley 1992, 224 and 2006b, 70-1; Hall 2000, 87; Cartledge 2002, 155. This loyalty is mostly seen through their active participation in the Lacedaemonian army, which will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

⁷⁶ As this did not involve cooperation with the helots, it will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁷⁷ Luraghi 2002a, 59.

⁷⁸ Cartledge 2002, 155.

agreeing to terms and leaving the Peloponnese for good (1.103.1-3).⁷⁹ Luraghi claims that one would have expected these *perioikoi* to be on Sparta's side.⁸⁰ But is it really that difficult to believe these Messenian *perioikoi* sided with the helots in the revolt? The short answer would be no. These *perioikoi* were Messenian and thus felt more inclined to support their helot comrades because of their shared Messenian identity. What would have been unexpected in this scenario was to find Laconian *perioikoi* joining the revolt.

Luraghi uses as evidence 'the fact that the *perioikoi* in Messenia had a material culture that is indistinguishable from that of the *perioikoi* in Lakonia'. That 'the evidence from Archaic and Early Classical Messenia... would lead us to expect the inhabitants of that region to understand themselves as ethnically Lakedaimonian'.⁸¹ But this does not mean that they felt Laconian or Lacedaemonian.⁸² They were definitely not citizens of Laconia or possessors of a Lacedaemonian identity, at least not the one Hall is referring to. That they had the same material culture as Laconian *perioikoi* could be due to its being imposed on them by the Spartans and the Lacedaemonians. Luraghi himself admits that this could be due to the 'political integration in the Spartan state'.⁸³ Although very useful, the limited material evidence we have will never tell us how these *perioikoi* from Aithaia and Thouria felt. That they joined the helots against the Spartans does tell us that, however much Lacedaemonian ware they might have, it did not change their will to revolt against the Spartans.

We know that the Lacedaemonian army fought with these rebels for years. What most scholars forget or never mention is that this was one of the few instances where *perioikoi* would have faced other *perioikoi* in open conflict. The Laconian *perioikoi* in the army presumably did not feel any solidarity or sympathy towards these Messenian *perioikoi*. Just as the Spartans, they saw these *perioikoi* for what they were, rebels who were trying to destabilise the Lacedaemonian order. The great majority of the *perioikoi* were loyal to the Spartans, and probably many of the Messenian *perioikoi* themselves would have been at least comfortable enough with the Spartans to live side by side with them without causing any problems. Ironically, evidence of this is the revolt itself. Only Aithaia and Thouria joined the revolt. Shipley concludes that at least ten perioikic settlements existed in Messenia – and

⁷⁹ Finley 1972, 95, n. 20 says that 'this figure [of ten years] has been the cause of endless controversy. One plausible solution is to read 'four' for 'ten' in the manuscripts: the evidence that the revolt did not last ten years is firm'. For further discussion of the chronology of the revolt see Gomme 1956, 302-3 and Hornblower 1991, 160.

⁸⁰ Luraghi 2002a, 61.

⁸¹ Luraghi 2002a, 66.

⁸² Gallego 2005, 54 believes that perioikic intervention in this revolt had 'ethnic-nationalist connotations'.

⁸³ Luraghi 2002a, 66.

there were probably others about whom we know nothing.⁸⁴ If only two, out of at least ten, revolted, then the vast majority was loyal to Sparta even though they were Messenian.

The other major incident which involves *perioikoi* conspiring with the helots against the Spartans is the infamous episode of Cinadon (Xen.*Hell.*3.3.6). This episode, however, is unique in that it mentions the *perioikoi* only once and as part of a larger group which included helots, *neodamodeis* and *hypomeiones*. We do not know if these *perioikoi* were Messenian or Laconian. Cinadon does say that the men from these groups hated the Spartiates enough to eat them raw. We shall never know where these *perioikoi* hailed from but judging from the fact that they hated the Spartans with a passion it is more likely that he is talking about Messenian *perioikoi*. Xenophon says that in order to trick the conspirators, the Spartans sent Cinadon and his followers to Aulon to arrest Aulonians and helots, including the most beautiful woman of Aulon, who was corrupting Lacedaemonians old and young. What we know for certain is that certain perioikic Aulonians and helots were wanted by the Spartans for reasons unknown to us. This is another case where Messenian *perioikoi* and helots are possibly conspiring against the Lacedaemonians. Hodkinson suggests that we might be ‘dealing with helot fugitives and *perioikoi* harbouring them’.⁸⁵

Cartledge says that ‘students and scholars are now in the extraordinarily fortunate position of being able to work from a dedicated collection of articles, the product of the world’s first Helotological conference (Luraghi and Alcock 2003)’.⁸⁶ Yet, if one examines most of these works one will begin to realise that the topic of helot interaction with the *perioikoi* is still inadequately addressed. This chapter has tried to do something to fill the gap. *Perioikoi* had various relationships with helots. In the special case of Messenia we do find (Messenian) *perioikoi* conspiring with the helots against the Spartans because of their shared identity as Messenians. But most *perioikos*-helot interaction put the *perioikoi* on the side of the Spartans – guarding against helot subversion from the many forts throughout Laconia; supervising or themselves acting as the *mnôionomoi* used by Spartans to supervise helots working on Spartan land; employing helots themselves to work on land in perioikic territory. Cretan *perioikoi* may have been analogous to helots, but Laconian ones were definitely not, and an examination of perioikic-helot interaction brings this home. *Perioikoi* had much more in common with Spartans than with helots, and if we want to understand perioikic mentality, we should look at the Spartans rather than at the helots.

⁸⁴ Shipley 2004b and 2006b, 58-9.

⁸⁵ Hodkinson 2003, 267.

⁸⁶ Cartledge 2011, 88.

Chapter 4. The *Perioikoi* and the Spartans

In the last chapter perioikic-helot relationship was examined thoroughly to the point that it was possible to look at the helots from a different perspective. Now, this chapter will do the same but instead of considering the helots, it will address the Spartans. It is not hard to visualise the Spartans interacting with the *perioikoi* on a daily basis. They would have done so at home (in Sparta and the perioikic *poleis*) and abroad during military campaigns. Since the Spartans were the other major force of the Lacedaemonian army it is important to analyse how they lived and operated side-by-side with the *perioikoi*. Studies have explored many aspects of Spartan life that have shed light into their society and have successfully attempted to dismantle the ‘Spartan mirage’ in order to understand a more realistic perspective of Spartan life.¹ Yet Spartan life did not revolve only around Sparta, but also around Laconia and overall Lacedaemonian society, which, inevitably, included the *perioikoi*. Therefore, this chapter will explore the cultural, military and social cohesiveness that existed between the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. Various aspects will be considered and analysed: their professional relationships as soldiers in the Lacedaemonian army, their common interests and interactions through religious festivals and games, and the low incidence of perioikic disloyalty.

Friends or foes: the relationship between Spartans and *perioikoi*

The reader needs to understand from the outset that explicit references in our sources to Spartan-perioikic relationship are virtually non-existent. If one sets out to look for instances where a ‘Spartan’ is interacting with a ‘perioikos’, one will only find a handful of cases. Nevertheless, we can sometimes identify hints or glimpses of Spartans interacting with suspected *perioikoi*.

Edmond Lévy says that *la fidélité* of the *perioikoi* can be explained politically, socially, and psychologically: politically because they depended on Sparta for foreign policy, socially because they had the same relationship to helots that Spartans did, and psychologically because they reaped the benefits of the success of the Spartans.² Perioikic loyalty, however, cannot be summarised in a few sentences. Most scholars tend to use the same reasons to support their claim for perioikic loyalty: mainly that there are almost no

¹ See for example Powell and Hodkinson 2002.

² Lévy 2003, 154.

cases of perioikic rebellion against the Spartans.³ But it is more complicated than just saying that the *perioikoi* were loyal because they rarely rebelled. Scholars tend to use this as the main piece of evidence for their loyalty because for a long time there has been a habit of comparing helots with the *perioikoi*. As I showed in the previous chapter, these two groups were completely different in every respect.

One measure of the *perioikoi* being the friends rather than the enemies of Sparta is undoubtedly that they do not habitually or indeed almost ever revolt. Surely they had numerous opportunities to revolt during the fifth century, especially during the continuous attacks on their cities during the Peloponnesian War. But they never did, and this is testament to their loyalty to the Lacedaemonian state. This brings one to another pitfall in how scholars have analysed perioikic loyalty to Sparta. The idea of the *perioikoi* loyal to Sparta because Sparta is their superior and they are better off being for them than against them is misleading.⁴ The *perioikoi* are not second-rate Lacedaemonians to the Spartans, which is why this section argues against the narrow interpretation of loyalty. Spartans and *perioikoi* are both Lacedaemonians and herein lies the true loyalty, not to Sparta alone, but to the Lacedaemonian state. We should not confuse perioikic loyalty to Sparta with opportunism. It is not that they were loyal because they had the protection of Sparta, but by both being Lacedaemonian, both being the main operatives of the Lacedaemonian army, the joint cooperation and partnership of Spartans and *perioikoi* is what made Lacedaemon the strongest state during most of the classical period.

Nonetheless, while the absence of perioikic revolts is good evidence for their loyalty, it is not the only reason why we should see the *perioikoi* as Sparta's most loyal companions. It is in the Lacedaemonian army where we can truly understand perioikic loyalty to Sparta and the Lacedaemonian state. Shipley says that the *perioikoi* should not be seen 'as subjects but as fellow members...of the Lakedaimonian ethnic body and polity, helping to create, and subsequently sharing in the benefits of, its military success'.⁵ If one really wishes to appreciate the unswerving loyalty of the *perioikoi* one needs to look no further than the Lacedaemonian army. For decades the army has been analysed and studied in relation to Sparta and the Spartans,⁶ but hardly from a perioikic point of view.

When we think of the *perioikoi* in the Lacedaemonian army we automatically think of the five thousand who fought at Plataea. The fact that the *perioikoi* contributed the same

³ Shipley, 1997, 202; Flower 1991, 79; Cartledge 2002, 155; Lévy 2003, 153-4.

⁴ Lévy 2003, 154.

⁵ Shipley 1997, 213.

⁶ See Lazenby 1985, and for a general overview of the army Hodkinson and Powell 2006.

number of soldiers as the Spartans shows that their resolve was the same as the Spartans. Perhaps it is unsurprising that it is during the Persian Wars – when Greece was at the brink of being conquered by the Persians – when we see the largest number of perioikic troops in battle. The *perioikoi*, just like the Spartans, knew that the stakes were high and thus wanted to make sure they were useful in war. One can imagine that many *perioikoi* would have wanted to enlist in the army for the purpose of fighting the Persians, but only the best were chosen.⁷

However, perioikic loyalty in the Persian Wars is not just a matter of Plataea. Although discussed extensively later on, it should be briefly noted that perioikic troops were present at Thermopylae – a fact often overlooked by modern scholarship.⁸ Isocrates (4.90, 92, 6.99-100) and Diodorus (11.4.2, 5) both mention the presence of one thousand Lacedaemonians, from which we can deduce that seven hundred perioikic troops were involved. If we are to believe these two authors then here is another case of the *perioikoi* being loyal to the Lacedaemonian – and in this case the overall Greek – cause. Scholars often stress that the five thousand *perioikoi* at Plataea represented a small number in comparison to the extent of perioikic territory.⁹ But what did it mean having only seven hundred *perioikoi*? If these seven hundred did indeed stay until the end with the Spartans then surely they would have been held in high regard in Laconia for their sacrifice and devotion to the Lacedaemonian state. The Spartans would have wanted only the most loyal and trustworthy companions at their side, and it is probable that these *perioikoi* were either chosen for their unmistakable loyalty or that they volunteered.

Perioikic presence in decisive battles is not the only display of loyalty during the classical period. One of the things we can infer from the specific examples of named *perioikoi* in our sources is a sense of companionship and comradeship between the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. For example, one could say that Neon the Asinean was the right-hand man of the Spartan Cheirisophus during the journey of the Ten Thousand. He is a unique character because of his prominence in Xenophon's *Anabasis* and because he is the most visible *perioikos* in our sources.¹⁰ Although Neon himself will be analysed in detail in the next chapter (i.e. his military role), it is important to trace and analyse his interactions with the Spartans. After all, he is the only *perioikos* in our sources who interacts with a Spartan (i.e. Cheirisophus) on a constant basis.

⁷ The case of the five thousand perioikic *logades* will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

⁸ See van Wees 2004, 84 and 2007, 277 and n. 13; Hodkinson 2006, 151, n. 74.

⁹ Cartledge 1987, 40 and van Wees 2007, 278, n. 15.

¹⁰ 5.3.4, 6.36, 7.1; 6.2.13, 14, 15, 4.11, 23, 5.4; 7.1.40, 2.1, 2, 11, 17, 29, 3.2, 7.

Figure 10 below lists all of Neon's appearances alongside Spartans and Lacedaemonians in Xenophon's *Anabasis*. From a quick glance one can see that Neon is closely associated to Cheirisophus; and we can assume it was Cheirisophus who made Neon his lieutenant. After all, among a possibly larger class of wholeheartedly trusted individuals, Neon was the one picked out as second-in-command. Neon even sometimes acts as intermediary between Cheirisophus and Xenophon (6.2.13-5). By telling Xenophon to go his own way, Neon is informally acting on behalf of Cheirisophus because the latter is too angry (at losing command of the army) to care. What is important here is that Cheirisophus basically tells Neon to take care of matters by himself; this shows the amount of trust Cheirisophus had in Neon. Figure 10 shows various other examples of this trust. In 5.3.4 the portion of the sale of captives that belonged to Cheirisophus was given to Neon. We can infer that since Cheirisophus was temporarily absent he asked Neon to keep his possessions safe until he returned. In fact, Cheirisophus' trust in Neon was such that he left him, and no other, in charge while he was away (5.6.36).¹¹ Neon is always seen looking out for Cheirisophus' best interest, and at the end he is duly rewarded by becoming commander of Cheirisophus' troops because of the latter's sudden death. Neon replaced him because he was worthy, and because he was Cheirisophus' main confidant. We can assume that the latter left instructions at some point that if anything were to happen to him Neon would take his place.

¹¹ Lee 2007, 58 says that 'one general who certainly entrusted his contingent to a *hupostrategos* was Cheirisophus, who left Neon of Asine in charge'. Lee focuses on the fact that Cheirisophus left a contingent in the charge of a *hupostrategos*. But it was not because Neon was a *hupostrategos* that he was left in charge, but because he was a fellow-Lacedaemonian trusted by another Lacedaemonian. That Neon was Cheirisophus' right-hand man mattered more than the fact that he was a *hupostrategos*.

Neon (Xen.An.)	Event
5.3.4	The portion from the sale of captives that belonged to Cheirisophus was given to Neon
5.6.36	Neon was acting as lieutenant for Cheirisophus because Cheirisophus had not yet returned
6.2.13	Neon urged Xenophon to go by himself and not with Cheirisophus
6.2.14	It was Neon's purpose that no one else should get a share in this opportunity, but that he himself and Cheirisophus and their soldiers should sail away upon the triremes
6.2.15	Cheirisophus allowed Neon to do whatever he chose
6.4.11	After Cheirisophus' death, his command passed to Neon
6.4.23	Now Neon was general in place of Cheirisophus, and when he saw in what a terrible condition the soldiers were from want, he was desirous of doing them a kindness...
7.2.2	Neon wanted to go to the Chersonese, thinking that if the troops should fall under the control of the Lacedaemonians, he would be leader of the entire army

Figure 10. Instances Neon is mentioned alongside Spartans and Lacedaemonians.

Thus, the relationship between Cheirisophus and Neon is a clear example of a Spartiate and a *perioikos* living, fighting and functioning side-by-side before, during and after war. Of course, the context of the *Anabasis* is unique in that it is a mercenary army and not a state army. Nonetheless, we can assume that if Neon and Cheirisophus worked so closely and effectively in a chaotic environment such as this, then working together in the Lacedaemonian army would have been a normal day-to-day occurrence. However, Neon does not disappear after Cheirisophus' death. Interestingly enough, one passage which shows the kind of relationship (and reputation) he might have had with the Spartans can be seen in 7.2.2. Here Xenophon tells us that Neon wanted to go to the Chersonese, thinking that if the troops should fall under the control of the Lacedaemonians, he would be leader of the entire army. That he believed he could only attain command if the army was in Lacedaemonian hands shows that he expected Spartans in general (not just Cheirisophus) to think highly of him and judge him capable of fulfilling this job. Either Neon was delusional for thinking he could be in command of the whole army, which I think is highly unlikely, or he truly believed

he could achieve this because of his respectable and solid reputation amongst the Spartans. The Spartans trusted Neon, and he was clearly appreciative of this trust.¹² The relationship between Neon and Cheirisophus is thus the perfect example of the ‘fellow-feeling among Lakedaimonians’ Shipley speaks about.¹³

Neon is not the only named *perioikos* who functions alongside Spartiates. Another *perioikos* also found in the *Anabasis* is Dexippus. Dexippus, at first, was also deemed trustworthy enough to be given command of a fifty-oared warship, even though he decided to ignore his orders and sailed away (5.1.15; 6.6.22). This is further evidence that the *perioikoi* were master seafarers and thus useful to the Spartans. But later on we see Dexippus interacting first with Cheirisophus (6.1.32) and then more frequently with Cleander, the Lacedaemonian governor of Byzantium, in a memorable passage (6.6.5-33). In the first of these passages Cheirisophus says that Dexippus had said that he, Dexippus, thought that Xenophon wanted to support Timasion, though only a Dardanian, being in charge of Clearchus’ army rather than Dexippus, who was a Lacedaemonian. Cheirisophus probably knew Dexippus in a similar capacity to Neon, and therefore would not have objected to the former’s request to be promoted to a leadership position.¹⁴ Therefore, this example, although not as explicit as that of Neon’s, shows that the Spartans would have been fine with a *perioikos* in a leadership position. At the very least, they would have preferred a Lacedaemonian to be in command rather than a non-Lacedaemonian. In fact, it also shows that Spartans were not going to stand in their way if the *perioikoi* wanted to lead.

In the passages concerning Cleander we see Dexippus constantly at his side. He accompanies Cleander to Calpe Harbour and also acts as a quasi-informant to Cleander. In another passage we see Cleander almost defending Dexippus by saying that even if he had behaved dishonestly the soldiers should not have acted violently against him (6.6.25-6). Cleander must have known what sort of person Dexippus was. Not a single soldier was fond of Dexippus and they even called him a scoundrel and a traitor. The only person jumping to his defence was Cleander, which shows that a Spartiate’s starting point is solidarity with a Laconian *perioikos*. Indeed, we can even say that Dexippus took advantage of this trust and often acted deceitfully because he knew if he got himself into a bad situation he would have the backing of the Lacedaemonians. Dexippus regards it as natural that Cleander as a Spartan

¹² Roy 1967, 300, n. 58 rightly argues that ‘It is true that Neon had high hopes of the Spartans, never acted against Spartan wishes, and finally remained with the Spartans when the rest of the army joined Seuthes...’

¹³ Shipley 2006b, 70.

¹⁴ Millender 2006, 242, suggests that ‘while Xenophon does not clarify Dexippus’ position, both his command over the Trapezan penteconter and his connections with the leading Spartans in the region suggest that he was part of the force Sparta sent out under the command of Cheirisophus in 401’.

would side with him as against other people. One should keep in mind Xenophon's constant reminder that the Lacedaemonians were masters of Greece at that time (6.6.12-3). Therefore Dexippus was acting opportunistically and reaping the benefits of the Lacedaemonians' superiority over the rest of the Greeks. For Dexippus, being a Lacedaemonian entitles him in ways that ordinary people are not. As far as the rest of the world is concerned, it is a minor point that he is not a Spartiate. That he is a Lacedaemonian is already better.

Diodorus also portrays this view. Even though he writes more than three hundred years later, he relied heavily on Ephorus and other authors such as Timaeus.¹⁵ He says, quoting Timaeus, that 'Dexippus was tarrying in Gela, enjoying high regard by reason of the city of his birth' (Diod.13.85.3; Timaeus, BNJ 566 F 27). This can be taken to mean that Dexippus was taking advantage of Lacedaemon's dominance even before the events of the *Anabasis*. It can also mean that the locals treated him as a Spartan. Elsewhere, Diodorus relates that Dexippus was 'reputed to be not inexperienced in warfare' (13.87.5). If Dexippus was experienced in warfare, something we can also infer from the *Anabasis*, then we can assume that the Spartans would have held him in high regard not because of his personality but because of his attributes in war. We have to assume that Dexippus was a capable soldier who had trained with the Spartans therefore enjoying a good relationship with them. The fact that he is in Gela in charge of fifteen hundred men shows that the Spartans trusted him enough to carry out military affairs outside Laconia. We cannot deny that Sparta dictated foreign policy, but the fact that we have perioikic soldiers fighting in different places outside Laconia shows that the *perioikoi* were able to contribute to the execution of foreign policy. The Spartans undoubtedly found these *perioikoi* fighting abroad reliable.

That the *perioikoi* could hold important positions such as ship commanders, spies and horsemen is testimony to the degree of trust awarded to them by their Spartan comrades. Eudicus, the perioikic horseman, was struck down alongside two other named Spartiates (Xen.*Hell*.5.4.39). Eudicus was presumably thought worthy enough by the Spartans to serve alongside them. Similarly, the accounts of Diniades and Phrynus, two other *perioikoi* who also held important positions in the Lacedaemonian army, show that the Spartans could trust them to do anything. Kennell notes that the 'Perioeci could be *trusted* with sensitive intelligence missions (Thuc.8.6.4) or to command large naval forces (Thuc.8.22.1)'.¹⁶ He is, of course, referring to Diniades, the fleet commander, and Phrynus, the spy. While these named *perioikoi* will not be analysed at length in this section it is still important to point out

¹⁵ On Diodorus' account of the Ten Thousand see Westlake 1987 and Stylianou 1998 and 2004.

¹⁶ Kennell 2010, 89 (my italics).

that holding these positions of esteem and authority/power gives us another insight into Spartan-perioikic relationship. In the case of Diniades he is put in charge of a whole fleet and is, again, mentioned alongside a Spartan, Eualas, who in turn is in command of the land forces. As pointed out previously, some *perioikoi* were skilled seafarers and this example gives us further proof of that. The Spartans definitely knew this and trusted them with maritime affairs.

Phrynīs, the spy, on the other hand, has the most important role of them all (Thuc.8.6.4). His is undoubtedly the best case of Spartans' trust in a *perioikos*. The Lacedaemonians wanted to ally themselves to the Chians during the later stages of the Peloponnesian War and were persuaded to do so by numerous factors, but crucially they still wanted to make sure that the Chians were keeping their end of the bargain (8.6.3-4). 'In spite of this' as Thucydides says, they were not going to go ahead until they assessed the situation at Chios. That is when Phrynīs enters into the scenario:

But in spite of their inclination, the Lacedaemonians first sent Phrynīs, one of the Perioeci (ἄνδρα περίοικον), to Chios to see whether the Chians had as many ships as they claimed, and whether in other respects the power of the city was equal to the representations made. When he brought back word that what they had heard was true, they at once made the Chians and the Erythraeans allies, and voted to send them forty ships, there being, from what the Chians said, no fewer than sixty already there.

(Thuc.8.6.4-5)

This shows that Phrynīs was one of the most trustworthy soldiers of the Lacedaemonian army: he was sent first to corroborate information and upon returning a vote was carried out based solely on his report. The Spartans definitely showed great confidence in Phrynīs to have tasked him with this enormous and vital intelligence-gathering task. Trust in Phrynīs was, I suggest, based on previous accurate reports, previous experience and his overall expertise in maritime matters. Such undertaking was not to be left to chance but based on military reputation. Shipley says that 'Phrynīs the *perioikos* would hardly have been reported by name to Thucydides had he not enjoyed considerable status and held weighty responsibilities'.¹⁷

It is important to emphasise that these named *perioikoi* are never mentioned in a context of hostility towards a Spartan. The only isolated case we hear of violence against a *perioikos* is in the *Anabasis* (5.1.15) when Xenophon says Dexippus 'indeed [got] his deserts

¹⁷ Shipley 1997, 202.

afterwards'. Xenophon gladly informs us that Dexippus was killed at the court of Seuthes by Nicander the Laconian (Νικάνδρου τοῦ Λάκωνος). However, we should not use this passage – or in fact any passage – as a definite example of hostility between a Spartan and a *perioikos*. Xenophon describes Nicander as a Laconian, and there is no way of knowing if he was a Spartan or another *perioikos*. Indeed, this could be the only case of a *perioikos* killing another *perioikos*, which would be completely plausible.

We have now seen that the *perioikoi* were in harmony with the Spartans. They enjoyed a professional relationship with the Spartans, which made the Lacedaemonian army diverse but at the same time effective. The diversity in their roles within the Lacedaemonian army shows that the Spartans were more than comfortable with tasking the *perioikoi* with important and even course-altering missions. But if we are analysing the relationship between these two groups, we need to understand not just the mind-set of the *perioikoi*, but of the Spartans as well. Is there any way of knowing what the Spartans themselves thought about the *perioikoi*?

Spartan attitudes towards the *perioikoi*

Nowhere in our sources do we hear of Spartans referring to the *perioikoi* as inferior or of lesser status/class. On the contrary, the Spartans include the *perioikoi* in their affairs (not just military), interact with the *perioikoi* both in Sparta and in their own *perioikic poleis*, show concern over them, show appreciation for them and even explicitly praise and compliment them. That the Spartans themselves never show animosity or superiority towards the *perioikoi* cannot be stressed enough. It is for this reason that the *perioikoi* should never be compared with the Spartans in regard to who was a better citizen or a better warrior because our sources never show the Spartans engaging in this sort of rhetoric or activity.¹⁸

The *perioikoi* have suffered from a negative image in modern scholarship mainly because some ancient sources liked to portray them as being inferior or lesser to the Spartans. This is presumably due to (i) sources' oblivious unfamiliarity with how the Lacedaemonian state operated, (ii) because they are, in effect, outside sources, or (iii) simply because they benefitted from portraying the *perioikoi* as inferior. Even though modern views have changed and the *perioikoi* are now being portrayed in a better light, the misrepresentations and sometimes inaccurate depictions by ancient sources run the risk of making this false image of the *perioikoi* a factoid.

¹⁸ For a negative view of the *perioikoi* as fighters see Proietti 1987 and Humble 2006. This view will be discussed in chapter 6.

A good example of this comes from Isocrates. In his *Panathenaicus* (177-81) he speaks at length about the harsh conditions of the *perioikoi*. According to Isocrates, the mistreatment of the *perioikoi* at the hands of the Spartans ranged from making the *perioikoi* fight on the front line, sending them on perilous and suicidal missions, and (worst of all) putting them to death without trial. Isocrates portrays this last act as the worse of them all.

...reducing the mass of the people to the condition of Perioeci, subjecting their spirits to a bondage no less abject than that endured by slaves... And, having despoiled them of all the rights which free men ought to share, they imposed upon them the greatest part in all dangers. For in the campaigns which were conducted by their kings they not only ranged them man for man side by side with themselves, but some they stationed in the first line, and whenever need arose to dispatch a relief-force anywhere and they themselves were afraid of the hardships or the dangers or the length of time involved, they sent them forth to take the brunt of the danger from all the rest. But why make a long story by detailing all the outrages which were visited upon the common people? Why not, rather, mention the greatest of their misfortunes and refuse to be burdened with the rest? For over these people, who have from the beginning suffered evils so dreadful, but in present emergencies are found so useful, the Ephors have the power to put to death without trial as many as they please, whereas in the other states of Hellas it is a crime against the gods to stain one's hands with the blood of even the basest of slaves.

...τὸν δὲ δῆμον περιοίκους ποιήσασθαι, καταδουλωσαμένους αὐτῶν τὰς ψυχὰς οὐδὲν ἥττον ἢ τὰς τῶν οἰκετῶν... ἀπάντων δ' ἀποστερήσαντας αὐτοὺς ὧν προσήκει μετέχειν τοὺς ἐλευθέρους, τοὺς πλείστους ἐπιθεῖναι τῶν κινδύνων αὐτοῖς: ἐν τε γὰρ ταῖς στρατείαις, αἷς ἡγεῖται βασιλεύς, κατ' ἄνδρα συμπαράταττεσθαι σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, ἐνίους δὲ καὶ τῆς πρώτης τάττειν, ἐάν τέ που δεῖσαν αὐτοὺς ἐκπέμψαι βοήθειαν φοβηθῶσιν ἢ τοὺς πόρους ἢ τοὺς κινδύνους ἢ τὸ πλῆθος τοῦ χρόνου, τούτους ἀποστέλλειν προκινδυνεύσοντας τῶν ἄλλων. καὶ τί δεῖ μακρολογεῖν ἀπάσας διεξιόντα τὰς ὕβρεις τὰς περὶ τὸ πλῆθος γιγνομένας, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὸ μέγιστον εἰπόντα τῶν κακῶν ἀπαλλαγῆναι τῶν ἄλλων; τῶν γὰρ οὕτω μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς δεινὰ πεπονθότων, ἐν δὲ τοῖς παροῦσι καιροῖς χρησίμων ὄντων, ἔξεστι τοῖς ἐφόροις ἀκρίτους ἀποκτείνειν τοσούτους ὁπόσους ἂν βουλευθῶσιν: ἃ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἑλλήσιν οὐδὲ τοὺς πονηροτάτους τῶν οἰκετῶν ὅσιόν ἐστι μαιφονεῖν.

(Isoc. 12.178, 180-1)

The way Isocrates spins the story makes it sound as if the Spartans only did this to *perioikoi*. That is certainly not true. Plutarch (*Ages*.32.6) says that traitorous Spartiates were put to death in a similar fashion during the Theban invasion of Laconia.¹⁹ These are not just

¹⁹ Cf. Bonner and Smith 1942, 122; David 1980; MacDowell 1986, 30-1; Cartledge 1987, 164.

any ordinary Lacedaemonians being put to death but Spartans. (Plutarch himself says that this was the first time this happened,²⁰ which may or may not be a reliable assertion.²¹) In any case, Isocrates' assertion about *perioikoi* is vague and potentially misleading. Jones believes that Isocrates is wrong and was really referring to the helots. In effect, that 'he is mixing up the Perioeci with the Helots'.²² MacDowell, by contrast, insists Isocrates was right. His theory is that the Spartans already killed helots without consequence when they declared war on them on a yearly basis, and so Isocrates cannot be referring to the helots.²³ MacDowell's argument, however, falls short. First, the fact that the Spartans supposedly declared war on the helots every year has nothing to do with putting people to death without trial. Second, if the ephors could kill Spartiates and *perioikoi* without trial then they definitely could also do it to the helots. After all, they apparently put many Greeks to death without trial, if we are to believe Isocrates again. He says that the Lacedaemonians have put more Greeks to death without trial than have been put on trial in Athens since its foundation (12.66). This is, of course, a completely ludicrous exaggeration. In fact, we can take his descriptions of perioikic treatment as mere hyperbole.²⁴ Modern scholars now agree that we cannot use Isocrates as evidence of any mistreatment of the *perioikoi*; his intention in this part of *Panathenaicus* is, after all, to present the Spartans in a bad light.²⁵

But how can we truly find out what the Spartans thought of the *perioikoi*? The reality could not have been more different from Isocrates' tedious accusations. Spartans were more than comfortable with being surrounded by and in the company of the *perioikoi*. Ducat is right when he says that the Spartans considered the *perioikoi* a 'circle of first friends'.²⁶ One may take this proposition further and say that the Spartans would have confided in the *perioikoi* on many matters, political, military, religious, economic, and social. But how does this friendship materialise in our sources?

²⁰ Cf. Cartledge 2002, 254-5.

²¹ An interesting observation is the fact that there was definitely a difference between putting people to death with trial and putting them to death without trial. After all, putting people to death without trial may have been seen as barbaric, but when it came to putting them to death with trial even kings did not escape this punishment. See, for example, the case of the regent Pausanias (Xen.*Hell.*3.5.25). Cf. Shipley 2004a, 591 for other bibliography.

²² Jones 1967, 8.

²³ MacDowell 1986, 31. Cf. Plut.*Lyk.*28.

²⁴ Cartledge 2002, 151.

²⁵ Shipley 2006b, 68 says that 'only the Athenian orator (or pamphleteer) Isocrates... assimilates their status and living conditions to those of helots. He is either confused or intentionally misleading, since all the other evidence points in the opposite direction. Cartledge 2012 says that 'Isocrates was also almost certainly wrong to claim that the Spartans could put *perioikoi* to death without trial'. Even MacDowell 1986, 31 agrees that 'it is unlikely that the ephors or their emissaries regularly toured the cities of *perioikoi* and carried out executions indiscriminately'.

²⁶ Ducat 2010, 203.

From a non-military standpoint, the relationship between Spartan kings and the *perioikoi* would have been a solid one. Herodotus (6.58) says that when a king dies both Spartiates and a number of the *perioikoi* must attend the funeral of the kings.²⁷ This is a clear example of both Spartans and *perioikoi* coming together to mourn their king, because after all the kings were Spartan kings but not kings of Sparta only.²⁸ Humble says that when Xenophon speaks of “kings of the Lacedaemonians” in *Lak.Pol.*15.9 he really means kings of the Spartans.²⁹ However, this statement is inaccurate because if perioikic foreign policy was controlled by Sparta, and, as far as we know, there were no perioikic kings, then they would regard the Spartan king as their own. Shipley says ‘the [kings] were, indeed, the βασιλεῖς τῶν Λακεδαιμόνιων, ‘kings of the Lakedaimonians’, not βασιλεῖς τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν, ‘of the Spartiates’.³⁰

The kings of Sparta were Spartans but they were the kings of Lacedaemon, Laconia and Messenia, which made them kings of the Spartans, the helots and the *perioikoi*.³¹ In Herodotus’ account we see a coming together of both Spartans and *perioikoi*. Spartan kings would have been in good standing with the *perioikoi*. Not only did they fight together on campaigns of the army, but Xenophon (*Lak.Pol.*15.3) says that the kings had estates in perioikic territories (γῆν δὲ ἐν πολλαῖς τῶν περιοίκων πόλεων ἀπέδειξεν ἐξαίρετον).³² The implications of this are that the king as king of the Lacedaemonians has his own property which is supplied by the *polis* in an area of non-Spartiate *polis* territory; and this affirms his kingship over the Lacedaemonians. In fact, Hodkinson argues that ‘...we should not expect strict demarcation between areas of Spartiate and perioikic landholdings’.³³

From a military point of view, on the other hand, we have examples of Spartan kings using and depending on perioikic forces. For example, Xenophon (*Hell.*5.1.33) relates how Agesilaus, once he arrived at Tegea, ‘sent horsemen hither and thither among the Perioeci to hasten their coming’ (ἀφικόμενος εἰς τὴν Τεγέαν διέπεμπε τῶν μὲν ἱππέων κατὰ τοὺς περιοίκους ἐπισπεύσοντας). Of all kings, Agesilaus knew the *perioikoi* the best, and

²⁷ Kennell 2010, 91-92 states that ‘all of these practices emphasized the direct relationship between the perioeci, as Lacedaemonians themselves, and the king’.

²⁸ Cf. Hampl 1937, 22; Shipley 2004a, 569 and 2006b, 68.

²⁹ Humble 2006, 230-1, n. 14.

³⁰ Shipley 2006b, 68.

³¹ Ducat 2010, 196, on the other hand, recognises that Spartan kings could be kings of the Lacedaemonians but he still believes that ‘neither this phrase nor these ties imply in any way that there ever was a ‘*polis* of the Lakedaimonians’, of which the Spartan kings would have been constitutionally the kings’.

³² Cf. Hodkinson 2009b, 78-79 who says that the kings owned more lands than other citizens. He believes ‘it is highly unlikely that the kings’ possession of estates in perioikic territories was a new feature of the Spartan property system introduced only in the early fourth century’.

³³ Hodkinson 2009b, 139. Cf. also Shipley 1992.

depended on their participation. Once abroad, he would have shared battle stories with them and bonded with them regularly. Ducat says ‘He [the Spartan king] lived with them [the *perioikoi*] all day long, and shared with them the harshness of military life. This fact created strong ties between them, and each *Perioikos* soldier personally knew the Spartan kings’.³⁴ And we can add that the *perioikoi* showed appreciation for their kings by mourning them accordingly, as Spartan – or in this case Lacedaemonian – law dictated.

Moreover, we can truly say that the Spartans treated the *perioikoi* with fondness and often bonded with them because there is evidence of Spartans attending perioikic sanctuaries, games and festivals. Shipley says that ‘A regular calendar of festivals involving both Spartans and *perioikoi* took place around Laconia’.³⁵ The best example for this is the famous Damonon stele (IG V, 1 213),³⁶ a monument variously dated before 430³⁷ or after 403.³⁸ This lengthy inscription, shown in figures 11a and 11b, lists all the places where Damonon and his son Enymakratidas won victories in festivals all over Laconia. What is interesting is that many of the places are perioikic. He lists Helos, Thouria, the Lithesia festival near Boia, Thyreatis, and the Maleatea festival, north east of Geronthrai.³⁹ A large part of the stele is missing both in the middle and in the lower half. Therefore, the possibility exists that Damonon won even more victories at other unnamed places – possibly perioikic.⁴⁰

³⁴ Ducat 2010, 196.

³⁵ Shipley 2004a, 593.

³⁶ See Hodkinson 2009a, 152–3, 155, 157 and 2009b, 303–7. For a recent and updated translation see Hodkinson 2009b, 303–4. For an incomplete translation see Sweet 1987, 145–6.

³⁷ Jeffery 1990, 201, n. 52 puts it somewhere between 450–431; SEG xiv 330; Cartledge 2002, 199 ascribes it to the third quarter of the fifth century.

³⁸ Johnston 1990, 448, n. 52 supplement of Jeffery 1990; Cf. Shipley 2004a, 593. For a more recent discussion of the stele and its chronology see Nafissi 2013, especially 114–115.

³⁹ Ducat 2010, 208, n. 50.

⁴⁰ Hodkinson 2009b, 328, n. 3 gives a detailed description of the damage done to the stele and concludes that the complete number of victories was higher.



Figures 11a and 11b. Damonon stele.

One cannot help but notice that Thouria – one of the two Messenian perioikic cities that revolted in the aftermath of the great earthquake – is one of the places where Damonon participated and won. Does this mean that only a handful of Thourians, and not the whole population, actually revolted? Or did the Lacedaemonians repopulate Thouria after expelling all the rebels? What we can be certain of is that by the time of the Damonon inscription it is clearly a place that a salient type of event can happen, and whatever disruption had been occasioned by the great revolt in the 460s no longer militates against that.

In any event, what this revealing stele tells us is that Spartans went to perioikic cities as if they were their own and may be assumed to have felt at home there. Nafissi argues that the Damonon stele is a perfect example of the cultural, religious and even political unity in Laconia;⁴¹ for the religious organization of Laconia centred around Sparta is a sort of reflex of its political organization.

Ducat argues that Spartans visited perioikic sanctuaries and that ‘first-rank perioikic families’ also visited festivals at Sparta.⁴² While the former is definitely true, the latter is perhaps over-restrictive because there is no reason to believe that only wealthy *perioikoi*

⁴¹ Nafissi 2013, 149.

⁴² Ducat 2010, 202.

attended religious festivals at Sparta. I do not think that *perioikoi* would have been turned away at Sparta just because they were not wealthy or of higher status. After all, in general terms, no other non-Spartan would have been more welcome in Sparta than a *perioikos*.

Going back to Damonon, it is noteworthy that the majority of his victories take place in perioikic territories, whereas only a handful happened in Sparta. This shows how perioikic places were attractive venues for Spartans wanting to broaden their athletic experiences beyond Sparta and wanting to try their luck in different environments. Furthermore, it demonstrates how these perioikic cities were able to host competitions and receive people from all over Laconia – Damonon could not have been the only Spartiate. One only wonders who the losers were. Interestingly, the stele also describes the victories Damonon won as a boy, some of them at the Lithesian games. This means that ever since he was a boy he had been visiting perioikic communities and therefore it would have been customary routine for him every time he ventured into perioikic territory.

Damonon's stele does come across as a *curriculum vitae*, as Cartledge says, but not for the same reasons Cartledge proposes. He interprets this stele as a Spartan taking 'advantage of the political unification of Lakonia and Messenia and [wanting to] emphasize his economic superiority over his Perioikic rivals and subjects'.⁴³ Cartledge further claims that 'as if to ram the point home, Damonon stresses that his victorious teams were bred in his own stables'.⁴⁴ But that this was Damonon's true purpose is doubtful. We should not mistake his overtly ambitious nature for possessing a feeling of superiority over 'perioikic rivals and subjects'. That he won many victories across Laconia and displayed it for all to see has nothing to do with feeling empowered over the *perioikoi*.⁴⁵ Surely we can imagine the *perioikoi* and the Spartans being rivals at times, but their rivalry is no more than it ever is in Greek athletics. In a way they could test each other by competing against each other in the wide range of games that – by having Laconia and Messenia united – they could participate in. Why stick strictly to games at Sparta when you could enjoy a larger number of games across the vast territory that the Lacedaemonians controlled?

Without a doubt perioikic cities were up to hosting the Spartans for games and religious festivals.⁴⁶ Epigraphical evidence from Geronthrai sheds light on the ability of

⁴³ Cartledge 2002, 200.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cartledge seems to write as though it does not occur to him that Damonon might be competing against other Spartans, as was surely the case.

⁴⁶ And presumably Spartans would not have passed up the chance of participating in local games.

perioikic cities to double as venues for these activities. Two stelae from Geronthrai, dated to around 500, each contains a list of names:

...λέον
[Λ]αφάναξ,
TEBYKIOΣ
Σαμίτας,
Σαμύλος,
Σαφάναξ.
(IG V, 1 1133)

Θαλιαχολα,
[Δρ]ῖμαξ, vacat
Ἀνχίβιος,
Ἀριστομαχίδα[ς],
Εἰόν,
[Φ]εῖδιχος,
Τιμόδαμος,
Ἀρχίας.
(IG V, 1 1134)

As opposed to the Damonon stele there is no context or narrative, just lists of names (see also figure 12). It has been argued that these stelae consist of lists of victors at local games, that they are funerary or even a list of political offices.⁴⁷ But since one of the name appears twice in the same stele Jeffery rules out these last two possibilities and opts for a more probable theory, that it lists the victors in games at Geronthrai.⁴⁸ While we may never know if these names belonged to Spartans, *perioikoi* or a combination of the two, these lists further show that games and competitions were held at perioikic cities throughout Laconia and the Spartans would have taken an interest in them.



Figure 12. Possible list of victors from Geronthrai.

⁴⁷ Jeffery 1990, 195.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

Nevertheless, competitions and games in perioikic territory are not the only scenario for Spartan interaction with *perioikoi*. One can also see a shared Lacedaemonian religious identity. It is widely accepted that the Spartans were very religious at home and even abroad when on campaigns.⁴⁹ But we need to consider that all of the Lacedaemonians – and not just the Spartans – were religious.⁵⁰ During the Persian Wars, all of the Lacedaemonians were celebrating (presumably) the Carneia and were thus prevented from participating in Marathon (Hdt.6.106.3). We have to assume that the *perioikoi* were also celebrating the Carneia, otherwise the Spartans could have sent a perioikic contingent – similar to the one at Plataea – to Marathon. One might think it absurd that a perioikic contingent could be sent on its own to fight, but we need to remember that, firstly, they were part of the Lacedaemonian army, and, second, that little is known about perioikic organisation in the army. We cannot therefore rule out this possibility of perioikic contingents fighting and operating on their own but on strict orders from the homeland (i.e. the ephors at Sparta).⁵¹

That no Lacedaemonian took part in Marathon due to their religious obligations shows that religion was crucial in Lacedaemonian society, which, of course, includes the *perioikoi*. A fifth-century inscription from Geronthrai, for instance, states that [Α]θαναία[ι] [Ζῶσ]τεῖραι [Καλ]λιτελίδα[ς] [Ἄ]νέθεκε (IG V, 1 1116). This is clear evidence of a dedication by a *perioikos* in Geronthrai. From this same city also survives an early Hellenistic terracotta roof tile with an inscription stating ‘Of Apollo. The People of Geronthrai’.⁵² Thus far, this is the only evidence we have of a perioikic community describing itself collectively as a

⁴⁹ For Spartan religion see Parker 1989; Richer 2007 and 2012; Flower 2009.

⁵⁰ Parker 1989, 145 says: ‘The *perioikoi*, by contrast, evidently had their own shrines, festivals, competitions and oracles. Interestingly, the gods who dominate Spartan religion – Artemis, the Dioscuri, Poseidon and, above all, Apollo – are also prominent among the *perioikoi*, and ‘hero-reliefs’ too are widely distributed throughout Laconia’.

⁵¹ One example which could hint at this possibility can be found in Thucydides. Immediately before the Pylos campaign (425) we find out that ‘...the Spartans themselves and the nearest of the Perioeci at once set out for Pylos, the other Lacedaemonians following more slowly as they had just come in from another campaign’ (Thuc.4.8.1). Here we have evidence of the *perioikoi* fighting on another campaign and even though they were probably not alone, this passage does present an example where the *perioikoi* are seen fighting abroad while the Spartans are at home. Furthermore, if the evidence suggests that the *perioikoi* could mobilize on their own (e.g. Plataea and at various other instances during the early fourth century), then it is not farfetched to presume they could have fought on their own. At Plataea we know that the perioikic troops assembled and moved out on their own. Whether or not Spartans were open to the possibility of the perioikic contingent being attacked midway is another matter, but they were still prepared to take that chance (cf. the Argive plot to stop the Lacedaemonians in Hdt.9.12.1). As we shall see in the next two chapters, the *perioikoi* were more than able fighters and thus would have fared well on their own. In the end, Thucydides 4.8.1 is a small piece of evidence of relatively objective sort about the possibility of moving perioikic soldiers on their own, which is not too far off from fighting on their own.

⁵² See also Crouwel et al. 2007 and Kennell 2010, 9. Shipley 2006b, 69 believes that this sanctuary, now accurately identified by this inscription as Apollo Geronthratas, was an important centre for Spartans and *perioikoi* alike. For later inscriptions also from Geronthrai see CIG 1334; IG V, 1 1111 and 1113. These inscriptions use the phrase πόλει τῶν Γερωνθρατῶν, although Crouwel et al. 2007, 13 dates IG V, 1 1111 after 195, since it refers to the *koinon* of the Lakedaimonians. IG V, 1 1113 is also dated to the Hellenistic era.

community. By Pausanias' time we can still find a temple of Apollo, which presumably stands on the site of the former temple that was destroyed by fire (3.22.7).

The *perioikoi* have festivals that matter to them just as the Spartans have festivals that matter to them. The interesting additional proposition, on the other hand, is that perioikic festivals also mattered to the Spartans because of a shared religious identity and, in practical terms, because of the breadth of religious presence in perioikic territory. There are more examples – both textual and epigraphical – of religion in perioikic Laconia than is often assumed.⁵³ It is through religion that we see the Spartans taking an active role in perioikic life. Thus, it is not so much to do with how religious the *perioikoi* are, but with the extent to which the several groups involved consider that there is a thing which is Laconian religion, which they are all invested in, as opposed to just hyper-separated and specialized *polis* religions. For example, in perioikic Thalamai we have epigraphical evidence of both Spartan and perioikic presence. A fifth-century inscription (IG V, 1 1313) says that a certain Λανικία ἀνέθηκε τῷ Ἀγλαπιῷ.⁵⁴ Since there is no other information we have to assume that this *Lanikia* is a *perioikos* from Thalamai. This also tells us that by the fifth century there is evidence of religious cults in perioikic Thalamai. Around this time, there is also evidence of a cult for Apollo Kabatas that mentions a certain *Gaisulos* (Gaihulos), who in all probability was also another *perioikos* (IG V, 1 1316). However, Spartan interest in Thalamaic cults is attested in the late fourth century (IG V, 1 1317). This inscription describes a member of the Gerosia dedicating to the goddess Pasiphaë. Even though this inscription is post-classical we have to assume that Spartan interest began much earlier. Cartledge says that this inscription ‘presumably gives a *terminus ante quem*’.⁵⁵ Thalamai's geographic closeness to Sparta means that the Spartans would have regularly attended this cult, and possibly others in Thalamai as well, such as the ones to Apollo Kabata and Asclepius. Oliva says that the ephors were directly involved with the cult of Pasiphaë, due in part, to the religious nature of their office.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the connection between various dark episodes in Spartan history and perioikic places of worship, like the Temple of Poseidon at Tainaron, is surprisingly interesting. Thucydides briefly describes the so-called ‘Tainaron curse’, which is supposed to have been the cause of the great earthquake. In a distant past, the Lacedaemonians forced

⁵³ We must not forget the manumission stelae discussed in chapter 3 where we have *perioikoi* dedicating free slaves at the temple of Poseidon in Tainaron.

⁵⁴ Aglapios is the Doric form of Asclepius. Cf. Luraghi 2008, 271, n. 86. For the provenance of this inscription see Riethmüller 2005, 135.

⁵⁵ Cartledge 2002, 165.

⁵⁶ Oliva 1971, 131, n. 1.

some suppliant helots to abandon their refuge in the Temple of Poseidon at Tainaron and proceeded to murder all of them (1.128.1). Thucydides does not give any backdrop to the story but it does tell us that this temple at Tainaron was frequented by both Spartiates and helots. This same temple was also the setting for the downfall of the regent Pausanias (1.133.1-134.1).⁵⁷ Once the ephors found out that the rumours about Pausanias' betrayal were true, they masterminded a trap in order to find out from Pausanias himself.⁵⁸

Pausanias' former servant – now turned informant – was to act as a suppliant at the temple of Poseidon at Tainaron and hide the ephors there so that they could hear for themselves Pausanias' treachery. After confirming their suspicions the ephors left and Pausanias later met his end at Sparta's temple of Athena of the Brazen House. The immediate question that comes to mind is why would the ephors choose the temple of Poseidon at Tainaron – out of all the temples in Laconia and the ones at Sparta – as the setting for Pausanias' entrapment? It has been argued that the temple was often used by slaves and is therefore a place of refuge for slaves, including a close association with helots; and that this is why the ephors chose Tainaron.⁵⁹ This would also explain why the manumission stelae discussed in chapter 3 come from Tainaron. However, even Spartan kings sometimes used Tainaron as a place for supplication. Plutarch (*Agis*.16.3) relates how king Cleombrotus II went as a suppliant to the sanctuary of Poseidon. Some scholars see this as an exception to the rule because this sanctuary was mostly used by helots.⁶⁰ But in another passage from Plutarch (*Cleom*.22.5) king Cleomenes III is taken into the temple of Poseidon by Cratesicleia. Even though these examples are Hellenistic, we should definitely see them as a *terminus ante quem*, since in all probability if ephors and regents were already frequenting this temple in the classical period, then we have to assume other Spartan kings were also doing the same long before the Hellenistic period.

Clearly there was something unique, or at least special, about this temple that made ephors, kings and, in the case of Pausanias, a regent think of it as a safe and familiar place.⁶¹ The best explanation is that the solid relationship between the Spartans and the *perioikoi*

⁵⁷ The same account can also be found in Diodorus 11.45.4-5 and Aristodemos BNJ 104 F 1.8.1-3.

⁵⁸ One cannot help but notice this story's strong resemblance to that of the conspiracy of Cinadon. Cf. Xen.*Hell*.3.3.4-11.

⁵⁹ See Schumacher 1993, 72-74 for the theory of Tainaron being a refuge for slaves and for the instances it is associated with the helots.

⁶⁰ See Schumacher 1993, 72, who sees this as 'an exception'; see also Naiden 2006, 207, n. 169 'in the view of Cailllemer, "asylia," 510, supplication by a king at Taenarus is aberrant, as this sanctuary was mostly used by Helots'.

⁶¹ This is aside from the fact that it was the legendary entrance to the underworld. See Cummer 1978. See also Paus.3.25.5 and Str.8.5.1 for the myth of how Cerberus was brought up from Hades by Heracles.

allowed the former to regard the temple of Poseidon at Tainaron as a sort of ‘home away from home’ and they would have felt comfortable enough to use it as they would any temple at Sparta.⁶² Naiden suggests that ‘the Spartans treat Taenarus...as though it were a shrine of their own’, whereas Shipley labels the temple of Poseidon as a ‘pan-Lakedaimonian sanctuary’.⁶³ Both views, in my opinion, are completely justified, but not just of Tainaron, but probably of many more sanctuaries throughout Laconia. What is crucial here is that if we have evidence of high-ranking Spartans visiting perioikic sanctuaries, then it would have been even more normal for regular Spartiates to roam the perioikic countryside in search for different religious alternatives to Spartan sanctuaries.

In addition, further proof that the Spartans included the *perioikoi* in their religious affairs comes from the evidence of Spartan dancing maidens. Pausanias relates how Lacedaemonian maidens (Λακεδαιμονίων παρθένοι) descended on Karyai each year and held chorus-dances and traditional native dances (3.10.7). Elsewhere in 4.16.9, describing another episode that involved the Λακεδαιμονίων παρθένοι, Pausanias says that they included wealthy and noble girls.⁶⁴ The perioikic status of Karyai has often been disputed due, in part, to the inability to pinpoint its exact location and the lack of explicit connection with the *perioikoi*.⁶⁵ However, perhaps the clue of its perioikic connection lies in its religion. The Λακεδαιμονίων παρθένοι at Karyai were part of a religious cult to Artemis. Artemis Orthia is the well-known sanctuary at Sparta, but even more interesting is the fact that Artemis had an immense following throughout Laconia. Richer says that ‘on the borders of the territory was a cult devoted to a deity who, if she was not precisely identical, must have been very similar to Orthia. Sanctuaries of Artemis are known, along the borders of Laconia...’⁶⁶ Richer also identifies sanctuaries of Artemis outside Sparta in Limnai (Paus.3.2.6; 3.7.4; 4.4.2; Str.6.1.6; 6.3.3; 8.4.9), Boiai (IG V, 1 952), and in the territory of Epidaurus Limera (Paus.3.23.10).⁶⁷ What all of these places have in common is that they are perioikic. Therefore we cannot rule out that Karyai was perioikic. These rituals practiced at Karyai echo those practiced at perioikic Limnai.

⁶² According to Pausanias 3.12.5 there was even a precinct of Poseidon of Tainaron at Sparta, which is further proof of the strong ties between the Spartans and perioikic Tainaron.

⁶³ Naiden 2006, 207; Shipley 2006b, 68-69. See also Shipley 2011, 123-124.

⁶⁴ What is striking is that Pausanias uses the term Λακεδαιμονίων to refer to the dancing maidens. Therefore, we could be dealing with a mixture of both Spartiates and perioikic dancing girls. This would underline further the existence of religious Laconian cohesiveness.

⁶⁵ For the debate about Karyai’s perioikic status see Shipley 1997, 238; 2000, 369, 374-5; 2006b, 65.

⁶⁶ Richer 2007, 243.

⁶⁷ Ibid. See also Calamé 2001, 142-69.

Again, Pausanias (4.4.2) mentions Lacedaemonian maidens partaking in rituals at the sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis.⁶⁸ What is important here, however, are the implications of having Spartan maidens taking part in perioikic festivals.⁶⁹ This tells us that the level of trust the Spartans had of the *perioikoi* – to send their own daughters into the hands of the *perioikoi* – must have been tremendous. This level of trust is appreciated when we take into consideration the dangers these specific sanctuaries to Artemis posed. Cole stresses that ‘females were often at risk while celebrating festivals at border or coastal sanctuaries, because sanctuaries of Artemis protected strategic, vulnerable areas’.⁷⁰

Evidence of this danger comes from two episodes of early Spartan history. Coincidentally, it is the sanctuaries of both Artemis at Karyai and Limnai that fell victim to attack by Messenians, who, in both cases, proceed to attack the Lacedaemonian maidens who were partaking in the customary religious festival mentioned above.⁷¹ The Spartans probably believed these ‘folk tales’ of old but still they sent their daughters to these sanctuaries in perioikic territory. Cole again, says that ‘the Lacedaemonians who sent their daughters to perform the dances...tested Lacedaemonian strength and celebrated Laconian security by entrusting to Artemis the most vulnerable members of their community, whose safety, protected by the festival, signified and guaranteed their own’.⁷² But they did not just trust them to Artemis, but to the *perioikoi* as well, whom they relied on to protect them if need be. This ‘Lacedaemonian strength’ and ‘Laconian security’ Cole speaks of could not have been achieved without a high-level of mutual trust between the Spartans and the *perioikoi*. Surely if the Spartans sent their girls to the sanctuaries of Artemis in Laconia then part of celebrating Laconian security had to do with the sense of relief that they could trust the *perioikoi* to facilitate all aspects of these girls’ journeys.

Leaving religion to one side, perhaps the best and only explicit example we have of a Spartan describing the heroic qualities of the *perioikoi* can be found in Herodotus (7.234.2). In the aftermath of the battle of Thermopylae, after clearly being impressed by the

⁶⁸ Strabo 6.1.6 and 8.4.9 also mentions the maidens who were sent to the sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis. We have to assume that perioikic women maintained and cared for these sanctuaries to Artemis, and it is probable that perioikic women were also at the forefront of the rituals enacted there.

⁶⁹ In 4.17.1 Pausanias relates yet another account of women taking part in a festival. This time it takes place in ‘Aegila in Laconia, where is a sanctuary sacred to Demeter’. In this case, however, the description is too vague and he does not even mention if the women were Lacedaemonian. Nor does he use the word *παρθέναι* but the more general term *γυναῖκες*. Cf. Dillon 2002, 213, 351, n. 9.

⁷⁰ Cole 1998, 25.

⁷¹ Attack on Karyai: Paus.4.16.9. Attack on Limnai: Paus.3.7.4; 4.4.2; Str.6.1.6; 6.3.3; 8.4.9. See also Calamé 2001, 150, who says that ‘the dance of Spartan maidens at Karyai acquired a certain fame throughout Greece and the appearance of the word *Karyatides* for those who performed the dance suggests the formation of a permanent chorus attached to the cult of Artemis Karyatis, similar to the *Deliades* at Delos’.

⁷² Cole 1998, 26.

Lacedaemonians, Xerxes asks Demaratus how many Lacedaemonians – not just Spartiates – are left and how many of them are warriors like the ones who fought at Thermopylae, to which Demaratus replies: ‘there is in Lacedaemon a city called Sparta, a city of about eight thousand men, all of them equal to those who have fought here; the rest of the Lacedaemonians are not equal to these, yet they are valiant men’ (ἔστι ἐν τῇ Λακεδαιμόνι Σπάρτη πόλις ἀνδρῶν ὀκτακισχιλίων μάλιστα, καὶ οὗτοι πάντες εἰσὶ ὅμοιοι τοῖσι ἐνθάδε μαχεσάμενοι· οἳ γε μὲν ἄλλοι Λακεδαιμόνιοι τούτοις μὲν οὐκ ὅμοιοι, ἀγαθοὶ δέ).

Bearing in mind, of course, that this is an assessment in a particular rhetorical context by a particular speaker imagined by a particular historian, this passage says much of the *perioikoi*. In regard to Spartan appreciation of the *perioikoi* two things can be observed here. Firstly, Demaratus begins by portraying what can be described as a sense of community within Laconia. He starts by saying that within Lacedaemon – in this case probably meaning Laconia⁷³ – there is a city called Sparta. He is placing Sparta in Lacedaemon and does not speak of Sparta as an independent or isolated city. He includes Sparta as a sort of cog of the much larger wheel: Laconia. This sentiment is echoed by Strabo centuries later when he says that the Laconia of olden times – probably the Laconia of Demaratus’ time – was called the ‘country of the hundred cities’, where they held ‘annual festivals in which one hundred cattle were sacrificed’ (8.4.11).⁷⁴ Strabo’s statement would confirm that by the time of Demaratus Lacedaemon was a ‘country’ comprised of Sparta and the perioikic cities. It also makes one wonder that if one hundred cattle were sacrificed – no doubt representing the one hundred cities – each city, including Sparta, donated a cattle each. This sense of community within Lacedaemon takes us back to Pseudo Skylax’s remark addressed in chapter 2, where he refers to Lacedaemon as a community filled with cities and in these communities there are also many other cities of the Lacedaemonians, where in the interior there is Sparta (46). There seems to be a pattern stemming from the classical period all the way to the Roman where Lacedaemon is seen by our sources as a country filled with cities. Again, this shows that the Spartans considered the *perioikoi* as their fellow neighbours and not their subjects. Nafissi rightly suggests that the Hecatombaia mentioned in Strabo is a ‘panlacedemone’ festival in all its essence.⁷⁵

Secondly, this sense of community is further enhanced when Demaratus says that the rest of the Lacedaemonians are not equal to these, yet they are valiant men. Some could say

⁷³ Although not exclusively: Herodotus might not necessarily have meant Laconia, but maybe Lakonike, or even Lacedaemon in the sense of the central Eurotas valley.

⁷⁴ Cf. How and Wells 1912, commentary on Hdt.7.234.2.

⁷⁵ Nafissi 2013, 145. Cf. also Nafissi 2009, 123.

that he is placing the Spartans in a superior light to the *perioikoi*. While we cannot rule this out – especially since he is a Spartan king and therefore biased – we need to look carefully at the words used to describe the Spartans and their similarities, or lack thereof, to the *perioikoi*. Herodotus has Demaratus admitting that they are not equal to the Spartans but in Greek it is οὐκ ὅμοιοι which could mean that they are not members of the class of Peers; nonetheless they are valiant men, like the Peers are. In a sense, even though Demaratus is maintaining the distinction, he is doing his best to diminish its practical significance. The perioikic soldier is not the equal of the Spartiate, but they are ἀγαθοί. What is important here is that he is explicitly acknowledging not only the existence of the *perioikoi* but their valour and essentially their contribution to Lacedaemonian success. Even though this is not direct evidence about what Spartans thought, it is direct evidence about what an observer thought Spartans might think.

Although the present chapter is not about the Lacedaemonian army per se, the fact there are no ancient references that speak ill of the *perioikoi* as fighters needs to be stressed.⁷⁶ What is important is that here we do have a positive reference where the *perioikoi* are referred to as being valiant, ἀγαθοί. The fact that Demaratus not only includes the *perioikoi* in his praise of the Lacedaemonians but says that they are valiant as well is testimony to the importance of the *perioikoi* to the Lacedaemonian army and to Lacedaemonian society as a whole. One does not simply talk of one's own subjects in this way if they are indeed considered as subjects. That is why modern scholarship should forego the notion that the *perioikoi* were mere subjects of the Spartans.

Notwithstanding this, the Spartan-perioikic relationship was marred by various episodes of mutiny and rebellion in the classical period. But as with almost everything, there is more to it than just simply saying certain *perioikoi* rebelled or wanted to eat the Spartans raw.

Disloyal *perioikoi*: the case of the minority

In the previous chapter I discussed and analysed rebellious *perioikoi* who sided with the helots. In this section, however, I discuss *perioikoi* who rebelled against the Spartans on their own account. Since there are only a handful of examples, this section will mostly focus on the events surrounding the Theban invasion of Laconia, the only occasion on which the *perioikoi* rebelled *en masse*.

⁷⁶ The reliability of the *perioikoi* as fighters will appear in chapter 6, where the idea of the *perioikoi* as substandard soldiers will be put to the test.

As it stands, perioikic rebels in the classical period truly represented the minority. Explicit examples of mutinous *perioikoi* can be narrowed down specifically to just three events and occasions, one in the fifth century and two in the fourth. But when we look at them carefully, even these accounts should be read with reservations. The earthquake revolt (Thuc.1.101.2) and the conspiracy of Cinadon (Xen.*Hell.*3.3.6) – discussed in the previous chapter – are not truly representative of the whole perioikic population, not least the perioikic population of Laconia. The rebels from Thouria and Aithaia were, firstly, Messenian, and, secondly, from only two perioikic Messenian cities, clearly a minority itself within the Messenian *perioikoi*. In the second instance, the main protagonist is Cinadon, and the *perioikoi* are mentioned only once in his conspiracy, alongside other known groups. However, as we saw in the previous chapter, Cinadon’s account is highly unreliable and since he is speaking for the *perioikoi*, his words and his intentions should not be taken at face value. What Cinadon is reported as saying is that *all* the *perioikoi* are in a conspiracy with him, which is plainly an extravagant remark and persuasive rhetoric. This is a conspiracy imagined solely on the basis of the unsupported claim that all *perioikoi* want to eat Spartans raw. Looking at the passage with the *perioikoi* solely in mind one can see why Cinadon’s remarks seem exaggerated at the very least; this is not a passage that is easy to compute due to its rhetorical undertones. And as we shall see below, this is a common trend in Xenophon.

That leaves us with the last example of perioikic mutiny: the events surrounding the Theban invasion of Laconia (see figure 13 for all the textual evidence).

Source	Specific Context	Account	Greek text
Xen. <i>Hell.</i> 6.5.25	The Thebans were having second thoughts about attacking Lacedaemon. Their fears were allayed when the perioikoi offered to help.	‘...some of the Perioeci appeared, asking the Thebans to come to their aid, engaging to revolt if only they would show themselves in the land, and saying also that even now the Perioeci when summoned by the Spartiatae were refusing to go and help them...’	‘τινες καὶ τῶν περιοίκων ἐπικαλούμενοι καὶ φάσκοντες ἀποστήσεσθαι, εἰ μόνον φανείησαν εἰς τὴν χώραν, ἔλεγον δὲ ὡς καὶ νῦν καλούμενοι οἱ περίοικοι ὑπὸ τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν οὐκ ἐθέλοιεν βοηθεῖν...’
Xen. <i>Hell.</i> 6.5.32	The Thebans attack Gytheion	‘...some of the Perioeci also who not only joined in this attack, but did regular service with the troops that followed the Thebans’.	‘...ἦσαν δὲ τινες τῶν περιοίκων οἳ καὶ ἐπέθεντο καὶ συνεστρατεύοντο τοῖς μετὰ Θηβαίων’.

Xen. <i>Hell.</i> 7.2.2	Xenophon is praising the Phliasians for their loyalty to the Lacedaemonians	‘Now the Phliasians had become friends of the Lacedaemonians...when many of the Perioeci had revolted from them and all the Helots also had revolted...’	‘Φλειάσιοι τοίνυν φίλοι μὲν ἐγένοντο Λακεδαιμονίοις...καὶ ἀποστάντων μὲν πολλῶν περιοίκων, ἀποστάντων δὲ πάντων τῶν Εἰλώτων...’
Xen. <i>Ages.</i> 2.24	Events surrounding the first invasion of Laconia	‘...the slaves and many of the perioikic poleis were in revolt...’	‘...πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἀφεστηκότων μὲν τῶν δούλων, πολλῶν δὲ περιοικίδων πόλεων...’
Plut. <i>De glor.Ath.</i> 2	Epaminondas invades Laconia after Leuctra	‘... [Epaminondas] pillaged the Spartans' territory, and persuaded the Perioeci to revolt from them’. ⁷⁷	‘καὶ πρῶτα μὲν ἐμβαλὼν ἐπὶ μυριάσι στρατοῦ διεπόρθησε τὴν χώραν καὶ τοὺς περιοίκους ἀπέστησεν αὐτῶν’.
Plut. <i>Ages.</i> 32.7	Plutarch relates how Agesilaus had to deal with mutinous Lacedaemonians within Sparta	‘Many of the provincials and Helots who had been enrolled in the army ran away from the city and joined the enemy, and this caused very deep discouragement’.	‘ἐπεὶ δὲ πολλοὶ τῶν συντεταγμένων ¹ εἰς τὰ ὄπλα περιοίκων καὶ εἰλώτων ἀπεδίδρασκον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους, καὶ τοῦτο πλείστην ἀθυμίαν παρεῖχεν’.

Figure 13. Accounts of perioikic rebellion during the Theban invasion of Laconia, 370-69.

At first glance, it is clear that there was a serious breach of fidelity on the part of the *perioikoi*. Both Xenophon and Plutarch, on more than one occasion, relate how the *perioikoi* turned on their fellow Lacedaemonians.⁷⁸ But before analysing these disloyal *perioikoi* there is a point to be made about Xenophon’s evidence. Xenophon twice says that ‘many’ *perioikoi* revolted, but he does so in contexts whose rhetorical purpose is to praise the virtuous response of the Phliasians and of Agesilaus. When he is simply writing a narrative of the events, suddenly it is just ‘some’ of the *perioikoi* who revolt, not ‘many’.⁷⁹ And, since we are dealing with the same author, we can safely say that Xenophon was conscious of what and how he was writing. So our most authoritative contemporary source provides no evidence that perioikic disaffection was widespread.

Close reading of the passages reveals three types of perioikic behaviour during the Theban invasion: (i) those who were eager to join the Thebans and readily did so at the first

⁷⁷ Cartledge 1997, 196, n. 26 says that those *perioikoi* who revolted were from Northern Laconia, ‘athwart the invasion routes’.

⁷⁸ I say Lacedaemonians, not Spartans, because we must not forget that these traitorous *perioikoi* also betrayed loyal *perioikoi*, who will be discussed below.

⁷⁹ Cf. Flower 1991, 95, who also noted this shift in terminology.

opportunity, (ii) those who had to be persuaded by the Thebans to rebel, but rebelled nonetheless, and (iii) those who stayed loyal to themselves and the Spartans and therefore resisted the Thebans. In order to describe the actions and motives of each of these groups – especially the first two – it is important to highlight the uniqueness and seriousness of the events of the late 370s and 360s. It would be tempting to say that the first group was eager to join the Thebans either because they felt repressed by the Spartans or because they felt they had a better prospect of life under the Thebans or at least with a weakened Sparta. Yet, there is no evidence of a feeling of repression amongst the *perioikoi*, as has been shown throughout this thesis. Also, we must take into consideration the fact that no event as dire as the Theban invasion had ever happened to Laconia or to the Lacedaemonians. To put it simply, Lacedaemonian territory had never been invaded in this fashion, and such unprecedented events would have been an extreme challenge for *all* the population of Laconia. The Laconian countryside had, it is true, been ravaged by the Athenians less than a century earlier, but no enemy had come as close to Sparta as the Thebans did.

In other words, the resolve and the resolution, the nerves and the loyalties of the inhabitants of Laconia were truly put to the test for the first time. One clear example of this, surprisingly, comes from the actions, or lack thereof, of the Spartan women.⁸⁰ Aristotle (*Pol.*1269b) says that they rendered no useful service and caused more confusion than the enemy, Plutarch (*Ages.*31.4) reports that the women, ‘who found it impossible to stay calm, were driven frantic by the cries emanating from the enemy camp and the sight of the watchfires there’, Xenophon (*Hell.*6.5.28) notes that ‘the women could not endure the sight of the smoke, since they had never seen an enemy’. Given the situation, one can understand why the women of Sparta were in such disarray. What is important here is that things got so bad that many inhabitants resorted to desperate measures in order to save themselves. Many of those *perioikoi* who decided to join the Thebans and aid them surely assumed that they stood a better chance of surviving the onslaught if they went over to the other side. After all, many – if not everyone – in Laconia knew the outcome of the Battle of Leuctra: *perioikoi* who refused to fight and join up with the Spartans feared that another Leuctra was imminent.

Concerning the second group, those who were ‘persuaded’ to revolt, there are many reasons why they ultimately chose to do so. One can understand why they would choose this course of action as a last resort, mainly because they were witnessing their cities being destroyed before them. Xenophon (*Hell.*6.5.32) describes how perioikic Helos, Gytheion and

⁸⁰ On the actions of Spartan women during the Theban invasion see Schaps 1982 and Powell 2004.

other unnamed places were burned to the ground by the Thebans. Elsewhere he says that perioikic Oios was also victim of attack (6.5.25). The stress and trauma for the perioikic inhabitants of these cities must have been too much to bear and many probably decided to join the enemy to save whatever was left. In addition we cannot rule out the possibility that revolt was sometimes a response to Theban threats.

Most importantly, however, the *perioikoi* should not be unfairly singled out in a context of widespread dissension in Laconia. When one thinks of disloyalty during the Theban invasion one quickly thinks of the helots and the *perioikoi*, but one passage which is often overlooked describes how around two hundred Lacedaemonians, ‘who had long been disaffected and mutinous’ (ὑπούλων καὶ πονηρῶν), plotted against the Spartans (Plut.*Ages.*32.3-5). Furthermore, Plutarch (32.6) relates another similar incident. He says that ‘[Agesilaus] was also informed of another and a larger conspiracy of Spartans, who met secretly in a house and there plotted revolution’. While the former plot probably included *perioikoi*, the latter plot, on the other hand, was orchestrated by Spartiates alone; hence the Greek words used are ἀνδρῶν Σπαρτιατῶν.⁸¹ In that same passage Plutarch goes on to say that given the delicateness of the current situation, these Spartans were put to death without trial. By saying that ‘no Spartan had ever before met with such a death’ (32.6), Plutarch is highlighting the serious nature of both the invasion and of the Spartan conspiracy. This episode shows that the mind-set of many Lacedaemonians involved either joining up with the enemy or simply watching out for their own interests. The crucial point is that everybody was vulnerable because this was a quite extraordinary crisis. Therefore, a certain amount of erratic behaviour is only to be expected.

Nevertheless, the great majority of *perioikoi*, those from the third group, were not tempted by the Thebans to rebel against the Spartans. Although their explicit actions are invisible in our sources, the outcome of the invasion and the sequence of events show that most *perioikoi* remained loyal to the Lacedaemonian cause and resisted the enemy, many of them even perishing in the process. In fact, it is during the Theban invasion of Laconia that we see that most *perioikoi* remained loyal to the Spartans until the end. The evidence for this lies in the fact that despite all the confusion, the chaos, and the gloomy outlook, Sparta was never taken and Laconia was not occupied. In scenes completely analogous to the events of the Peloponnesian War, the perioikic cities of Laconia were the ones most affected by enemy

⁸¹ D. R. Shipley 1997, 345 believes that these were not Spartiates but *hypomeiones*. However, there is no direct evidence to support this theory.

attack. I suggested above that such destruction might have triggered some *perioikoi* to join the Thebans by default and not by choice.

However, the destruction of many perioikic cities was also the direct result of constant perioikic resistance against the enemy.⁸² Many perioikic cities were completely destroyed because when the Thebans approached them they met with heavy resistance; otherwise they would have just passed through them. Shipley notes that, even if it turned out to be in vain, the people of Oios and Sellasia resisted the enemy.⁸³ Xenophon says that ‘the Thebans were won over, and pushed in with their own forces by way of Caryae, while the Arcadians went by way of Oeum, in Sciritis’ (οἱ Θηβαῖοι ἐπέισθησαν, καὶ αὐτοὶ μὲν κατὰ Καρύας ἐνέβαλον, οἱ δὲ Ἀρκάδες κατὰ Οἶον τῆς Σκιρίτιδος) (Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.25). This is the only concrete evidence of perioikic loyalty to the Lacedaemonian cause during the Theban invasion, and it is crucial; but the overall importance, again, lies in the fact that Sparta was never taken. Even though our sources do not acknowledge the positive contribution of the *perioikoi*, the fact remains that it would have been impossible for the Spartans to fend off the Theban onslaught on their own, without perioikic help. Having perioikic support at your side if you were a Spartan was of the utmost importance, which is why Plutarch says that the Spartans were deeply discouraged when some *perioikoi* revolted (*Ages.*32.7). That they were discouraged also shows that they never expected the *perioikoi* to abandon them when they needed them the most, which, for a change, shows the level of reliance the Spartans had on the *perioikoi*. Scholars like to use the Theban invasion of Laconia as an example of how myriads of the *perioikoi* turned against the ‘establishment’ when it came to the serious crisis. However, many fail to see that it was quite the opposite.

If *all* the *perioikoi* had come out of their cities in support of the Thebans then it would have all been over swiftly, but they did not do that. The astonishing fact is that the Theban invasion of Laconia failed to take Sparta or occupy Laconia on two occasions, not just one. The contrast between those failed attempts and their success in Messenia is remarkable. This shows that the *perioikoi* of Laconia were never universally disaffected. As with previous attempts, it was always a case of the minority. Messenia was never a problem for the Thebans: its capture was instant and irreversible, whereas Sparta and Laconia proved to be solid. In a time when there were few Spartan citizens left, many having been killed at Leuctra, one would have expected the Thebans to have the same success in Laconia as they

⁸² Cf. Cartledge 2002, 255, who says that ‘any of their towns that were unwalled were looted and put to the torch’.

⁸³ Shipley 2006b, 65.

did in Messenia. When we take into account how all those events unfolded, then we start to see that it is mainly due to perioikic resistance that Laconia was never taken. The fundamental dynamic of the Lacedaemonian state was so robust that it allowed Sparta to be prosperous for a long time after it ‘declined’.

As we have seen in this chapter, the Spartan-perioikic relationship remained solid throughout the classical period. They were companions-in-arms ‘on and off the field’. They relied on one another to fulfil their military duties. But we have also seen how they interacted with each other on a day-to-day basis for non-military matters such as festivals, games and religious duties. The very few cases of revolt involved only a minority, but that is something that we see in every society. Indeed, even the Spartiates themselves at times conspired against one another, which is why we cannot simply say that the *perioikoi* who revolted simply did so because of their perioikic status. As we have seen, Spartans and *perioikoi* were fellow Lacedaemonians with a shared culture and a shared ideal. The success and prosperity of the Lacedaemonian state was the objective of all Lacedaemonians. There was a sense of belief that they belonged to the same community.⁸⁴ And as a community they were there for each other and looked out for each other. It should not come as a surprise that there is not a single recorded episode of Spartans fighting Laconian *perioikoi*, and that is something that should not be ignored.

Although absent in our sources, their sense of unity will have been strengthened in the aftermath of the great earthquake. Plutarch (*Cim.*16.4) says it ‘rent the land of the Lacedaemonians into many chasms, shook Taygetus so that sundry peaks were torn away, and demolished the entire city with the exception of five houses. The rest were thrown down by the earthquake’. We can assume that the *perioikoi* came to the assistance of the Spartans and helped them rebuild Sparta again. Surely the Spartans could not have done everything by themselves. One can even imagine that Spartans took temporary lodging in perioikic cities until Sparta became habitable again. Although pure conjecture, this type of analysis does not seem out of place when we take into consideration that in Laconia existed a cohesiveness and harmony between the Spartans and the *perioikoi*.

⁸⁴ See Ducat 2010, 202.

Chapter 5. The Lacedaemonian Army I: Perioikic Presence

It would be impossible to carry out a complete study of the *perioikoi* without analysing their role in the Lacedaemonian army. That the overwhelming majority of evidence we have of the *perioikoi* is directly related to the military sphere shows their unequivocal link to Sparta and the Lacedaemonian army. We have now seen the *perioikoi* in different contexts, from religion to slavery, and interacting both with the Spartans and the helots. However, it is in a military context that we see a pattern of continuous perioikic presence. It is now widely accepted that the *perioikoi* played a role and contributed towards the overall success of the Lacedaemonian army. Yet scholars have failed to analyse and indeed notice that, even within this military context, the diversity of roles played by the *perioikoi* is staggering. Even though the handful of named *perioikoi* have already been mentioned in previous chapters, they will be analysed here from a military point of view.

Finally, this chapter will examine the concept of elite soldiers amongst the ranks of the *perioikoi* and how it is (dis)entangled from the concept of wealth. In order to carry out this analysis, three particular cases will be used: (i) Agesilaus' 'special' Lacedaemonians mentioned by Plutarch, (ii) the five thousand *logades* mentioned by Herodotus and (iii) the *kaloi kagathoi* mentioned by Xenophon. Looking at all of these examples gives us a broader perspective on perioikic presence in the Lacedaemonian war machine. As we shall see, the *perioikoi* were not used as reserve or auxiliary units, nor were they a homogeneous unit tucked away in the far corners of the army. Their military roles were diverse, influential, and above all, vital.

Perioikic roles in the Lacedaemonian army: named *perioikoi*

As we saw in the previous chapter, perioikic loyalty can be attested in every aspect of Lacedaemonian life, especially in the Lacedaemonian army. Nonetheless, it is important to go behind the façade of the Lacedaemonian army and of the Lacedaemonians in order to find out what exactly the *perioikoi* were doing in the army. This thesis is not only about the need to portray the *perioikoi* as able and proficient members of the Lacedaemonian army and of Lacedaemonian society. In fact, scholars now readily accept that the *perioikoi* were integral to 'Spartan society' and the Lacedaemonian army.¹ Yet, many stop short of detailing their

¹ See van Wees 2004, 83 and Shipley 2004a, 569. Also implied by Cartledge 1987, 16.

actual contribution to – and participation in – the army. It is not enough to say they played their part in the overall success of the Lacedaemonian army. We need to go further and analyse every occasion on which the *perioikoi* are mentioned in a military context in order to establish a complete picture of their role in Lacedaemonian army during the fifth and fourth centuries.

In order to do this we need to look at (i) the examples of named *perioikoi* again, but this time in a military context, (ii) those instances where they are mentioned as a group or contingent, and (iii) those instances where they are labelled as Lacedaemonians alongside the Spartans, which, unsurprisingly, mostly happens in the military context (due, of course, to the homogeneity of the army).² Even though we have already discussed the named *perioikoi* in previous chapters, their role in the army itself has not been fully analysed as such. It is not a coincidence that we have named *perioikoi* in a military context but in no other context whatsoever. When we look at all the occasions on which the *perioikoi* are mentioned in our sources, especially during the classical period, we find that the majority are closely linked to war narratives and some sort of military activity. If we analyse the number of times the *perioikoi* are mentioned in the three major historical authors of the classical period, Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, we begin to appreciate that these sources are mainly interested in the *perioikoi* because they are part of the Lacedaemonian army (see Appendix A).

Appendix A shows that the *perioikoi* are inextricably linked to the Lacedaemonian army. In both Thucydides and Xenophon, every instance, save two, that the label *perioikos*(oi) is mentioned is directly related to a military event. It is also not a coincidence that these two authors, well-known for their war narratives, are the ones that name the various *perioikoi* who operated in the army. The named *perioikoi* in question are Phrynīs, Diniades, Eudicus, Dexippus, and Neon. It is important to scrutinize carefully every military role assumed by each individual *perioikoi* because even though much has now been done on the so-called ‘Spartan army’, no one has ever discussed the (evident) military contribution of the *perioikoi* thoroughly.³ When one examines the *perioikoi* what one realises first is that they all have completely different military functions. Of the five individuals mentioned by our sources, Thucydides names two, and they will be discussed first.

² For the last point cf. Cartledge 1987, 16.

³ For studies and analyses on the Lacedaemonian army see Anderson 1970; Cartledge 1977; Cozzoli 1979; Lazenby 1985; Hodkinson 1993; Valzania 1996; Sekunda 1998; Singor 2002; van Wees 2004; Millender 2006; Campbell 2012.

Thucydides' named *perioikoi* are Diniades (8.22.1) and Phrynīs (8.6.4), the former a fleet commander and the latter a spy. These positions could not be more different from each other, but they both have in common a link with the navy. Furthermore, both occupy very important positions. The Lacedaemonians were up against the Athenians, who possessed the most formidable navy the Greek world had ever seen, and they therefore had to make sure they had experienced – and possibly specialist – sailors capable of operating and commanding fleets. Of course, this is where *perioikoi* would have been most effective in the Peloponnesian War. As we saw in chapters 2 and 3, the *perioikoi* were mostly coastal and seafaring people. Therefore, they would have been expected to put their seafaring credentials to the test in the Lacedaemonian army. It is also no coincidence that the only two *perioikoi* named by Thucydides are carrying out naval missions.

Coming back to Diniades, we can say for certain that he was no mere oarsman, but quite the opposite. Thucydides says he was in command of a fleet (ἤρχε... τῶν δὲ νεῶν Δεινιάδας περίουκος); but could he be a navarch?⁴ The main reason why one could argue against this proposition is simply because someone else was already a navarch at that time.⁵ Diniades is operating in the year 412, which is the same year we see Astyochus as navarch (8.20.1, 23.1).⁶ Therefore, if this office could only be held by one person then Diniades was definitely not a navarch. But we should see this as the *only* reason preventing him from being one. There is nothing to suggest that the office of navarch was reserved for Spartans alone. The same Astyochus mentioned above is never referred to as a Spartiate, but as a Lacedaemonian and a navarch (ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος ναύαρχος), whereas another navarch, Cnemus, is described as a Spartan and a navarch (Σπαρτιάτης ναύαρχος) (2.66.2). Another reason Diniades was qualified for the position of navarch is his position as commander of the fleet and the importance of his actions. Some scholars are apprehensive when it comes to recognising the military importance of Diniades, and even downplay significantly his role as fleet commander.⁷ Nonetheless, the available evidence does hint that Diniades was a high-ranking *perioikos* with a quite impressive military *curriculum vitae*, not least due to what he does next.

⁴ At the very least, Diniades could be a navarch in the general sense of the word. According to the LSJ ναύαρχος can simply mean commander of a fleet, or admiral.

⁵ For Spartan navarchs see Sealey 1976b. The fact that studies on Spartan navarchs are scarce shows that this is a topic that has been overlooked for too long and thus deserves more attention.

⁶ Apparently, the office of navarch could only be held for one year. Cf. Kennell 2010, 126 and Rusch 2011, 13, who says that 'the navarch enjoyed the war powers of a king, but was limited to a single year in office with no second term, to prevent him abusing the position for personal power'.

⁷ Lazenby 1985, 20 suggests he was not a navarch, yet he does not give any specific reason for this assertion; cf. also MacDowell 1986, 28 and Lévy 2003, 146.

Thucydides (8.22.2) goes on to say that Diniades (i) sailed up to Methymna and caused it to revolt, (ii) left four ships there, (iii) and with the rest procured the revolt of Mytilene. This is all happening in 412 during the latter stages of the Peloponnesian War, clearly a very crucial period of the war. What is important and unique in the case of Diniades is that, in a very concise way, Thucydides tells us much about his actions as a fleet commander. Not only does his fleet cause a revolt at Methymna, but it causes another revolt at Mytilene. As a fleet commander Diniades is very active, and is equally instrumental in setting in motion the chain of events that followed. Yet, in true *perioikic* fashion, we never hear from Diniades again. Nevertheless, his cameo appearance is enough to surmise that Diniades was an important figure in Lacedaemonian naval affairs, and though not a navarch, he was at the very least a high-ranking fleet commander who was also the representative of the state. The truth is that if we were to substitute Spartiate for *perioikos*, no one would find any fault in classifying Diniades as a navarch.⁸ But being labelled a *perioikos* still carries a stigma that needs to be removed in order to fully appreciate the importance of the *perioikoi* to the Lacedaemonian army.

Each unique role played by the named and the rest of the *perioikoi* is more than enough evidence to counter this stigma. There is no better example for this than that of Phrynitis (Thuc.8.6.4). The case of Phrynitis was discussed in the previous chapter in terms of loyalties and the relationship with the Spartans. Yet, his position in the army needs further discussion. Phrynitis was undoubtedly one of the highest-ranking *perioikoi* of the Peloponnesian War.⁹ Nevertheless, the fact that his role was not a conventional one is perhaps worth exploring. Thucydides could not be any clearer when he says that Phrynitis was a *κατάσκοπος*, or spy.¹⁰ Russell notes that ‘...since the Chians were officially enemies of Sparta, Phrynitis almost certainly went as a covert agent’.¹¹ This may seem straightforward but when we look at the ancient sources closely we find that the word *κατάσκοπος* is seldom used in conjunction with the Lacedaemonian army or with the Spartans.¹² It is worth noting that in a military context we find almost no mention of Lacedaemonian spies operating.¹³ The only instance where we find mention of Lacedaemonian spies is also in Thucydides (8.41.1),

⁸ Provided, of course, that the office of navarch be vacant or its holder unknown.

⁹ See n. 17 in chapter 4.

¹⁰ For spies in ancient Greece see Richmond 1998 and Russell 1999. The former study, however, does not explore the term *κατάσκοπος* fully, nor does it even mention Phrynitis.

¹¹ Russell 1999, 130.

¹² The Greek term is well attested in Herodotus, for example the famous case of the Greek spies in 7.146 sent to gather intelligence of Xerxes’ army. Yet there is not a single case of Lacedaemonian spies in Herodotus.

¹³ In *Lak.Pol.*2.7 Xenophon does make use of the word but he is of course referring to the training of young Spartans in the art of obtaining supplies stealthily.

when Astyochus wanted to provide safe passage to some Lacedaemonian sent as spies.¹⁴ If being a professional information-gatherer under auspices of the Lacedaemonian army was such a unique position then Phrynīs must have been chosen for his unique set of skills.

As established in the previous chapter, the level of trust placed in Phrynīs meant that he had done this kind of mission before and that the Spartans knew, to put it simply, that he would get the job done.¹⁵ Part of Phrynīs' mission involved assessing Chian ships, which means that his mission was partly a naval one. Therefore, it is completely plausible to assume that Phrynīs' speciality was acting as spy for naval matters; and even though he is only mentioned once in Thucydides, I am sure his services were used regularly because he probably has had a career as a maritime *kataskopos*. After all, the link between the sea, the *perioikoi*, and the Lacedaemonian army is evident throughout the classical period. Russell believes that his status as a *perioikos* was instrumental in the success of his mission. Since Phrynīs was a *perioikos*, he could blend in easily by 'being a merchant or operating in the guise of one'.¹⁶ Thus, Phrynīs' importance can be judged purely by the role he played as a *kataskopos*. Spying, or the business of information gathering, was vital in ancient warfare, so much so that it was recognised by the famed military strategist Sun Tzu:

Spies

Are a key element
In warfare.
On them depends
An army's
Every move.¹⁷

The next *perioikos* with an identified military role is Eudicus, a cavalryman. Xenophon tells us (*Hell.*5.4.39) that during the Theban attack of 378 the Lacedaemonians, under Agesilaus, suffered heavy losses, especially the cavalry. Among the casualties were two Spartiates, Cleas and Epicydidas, and one of the *perioikoi*, Eudicus. Out of all the casualties Xenophon only mentions these three by name. This perhaps suggests they were high-ranking officials of the Lacedaemonian army. The Lacedaemonian cavalry was not as

¹⁴ Notably, these *kataskopoi* were not sent in the same capacity as Phrynīs.

¹⁵ Just like the commanders of the Ten Thousand knew that Democrates was reliable (*An.*4.4.15). Even though Democrates is not described as being a *kataskopos*, these two examples show that having a good reputation as a scout or spy went a long way in the eyes of their comrades.

¹⁶ Russell 1999, 105. In 130, n. 83 he adds: 'If I were to hazard a guess, it would be that he went as a merchant, since (1) he would have a plausible reason for being around the docks and (2) *perioikoi* (at least in the theory) carried on all commerce in Sparta and the most effective disguise is one that incorporated as much as the individual's own identity as possible'.

¹⁷ Cited from Minford 2002, 95. According to the Chinese commentator Jia Lin, in Minford 2002, 325, the passage can also be read as: 'An army without spies is like a man without ears or eyes'.

prestigious or important as the Athenian cavalry, for example.¹⁸ Lazenby says that the cavalry ‘ranked low in the Spartan military hierarchy’.¹⁹ The main piece of evidence he uses is a passage in Xenophon (*Hell.*6.4.10-11) where he gives a surprisingly honest description of the Lacedaemonian cavalry at the battle of Leuctra.²⁰ Xenophon says that at that time (i.e. 371) the cavalry of the Lacedaemonians was remarkably poor.²¹ He goes on to say that the least strong of body and least ambitious were the ones mounted on the horses. Even though there are other passages which one could interpret as degrading the Lacedaemonian cavalry, this is the only passage where a source explicitly criticises the cavalry.²² The truth is we do not know enough of the Lacedaemonian cavalry to conclude that it was a substandard unit in the army, especially since most of references are either of the fourth century or from much later sources.

What matters here is that having a *perioikos* as a cavalryman is not synonymous to a time when the Lacedaemonian cavalry was inferior. What is often overlooked about Xenophon’s passage on the cavalry is that he says that it was inferior at *that* specific time (κατ’ ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον), which could mean at the time of the battle. Perhaps there was a time when the cavalry was more of an elite status, or at least more efficient, be that ten or one hundred years before. If we have *perioikoi* as cavalrymen in the early 370s then in all probability they exercised the same role at earlier times, possibly during the Persian Wars or the Peloponnesian War. That we have definite proof of a perioikic cavalryman further shows the diversity of their role in the Lacedaemonian army.

Nevertheless, there is only one scenario where we see named *perioikoi* appearing in more than a single incident– which in terms of the *perioikoi* means much – and that is the mercenary one. The two *perioikoi* in question, Neon and Dexippus, have already featured in this thesis, but as with the other named *perioikoi*, we need to establish the full extent of their military involvement in a mercenary environment.²³ As we have seen, Neon appears numerous times in Xenophon’s *Anabasis*. He is constantly at the side of the Spartan

¹⁸ On Greek cavalry see Spence 1993 and 2010; Worley 1994; Gaebel 2002.

¹⁹ Lazenby 1985, 10.

²⁰ This passage is often used by other scholars wishing to make a similar point. See, for example, Sekunda 1998, 45-8.

²¹ Xenophon is, of course, a man with a technical interest in cavalry (see *On the Cavalry Commander*). Therefore, we might wonder whether if he is being overcritical.

²² For passages open to interpretation regarding the ambiguity of the Lacedaemonian cavalry see Xen.*Hell.*3.4.15, 4.4.10, 4.5.16; Ages.2.5; Thuc.4.55.2; Xen.*Eq.mag.*9.4; Plut.*Mor.*210F; Diod.15.32.1 (cavalry of mercenaries, presumably).

²³ It must be explained that Neon, by definition, is not a mercenary but sent under direct orders by the Lacedaemonians, as opposed to Clearchus, for example, who was a rogue Spartan by that time and a fully-fledged mercenary. Roy 1967, 308 says that ‘Chirisophus and Neon were not mercenaries but officers sent by the Spartan state’.

Cheirisophus and was not portrayed in a positive light by Xenophon. Indeed, Neon is mostly remembered by scholars today for the ill-fated expedition to gather provisions where five hundred out of two thousand died when they were ambushed by Pharnabazus' cavalry (6.4.23-4).²⁴ Coincidentally, of course, it is Xenophon who goes out and rescues all of the survivors (6.4.25). Yet, Neon, in military terms, is very important because his rank – and his ambition – changes throughout the course of the *Anabasis*. It is very clear from the onset that Neon was a lieutenant-general or *hypostrategos* (ὕποστράτηγος) and second-in-command to Cheirisophus.²⁵

The position of *hypostrategos* was important because it was just below the rank of general (στρατηγός) – which was the highest – but above the rank of captain (λοχαγός). This is clearly illustrated by Xenophon (3.1.32) who, on describing the various divisions of the army, says that 'wherever a general (στρατηγός) was left alive, they would invite him to join them; where the general was gone, they invited the lieutenant-general (ὕποστράτηγος); or, again, where only a captain (λοχαγός) was left, the captain'.²⁶ Thus, the rank of *hypostrategos* can be classified as a high-ranking one.²⁷ Scholars always use the perioikic *kaloi kagathoi* and *logades* – which will be discussed below – as examples of high ranking positions achieved by the *perioikoi*, but Neon's high-ranking status is often overlooked. However, Neon's position as a *hypostrategos* may have been short-lived. Xenophon never makes it clear whether Neon was a *hypostrategos* before the events of 5.6.36, when Cheirisophus suddenly left to look for ships.²⁸ Just because this is the only time Neon is described as a *hypostrategos* does not mean this is the first time he is appointed to such position. We have to at least consider the possibility that Neon was a *hypostrategos* throughout the whole march.

Nevertheless, things take an unexpected turn when Cheirisophus dies from the adverse effects of a medicine taken for a fever, according to Xenophon, and his command thus passes to Neon (6.4.11). Neon now became a *strategos*. Xenophon describes this change of command rather abruptly. If we assume that Cheirisophus' death was not sudden, then he

²⁴ This event has been described as an unqualified and foraging disaster, see Lee 2007, 39, 85; as a mauling, see Whitby 2004, 235; and as a disastrous sortie, see Parker 2004, 145 and Roy 2004, 272. Cawkwell 2004, 60 believes that Neon 'took the (religious) law into his own hands and landed his men into disaster'. Parker 2004, 135 also implies that not observing religious omens was the cause for Neon's disastrous raid.

²⁵ It is in 5.6.36 where we see the position of *hypostrategos* directly associated with Neon.

²⁶ See also 3.1.4 for another reference of military hierarchy. Here Xenophon says he was neither (στρατηγός) nor captain (λοχαγός) nor common soldier (στρατιώτης).

²⁷ Roy 1967, 289 states that 'a *hypostrategos* did not automatically succeed his strategus, since elections were necessary for vacant places (III. I. 46-7) although some *hypostratego*i survived (III. I. 32)'.

²⁸ See Lee 2007, 53, n. 64.

must have set things in motion in order that the transition of command to Neon was handed smoothly. After all, as we saw in chapter 4, Cheirisophus' trust of Neon was unquestionable, and Neon seized that opportunity to prove himself. Lee says that 'the Spartan's prolonged absence enabled Neon to entrench himself firmly, and he was easily able to take over Cheirisophus' contingent following the latter's death'.²⁹

As *strategos*, Neon grew even more ambitious. Xenophon says 'Neon wanted to go to the Chersonese, thinking that if the troops should fall under the control of the Lacedaemonians, he would be leader of the entire army' (Νέων δὲ εἰς Χερρόνησον, οἰόμενος, εἰ ὑπὸ Λακεδαιμονίοις γένοιτο, παντὸς ἂν προεστάναι τοῦ στρατεύματος) (7.2.2). If Neon was sure he would become leader of the army once the troops fell under the Lacedaemonians, then Neon may have already been a high-ranking soldier in his time in the Lacedaemonian army, before the events of the *Anabasis* took place. After all, we never see him quarrelling with any other Lacedaemonian, and Cheirisophus even allowed him to do whatever he pleased (6.2.15). In relation to the outside world, Neon behaves as though he were a Spartan and with the same sense of entitlement. Therefore, he may not have been so pretentious in thinking that the Lacedaemonians would give him control of the whole army. It is when we break free from Xenophon's persuasive rhetoric that we can appreciate the fact that maybe Neon was a good soldier after all. His soldiers certainly thought so; after he detached himself from the army on arrival at Perinthus, eight hundred soldiers followed suit.

Lee says that 'Neon's retention of these troops' loyalty is remarkable considering his disastrous foraging expedition at Calpe'.³⁰ I have to disagree with this view because we cannot judge Neon's military credential from a single incident. We cannot even trust completely Xenophon's version of this event. It is impossible to know if Xenophon overplayed this incident because it was he who came to the rescue. Furthermore, we simply do not know enough about Neon to say what type of soldier he was, and Xenophon may have also chosen to downplay Neon's role in the *Anabasis*.³¹ One view which may be closer to the truth is proposed by Stronk, who 'suggests they preferred the certainty of Spartan service to the unknown perils of joining Seuthes in Thrace'.³² We may replace here Spartan with Lacedaemonian. As we shall see soon with Dexippus, being a Lacedaemonian soldier had its advantages, not least at this specific period of Spartan supremacy. It may be that the combination of being an able soldier and a Lacedaemonian at the same time provided security

²⁹ Lee 2007, 58.

³⁰ Lee 2007, 58, n. 94.

³¹ See Roy 1967, 300, n. 58, who believes that Xenophon suppresses evidence.

³² Stronk 1995, 180.

and prosperity to a soldier. Nevertheless, Neon's military role in the *Anabasis* should not go unnoticed. If there was one Lacedaemonian who made it through the whole expedition it was Neon. Roy says that Neon was the 'senior surviving officer of a force originally sent by Sparta to help Cyrus...' ³³

While Neon was strictly speaking not a mercenary but on official business for the Lacedaemonians, the remaining named *perioikos*, Dexippus, was not. Just like Clearchus, Dexippus was a full-time mercenary and, as far as we can tell, not acting under orders of the Lacedaemonians. With Clearchus we can trace his whereabouts prior to his becoming a mercenary. Xenophon (*An.2.6.2-4*) says he fought in the Lacedaemonian army during the Peloponnesian War. Immediately following the end of the war, he convinced Sparta to wage war on the Thracians of the Chersonese and Perinthos. However, when the ephors changed their minds and abandoned the expedition, Clearchus sailed to the Hellespont anyway, at which point the ephors condemned him to death *in absentia*. Since Clearchus was now an exile without the possibility of ever returning to Laconia, he convinced Cyrus to retain his services as a mercenary.

In the case of Dexippus, on the other hand, his pre-mercenary life is a mystery. We know that he was a Lacedaemonian and a *perioikos* (*Xen.An.5.1.15*); and even though he appears some years earlier in Sicily (*Diod.Sic.13.85-96*), he was already a mercenary by that time (i.e. 406). Again, Xenophon gives us the exact reason why Clearchus became a mercenary, whereas with Dexippus it is unknown. Did he get expelled from the Lacedaemonian army? Did he do something that prompted the ephors to banish him or condemn him to death, as with Clearchus? I believe the answer to the last question is yes, but we shall come to that eventually. Due to his actions in the *Anabasis* and in the events of Sicily, we can paint a close-to-accurate picture of Dexippus without having all the facts. Presumably he fought with the Lacedaemonian army before his stints as a mercenary. Like Clearchus, he probably fought in the Peloponnesian War and had years of service behind him. After all, Diodorus (13.87.5) says that Dexippus was experienced in war. This, combined with enjoying high regard due to the city of his birth (13.85.3), means that Dexippus was already a high-ranking officer in the Lacedaemonian army before he became a mercenary. There are various clues to this.

Regardless of his personal qualities and reputation, a close reading of the sources suggests that Dexippus was quite resourceful in military matters and could also be

³³ Roy 2004, 281.

influential.³⁴ As depicted in the *Anabasis*, he was put in command (ἐπέστησαν in 5.1.15; ὑπὸ τῆς στρατιᾶς ἄρχειν in 6.6.22) of a fifty-oared warship (πεντηκόντορος), which was not just any ship.³⁵ Again, this is yet another case of a *perioikos* being associated with naval matters, which further explains why the *perioikoi* would have been at the forefront of any Lacedaemonian navy put into operation. Nevertheless, it is during his spell in Sicily where we see Dexippus dictating things and being more pro-active. During the Carthaginian siege of Acragas in 406, Dexippus arrives late – but with fifteen hundred mercenaries – to aid the Acragantines. Although Diodorus does not explain how or why the Acragantines retained the services of Dexippus, he does tell us that Dexippus travelled from Gela where, according to Timaeus, he ‘was enjoying high regard by reason of the city of his birth’ (Diod.Sic.13.85.3; BNJ 566 F 27).³⁶

Although neither Diodorus – nor Xenophon for that matter – ever assigns a specific military rank to Dexippus, we have to assume that he was at least a captain (λοχαγός) since he was definitely leader of the fifteen hundred mercenaries that accompanied him to Acragas. Roy says that Dexippus was probably a λοχαγός given his career in Sicily.³⁷ But it is possible that he was more than a mere captain. According to Niese, Dexippus was a leader of mercenaries (*Söldnerführer*) and a commander (*Befehlshaber*).³⁸ One is inclined to agree with Niese. In most of Diodorus’ narrative, Dexippus is always in command of soldiers. A λοχαγός is simply a captain in command of a few hundred men; but Dexippus has fifteen hundred mercenaries serving under him at the start, and he employs a further eight hundred Campanians who had fought with Hannibal (13.85.4), which makes him commander of over two thousand soldiers. With these soldiers he resisted the siege of Acragas at the hand of the

³⁴ As mentioned before, Dexippus was not an honourable person. One thing which is consistent in Xenophon and Diodorus’ accounts of him is his propensity to act treacherously and unscrupulously: He was accused of being a traitor (προδοτήν) to his men and was at the verge of being stoned (Xen.An.6.6.7); At one point he is even called a παμπόνηρος (according to the *LSJ* ‘thoroughly depraved’) (Xen.An.6.6.25); Diodorus also makes a contrast between Dexippus’ military superiority and his treacherousness (13.87.5); he is also ‘corrupted by a bribe of fifteen talents’ (Diod.13.88.7); he is expelled from Sicily by Dionysius because he is suspicious of Dexippus (Diod.13.96.1). But in a classic case of ‘what goes around comes around’, Xenophon himself says that Dexippus in the end got what he deserved and was summarily killed by Nicander, another Laconian, again for acting suspiciously (Xen.An.5.1.15).

³⁵ Rihll 1993, 94 says the pentekonter was ‘the warship *par excellence*’. For Greek warships see Morrison and Williams 1968 and Strauss 2007. For a comprehensive study on warships and naval warfare during the archaic period see Wallinga 1993.

³⁶ Caven 1990, 47 believes that Dexippus served under Hermocrates the Syracusan and, alongside the fifteen hundred mercenaries, also brought eight hundred ‘Campanians discarded by Hannibal after the Himera campaign’. However, this theory is entirely speculative and there is no way of knowing if Dexippus served under Hermocrates as Diodorus never mentions Dexippus before this passage. Furthermore, it seems Caven does not know that much about Dexippus, since he calls Dexippus a Spartan, which means that either he does not know that Dexippus appeared in Xenophon or he does not associate that Dexippus with the one in Diodorus.

³⁷ Roy 1967, 304.

³⁸ Niese 1905, 287-8.

Carthaginians (13.85.5). He then returns to Gela and there the Syracusans entrust Dexippus with the task of guarding (παρεφύλαττε) the city, which means that now, albeit temporarily, Dexippus is in charge of a whole city (13.93.1). All of this shows that Dexippus was a successful soldier and not just a mere captain. He was capable of commanding thousands of men, capable of watching over a whole city, and even confident enough to turn down the all-powerful tyrant Dionysius I.³⁹ This prompted Dionysius to expel him from Sicily because he feared the possibility of Dexippus seizing an opportunity to restore the Syracusans their liberty (13.96.1) – a remarkable tribute to Dexippus’ potential influence as a mercenary soldier.⁴⁰

Therefore, Dexippus as a soldier had the power to influence the chain of events, due to the fact that, as Diodorus say, he was not inexperienced in war. After all, we seldom see him being unemployed; he is employed by the Acragantini, then the Syracusans, then almost by Dionysius I, then by Cyrus as part of the Ten Thousand, and finally by Seuthes in Thrace, where he met his end. Therefore, Dexippus had quite an impressive resume as a mercenary alone. This can only mean that Dexippus was trained in accordance with the level required of any member of the Lacedaemonian army, both Spartans and *perioikoi* alike. That Dexippus is said to be experienced in warfare by 406, before the events of the *Anabasis*, would only mean that he had already enjoyed a successful military career prior to his earliest appearance in our sources. It would not be surprising if Dexippus had made a name for himself as a soldier in the Lacedaemonian army. Cartledge says that ‘there could be few better illustrations of the extent to which *Perioikoi* had become assimilated to the Spartan military establishment’.⁴¹ Diodorus, in more or less these words, also says that his Lacedaemonian reputation preceded him (13.85.3). Exactly what Diodorus meant by this is purely speculative. His exact words are κατ’ ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον, ὡς Τίμαιός φησιν, ἐν Γέλα διέτριβεν, ἔχων ἀξίωμα διὰ τὴν πατρίδα. This means that he was enjoying his time at Gela by reason of his fatherland.⁴² However vague this statement is we have to assume this means that he already had a reputation for being a skilled soldier, presumably by virtue of being a Lacedaemonian.

³⁹ Diodorus (13.93.4) relates how Dionysius tried to win over Dexippus make him ‘associate himself with his design’, but Dexippus rejected him and turned him down.

⁴⁰ Millender 2006, 238 says that ‘[Dexippus] posed an obstacle to the ambitious Dionysius’ bid for tyranny’. For this reason Dionysius took all the necessary steps to diminish Dexippus’ influence, from winning over Dexippus’ mercenaries, unsuccessfully persuading Dexippus to join him, to finally expelling him from Sicily.

⁴¹ Cartledge 1987, 320.

⁴² Millender 2006, 238 says that it was because of his Lacedaemonian origins. See also Cartledge 1987, 318.

There is a debate in modern scholarship regarding Dexippus' 'notorious career in Sicily', as Parke puts it.⁴³ Some believe that Dionysius treated Dexippus leniently – by simply expelling him from Sicily and not killing him then and there – because the latter was sent by Sparta on official business.⁴⁴ Other scholars, on the other hand, believe that he was acting alone as an adventurer or as a soldier of fortune.⁴⁵ Both scenarios are entirely plausible. He could have been sent by the Spartans on official business to Sicily. Even though Diodorus and Xenophon do not portray him as a likeable character, he is still effective from a Lacedaemonian point-of-view and, as shown in the previous chapter, he had the backing of not just any Spartan, but influential ones.⁴⁶ Therefore they would have definitely trusted him to carry out their orders abroad. On the other hand, if he was simply a soldier of fortune then, as shown above, he most definitely had the credentials to fulfil this type of career. Regardless of the reason for Dexippus' stay at Sicily, what is important is that Dexippus had achieved fame and status first as a soldier in the Lacedaemonian army and then as a mercenary. He is the only *perioikos* in our sources whose military life and whereabouts can be traced in more than one context. Even though he is not representative of all *perioikoi* – many would not have liked to associate themselves with him – he does show that the *perioikoi* are present in our sources and that they have a military story to tell.

Perioikic roles in the army: elite and wealthy *perioikoi*

Moving on from named *perioikoi*, in the majority of instances where the *perioikoi* are mentioned in a military context they are both unnamed and amalgamated into contingents and groups. Many scholars today believe that these unnamed *perioikoi* that fought alongside the Spartans in the Lacedaemonian army were recruited from the elite and wealthy ranks of the *perioikoi*. But was the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army composed only of elite *perioikoi*? In other words, could it be possible that the *perioikoi* provided only their best

⁴³ Parke 1933, 29.

⁴⁴ At the forefront of this view is Cartledge 1987, 218-20 and Millender 2006, 238-9, who follows Cartledge. He believes that 'If [Dexippus] was merely a 'free lance', offering his services to the highest bidder, it is odd that subsequently Dionysios, during his resourceful rise to the tyranny, sent him packing back to Greece in case Dexippos should frustrate his devious plans rather than simply do away with him on the spot. It looks as if Dexippos' presence at Gela was really part of an official Spartan policy of sending (limited) aid to the Sicilian Greeks with a view to receiving reciprocal aid in the war against Athens'.

⁴⁵ Parke 1933, 64 simply labels Dexippus as an adventurer. Caven 1990, 47 simply called him a soldier of fortune.

⁴⁶ Cartledge 1987, 220 says that 'he enjoyed favoured status in the eyes of two of the most powerful Spartans in the area, Anaxibios the navarch and Kleandros the harmost of Byzantion'. Millender 2006, 243 also alludes to the passage (Xen.An.6.6.9) where Cleander threatened 'to punish those Cyreians who had gotten into a conflict with Dexippus by outlawing the 10,000 from the Spartan Empire'. A bigger threat than this one would be hard to find.

and most skilled soldiers for Spartan campaigns? Elite *perioikoi* are synonymous with wealthy *perioikoi* in most modern scholarship.⁴⁷ Julián Gallego, for example, claims that those *perioikoi* in the army were ‘aristocrats certainly’ and ‘noblemen’.⁴⁸ However, in this section I shall challenge this view and present a different proposition: namely, that elite does not equal wealthy. In order to do this it will examine three special perioikic contingents: Agesilaus’ Lacedaemonians, the five thousand *logades* at Plataea and the *kaloi kagathoi* mentioned by Xenophon.

Agesilaus’ special Lacedaemonians

There is one passage which, even though it does not mention the *perioikoi* explicitly, undoubtedly includes them and is an appropriate way of opening the debate about the elite/wealthy *perioikoi*. In his *Agesilaus*, Plutarch describes a well-known occasion on which Agesilaus explicitly says his men do not engage in manual work. The passage is as follows:

Accordingly, they said they had no wish to be dragged hither and thither to destruction every year, they themselves so many, and the Lacedaemonians, with whom they followed, so few. It was at this time, we are told, that Agesilaus, wishing to refute their argument from numbers, devised the following scheme. He ordered all the allies to sit down by themselves promiscuously, and the Lacedaemonians apart by themselves. Then his herald called upon the potters to stand up first, and after them the smiths, next, the carpenters in their turn, and the builders, and so on through all the handicrafts. In response, almost all the allies rose up, but not a man of the Lacedaemonians; for they were forbidden to learn or practise a manual art. Then Agesilaus said with a laugh: ‘You see, O men, how many more soldiers than you we are sending out’.

(Plut.*Ages.*26.4-5)

By this time (370s) not only were the *perioikoi* an integral part of the Lacedaemonian army, but they were also completely integrated with the Spartiates that made up the remainder of the army. Moreover the *perioikoi* probably represented the bulk of the Lacedaemonian army and their numbers would have been crucial for any Lacedaemonian success. Therefore, without a doubt the army Plutarch is alluding to includes *perioikoi*. At first glance what this passage shows is that Agesilaus wants to make a point that all Lacedaemonians – at least

⁴⁷ For the elite/select *perioikoi* argument see Cartledge 1987 and 2002; Shipley 1992, 224, quotes Cartledge but does not really pick a side; van Wees 2004; Gallego 2005, believes elite equals wealthy and free from manual labour.

⁴⁸ Gallego 2005, 44.

those in the army – were prohibited from practicing manual arts and are presumably full-time soldiers. We know that this applied to the Spartans, but where does that leave the *perioikoi*? Does it mean that only wealthy *perioikoi* could enrol in the Lacedaemonian army? My short answer would be no. There is absolutely no evidence in our sources which suggests that the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army was exclusively composed of well-to-do *perioikoi*. Nonetheless, we need to look at this – and all pieces of – evidence in order to give a full answer to the above question.

Plutarch's passage is very important because it offers a unique insight into perioikic involvement in the Lacedaemonian army. It perhaps implies that the Spartans were not the only ones exempt from manual labour, but the *perioikoi* as well – or at least those who served in the Lacedaemonian army. The passage suggests one of two things: (i) that the *perioikoi* involved in the Lacedaemonian army were indeed elite *perioikoi* strictly focused on training for military campaigns because they were either wealthy enough to do so or skilled enough that their specific circumstances allowed them to dedicate their time solely to military training. Or (ii) they could have been a mixture of elite perioikic soldiers and regular perioikic hoplites (farmers?) who simply divided their time between work and training, which is what I believe lies closer to the truth. But before going further into the passage itself we must analyse the source.

Plutarch knew what he was writing, and even though he was 'not writing history but biography' (*Alex.*1.2) there are historical glimpses which we can extract from an already philosophical passage. The passage is what I would call a typical 'Agesilean' passage. It shows his witty, his exuberant personality, his craftiness, and his unique 'Spartan' take on everyday things. As an anecdote, some today will understandably be suspicious of it. Nonetheless, a close analysis must be made, especially with the *perioikoi* in mind and in view of how they would fit into the passage itself. D. R. Shipley's assessment of the passage focuses entirely on the fact that Agesilaus is being accused by the allies and that he disregards one of the key principles of the Rhetra (i.e. that Sparta shall not campaign against the same enemy repeatedly).⁴⁹ Shipley says that 'there is some truth in the charge, but the source of the anecdote is perhaps in the Spartans' own tradition, since it enhances their reputation for military prowess'.⁵⁰ He also implies that the passage may be philosophical as well since it would therefore mean that the Spartans brought the defeat upon themselves. We must not forget that behind all the philosophical sub-traces, the 'Plutarchan' nature of it, and the

⁴⁹ Shipley 1997, 302.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

moralistic tone, it is still a very ‘Spartan’ passage full of Spartan slyness, the likes of which we can also witness in Xenophon (*Hell.*4.3.2; *An.*4.6.14-16; *An.*2.2.20-21) and in Herodotus (7.226).

The veracity of the anecdote is not what is important here, but who said it, and perhaps more importantly, why. Spartan wit aside, the core of the passage is simple, that the Lacedaemonians, as opposed to the allies, were soldiers first and foremost. They were barred from practicing any sort of manual ‘art’, which made them real soldiers, which is what Agesilaus is implying. The allies on the other hand, were not ‘real’ soldiers because they were potters, smiths, carpenters, among others, but we shall return to that later. There are three main issues with this passage: first, the whole notion of not practicing a manual art has always been associated with Spartiates only and not everyone else (i.e. *neodamodeis* and especially the *perioikoi*). Second, one needs to explore whether the perioikic contingent was an elite group deprived of manual labour. Or could they have been farmers, like regular hoplites?⁵¹ The archetypal heavy-armoured foot soldier in ancient Greece was not a carpenter (for example), but we must not forget that he was not necessarily remote from manual labour either. The standard hoplite was a farmer, but the Spartans were not farmers, whereas it is more probable that the *perioikoi* were. Thus, is Plutarch hinting at the notion that the Lacedaemonian army could have been composed – at least partly – of farmers? And third, why did Plutarch specifically mention the profession of the allies?

The first issue concerns the banning of all manual *techne* in Sparta. One of the most prominent features of the ‘Spartan mirage’, the barring of any sort of craftsmanship – at the hands of the citizens, of course – is a characteristic associated with Sparta. Cartledge says that it started with a ‘strong disapproval of *kheirotekhnai* attested by Herodotus’, and evolved into a ‘qualitative different legal prohibition on ‘banausic’ enterprise implied by Xenophon and Aristotle and stated as a fact by Plutarch’.⁵² Cartledge, however, only has in mind the Spartans themselves. Plutarch specifically says that ‘they were forbidden to learn or practise a manual art’, but he was not just talking about the Spartiates, he was also referring to the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army as well. Agesilaus is speaking about the Spartans and *perioikoi* that were *in* the army, and not ordinary *perioikoi* that remained at home producing goods for the Spartans or for themselves.

This brings us to the second issue, was the perioikic contingent made of people who avoided manual labour as well and therefore composed of an elite group who trained with the

⁵¹ For the link between farming and hoplite warfare see Hanson 1983 and Foxhall 1993.

⁵² Cartledge 1976, 119.

Spartans or in their local *agōgē*? As we can see from Plutarch's passage, Agesilaus took pride in showing that his army had 'more' soldiers than his allies. Plutarch even points out that Agesilaus said it with a laugh. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army was also banned from practicing the manual arts in order to be better soldiers. As mentioned above, by the time of the events taking place in the passage, *perioikoi* were already fully integrated into the Lacedaemonian army. Therefore, there is no doubt that the 'Lacedaemonians' Plutarch is talking about already included *perioikoi*, who should be included in his statement that no Lacedaemonian practiced manual arts.⁵³ This plays well into the whole 'elite *perioikoi*' debate and supports the idea that the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army will have been composed mainly of elite perioikic soldiers, although I do believe that there was room for regular perioikic soldiers as well, especially in a time where fewer and fewer Spartiates remained.⁵⁴ Now, Cartledge uses Plutarch's passage for a different purpose, he uses it to support his theory that hoplite *perioikoi* equals wealthy *perioikoi*.⁵⁵ However, I believe the passage has nothing to do with wealth, but with the fact that there existed *perioikoi* who were also banned from practicing manual arts, regardless of whether they were wealthy or not.

This leads to the third and final issue, the question of why would Plutarch specifically name the allies' professions. According to Agesilaus an army composed of potters, smiths, carpenters, and builders, 'all the handicrafts', as Plutarch says, was not a real army. Agesilaus could not have said it more bluntly 'You see, O men, how many more soldiers than you we are sending out'. Plutarch, on the other hand, does not mention farmers. This is because he knew that (good) soldiers could also be farmers, as was the standard Greek hoplite, or yeomen farmer and yeomen hoplite, as Hanson and van Wees like to call them.⁵⁶ The handicrafts that Plutarch mentions by name are just that, quintessential handicrafts, as opposed to farming. Many *perioikoi* were handicraftsmen as well as farmers. It is possible that those who farmed and oversaw farming were chosen to be part of the Lacedaemonian army, for whatever reasons, be it that they had more time for training or that perioikic handicraftsmen would have been too busy producing things for Spartiates and/or export. Cartledge has frequently stressed that rich *perioikoi* had chattel slaves that could work their

⁵³ See Shipley 1997, 202.

⁵⁴ The reader should be reminded that, as I have said before, elite does not equal wealth. Elite *perioikoi* simply means those who trained under 'the laws of Lycurgus', meaning that they trained in a similar fashion to the Spartans.

⁵⁵ Cartledge 2002, 154.

⁵⁶ Hanson 1995 and van Wees 2013.

lands and so they had the time to participate in the Lacedaemonian army.⁵⁷ While this could be true, there could have been regular perioikic farmers that also belonged to the Lacedaemonian army, farmers that were not wealthy but in all probability part of a military elite trained under the laws of Lycurgus. Even though Spartiates were not farmers, farming would not have been on the list of banned manual arts because the *perioikoi* were part of the Lacedaemonian army. This could be Plutarch's way of saying that there were farmers in the Lacedaemonian army, which if looked at carefully, does not undermine the Lacedaemonian army. It was quite the contrary; it makes the army socio-morally good because it meant that it was truly made up of real soldiers. It does however undermine the Spartan mirage because it takes away from the picture of an army composed of 'super hoplites'. The Lacedaemonian army, regardless of how superior it was to the rest of the Greek *poleis*, was more pragmatic than one would like to believe but still different from the rest, and that is what Plutarch wants the reader to know.

Plutarch wants the reader to know that the Lacedaemonian army was different; he even has Agesilaus sitting the allies apart from the Lacedaemonians. From the passage we can already establish that they were not builders, smiths, potters, among others. Plutarch did not forget that the *perioikoi* were already an integral part of the army; he has mentioned them by name before in his works at least six times and mostly in military contexts.⁵⁸ Starting from the fact that Plutarch knew who the *perioikoi* were, and most importantly, their role in the Lacedaemonian army we can deduce that the perioikic contingent in all likelihood was composed of a mixture of elite wealthy and non-wealthy *perioikoi* (i.e. farmer but still non-artisan). From the passage we can deduce one crucial understanding of the *perioikoi*: that like the Spartans they were banned from practicing manual arts. This passage does not tell us that only wealthy *perioikoi* were present in the Lacedaemonian army, as Cartledge suggests. Rather it tells us something very revealing and specific, that the perioikic contingent had to meet certain fundamental requirements in order to be incorporated into the army. The main requirement probably was to dedicate their time to training and not to practice any manual arts. Whether they were chosen from childhood or recruited later and therefore required to stop any craftsmanship they were doing is something we cannot know for certain. What we do know is that Plutarch's passage gives us a glimpse of a truly unique army of the classical period, one that included farmers and non-artisans, *perioikoi* and Spartiates. But most importantly it shows that the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army was adapted

⁵⁷ Cartledge 1987, 178 and 2002, 154.

⁵⁸ *De glor.Ath.*2; *Lyc.*8.3; *Cim.*16.7; *Ages.*32.7; *Agis.*8.2; *Cleom.*11.

into the military and social practices of Spartan way of life. This passage implicitly confirms that (some) *perioikoi*, elite or not, could have been trained under the laws of Lycurgus because they had to go as far as proving that they did not practice any manual *techne*.⁵⁹

What this passage tells us *prima facie* is that (i) the fourth-century Lacedaemonian army had *perioikoi*, (ii) that Plutarch definitely knew this, and (iii), most importantly, that Agesilaus' perioikic soldiers did not practice artisan trades. On the other hand, looking at the passage from a philosophical standpoint, the true meaning behind the passage is that a proper army is made up of people who are intrinsically soldiers, whereas a wrong army is made up of people of all walks of life (in this case people of artisan trade). And the *perioikoi* are included in this ideal of how a real army should operate. Therefore, even if one argues against the veracity of the passage and says it does not constitute evidence in favour of perioikic soldiers banned from manual trade, it still does not constitute evidence against that proposition.

Perioikic logades

Plutarch's passage does not offer any concrete evidence that only wealthy *perioikoi* could participate in the Lacedaemonian army. Yet, some scholars follow the theory set by Cartledge and believe that elite and wealthy, in regards to the *perioikoi*, are intrinsically linked.⁶⁰ But, textual evidence never suggests that non-wealthy *perioikoi* were excluded from participating in the Lacedaemonian army. Out of all the passages where *perioikoi* are mentioned in ancient sources, only two would suggest that elite *perioikoi* participated in the Lacedaemonian army. One is an episode in Xenophon's *Hellenica* (5.3.9) – the one with the *kaloi kagathoi* – and the other is a very interesting passage in Herodotus (9.11.3) where the five-thousand *perioikoi* who fought at Plataea are described as *λογάδες*. According to the LSJ, the definition of the word *λογάς* means 'picked', 'chosen', 'picked men' and is often translated as 'picked troops' or 'an elite force'. The word, therefore, in looser terms could definitely mean elite.⁶¹ In our case it is *τῶν περιόικων Λακεδαιμονίων λογάδες*, which is very specific and direct. Judging by the passage there is no doubt that Herodotus is referring to the five-thousand

⁵⁹ Perioikic training will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁶⁰ For example, as seen above, Gallego 2005 believes that it was mostly elites (which to him equals those *perioikoi* who were wealthy, well-off, and free from manual labour because they owned slaves) who were part of the Lacedaemonian army. The problem is that Gallego does not go further than focusing on wealthy *perioikoi*. It is therefore necessary to explore more possibilities.

⁶¹ The term is often interchangeably used with the *epilektoi*, who are also 'chosen' troops. However, since the *perioikoi* are only associated with the *logades*, the *epilektoi* will not be discussed. For the latter see Tritle 1989 and Wheeler 1993.

perioikoi as a picked group. However, whether this picked or select group is elite and wealthy is another matter. One must look at other examples where *logades* is used to better understand what the word means in a military context.

Logades is mostly attested in Herodotus and Thucydides but oddly enough never in Xenophon. This could be seen as ironic since Xenophon is the author that mentions the *perioikoi* the most.⁶² There are too many examples in both Herodotus and Thucydides to list them all here but there are a few that come closest to the one in question.⁶³ When we compare most of the passages mentioned in Thucydides and Herodotus we begin to see a pattern emerging: in the majority of the passages the ‘picked men’ are usually small in numbers – sometimes smaller than one hundred but almost always a few hundred,⁶⁴ although one does find the cases where the numbers range from one thousand to four thousand, albeit this is the minority.⁶⁵

In what category, therefore, do the five thousand ‘picked’ *perioikoi* fall? Judging from the textual evidence, a ‘picked’ group of more than a few thousand soldiers is rare, which makes the five thousand *perioikoi* even a rarer sight. One would think that *logades* is too restrictive a word to be used to describe five thousand soldiers. On the other hand, the reality may be simpler. It could be that five thousand ‘picked’ *perioikoi* is not really a large number when one compares it to the number of *perioikoi* who inhabit Laconia (which we know to be

⁶² Xenophon does use the word *epilektos*, which is more common across Greek sources. But even though linguistically and etymologically *epilektos* is equivalent to *logades*, the former will not be discussed because neither Xenophon nor any other source speaks of *epilektoi perioikoi*.

⁶³ In 5.67 Thucydides mentions that the Argives came with one thousand ‘picked men’ (Αργείων οἱ χίλιοι λογάδες); in 2.25 he says that ‘The Athenians...ravaged the country for two days and defeated a picked force of three hundred men (τριακοσίους λογάδας) that had come from the vale of Elis and the immediate neighbourhood to the rescue; in 4.125 ‘...he himself with three hundred picked men in the rear... (αὐτὸς λογάδας ἔχων τριακοσίους τελευταῖος); in 4.129 ‘...sixty picked men from the Athenian heavy infantry...’ (λογάδας τῶν Ἀθηναίων ὀπλιτῶν ἐξήκοντα); in 6.96 ‘...held a review of their heavy infantry, from whom they first selected a picked body of six hundred...’ (ἐξακοσίους λογάδας τῶν ὀπλιτῶν ἐξέκριναν πρότερον); in 6.100 ‘...appointed three hundred picked men of their own...’ (τριακοσίους μὲν σφῶν αὐτῶν λογάδας); in 6.101 ‘The three hundred picked Athenians...’ (οἱ τῶν Ἀθηναίων τριακόσιοι λογάδες). These examples come only from Thucydides. Herodotus, on the other hand, also uses the word several times: in 1.82 ‘...picked men of each side remained and fought (λογάδες δὲ ἑκατέρων ὑπολειφθέντες συνέβαλον). Neither could gain advantage in the battle; at last, only three out of the six hundred were left...’; in 6.56 ‘...one hundred chosen men guard them in their campaigns...’ (ἑκατὸν δὲ ἄνδρας λογάδας ἐπὶ στρατιῆς φυλάσσειν αὐτούς). He is referring to the 300 Spartiates who always accompany the Spartan kings; in 9.21 ‘...three hundred picked men of Athens...’ (Ἀθηναίων οἱ τριηκόσιοι λογάδες).

⁶⁴ Wheeler 2007, 220 notes that ‘Temporary special units of 300 sometimes called *logades* appear already in the Persian Wars and earlier’.

⁶⁵ In Hdt.6.15.1 ‘the [Chians] brought a hundred ships to the fleet...and on each ship were forty picked men of their citizens’; Hdt.9.63 ‘...Mardonius...surrounded by a thousand picked men who were the flower of the Persians’; Diod.12.79.4-6 ‘the picked troops of the Argives, one thousand in number...’ Surprisingly, though, Plutarch (*Ages*.6.2) gives an example of *neodamodeis logades*: ‘Agesilaus went before the assembly of the people and agreed to undertake the war if they would grant him...a select corps of two thousand enfranchised Helots...’

much larger than Spartans), which in turn would make them an elite force. After all, that is what the *logades* were, ‘an elite unit, whether permanent or selected *ad hoc*’.⁶⁶ Thus, you can have a big selection of *logades* as long as you have a big group to choose from. Lee says that ‘some large *poleis* and federal states did raise bodies of *logades* or *epilektoi*, picked troops maintained at public expense’.⁶⁷ Nonetheless, we cannot assume that every state chose their picked troops for the same purposes.

Therefore, who were these perioikic *logades*, and why were they picked? Sources sometimes say that *logades* were the most able-bodied troops, skilled, among others, but most of the time they do not say, as in the case of the *perioikoi*. Since five thousand is such a large number we should not compare these *logades* to the instances where only a few hundred are mentioned. Even though we know nothing about the perioikic *logades*, it might be possible to get a glimpse of what type of soldier they were if we compare them to the three thousand Macedonian *logades* described by Plutarch.⁶⁸ In the *Aemilius Paullus* (18.3-4; 21.3),⁶⁹ Plutarch describes what made these soldiers unique:

Next to these came a third division, picked men, the flower of the Macedonians themselves for youthful strength and valour, gleaming with gilded armour and fresh scarlet coats. As these took their places in the line, they were illumined by the phalanx-lines of the Bronze-shields which issued from the camp behind them and filled the plain with the gleam of iron and the glitter of bronze, the hills, too, with the tumultuous shouts of their cheering. And with such boldness and swiftness did they advance that the first to be slain fell only two furlongs from the Roman camp. When he saw...the strength of their interlocked shields and the fierceness of their onset, amazement and fear took possession of him, and he felt that he had never seen a sight more fearful. Finally, the three thousand picked men of the Macedonians, who remained in order and kept on fighting, were all cut to pieces; and of the rest, who took to flight, the slaughter was great...

(Plut.*Aem.*18.3-4; 21.3)

This is the best description we have of an elite unit of ‘picked troops’. Since the word *logades* is consistent throughout both the classical period and the Hellenistic, we can assume that the five thousand perioikic *logades* at Plataea could be described in the same manner as the Macedonians. After all, given the unique situation of the Persian Wars, and for the purpose of

⁶⁶ Definition taken from *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare* 2007, Vol. 1, 538.

⁶⁷ Lee 2013, 146.

⁶⁸ Even though this event is not classical, Plutarch is again using the word *logades* just as he used it to describe the *Neodamodeis logades* of Agesilaus. See n. 65 above.

⁶⁹ The event in question is the Third Macedonian War of 171.

this particular enterprise, the Lacedaemonians could not afford to send an average force to face the Persians. The collective force of ten thousand Lacedaemonians must have truly been a first-class one. Thus, the *perioikoi* chosen for this endeavour had to have been as impressive as the ‘picked’ Macedonians described above, youthful, valorous, bold, swift, fierce, fear-inducing, and brave.⁷⁰

The question of why they were chosen, on the other hand, is more difficult to answer. If we presume they were picked because they were strictly an elite group, then five thousand should not be seen as large due to the overall number of *perioikoi*, which is the more reasonable explanation. For Plataea, the Spartans needed the best soldiers at hand and it should not be coincidence that for the most crucial battle of the Persian Wars they picked the most skilled and elite *perioikoi*. We have to remember that even though we have numerous examples of *logades* throughout the classical period, it is important to highlight that the perioikic contingent of Plataea is the largest group of *logades* in our sources. If these were really the elite of all the *perioikoi* then it would mean that the Spartans had the luxury of picking even more *perioikoi* (regular soldiers) but chose only to bring the most skilled, the ‘select/picked’ troops.⁷¹ Van Wees certainly agrees with this theory; he says that the ‘*perioikoi* were required to provide only select groups’.⁷² He also says ‘...the total population of *perioikoi* in their dozens of towns must have far outnumbered full Spartan citizens, so it seems clear that only a small proportion was called up for active service’.⁷³

While I do agree that the five thousand *perioikoi* at Plataea were indeed elite (because the word *logades* seems to suggest so and the other examples support that theory) I do not agree with van Wees’ view that the *perioikoi* were required to provide only select groups. His theory is only based solely on this Herodotean passage. But this passage should not be treated as representative of all the appearances of *perioikoi* in our sources. As mentioned above, the Persian Wars was such a unique event that it provided many ‘firsts’ for the Greeks, and

⁷⁰ By saying that all of the Macedonians were killed, and then saying that the rest of the troops fled, Plutarch is saying that these elite picked troops never considered retreating, and the same should be said of the *perioikoi*. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, where the reliability of the *perioikoi* will be analysed.

⁷¹ However, we cannot rule out the possibility that there were even more perioikic *logades* available and that the Spartans chose five thousand simply to have an equal and uniform amount to the Spartiates at the battle. The question is, if the Spartans had fielded, say, seven thousand Spartiates instead of five, would we have seen the same number of perioikic *logades*? I think it is very interesting that they chose to have equal amounts of perioikic and Spartiate soldiers, but then again the Lacedaemonian army was nothing if not complex. See Lazenby 1985 and Sekunda 1998 for an overall picture of the complexity and uniqueness of the Lacedaemonian army.

⁷² Van Wees 2007, 278.

⁷³ Van Wees 2007, 278, n. 15.

anything that came before or after was not necessarily going to be the same.⁷⁴ Furthermore, we cannot say that just because Herodotus mentions perioikic *logades* that the *perioikoi* were required to provide only elite troops. Part of the reason is that the word *logades* in relation to the *perioikoi* is never used again. Also, this is the only time so many ‘elite’ *perioikoi* are deployed into a battle, which prompts the question: what about the *perioikoi* that fought in the rest of the battles? Were these *logades* as well? There is no question that *logades* were picked troops, chosen carefully and not randomly. They are supposed to be better than the average soldier, for whatever reason in a specific context. But there is no certain way of knowing if the rest of the *perioikoi* were *logades* as well, which is why we cannot assume that only select *perioikoi* fought with the Spartans.

On the other hand, apart from saying they were *logades*, Herodotus does not give any information at all about the five thousand *perioikoi* at Plataea. Quite frankly, if the word was not there, and Herodotus had just said there were five thousand *perioikoi*, we would not notice its absence. But interestingly, we do have a case where two different authors, Xenophon and Plutarch, describe the same event but one uses the word *logades* and the other one does not.⁷⁵ Speaking about the moment Agesilaus was persuaded to lead an army against the Persians in Asia during the early 390s, Xenophon (*Hell.*3.4.2) goes on to say that the Spartan king needed two thousand emancipated helots (*neodamodeis*). Plutarch (*Ages.*6.2), on the other hand, describing the same episode almost word by word, adds that the two thousand *neodamodeis* were *logades*.⁷⁶ Shipley’s commentary on this passage suggests that the word ‘λογάδας may indicate their exclusive training as hoplites’, though Shipley does not address the fact that Plutarch describes them as *logades* whereas Xenophon does not.⁷⁷ This passage gives us an insight into Herodotus’ reference to the perioikic *logades*. They are both mentioned as *logades* but there is really no difference at all if the word would have been omitted. Regardless of the reason why Xenophon did not label them as *logades*, we cannot say that Plutarch – and in that case Herodotus as well – inserted the term casually. In the case of Herodotus somebody simply told him that the perioikic contingent at Plataea was

⁷⁴ As far as we know (i) this is the first time the Greeks fought together against an invading foreign enemy, (ii) the first time the Greeks fought a major naval battle, (iii) the first time the Spartans embarked on what was, in effect a suicide mission, (iv) the first time Athens had to undergo a massive evacuation, and surely there are many more examples. All of this shows that the Persian Wars had an everlasting effect on the population of ancient Greece. For the impact of the Persian Wars see Bridges, et al. 2007.

⁷⁵ For Plutarch’s use of earlier sources see Schettino 2014.

⁷⁶ This is one of those Plutarchan episodes that is a direct proxy of Xenophon. Save for the – probably deliberate – omission of Lysander’s role in Plutarch’s version, this passage is almost completely identical to the one in Xenophon. Both even mention the same amount of Spartiates (i.e. thirty) and *neodamodeis* (i.e. two thousand).

⁷⁷ Shipley 1997, 122-3.

specifically chosen and picked, and so it became a *logades* contingent. Therefore, it is possible that the same thing happened in Plutarch's case, that even though Xenophon omitted the word, Plutarch probably read somewhere that the two thousand *neodamodeis* were, after all, a carefully chosen and picked contingent for Agesilaus' expedition. Plutarch knows, as we saw with the Aemilius Paulus passage, that 'picked' troops were not the same as regular troops therefore he had to fill in the blank left behind by Xenophon. The same can be said of Herodotus; he knew it was important to say that the five thousand *perioikoi* at Plataea were picked troops also.⁷⁸ Whatever the rhetoric in his passage, it is definitely not one that undermines the use of the term. Somebody told Herodotus that the five thousand *perioikoi* at Plataea were a first-class group, at which point he knew – and thus wanted to let his reader know – that the Lacedaemonian army was a force to be reckoned with.

Nonetheless, we can suspect that this is not the only case of elite *perioikoi*. If we had more textual evidence on elite *perioikoi*, other than Herodotus' *logades* and Xenophon's *kaloi kagathoi*, who will be discussed shortly, we could perhaps pinpoint which perioikic troops were elite and more importantly when were they used. I suppose in a sense that the few examples we do have of specific named *perioikoi* could be seen as elite because if the sources go as far as naming such *perioikoi*, which as I have found is a rarity, then they will have done so for a reason, and that reason could well have been that they were worthy of being mentioned because of their skills. On the other hand, by analysing all of these suspected elite *perioikoi* I have come to the realisation that there is no connection between wealthy and elite *perioikoi*. What should be pointed out is that wealthy and elite should not be intertwined together, at least not in the case of the *perioikoi*. In the case of the five thousand *logades* there is never any mention of wealthy *perioikoi* as being part of that company, nor is there with the named *perioikoi* either. In the end, *logades* is a statement about military contingent quality, not about social or other origins.

Kaloi kagathoi *perioikoi*

Nevertheless, the classic example scholars use as evidence of possible elite or wealthy *perioikoi* is not just Herodotus' perioikic *logades*, but the *kaloi kagathoi* in Xenophon (*Hell.5.3.9*).⁷⁹ While *kaloi kagathoi* is attested elsewhere in Greek sources, it is only used once in reference to the *perioikoi*, as with the case of the *logades*. The term is more

⁷⁸ It was enough in his mind for him to use the word, which he might not have done, but not enough in his mind to explain it. That would show that this piece of information arrived to him with this terminology attached to it.

⁷⁹ For the concept of *kalokagathia* see Gomme 1953; Wankel 1961; Donlan 1973; De Ste. Croix 1972; Bourriot 1995a, 1995b, 1996; Roscalla 2004; Link 2005; Davies 2013.

philosophical in nature, but one that could definitely be applied to warfare. A *kalos kagathos* (or *kalokagathos*) could be described as a perfect gentleman and it could also be seen as a title one obtains through personal qualities or actions (in our case courage or bravery in battle). Xenophon specifically says that many ‘*kaloi kagathoi* volunteers of the *perioikoi*’ (πολλοὶ δὲ αὐτῶ καὶ τῶν περιοίκων ἐθελονταὶ καλοὶ καγαθοὶ ἡκολούθουν) went with the Spartan king Agesipolis to Olynthos in 381 (*Hell.*5.3.9). Translations of these words include ‘many of the better class *perioikoi*’⁸⁰ and ‘many of the Perioeci as volunteers, men of the better class’,⁸¹ and, while these translations are not recent, they are still used today by scholars. As already mentioned above, nothing in the definitions of the word suggests a noble (in terms of wealth, not morality) or a person of upper class status. That is why we should be careful when translating *kaloi kagathoi* as ‘men of the better class’ and why we should not take those translations at face value. As we shall see below, Lacedaemonian *kaloi kagathoi* were different from the *kaloi kagathoi* from other regions.

A Lacedaemonian *kalos kagathos* has a more military connotation. Felix Bourriot says that ‘Ce n’était ni l’hérédité ni la richesse qui créaient les *kaloi kagathoi* à Sparte, mais l’attitude sur le champs de bataille qui révélait la qualité des hommes. Et sur le rives de ‘Eurotas, la vertu était d’abord militaire’.⁸² What he is saying is that neither wealth nor heredity creates a *kalos kagathos* in Sparta. This answer would correspond better with my theory that the *kaloi kagathoi perioikoi* were elite not because they were wealthy but because they earned it through their actions in battle. The term has nothing to do with being elite as a consequence of wealth but with the fact that you are elite because you prove yourself in battle. Being a *perioikos* of *kalos kagathos* stature would definitely make you stand above regular perioikic soldiers who are yet to attain such status. Further down, and more importantly, Bourriot says:

Les *kaloi kagathoi* spartiates, citoyens ou périèques, sont donc très différents de l’image traditionnelle des *kaloi kagathoi* helléniques. Ce ne sont pas des nobles beaux, élégants, raffinés, riches, rivalisant dans les jeux, les danses lors des grandes fetes panhelléniques. Ce sont tout simplement des guerriers courageux acceptant d’avance le sacrifice suprême pour la défense de la patrie. Leur titre est strictement individuel,

⁸⁰ Rex Warner’s 1979 Penguin translation.

⁸¹ Carleton Brownson’s 1921 Loeb Classical Library translation.

⁸² Bourriot 1996, 135. The problem with Bourriot is that he believes that *kalos kagathos* is an intrinsically Spartan concept. I agree with the overall consensus that his views are particularly problematic, see most recently Davies 2013, not least since almost all attestations are in an Athenian context and by an Athenian author (i.e. Xenophon). However, some of Bourriot’s arguments are cited in this section because he discusses the *perioikoi* in relation to the *kaloi kagathoi*.

il ne se transmet pas par hérédité, il disparaît avec la mort de celui qui l'a reçu. Les *kaloi kagathoi* sont donc une élite d'individus, non une caste héréditaire.⁸³

This is very important because Bourriot is separating Lacedaemonian *kaloi kagathoi* from regular *kaloi kagathoi*, and what is even more crucial is that the *perioikoi* definitely fall under that category. It is therefore wrong to use Xenophon's passage as evidence that only wealthy *perioikoi* (free of manual labour) could participate in the Lacedaemonian army. The five thousand picked *perioikoi* at Plataea could well have been a company composed strictly of *kaloi kagathoi*. While there is no true way of knowing this, it is far more probable that they were *kaloi kagathoi* instead of wealthy *perioikoi*.

The overall theory or assumption that *only* elite *perioikoi* fought with the Lacedaemonian army is questionable. The reality is that the Spartans would have needed all available help, including elite, *kaloi kagathoi*, and regular perioikic soldiers. We must remember that the *perioikoi* usually contributed half or even more soldiers than the Spartans ever did, never less than them. After all, elite or not they had to be good enough to be in the Lacedaemonian army in the first place, which they were because rare is the battle where the Spartans fought without the *perioikoi*. That is why Bourriot is right in saying 'les périèques qui ont été levés sont ceux qui ont prouvé leurs qualités à la guerre, ils ont le titre de *kaloi kagathoi*', because in the case of Olynthos, the *perioikoi* that were *kaloi kagathoi* were not upper class but elite in the sense that they had already proved their worth in battle.⁸⁴ Bourriot here indirectly distinguishes between being elite and being wealthy. In the end, the *perioikoi* that fought with the Spartans proved themselves on the basis of skill and not because they were rich enough to go to Sparta and train more than the average *perioikoi*.

Nevertheless, being an elite soldier in a Lacedaemonian society also included a social hierarchy that had nothing to do with wealth but with reputation. The fault with Bourriot's argument is that the reason he says the *perioikoi* could be *kaloi kagathoi* is simply because the military route is the only one they could undertake. In other words, they could be *kaloi kagathoi* in Sparta because the concept was purely a military one and they could not have achieved this status by any other mean because, although he believes they were citizens, they were, above all, marginal and deprived of political rights.⁸⁵ Bourriot asks himself how it was possible that Sparta could have a noble class that also recruited large numbers of 'citoyens de

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Bourriot 1995a, 175.

⁸⁵ Bourriot 1995a, 174. Even though he says the *perioikoi* were citizens, he does not specify which *polis* or state they were citizens of.

seconde zone' into an important army.⁸⁶ The answer to his question is actually the situation is not farfetched but rather logical and expected. As we have seen in previous chapters, the *perioikoi* were citizens of the Lacedaemonian state and thus Lacedaemonians in the same way as the Spartans. It seems only natural that the stage (i.e. military) in which they mostly proved their Lacedaemonian bond was the one they could reach the highest possible honours. This, in turn, opened the doors to social standing for these *kaloi kagathoi perioikoi*.

There is obviously no reason to believe that the status of *kaloi kagathoi* was exclusively reserved for Spartans. Xenophon could not be any clearer in saying that the perioikic volunteers of the campaign to Olynthos were *kaloi kagathoi*.⁸⁷ But being *kaloi kagathoi* does not mean that they were good soldiers and nothing more. By being (i) citizens of the Lacedaemonian state, (ii) Lacedaemonians, and (iii) soldiers of the Lacedaemonian army, the *perioikoi* could be part of this exclusive club that gave them both military prestige and the ability to climb the social ladder of the Lacedaemonian state by being, in effect, the ultimate elite. Davies agrees that Bourriot's view is too limited and agrees that the social aspect of the *kaloi kagathoi* can also be applied to the *perioikoi* because recent research has shown that perioikic communities were dependent yet autonomous. Therefore, 'whether or not it represents a moral hierarchy of 'military worth', the list certainly represents a social hierarchy of status, including the socially-defined *kalos kagathos* element of the perioeci'.⁸⁸ However, just like other scholars,⁸⁹ he quickly says that the 'social elite' of the *perioikoi* (i.e. the *kaloi kagathoi*), the ones that had the means to serve as hoplites and the leisure to serve on long campaigns, were the only ones who served in the Lacedaemonian army.⁹⁰ Additionally, even though he accepts that perioikic *kaloi kagathoi* had social standing, they were still inferior and separate to Spartiates of *kaloi kagathoi* calibre:

On the one hand, there are the *kaloi kagathoi* of the Spartiate stratum, in the upper echelons of both Spartan and Lacedaemonian society. On the other, there are the perioecic *kaloi kagathoi* who feature in this passage, occupying the upper ranks of the social structures of individual perioecic

⁸⁶ Bourriot 1996, 134-5.

⁸⁷ Link 2005, 83 says that Xenophon's description of the volunteers is an exaggeration and that we cannot really say they were *kaloi kagathoi* just on the basis of this passage. This view, however, is not accepted by scholarship. Bourriot 1996, 134-5 says that 'Mais surtout Xénophon, en qui on peut avoir confiance lorsqu'il s'agit d'affaires spartiates et plus spécialement d'organisation militaire, atteste sans la moindre ambiguïté qu'il y avait des périèques *kaloi kagathoi*'. More recently, Davies 2013, 268 has also rejected this claim: 'that Xenophon's intent is encomiastic does not preclude the possibility that the terms used have specific, technical meanings'.

⁸⁸ Davies 2013, 268-9.

⁸⁹ His statement could be interpreted as a combination of Cartledge's view of wealthy-equals-elite *perioikoi* with van Wees' statement that only elite *perioikoi* were selected for active duty in the army. See n. 47 above.

⁹⁰ Davies 2013, 269.

communities, but nonetheless ranking below the Spartiate stratum with regard to Lacedaemonian society as a whole.⁹¹

It is clear from his statement that regardless of the social standing of the *perioikoi* as *kaloi kagathoi*, they were still always second-best to the Spartans. I believe it is easy to assume this train of thought, which is how the *perioikoi* have always been seen by modern scholars, because we tend to think of the *perioikoi* as marginal, inferior, and disenfranchised. Even though the *perioikoi* are now seen in a more positive light, as active and relevant, they are still seen as inferior to the Spartans. But as I have shown in previous chapters – and will show in the next one – this is not the case. In terms of the *kaloi kagathoi*, these *perioikoi* will have proved themselves beyond any doubt. They surpassed any expectation of the average soldier, be that perioikic or Spartiate. It is completely absurd to believe that just because a Spartan was a Spartan he was automatically superior to all *perioikoi*, even those of *kaloi kagathoi* status. The point of proving yourself in war was the belief that you could be the best and able to surpass others, and that would have been the incentive of many, if not all, Lacedaemonians. There would have been elite *perioikoi* that were military superior to average Spartans and shared their messes and even hunted with them.⁹² Furthermore, we cannot ignore the possibility of wealthy *perioikoi* either. In all probability there were wealthy *perioikoi* who were better off than average and even poor Spartans. It did not matter if some less fortunate Spartans made themselves feel better by saying they were still superior to the *perioikoi* because the rest of the Spartans would have seen these elite and wealthy *perioikoi* as equal to them, either because they proved themselves in battle, or because they were wealthy, or simply because they were Lacedaemonians. Perioikic *kaloi kagathoi*, in particular, would have had close ties with Spartans because most likely they were implicitly a Spartan-trained group.

This chapter shows that perioikic presence in the Lacedaemonian army was twofold: the *perioikoi* existed as named individuals who exercised considerable influence and freedom in military affairs, and they also existed as faceless groups but still worthy of being elite and having their presence known. In regard to the former, there is a role for *perioikoi* not just at fighting level but at command level. The *perioikoi* could command fleets and land armies (including mercenaries). This chapter also demonstrated that there existed hierarchies within

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² It is interesting how scholars always say the *perioikoi* were inferior to Spartiates but they never address this matter in detail. For example, what are we to make of Spartan tremblers? Even though they were tremblers they were still Spartans, so were they still superior to *kaloi kagathoi perioikoi* who proved themselves in battle and were the complete opposite of tremblers? Of course not. Both the Spartans and the *perioikoi* knew that elite *perioikoi* could have a social standing superior to any Lacedaemonian.

their military roles. The case of Neon showed how they could hold respectable military positions and then ascend to even higher ranks. Phrynīs and Diniades exemplified how the *perioikoi* could already hold important official roles sanctioned by the state. Finally, Dexippus' military life illustrates the diversity of roles they could have. He was an influential mercenary who could employ and command troops and could also guard cities abroad.

The second part of this chapter showed that Agesilaus' Lacedaemonians, perioikic *logades* and *kaloi kagathoi* were Spartan-trained *perioikoi* selected not on grounds of wealth but on suitability of training. These *perioikoi* proved themselves in battle first and consequently gained social standing due to their elite rank and prestige. There was, of course, social hierarchy in perioikic communities as well, wealthy *perioikoi*, poor *perioikoi*, elite *perioikoi* and even 'middle-class' *perioikoi* who were neither wealthy nor poor.⁹³ But what is important in relation to this chapter is that a *perioikos* did not need to be wealthy in order to gain military standing in Lacedaemonian society. Being wealthy was not the only route you had to take to participate in the army and become an elite or 'select' soldier. The most probable scenario is that any *perioikos* with moderate means could train to be a soldier and thus become part of a group of *logades* or *kaloi kagathoi*, which in turn brought prestige and a superior position in the social hierarchy, both locally and nationally. Shipley says that 'those [*perioikoi*] who have been proven in battle, must have enjoyed good social standing in Sparta'.⁹⁴ I think Shipley's view is the most accurate because he also believes they enjoyed social standing in Sparta, and not just in local perioikic communities. As shown in chapter 4, the Spartans held the *perioikoi* in high regard, especially those they could count on. It did not have anything to do with wealth but with trust and reliability and a sense of comradeship. One example which is often overlooked is found in Plutarch's *Cleomenes* (11.2). Even though it is Hellenistic, it echoes the real meaning behind terms such as *logades* and *kaloi kagathoi* when applied to the *perioikoi*. He says:

Cleomenes III filled up the body of citizens with the most promising (*χαριεστάτοις*) of the free provincials (*perioikoi*), and thus raised a body of four thousand men-at-arms...Next he devoted himself to the training of the young men and to the 'agoge,' or ancient discipline...And quickly was the proper system of bodily training and public messes resumed, a few out of

⁹³ Interestingly, my research has not found a single case of poor *perioikoi*, whether named, unnamed, individual or in a group. That is not to say there were not any, but it goes to show that sources were very limited and selective when it came to what they wanted to convey about the *perioikoi*. For example, I am sure if we had evidence of perioikic property and wealth, Hodkinson would have included it in his seminal monograph *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*.

⁹⁴ Shipley 1997, 202.

necessity, but most with a willing spirit, subjecting themselves to the old Spartan regime with all its simplicity.

(Plut.*Cleom.*11.2)

The word *χαριεστώτοις* is a very adulatory term which can mean graceful, beautiful, accomplished, in fine condition. This is the third time that the *perioikoi* are described with specific words that denote an elite and superior military value. This is where the key aspect of being elite lies, not in the notion of whether or not they were wealthy but in the core of all military career, training. As we shall see in the next chapter, it is because they trained with the Spartans and like Spartans that the *perioikoi* contributed to the growing reputation of the Lacedaemonian army as a formidable military machine.

Chapter 6. The Lacedaemonian Army II: A Re-Evaluation of Perioikic Participation

In order to carry out an appropriate re-evaluation of perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army we first need to address – and dispel – the myth of the Spartans as a warring society which only bred superior soldiers. This legendary status of Spartans has been challenged in recent past, not least because it was a by-product of the Spartan mirage.¹ Nevertheless, they are still perceived as superior to perioikic soldiers today, and modern views often regress into the Spartan mirage in order to highlight, explain and make sense of Spartan dominance over the *perioikoi*. But it is only when we go beyond the mirage that we can fully grasp the notion that the *perioikoi* could be just as good a soldier as the average Spartan.

In this chapter, every aspect of the Lacedaemonian army will be addressed in order to elucidate just what kind of impact the *perioikoi* had on the army and on Lacedaemonian success throughout the classical period. In order to find out how integrated perioikic participation was and how indistinguishable from the Spartans they were, we shall look at how they would have trained, and how they were often described as Lacedaemonians just as the Spartans. Different questions will be addressed, such as how and where did they train? What type of dress did they wear for battle? As we shall see, perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army went beyond helping the Spartans increase their numbers in a campaign.

Thus, this chapter will also look at how effective the *perioikoi* were and how they made their presence known from the very beginning of the classical period. Perioikic integration in ‘Spartan’ ranks has often been a controversial but one-sided topic that needs to be re-evaluated. When we actually look at the evidence closely we see a different picture altogether of what has been accepted today. That is why in this chapter the traditional view of the *perioikoi*, that they were integrated with Spartans at a later date, will be challenged. Another view, albeit less prevalent, of the *perioikoi* as unreliable soldiers will also be disputed. It is when we look at the cohesion and harmony between the Spartans and the *perioikoi*, insofar as the military aspect goes, that we can truly understand why the Lacedaemonian army was so successful and why it gave rise to that aspect of the Spartan mirage. The *perioikoi* were part of that imaginary construct and helped strengthen the view

¹ See Hodkinson 2006.

that the Lacedaemonian army was a force to be reckoned with. Nevertheless, their role in this is often overlooked, underestimated, and unnoticed. But as we shall also see, perioikic soldiers received the same military honours bestowed to those Spartans who proved themselves in battle, which was the highest honour possible for a Lacedaemonian, not just a Spartan.

Perioikic indistinguishability from the Spartans in military life

Spartans: exceptional or average soldiers?

As we shall see later on, scholars tend to believe that the *perioikoi* had to keep up with the Spartans simply because the latter were superior soldiers.² The image of the Spartans as professional soldiers,³ as Geoffrey de Ste Croix called them, has now become a factoid which contributed to the modern image of Sparta seen both in scholarship and in popular media.⁴ Spartan institutional systems, such as the *agōgē*, the *krypteia*, and the *syssition*, together with post-classical views on women and their heroics in war, have enhanced further Sparta's military reputation. Moses Finley once remarked that Sparta was 'the model military state'.⁵ However, a recent view proposes that Sparta was not as militaristic as many thought. In other words, we need to move on from this traditional, but distorted, view of Sparta in order to have a realistic portrayal of the Lacedaemonian army and how it operated. Hodkinson is a firm believer that Sparta was not as militarist as previously thought. He says that 'military elements in Spartan society were clearly significant, but not dominant over other aspects of polis life in the way that has often been claimed'.⁶

A quick overview of Sparta's military dominance during the classical period supports Hodkinson's theory. As seen with many societies and empires throughout history, Sparta had

² Most scholars writing about Sparta – or indeed the *perioikoi* – either downplay perioikic role in the Lacedaemonian army, or readily assume that the *perioikoi* were inferior to the Spartans. See especially Lazenby 1985; Proietti 1987; Humble 2006.

³ It must be said that professional soldiers can be part of a non-military society. The problem is that with Sparta the concept of professional soldier is entangled with the concept of a military society, thus giving rise to the view that the Lacedaemonian state was, in effect, a military state.

⁴ De Ste. Croix 1972, 91. The image of Sparta as a purely military society has been received favourably in popular media most notably in the film adaptation of the Graphic Novel *300*, and most recently in the comic book series *Three*, where the Spartans are depicted as bloodthirsty soldiers who act in a ruthless manner toward the helots. Modern scholarship has also readily accepted Sparta as society dominated by military affairs. See for example Passerini 1952; Marrou 1956; Kiechle 1963; Forrest 1968; De Ste. Croix 1972; Snodgrass 1980; Ducrey 1985; Lazenby 1985; Finley 1986; Bengtson 1988; Garland 1989; Kagan 1991 and 1996; Rahe 1994; Briant and Lévêque 1995; Martin 1996; French 1997; Orrieux and Schmitt Pantel 1999; Powell 2001; Cartledge 2001 and 2002; Fornis 2003; Lazenby 2004; Humble 2006; Hanson 2009b; Hawkins 2011.

⁵ Finley 1986, 177.

⁶ Hodkinson 2006, 147.

a rise and fall, as did its military effect and superiority. Hodkinson agrees and quotes Tuplin's remark that 'Xenophon himself did not think that all Spartiates were like Klearchos'.⁷ Tuplin's use of Clearchus as an example of the anti-Spartan Spartan is completely accurate.⁸ Depending on one's view of Sparta, he acts both as the embodiment of the quintessential 'soldierly' Spartan or as completely dissimilar to the average Spartan. Judging from the evidence, the latter would be the correct view. Xenophon's assessment of Clearchus' belligerent nature is not an encomium. Rather, it is a critique of Clearchus' devotion and obsessive attitudes to war. Clearchus' life revolved around war, and Xenophon leaves little doubt that this was wrong. He says Clearchus was 'fitted for war' and 'fond of war to the last degree' (πολεμικὸς καὶ φιλοπόλεμος ἐσχάτως) (*An.*2.6.1). Xenophon goes on to say how even during peace time Clearchus, for want of participation in any theatre of war available, urged the Lacedaemonians to wage war against the Thracians. After initially agreeing, the Lacedaemonians later changed their minds, but Clearchus by this point did not heed their orders to turn back and instead continued on the path to war in the Hellespont (2.6.2-3).

It all came to a head when, as Xenophon tells us, Clearchus was condemned to death *in absentia*, at which point he went on his own and became a mercenary for Cyrus.⁹ Xenophon cleverly juxtaposes making war with 'comfortable idleness' and every now and then continues making the point that Clearchus 'kept making war'. Xenophon clearly does this to set up his own concluding opinion and remarks regarding Clearchus' fondness for war (2.6.5). This is when Xenophon truly weighs in on the character of Clearchus. Once again, Xenophon distinguishes between loving war and enjoying peace. He says Clearchus chose to fight when he could have retired from the military gracefully and live the rest of his days without dishonour, without harm. Instead, Xenophon says, he chose the toils of war over idleness, he chose to spend all of his money on war instead of safeguarding it for the future (2.6.6). Xenophon makes clear that Clearchus is the exception to the norm. In a way, by comparing and contrasting, Xenophon is saying how a true soldier or citizen should be. He could even be alluding to how a true Spartan should live and behave, and how he should

⁷ Tuplin 2004a, 27, quoted by Hodkinson 2006, 147.

⁸ Tritle 2004, 332-3 argues that the reason behind Clearchus' behaviour and nature is that he is suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. There is no denying that Tritle makes some valid points, such as that 'the twenty years of war leading up to Clearchus' first appearance in Thucydides had exposed him to the most violent of situations'. Nonetheless, this thesis does not follow Tritle's views, but instead argues that Clearchus is a rogue Spartan not because he is sick but just because being a war-loving person was simply what he was like. His innate nature was to love war above everything else, which is just what Xenophon says, and we cannot argue against that.

⁹ At this point Clearchus cut ties with the Lacedaemonians and vice versa. On Clearchus see Roisman 1985-8; Laforse 2000; Bassett 2001; Tritle 2004. For Spartan mercenaries see Millender 2006.

refrain from living and acting like Clearchus, who was probably doomed from the moment he was condemned to death. Tuplin remarks that ‘we should perhaps not assume that [Spartan] citizens were characteristically war-lovers’.¹⁰ Xenophon, who clearly knew the Spartans and how Sparta operated, was aware that it was not normal to have such an affinity for war.

Clearchus’ war-loving nature would not have come under intense criticism from Xenophon, who was clearly a Laconophile, if Sparta shared the same attitude towards war and belligerence. If the conditions of the city of Sparta resembled those of an army camp, as J.T Hooker once pointed out, then Clearchus would have been the model citizen and soldier.¹¹ His fate and relationship with the Lacedaemonian state, however, points to the opposite. Sparta was not a military-oriented city-state. That the main piece of evidence of Sparta’s exceptionally high military stance comes from Aristotle should serve as a reminder that his critique of this military aspect of Sparta is just one of the many components of his overall criticism of this city-state.¹² Hodkinson observes that:

First, Aristotle's account is couched in entirely generic terms without specific detail to substantiate his assertions. Secondly, the context in which some of these assertions are made does not always inspire confidence... Thirdly, although Aristotle's characterization of Sparta as a militarily orientated society appears to single her out from other Greek states, his comments exemplify a broader trend of late-fourth-century thought that was also applied to other poleis... Hence, far from viewing Sparta as unique in the extent of her military orientation, even Aristotle sees her as just one example among many.¹³

Therefore, we cannot take Aristotle’s criticism at face value.¹⁴ On the other hand, Thucydides, like Xenophon, wrote about war and experienced it, and also knew enough about the Spartans to portray an accurate picture of Spartan life and how it functioned.¹⁵ In memorable fashion, Thucydides says that the Spartans were ‘traditionally slow to go to war, unless they were forced into it...’ (ὄντες μὲν καὶ πρὸ τοῦ μὴ ταχεῖς ἰέναι ἐς τοὺς πολέμους, ἢν μὴ ἀναγκάζωνται) (1.118.2). This is a pattern that is most visible in the Persian Wars, where the Spartans abstained from participating in various important campaigns and battles. In the late 490s the Spartans refused to help Aristagoras for the simple reason that Susa was too far away (Hdt.5.50.1-3). For the battle of Marathon the Spartans refused to join the

¹⁰ Tuplin 2004a, 27.

¹¹ Hooker 1980, 141.

¹² Arist.*Pol.*1269b25-6; 1271b2-6; 1324b7-9; 1334a40-b4; 1338b25-39.

¹³ Hodkinson 2006, 122-3.

¹⁴ For Aristotle’s view on Sparta see David 1982-3; Shütrumpf 1994; Hermann-Otto 1998; Hodkinson 2004.

¹⁵ For an analysis of Thucydides’ Sparta see Lazenby 2004 and Cartledge and Debnar 2006.

Athenians due to religious obligations (6.106.1-3). Finally, the Spartans made the Athenian ambassadors wait nervously before finally deciding to partake in the battle of Plataea (9.10-11). Even for the Peloponnesian War Thucydides says that the Spartans were ultimately forced into conflict with the Athenians because the latter could not be ignored any longer (1.118.2). It is implicit therefore that the Spartans waited and considered every possible course of action before finally accepting that war was the only inevitable outcome.

Being slow to go to war does not go hand in hand with living in a barrack-like state. Why would a 'model military state'¹⁶ refrain from going to war? Why the 'overriding emphasis on military preparedness'¹⁷ if you are not prepared to go to war? The logical explanation to this is that these are all misrepresentations of Sparta. Hodkinson's conclusion that classical Sparta was far more than simply a military society shows that we should not take the view that Spartan life rotated around military ideals.¹⁸

By virtue of being Spartiates, are they fundamentally and continuously professional soldiers? If you look from a perspective in which the Lacedaemonian army is made up of different kinds of peoples, some of whom are Spartans and some of whom are not, but they still all constitute the army, then *eo ipso* the army is not the political determinant of the state. This would mean that it is not a military state, because part of the army is explicitly excluded. Therefore, the Lacedaemonian state is not a military state; it has a military elite or an elite than can categorize itself as military superior, but it does not have a professional soldier elite because, when it comes to fighting the state's wars, the people who do that are both inside and outside the elite. Some soldiers may be better than others, or may think they are; it is normal for armies to have elite and less elite entities within them. And although some may be better trained than others, it does not make it a military society. That in itself is not a particularly distinguishing feature.

Hodkinson is right when he states that 'to characterize the Spartans as 'a community of professional soldiers' is consequently too narrow'.¹⁹ The same can be said about the *perioikoi*. To classify the Spartans as military superior to the *perioikoi* is equally narrow. The Lacedaemonian army had a mixture of elite, regular, Spartiate and perioikic soldiers, and this diversity within the army is what made it different from other Greek armies. To be part of the Lacedaemonian army you had to train, eat, and socialise together on a daily basis. There are many implicit and explicit examples throughout ancient sources that invoke the

¹⁶ Finley 1986, 177.

¹⁷ Cartledge 2002, 134.

¹⁸ Hodkinson 2006, 147.

¹⁹ Ibid.

homogeneousness of being Lacedaemonians, to the point that it would have been hard to tell a Spartan apart from a *perioikos*. It is only when we forgo the myth of the Spartiates as essentially the professional soldiers of a military state that we can truly envision a Spartan fighting alongside a *perioikos* as equals.

Military training and equipment

Hodkinson singles out the geographic remoteness of the *perioikoi* as the main reason why they did not spend much time in Sparta, which in turn is the reason why the ‘opportunities for them to congregate for peacetime military training must have been limited’.²⁰ Additionally, he also says that the *perioikoi*, when levied, normally had to journey from their own *poleis* scattered throughout Lacedaemonian territory (he uses Thuc.4.8.1 as a good example).

Hodkinson is of course using this argument to give support to his bigger argument which states that the Spartans were flawed in their military training, and often used ‘manoeuvres’ that required little or no training at all. Hodkinson says that the uncomplicated nature of the Laconian formation was (he uses Xen.*Lak.Pol.*11.5-6) ‘so easy to learn that no one who knows man from man should go wrong’.²¹ This of course may have been established with the *perioikoi* in mind, which is what Hodkinson and other authors such as Noreen Humble and Gerald Proietti believe.²² Hodkinson says that the limited training opportunities available to perioikic troops had implications for the level of training undertaken by Spartiate soldiers. But before addressing the reliability of the *perioikoi* as soldiers, their military training and equipment needs to be examined first in order to understand their pre-battle integration in the army.²³

I cannot agree with the theory that the *perioikoi* may have had limited or no training at all just because they were not Spartiates trained under the laws of Lycurgus or because they did not live in Sparta. There is no doubt that full Spartiates had better training than most Greeks, but the *perioikoi* were not oblivious to the Spartans’ way of training. From as early as the battle of Thermopylae we can see them fighting alongside the Spartans, and we cannot think that the Spartans, careful and meticulous as they were when it came to warfare, would have let anybody fight for them, and especially with them. Therefore, even if the sources do

²⁰ Hodkinson 2006, 134.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See also n. 2 above.

²³ On general Greek training see Wheeler 1982 and 1983; Pritchett 1984; Kah 2004; d’Amore 2007; Strauss 2008.

not explicitly say so, I do believe perioikic troops must have trained regularly and it would not be farfetched to think that they could have had their own version of the *agōgē* as well.

Sparta's system of training was definitely unique and probably unseen elsewhere in the Greek world. Yet they were not the only Greeks that were good at fighting. The Athenians were excellent fighters during the fifth century (i.e. Marathon); the Thebans were considered to be even superior to the Spartans during much of the fourth century (i.e. Leuctra and afterwards); the Plataeans were also good fighters who also fought at Marathon.²⁴ The difference is that these men were not exempt from manual labour and did not spend the majority of their life training without the distractions of daily life. It was quite the opposite; a Spartan hoplite was not the textbook definition of a hoplite.²⁵ Regular hoplites were farmers or landowners, not wealthy like the *hippeis* or aristocratic class but not of lower class like oarsmen. The *perioikoi*, therefore, could be seen as a sort of hybrid between a Spartan hoplite and a regular Greek hoplite; Spartan in the sense that they fought with the Spartans and trained with them, but regular Greek in the sense that they were farmers, fishermen, traders, among others. Gallego claims that only the most distinguished of the *perioikoi* could participate in the *agōgē*, and so were 'integrated into the ideological programming and military educational institutions of the Spartan state'.²⁶ There is no denying that there were wealthy *perioikoi* more privileged who could probably travel to Sparta and spend more time training with them in the *agōgē* because they did not need to worry about going back to their perioikic city to work. But one could take it much further than that and say that regular *perioikoi* – just as the regular and standard hoplite – could divide their time between training and working. That is why I have no doubt that non-wealthy *perioikoi* participated in the *agōgē* as well and could achieve elite status, as discussed in the previous chapter.

As mentioned above, it would not be far-fetched to think that the *perioikoi*, other than going to Sparta to participate in their *agōgē*, had their own version of the *agōgē* as well, which was probably administered and overseen by Spartiates or even by already established and experienced perioikic soldiers. Shipley suggests, 'perioikic *poleis*...also probably organized recruitment to the Lakedaimonian army, and possibly military training'.²⁷ One can

²⁴ For the Athenian army see Ridley 1979; Hansen 1981; Siewert 1982; Frost 1984; Strauss 1986; Bugh 1988; Hanson 1996; Hamel 1998; Christ 2001; van Wees 2001. On the Theban army see Buckler 1980; Buck 1994; Hanson 2010. On the Plataean army see Crane 2001.

²⁵ For the prototypical Greek hoplite see Hanson 1993, 2009a and 2009b; Franz 2002; Krentz 2002; van Wees 2004; Hunt 2007; Echeverría 2008; Schwartz 2009; Kagan and Viggiano 2013.

²⁶ Gallego 2005, 44.

²⁷ Shipley 2006b, 57-8.

say for certain that the Spartans took an interest in the perioikic towns of Laconia.²⁸ Therefore, if the Spartans often went into perioikic territory it should not be far-fetched to consider that they could have also travelled to perioikic towns to supervise the military training of those *perioikoi* who could not afford the time and luxury to travel to Sparta to train there. In order for the Lacedaemonian army to function properly and as effectively as it did, it could not have had all the perioikic troops training separately. While I certainly advocate a perioikic version of the *agōgē*, we have to assume that some *perioikoi* would have trained at Sparta alongside Spartans. Although not explicit in our sources, elite and *kaloi kagathoi perioikoi* must have engaged in many activities traditionally ascribed to Spartans only, such as hunting and eating in communal messes (presumably at Sparta).²⁹ In addition, if the obscure *trophimoi*, who were foreigners, could be enrolled in the Spartan *agōgē*, then there is no reason to believe that the *perioikoi*, who were Lacedaemonians and regular members of the Lacedaemonian army, were prohibited from participating in this institution.³⁰

If we assume that the *perioikoi* could train with and/or be trained by the Spartans, should we assume that they shared the same military equipment as well? In theory, yes. There is no reason to believe members of the Lacedaemonian army wore different clothing according to their ethnic or indeed geographic background. Nor should we assume that there was a Spartan/non-Spartan policy regarding military clothing within the army.³¹ If there ever existed any social barrier between Spartans and *perioikoi* in the army it probably did not extend to wearing different clothing. Apart from rank, there is no reason why members of the Lacedaemonian army wore different clothing. The problem we face is not whether the Spartans and the *perioikoi* wore and used different clothing and armour – in all probability they did not – but that both textual and archaeological evidence on dress and armour is ‘lamentably thin and unreliable’.³² This is especially true, of course, with the Spartans. If we

²⁸ See chapter 4 where we discussed how the Spartans frequented perioikic sanctuaries and participated in perioikic games.

²⁹ The *syssitia* is, of course, another matter; but it may be worth noting that Plutarch (Lyc.12.1-7), our main source for mess decorum, uses the term *λακεδαιμόνιοι* to describe who participated in the *syssitia*, although he uses *οἱ Σπαρτιάται* in numerous other instances.

³⁰ On the *trophimoi* – foreigners trained ‘under the Laws of Lycurgus’ – Hodkinson 1997, 65 suggests they could even be sons of the *perioikoi*. Humble 2004, 247, n. 71 agrees and adds that ‘there is no reason why the *trophimoi* had to be a uniform group. They could well be made up of young men from other states whose parents had sent them to the Spartan agoge to toughen them up, as well as orphans of *xenoi*’. I believe that the fundamental element of the *trophimoi* is that they were foreign or belonging to a foreign state, but since the *perioikoi* were Lacedaemonians and belonged to the same state as the Spartans – that is, the Lacedaemonian state – we have to rule out that they were *trophimoi*.

³¹ Surprisingly, with the exception of Cartledge 1977 and David 1989, very few studies have examined Spartan or Lacedaemonian military equipment. Perhaps this is because, as we shall see, textual evidence on Spartan or Lacedaemonian military dress is very limited and almost non-existent.

³² Cartledge 1977, 12.

assume they used standard hoplite armour, then we should assume the *perioikoi* did as well. After all, among the different positions and ranks within the Lacedaemonian army, the *perioikoi* were mostly either hoplites or navy men. Regarding the supply of weapons, the consensus among scholars today is that the Lacedaemonians did not personally own weapons, but used those supplied by the state.³³ In Xenophon's description of the Cinadon conspiracy, the latter mentions an 'iron store' full of all kinds of weapons (Xen.*Hell.*3.3.7). Later on, Xenophon points out that around the late 370s a non-wealthy Lacedaemonian cavalryman received whichever horse and arms were provided to him (6.4.11). Although not mentioned explicitly, Xenophon, in both occasions, must be referring to state-owned arms and armour.

Nonetheless, the state in question is not Sparta, but the Lacedaemonian state. And since the *perioikoi* belonged both to the same state and to the same army, they must have been in receipt of the same state-owned weapons and armour. Hodkinson says that 'Centralised supply of equipment may have been prompted by the need to provide for these latter troops [*perioikoi*, *neodamodeis* and mercenaries] and to incorporate the *perioikoi* on equal terms with the Spartiates'.³⁴ Yet, when the *perioikoi* donned the same weapons they did not automatically become equal to the Spartans. Their path towards becoming equal to the Spartans – or able and reliable soldiers – began earlier, in their training. It is a combination of (i) training at least similarly, if not the same, (ii) using the same weapons and armours, and (iii), as will be discussed below, their indistinguishability from each other that made them fight successfully and on equal terms.

A common feature of Spartan military dress is the distinctive crimson cloaks (φοινικίς).³⁵ Mentioned on various occasions by ancient sources, the crimson cloaks became an item synonymous with Spartiates.³⁶ Yet, none of our sources ever say it was strictly a Spartan item of clothing. The only classical author who mentions the φοινικίς in a military context is Xenophon, and he uses the word Lacedaemonians, not Spartans. In the *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* (11.3) he says that one of the pieces of equipment Lycurgus devised for Lacedaemonian troops in battle was the φοινικίς. The reasoning behind this red cloak was

³³ Hodkinson 2009b, 221-2 says that the state did not limit its supply to Spartans alone since it most likely equipped those helots and *neodamodeis* in the active service; Cartledge 2002, 159 believes that 'the Spartan state made itself somehow responsible for supplying citizens – as from 424 it certainly supplied Helots and *neodamodeis* – with their arms armour'; Trundle 2004, 123-4 believes that the state might have provided equipment to both Spartiates and poorer members of the community.

³⁴ Hodkinson 2009b, 222.

³⁵ I would like to thank Professor Christopher Tuplin for allowing me access to his unpublished notes on purple clothes.

³⁶ See specifically Ar.*Lys.*1140; Plut.*Lyc.*27; Xen.*Lak.Pol.*11.3; Arist.*fr.*542; Ael.*VH.*6.6; Val.*Max.*2.6.2; Plut.*Mor.*238f. Van Wees 2004, 54, 267, n. 23, however, stresses that it was not a red cloak after all (as if often claimed, he says), but most probably a tunic.

that Lycurgus believed it to have ‘least resemblance to women's clothing and to be most suitable for war’ (ταύτην νομίζων ἥκιστα μὲν γυναικεῖα κοινωνεῖν, πολεμικωτάτην δ’ εἶναι). The importance of the red cloak was not to make a Spartan stand out from the rest of the troops, but to make the Lacedaemonians, Spartans and *perioikoi* alike, stand out in battle and be more effective at the same time. Therefore, we cannot rule out the possibility of perioikic troops also wearing the φοινικίς. If there is one thing scholars agree with regarding the φοινικίς is that it was used regardless of rank or political status.³⁷ As we have already seen in chapter 5, perioikic soldiers could attain different ranks within the army. One should assume, therefore, that they wore the same military dress as the Spartans, even the supposed distinctive ‘Spartan’ φοινικίς.

One piece of military equipment crucial to the Lacedaemonian soldier was the shield. Cartledge says that ‘the cardinal item of hoplite equipment was the large round shield (invented by 700) from which, according to Diodoros (xv 44.3; cf. xxiii 2.I), the heavy-armed infantryman (*hoplitēs*) took his name’.³⁸ One would expect that an army dominated and led by its Spartiate contingent would bear the sigma for Sparta or Spartiate.³⁹ After all, even to this day modern scholarship’s propensity for calling it the ‘Spartan army’ seems not to be diminishing. Yet, in ancient times the Lacedaemonian army was never known to use the word sigma on its shields. Instead, as expected, it used the lambda for Lacedaemonian.⁴⁰ Xenophon (*Hell.*4.4.10) tells us that during the 392 battle at the Long Walls of Corinth, the Lacedaemonian cavalry devised a plan to help the struggling Sicyonians: under their leader Pasimachus, the Lacedaemonians picked up the shields of the Sicyonians and charged at the Argives. The latter, seeing that the approaching enemy had shields bearing sigmas were not frightened, believing they were Sicyonians. At this point, Xenophon says that Pasimachus remarked: ‘Argives, these sigmas will deceive you’ (ὦ Ἀργεῖοι, ψευσεῖ ὑμὲ τὰ σίγμα ταῦτα).⁴¹ This passage shows that the Lacedaemonians at this date did not use sigmas in their shields. In fact, it is ironic how in this passage the shields used to deceive the enemy actually had sigmas on them.

³⁷ See Cartledge 1977, 15 and Hodkinson 2009b, 224.

³⁸ Cartledge 1977, 13. On the hoplite shield see Jarva 1995; Lazenby and Whitehead 1996; Snodgrass 1999; Viggiano and van Wees 2013.

³⁹ On emblems and patterns of hoplite shields see Sekunda 2000 and Spier 2010.

⁴⁰ Lazenby 1985, 30 believes that by Xenophon’s time ‘Spartan shields probably bore the letter Λ’, yet he does not go into details as to why this would be, nor does he acknowledge that it was simply because the common denominator in the army was the fact that both Spartans and *perioikoi* were Lacedaemonians. Therefore, in a sense, it would have been politically incorrect to have a sigma on the shields.

⁴¹ This passage is also mentioned, albeit briefly, by Aristotle (*Eth.Nic.*1117a26-8).

Furthermore, even though Xenophon does not explicitly say that the Lacedaemonians had lambdas on their shields, fragments of Theopompos (fourth century) and Eupolis (fifth century) do, in fact, mention them. The lexicographer Photios (ninth century AD) says:

La{m}bda: the Lakedaimonians inscribed upon their shields, just like the Messenians M. Eupolis: 'For they were stricken, having seen the shining la{m}bda'. So, also Theopompos.

Λά{μ}βδα· ἐπὶ ταῖς ἀσπίσιν οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἐπέγραφον, ὥσπερ οἱ Μεσ<σ>ήνιοι M. Εὐπολὶς· 'ἐξεπλάγη γὰρ ἰδὼν στίλβοντα τὰ Λά{μ}βδα'. οὕτως καὶ Θεόπομπος.

(Theopompos BNJ 115 F 402)

Unequivocally, both authors stress the fact that the letter lambda appeared on Lacedaemonian shields, even stressing that they shone and instilled fear on the enemy, which shows that they were not painted but probably polished to emphasise the brightness of the letter. Furthermore, that both authors quoted in the lexicon belonged to the classical period shows that already by the fifth century the Lacedaemonians were using standard issued shields with the lambda, as opposed to shields with individual blazons.⁴² This means that by the fifth century, the *perioikoi* were integrated in the Lacedaemonian army to the point that they were using even the same shields as the Spartans. Having lambdas on their shields, using the same weapons, dressing equally and receiving similar training, all lead to the same motif, that they were Lacedaemonians, and therein lies the key to their indistinguishability in battle.

Indistinguishability by being Lacedaemonians

When it came to actual fighting, all the training and the equipment meant one thing: in all probability an enemy could not tell a *perioikos* apart from a Spartan. This definitely had a desired psychological effect on the enemy which the Lacedaemonians were all too ready to embrace. A good example for this can be found in the lead-up to the battle of Plataea.

Herodotus (9.11) relates how five thousand perioikic soldiers left Laconia to join up with the Spartans before reaching Plataea. Herodotus does not make use of the word *perioikoi* after

⁴² For the use of personalised decorated shields see Cartledge 1977, 13 and n. 19 and Lazenby 1985, 30. It could be that these shields were, at one time, passed down from father to son. There is a passage in Plutarch's *Sayings of Spartan Women* (17), where he says that 'another woman, handing over the shield to her son as he was going off on campaign, said: 'your father always used to keep this safe for you. So you must either keep it safe too, or cease to exist.' However, Ducat 1999, 162-4 has shown that 'Non moins irr  elle est dans les apophtegmes la situation sociale de la femme'.

9.11, and for this reason one must assume that at some point along the way they joined up with the rest of the Spartans. Strength in numbers was a key factor in this battle and the *perioikoi* most definitely ‘increased’ the number of ‘Spartans’ or ‘Lacedaemonians’ in the eyes of the enemy. Adding five thousand *perioikoi* to the already five thousand-strong force of Spartans would produce what would appear to the enemy to be a force of ten thousand Spartans. The Argives, having promised Mardonius that they were going to stop the Spartans before they reached Plataea, quickly lost heart and sent a runner to Mardonius to tell him that they were not going to be able to stop the Spartans after all and that he should change his plans (9.12). Herodotus merely says that it was too late for them to act because the Lacedaemonians had already departed from Sparta, but by the time the Argives found out that the Lacedaemonian army was already on the move, the *perioikoi* in all probability had already caught up with the Spartans and joined their ranks. Therefore, what the Argives were reacting to was the combined force of five thousand Spartans and five thousand *perioikoi*, which for them simply meant ten thousand Lacedaemonians.

The psychological effect of having combined forces of Lacedaemonians, all indistinguishable from each other because of the factors mentioned above, meant that this was either a deliberate tactic from the Lacedaemonians or the enemy was oblivious of the fact that the Lacedaemonian army was composed mainly of Spartans and *perioikoi*. Whatever the answer, what we can infer is that the Spartans fought with the *perioikoi* side by side and in the event of a defeat the enemy would have found it difficult to single out the Spartans initially (for whatever reasons, ransom or execution, among others). A perfect example of this happened at the battle of Sphacteria during the Peloponnesian War in 425. Throughout the whole account of the surrender and the aftermath, Thucydides always uses the term Lacedaemonians to refer to those who fought and surrendered. This is because both Spartans and *perioikoi* were the ones fighting and because the Athenians could not tell them apart. Hodkinson says that ‘Thucydides’ account implies that on Sphacteria all the Lakedaimonian troops, both Spartiate and non-Spartiate, were dressed alike’.⁴³ Thus, the Athenians, when they took the surviving Lacedaemonians as prisoners, did not divide them into Spartans and *perioikoi* because they would not have been able to do so. Instead they simply divided them into groups (Thuc.4.38.4), irrespective of whether they were Spartans or *perioikoi*. It is only

⁴³ Hodkinson 2009b, 225.

when Thucydides tells us that the Lacedaemonians themselves sent a herald and took up their dead that we finally find out how many Spartans and how many *perioikoi* died (4.38.5).⁴⁴

Remarkably, the only surviving shield from a Lacedaemonian comes from the booty collected by the Athenians after the surrender of the former.⁴⁵ What is even more striking is that the shield was part of the arms surrendered to the Athenians, which were then dealt with at the Athenians' discretion (Thuc.4.37.2-3). Furthermore, centuries later Pausanias (1.15.4) reports that in Athens' Painted Stoa the shields taken from the Lacedaemonian captives at Sphacteria could still be seen. However, what is striking about this shield is an inscription carved by the Athenian who claimed it as his own trophy. The inscription reads:

ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ | ΑΠΟΛΑΚΕΔ | ΑΙΜ[ΟΝ]ΙΩΝ | ΕΚ[ΙΤΥ]ΛΟ⁴⁶

The Athenians from the Lacedaemonians from Pylos⁴⁷

The Athenian clearly carved the word 'Lacedaemonians' because he knew that the enemy were the Lacedaemonians and not Spartans only. Or perhaps he carved 'Lacedaemonians' because he could not tell whether the fallen soldier was a Spartan or a *perioikos*. The fact that there were more *perioikoi* than Spartans among the prisoners suggests that there is a 58.9% stronger chance for the shield belonging to a *perioikos* instead of a Spartan. In essence, just like the Athenians in 425, we cannot distinguish between a Spartan and a *perioikos*; they looked alike in battle and the term Lacedaemonians encompasses both groups. Cartledge says that '[the shield] served one of the two hundred and ninety-two Lakedaimonians captured on Sphacteria in 425'.⁴⁸ He refrains from saying it belonged to a Spartan because he knows all too well it could have belonged to a *perioikos*. What this shield reveals is the uniformity and the sense of equality that existed between the Lacedaemonians who were part of the army.

By being Lacedaemonians, the Spartans and the *perioikoi* shared the battlefield as one military force. It was not five thousand Spartans and five thousand *perioikoi* who marched on Plataea, but ten thousand Lacedaemonians. Though it is impossible for the purpose of this study to analyse every occasion on which the term Lacedaemonian is used, it is still important to recognise that on occasions it is very difficult to decide whether a named Lacedaemonian was a Spartan or a *perioikos*.⁴⁹ Dexippus' case, again, sheds light on important information

⁴⁴ 292 Lacedaemonians in total were taken prisoner: 120 Spartans and 172 *perioikoi*.

⁴⁵ On the Lacedaemonian shield from Pylos see Shear 1937; Paterakis 1997; Camp 2010.

⁴⁶ Inscription taken from Shear 1937, 348.

⁴⁷ Camp 2010, 100.

⁴⁸ Cartledge 1977, 13, n. 14.

⁴⁹ See 'further considerations' in the conclusion of this thesis.

about the *perioikoi*. He is the definite proof that the *perioikoi* could be called Lacedaemonians. Diodorus (13.87.5, 88.7) describes him as Dexippus the Lacedaemonian, whereas Xenophon (5.1.5) calls him a Laconian *perioikos*. Therefore, one should assume that there are many other cases like this. After all, if we only had Diodorus' account of Dexippus, and not Xenophon's, most scholars would automatically classify him as a Spartan.

Apart from Dexippus, there are a few isolated accounts of Lacedaemonians or Laconians where their background information, or lack thereof, provides us with the possibility of perioikic identification. When speaking about Neon the Asinean being a *perioikos*, Cawkwell remarks that 'other cases can be no more than suspected'.⁵⁰ Perhaps unsurprisingly, most of these unclear cases can be found in Thucydides and Xenophon – who, as I have said before, knew more about the *perioikoi* than most classical authors. Although there are many options to choose from in the whole Greek corpus, it would not be ideal to list and analyse all of them in the present work.⁵¹ Therefore, for the purpose of this section, only a subsection of the totality of named individuals who are labelled as Laconian or Lacedaemonian will be discussed and analysed. The specific examples below (see figure 14) have been chosen because some of them are mentioned alongside Spartiates and they represent both regular soldiers and more high-ranking soldiers. The latter only consist of naval commanders (but not navarchs) because, as we have seen throughout this thesis, the *perioikoi* are inherently linked to maritime affairs.

Name	Description	Occupation	Source
Nicander	τοῦ Λάκωνος	Soldier (unknown rank)	Xen.An.5.1.15
Charminus	ὁ Λάκων / ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος	Soldier (?)	Xen.An.7.6.1, 39, 7.13, 15, 56
Philip	ἄνδρα Λακεδαιμόνιον	Commander of Miletus ⁵²	Thuc.8.28.5, 87.6, 99.1
Therimenes	τῷ Λακεδαιμονίῳ	Fleet commander but not a navarch	Thuc.8.26.1, 29.2, 31.1, 36.2, 38.1, 43.3
Tantalus	αὐτοῖς ἦν τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων	Commander (ἄρχοντα)	Thuc.4.57.3-4

Figure 14. Examples of Lacedaemonians and Laconians that could be *perioikoi*.⁵³

⁵⁰ Cawkwell 1983, 393.

⁵¹ A search on Thesaurus Linguae Graecae shows at least thirty attested cases where the term Lacedaemonian or Laconian is used for a named individual (not identified as Spartan or *perioikos*).

⁵² According to Poralla 1985, 125 he was a 'Kommandant in Milet'.

⁵³ This list is by no means exhaustive.

What the above individuals have in common is that they are all described as Lacedaemonians or Laconians but never as Spartiates or *perioikoi*. Therefore, these cases could genuinely be describing *perioikoi*. For example, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, Nicander, the mysterious Laconian who killed Dexippus, could well have been a *perioikos*; and if this was the case we could have the only example of an explicit conflict between two *perioikoi*. What is important here is that since Nicander only appears once in our sources, and because he is mentioned by Xenophon simply as a Laconian, there is no way of knowing whether he was a Spartan or a *perioikos*. His example shows how being a Lacedaemonian/Laconian is a characteristic that is so embedded into the nature of both Spartiates and *perioikoi* that even an outsider such as Xenophon does not have a problem with Lacedaemonian/Laconian as adequate labels for these people. He is instinctively by default buying into the fundamental characteristic that all free adult males in Laconia are Lacedaemonians; and beyond that the difference is irrelevant. Of course, he knows that a Spartan was not a *perioikos* and *vice versa*, but the point is that sometimes he does not care about the difference. The same can be said of the subsequent examples of figure 14, even if those individuals, unlike Nicander, are mentioned more than once.

In fact, if these individuals are mentioned more than once, then there is at least some possibility for our sources to include more background information about them; and this is precisely the case with the following individuals. Charminus, for example, appears several times in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, and he is described as being sent on a mission by Thibron alongside another Laconian called Polynicus. They are instructed to carry out a message on behalf of all the Lacedaemonians that they are ready to undertake a campaign against Tissaphernes. This type of mission would have been seen as important and only capable of being carried out by the most trustworthy soldiers and officers. Therefore, if (as we have seen before) *perioikic* soldiers could attain prestigious positions in the Lacedaemonian army and in Lacedaemonian society, then Charminus could have been a *perioikos* working under Thibron or even under more important members of the Lacedaemonian army. Even though he has been described by scholars as a Spartiate as early as 1909, today some are not so quick to label him as such.⁵⁴ For example, Cawkwell admits that Charminus and Polynicus may not have been Spartiates.⁵⁵ He stops short of calling them *perioikoi* but since he is talking about *perioikic* soldiers in this section he is implicitly saying they could have been *perioikoi*.

⁵⁴ Bonner 1909, 360, 363 twice calls Charminus a Spartan official.

⁵⁵ Cawkell 1983, 393, n. 32. He also acknowledges that 'clearly the great extension of Spartan operations and Spartan influence had opened up prospects of honourable posts for many non-Spartiates'.

Philip and Therimenes, on the other hand, have more prominent roles than Charminus. Together with the fact that they are mentioned numerous times in our sources, some would expect them to be Spartiates given that at some point one was the governor or commander of Miletus (i.e. Philip) and the other a fleet commander sent with two galleys to fetch and assume command of the Phoenician fleet in 411 (i.e. Therimenes). Poralla assumes that Philip was a Spartiate due to the ambassadorial nature of his mission.⁵⁶ However, there is no indication whatsoever that Philip was a Spartan or that he should have been one due to his position in the army. There is nothing to suggest that Philip's case was beyond what a *perioikos* could do or achieve. The same goes for Therimenes, who played a crucial role in the year 412 of the Peloponnesian War. He was tasked with delivering fifty five ships from the Peloponnesians and the Sicilians to Astyochus the navarch before the Athenians could reach – and consequently besiege – Miletus. Even though he appears numerous times in Thucydides' account he is never described as a Spartiate, but as a Lacedaemonian. Therefore, the available evidence, in a sense, paves the way for the classification of Therimenes as a *perioikos*. Lastly, we have the Lacedaemonian Tantalus. Even though he only appears in 4.57.3-4 of Thucydides, he is described as being a commander (ἄρχοντα) of the forces at Thyrea during Athens' attack on the city in 424. Tantalus is unique because despite the fact that he is only referred to as a Lacedaemonian, he is commanding forces at Thyrea, which was 'definitely' a perioikic *polis*.⁵⁷ Therefore, Tantalus could have been a local *perioikos* appointed commander by the Lacedaemonian army to protect the garrison at Thyrea. Further evidence to suggest that he was a *perioikos* is that Thucydides (4.57.4) mentions how after being taken prisoner by the Athenians, Tantalus was ordered to lodge with other Lacedaemonian prisoners from Kythera, who were presumably *perioikoi* as well.

Thus, this section shows that once Spartiates or *perioikoi* were classified as Lacedaemonians, it was difficult, and sometimes impossible, to identify their specific status or place of origin. Kennell says, 'culturally and linguistically, perioeci were indistinguishable from Spartiates by the Classical Period'.⁵⁸ Even most importantly, it shows that as Lacedaemonians, the *perioikoi* and their Spartiate comrades did everything together when it came to serving in the Lacedaemonian army. The importance of being Lacedaemonians overrode any notion of distinction or segregation within the army. Shipley effectively points out, 'On the Serpent Column celebrating victory over Xerxes, the Lakedaimonians head the

⁵⁶ Poralla 1985, 125.

⁵⁷ From the evidence compiled by Shipley 2004a. See also Shipley 2006b, 58.

⁵⁸ Kennell 2010, 89.

list of Greek allies. As in other matters, it is generally as Lakedaimonians, not Spartans, that the army takes the field... [And] Leuktra was remembered as a Lakedaimonian defeat.⁵⁹ Thus, in memorable and forgettable times the Lacedaemonians stood together indistinguishably.

Soldiers or tremblers? Reliability of the *perioikoi*

If the *perioikoi* trained with the Spartans and dressed like the Spartans, did they fight like the Spartans as well? An overall compilation of the evidence would suggest that they did. Nonetheless, many have postulated perioikic inferiority in battle, especially when comparing them to the Spartans. The latter fought better, trained better, were better organized, among other things. The ‘superiority of Spartan soldiers’, as Lazenby calls it, was well attested in antiquity.⁶⁰ Yet, these remarks about Spartan superiority are sometimes used in a context of comparison with an obvious enemy or embedded into a narrative of criticism towards Sparta in general.⁶¹ But as Shipley says, ‘the army that earned such a spectacular reputation... was not the Spartan army but the Lakedaimonian. Sparta... [depended] heavily upon the *perioikoi*, who made roughly the same numerical contribution to the army as themselves’.⁶² Thus, the *perioikoi* must have possessed at the very least the sufficient skills and the capability to function alongside the Spartans. But in order to fully appreciate this we need to dispel the (modern) negative view of the *perioikoi* as fighters.

We know that the *perioikoi* fought with the Spartans, but to what extent has not exactly been studied before. For example, we do not know when they started fighting alongside the Spartans, though ancient sources and modern scholars alike suggest they may have been present as early as Thermopylae. We have already established that they were trusted by the Spartans to perform and carry out important and sensitive missions. Nonetheless, analysing their actual fighting skills on the battlefield presents an understandable dilemma due to the lack of sources on this topic. Questions that come up naturally are: what function did they perform on the battlefield? How well did they perform? Yet the prevailing myth of the Spartans as flawless soldiers, together with the lack of evidence for perioikic fighting skills, has led some scholars to argue that the *perioikoi* were inferior fighters and, to make matters worse for them, that the Spartans needed special

⁵⁹ Shipley 2004a, 590.

⁶⁰ Lazenby 1985, 3-4.

⁶¹ Lazenby 1985, 3 noticed that Herodotus (7.211.3) calls them ‘skilled fighters’, as opposed to the Persians, who in turn were unskilled (9.62.3).

⁶² Shipley 2004a, 569.

measures for when they caused confusion in the battlefield. Some scholars have gone as far as to argue that the *perioikoi* contributed to Sparta's military collapse in the fourth century.

Thus, when the fighting skills of the *perioikoi* are discussed by modern scholarship the end result is always negative. Gerald Proietti says that 'the Spartans had to master highly standardized tactical manoeuvres because the non-Sparta Lacedaemonians are not so reliable as soldiers'.⁶³ He is of course referring to chapter eleven of Xenophon's *Lacedaemonian Constitution*. In 11.7-8 Xenophon describes the 'special' tactics and manoeuvres the Spartans had to adapt when chaos and disorder ensued.⁶⁴ Another scholar, Noreen Humble, not only agrees with Proietti's statement but adds to it. To her, Proietti's statement is important because 'it was not a rare occurrence to find only one or a few full Spartan citizens leading an army composed of some combinations of *perioikoi*, ex-helots, allies and mercenaries'.⁶⁵ Still, there is no ancient text in which an author comments negatively on the fighting skills of the *perioikoi*. The fact that a Spartan citizen was the head of an army of non-Spartans does not automatically mean that the men fighting under him were untrained or prone to cause disorder. For all we know, Xenophon could have been referring to (Spartiate) tremblers as the ones who caused all the chaos and disorder.⁶⁶

When looking at the ancient sources what one finds, strikingly enough, is quite the opposite. As we have seen in previous chapters, there are instances where we see named *perioikoi* holding high positions in the Lacedaemonian army and other elite groups such as the *logades* and the *kaloi kagathoi*. All of these were able and effective soldiers who in one way or another proved themselves in battle. These examples alone justify perioikic reliability in battle, and in a way they also vindicate any notion that they were unprepared and unqualified for battle. But apart from these, other unnamed and more obscure *perioikoi* deserve mention for their bravery, reliability and resilience in battle. For example, one must not forget the *perioikoi* who fought daringly at Pylos and Sphacteria.⁶⁷ They are explicitly

⁶³ Proietti 1987, 66.

⁶⁴ Cartledge 1987, 42 also weighs in on this debate. He says: 'I have wondered whether Xenophon's comment (LP 11. 7) that only soldiers brought up under the 'laws of Lykourgos' are capable of fighting on even after the phalanx has been disrupted might not be a veiled reference to these incorporated Perioikic hoplites'.

⁶⁵ Humble 2006, 222.

⁶⁶ This does not preclude the possibility of perioikic tremblers, of course. Thucydides (5.34.2) mentions that those Lacedaemonians who had been taken prisoners after the battle of Sphacteria became dishonoured (ἀτίμους). Since the majority of those prisoners were *perioikoi*, we can assume they did not escape this harsh judgment. There must have existed perioikic tremblers that never made it into our sources. Even though Ducat 2006b, 41 never considers this scenario, he still argues that '...the case of Sphacteria was especially difficult, because all the men involved had been in exactly the same predicament: they had all capitulated, and, if the authorities elected to punish them, they had to punish all of them alike'.

⁶⁷ These *perioikoi* are often ignored by modern analyses of the battle and its aftermath. See for example Panagopoulos 1978, 74-84, who does not mention the perioikic captives.

mentioned by Thucydides in Book 4 (8.1), where we see them (τῶν περιοίκων) setting off hastily alongside the Spartans (οἱ Σπαρτιᾶται) towards Pylos to recapture it from the Athenians. Even though they are not mentioned as *perioikoi* again, we can still trace their movements in this campaign, especially since Thucydides starts using the word Lacedaemonians now that both Spartans and *perioikoi* were together and because those stationed at the shores and those stranded at Sphacteria included *perioikoi*.⁶⁸ Thus, throughout the whole Pylos/Sphacteria debacle, we actually see both Spartans and *perioikoi* fighting effectively side by side and holding their ground. More important though is the fact that those four hundred and twenty soldiers left at Sphacteria were hand-picked from their Lacedaemonian ranks (Thuc.4.8.9). Therefore, knowing that the defence of Sphacteria would be no easy feat, the Lacedaemonians must have chosen only those truly capable of carrying out and withstanding any attack. Further proof is the fact that the Lacedaemonians inland made various, albeit unsuccessful, attempts to recover those same men once after they were trapped with no way out.⁶⁹

The fact that they lost the battle, one could argue, downplays any notion of perioikic and Spartan military brilliance. But we must not forget that the fighting done at Sphacteria was atypical and abnormal since those on the Athenian side only used long-range missiles and never fought with the Lacedaemonians in hand-to-hand combat. As Thucydides says, '[the Lacedaemonians] were not able to engage or to profit by their superior skill, the light troops keeping them in check on either side with their missiles' (τοῖς μὲν οὖν ὀπλίταις οὐκ ἐδυνήθησαν προσμεῖξαι οὐδὲ τῇ σφετέρᾳ ἐμπειρίᾳ χρήσασθαι: οἱ γὰρ ψιλοὶ ἐκατέρωθεν βάλλοντες εἶργον) (4.33.2). Thus, it did not matter how skilful in battle the Spartans and the *perioikoi* were, since, as they themselves argued, the Athenians did not fight fairly (Thuc.4.40.1-2). Furthermore, even though the odds were completely against the Lacedaemonians, not least because of the reason mentioned above and because they were much fewer in numbers, the Spartans and the *perioikoi* held their own for seventy two days – when in fact the Athenians had expected the blockade to last 'only a few days' (4.26.4, 39.1). There is no doubt, therefore, that those who fought at Pylos/Sphacteria were not only brave but skilful and reliable soldiers, as they consistently proved to be throughout the various conflicts of the fifth century.⁷⁰ That is why I have to disagree with Cartledge when he says that 'It was these prisoners [Spartans and *perioikoi*], or rather the Spartiates among them,

⁶⁸ Cf. Cartledge 2002, 219.

⁶⁹ Thuc.4.14.2-3, 15.2, 19.1, 23.2, 41.3-4.

⁷⁰ It is perhaps not surprising that where they distinguished themselves as reliable soldiers was in the two major wars of the fifth century, where they would have been needed the most. Cf. Gallego 1990, 33.

who did most to hamstring the Spartan effort in the remainder of the Ten Years' War'.⁷¹ Cartledge undermines and devaluates perioikic contribution to the Lacedaemonian army and to the war effort by implying that Spartan officials were only interested in freeing the one hundred and twenty Spartiates held prisoner at Athens. But in the many attempts to rescue (and later free) the Lacedaemonian prisoners, there is never any hint of preference towards rescuing only the Spartiates. Furthermore, it would be absurd to think that Spartan officials wanted to prioritise the Spartan prisoners. As proven by the many instances of perioikic and Spartan collaboration and solidarity, we can safely say that the *perioikoi* were just as valuable to the Lacedaemonian state, especially those who had proven themselves time and time again in battle. In this case, those *perioikoi* who were hand-picked at Sphacteria had probably done so.

Nevertheless, those who fought at Sphacteria were not the only ones who were reliable soldiers. More than anyone, the Spartans valued the military contribution and skill the *perioikoi* could bring to the army and to any other endeavour (i.e. mercenary). As mentioned earlier, Clearchus was a soldier whose life revolved around all things military; soldiering was the only thing he understood. Therefore, when Xenophon (*Hell.*1.3.15) says that at Byzantium Clearchus had some Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* with him (τῶν περιόικων τινές), we have to assume that those *perioikoi* had to be skilled soldiers.⁷² After all, if anyone was not going to tolerate incompetent and unreliable soldiers it was going to be Clearchus. That he, rather despicably, chose to give all the provisions of the city to his soldiers rather than to the women and children shows that he held those particular perioikic soldiers in high regard (1.3.19). Regardless of his inhumanity, Clearchus was one of the most experienced, and probably most decorated, soldiers of the Lacedaemonian army. Tritle says that Clearchus was a 'battle-hardened veteran...he would have certainly fought in numerous places during these twenty years and with little doubt saw extensive combat'.⁷³ Therefore, an experienced man such as himself would have preferred to be surrounded by experienced soldiers, especially if fighting under him.

As observed in the cases of the named *perioikoi*, there is a recurrent theme in our sources where we see the *perioikoi* serving directly under or alongside Spartan officers. We saw it with Neon, with Dexippus, and the unnamed *kaloi kagathoi*. These examples already show that the *perioikoi* possessed the required skills to function effectively in battle. But

⁷¹ Cartledge 2002, 208.

⁷² These events occurred in 408, seven years before we see Clearchus again in the events of Xenophon's *Anabasis*.

⁷³ Tritle 2004, 330-1. Cartledge 1987, 320 calls Clearchus 'the hard man'.

these are not the only cases where we see evidence of this. Throughout the narratives of classical authors, especially in Xenophon, we seldom see Spartan officials or kings embarking on military expeditions without the *perioikoi*. They are almost always present in some capacity. Before the battle against Thebes in 395, after obtaining favourable omens, the king Pausanias rested at Tegea while he waited for the perioikic troops to arrive (*Hell.*3.5.7). Years later, we see king Agesilaus sending horsemen to the *perioikoi* to hasten their coming while he waited at Tegea after making sacrifices.⁷⁴ But aside from Spartan kings, high-ranking Spartans also often commanded forces of perioikic troops. In 382, an army under the command of the Spartan Eudamidas was sent to Olynthos (*Hell.*5.2.24). This force was entirely composed of *neodamodeis*, *perioikoi* and *skiritai*. Should we assume that because this force was devoid of Spartan soldiers that it would have been a second-rate one? Definitely not. The Spartans were too shrewd to send out an inexperienced force. Furthermore, no high-ranking Spartan such as Eudamidas (or any other Spartan in general) would have been satisfied with a mediocre army. Thus, the *perioikoi* who participated in this expedition must have been drawn from the perioikic contingent of the Lacedaemonian army.⁷⁵ That they fought effectively is reflected in Diodorus' account of the same event. He says that the only reason the Olynthians proved to be the better side was only because they had a much larger force (Diod.Sic.15.21.1). These examples show that individual *perioikoi* who held high military positions are not the only proof of their effectiveness in battle. We cannot forget those perioikic contingents who fought collectively with the Spartans and who served under kings and high-ranking Spartans. As observed in chapter 4, the kings were Spartans but they were not kings of the Spartans alone. They counted on the *perioikoi* to fight with them and for them. They expected nothing short of the best, and those *perioikoi* who accompanied the kings in battle were definitely not exempt from this. Cartledge argues that 'the *Perioikoi* as a whole were well equipped to handle a larger share of military responsibilities'.⁷⁶

On the other hand, when one thinks about the *perioikoi* as fighters, all the examples mentioned so far are the ones that come to mind. However, there is a group of *perioikoi* who

⁷⁴ Even though this event, also concerning Thebes, happened at least eight years later in 386, we see the same pattern as in the passage with Pausanias' *perioikoi*. In both, the king waits at Tegea for the *perioikoi* after the omens proved favourable. And in both they sent separate messengers, some to gather the *perioikoi* and others to gather the allies. Interestingly, sixteen years later, after a conflict in Mantinea in 370, we see Agesilaus doing the opposite. Xenophon says that after arriving in Laconia, Agesilaus sent the *perioikoi* home to their respective cities (*Hell.*6.5.21).

⁷⁵ Coincidentally, the perioikic *kaloi kagathoi* discussed in chapter 5 were sent to take part in the same conflict at Olynthos.

⁷⁶ Cartledge 2002, 220.

rarely receive any mention in modern scholarship due to their obscurity in our sources. During the Peloponnesian War, on more than one occasion, the Athenians embarked on raiding expeditions along the coast of Laconia, which was of course *perioikic* territory. Even though most attempts were futile, the *perioikoi* from these territories often stood their ground and defended themselves against the invading Athenians. After all, not only their lives, but their livelihoods, their properties, and their families were all under threat. In Aristophanes' *Peace* (625) Hermes says that when the Spartans 'seized on War...their gain became the farmers' loss' (τὸν Πόλεμον ἀνήρπασαν· κᾶτα τὰ κείνων γε κέρδη τοῖς γεωργοῖς ἦν κακά). Harvey says that Aristophanes is only thinking of the *perioikoi*, and 'could not care less about the helots'.⁷⁷ In *Peace* 626-7 Hermes blames the Athenians for devouring the figs of innocent [Laconian] men. There is no doubt that these farmers would have been *perioikoi*. Among those towns affected was Prasiai. Thucydides (2.56.6) reports how a force of Athenians under Pericles 'ravaged part of its territory, and took and sacked the place itself' (καὶ τῆς τε γῆς ἔτεμον καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ πόλισμα εἶλον καὶ ἐπόρθησαν). There is no doubt that the Athenians met some local resistance, for it is unlikely that Prasiai was abandoned. In addition, if the Athenians would have been welcomed with open arms by dissenting *perioikoi*, it would not have made sense to burn and sack the place to the ground. In *Peace* 242-5 Prasiai's unfortunate fate is mentioned: 'Oh! Prasiae! thrice wretched, five times, aye, a thousand times wretched! for thou shalt be destroyed this day' (ὦ Πρασιαί τρις ἄθλαι καὶ πεντάκις καὶ πολλοδεκάκις, ὥς ἀπολεῖσθε τήμερον). What is interesting is that Trygaios quickly brushes off Prasiai as insignificant: 'This, gentlemen, does not concern us over much; it's only so much the worse for *Lakonike*' (τουτὶ μὲν, ἄνδρες, οὐδὲν ἡμῖν πρᾶγμα πω· τὸ γὰρ κακὸν τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τῆς Λακωνικῆς).⁷⁸ Harvey says that 'just as the helots do not really count as Lakedaimonians in *Lysistrata*, so in *Peace* it does not really matter what happens to *perioikoi*'.⁷⁹ However, it is not that Trygaios disregards the *perioikoi*; it is that he regards them as perfectly good stand-ins for Spartans. From an Athenian point of view, at least, an attack on Prasiai is an attack on the Spartans. It is a retaliation for Spartans burning parts of Attica. Therefore, what is certain is that the *perioikoi* did not come over to the enemy.

Nevertheless, this was not the only time local *perioikoi* fought with invading Athenians. When the Athenians came back to the southern Peloponnese, this time they landed in Kythera, where the *perioikoi* were waiting for them. Thucydides (4.54.1-2) says that a

⁷⁷ Harvey 1994, 43.

⁷⁸ Modified trans. O'Neill, Jr.

⁷⁹ Harvey 1994, 49.

battle ensued and that the *perioikoi* held their ground for some time but were eventually routed and forced to surrender (perhaps because the Athenians had superior numbers). From there the Athenians sailed to perioikic Asine, Helus, and other coastal towns, where they ravaged ‘the country for about seven days’ (4.54.4). By this time, the Lacedaemonian garrisons sent by Sparta had not yet arrived, which means that the *perioikoi* of these besieged places stood alone against the Athenians. Interestingly, not once does Thucydides mention any revolt or betrayal on the part of the *perioikoi*. Nor does he say that the Spartans were anxious over any impending revolt from the *perioikoi*, unlike in the aftermath of the Pylos campaign, when they truly feared helot revolt (4.41.3). This can only mean that many of *perioikoi* fought the Athenians for at least seven days, many doing so to their deaths.

When the Lacedaemonian garrisons eventually arrived to aid the already-battered *perioikoi* they presumably joined up with the local soldiers and stood on the defensive for fear of a similar fate to that of the Pylos campaign (4.55.1-4). One garrison, however, near perioikic Cotyrta and Aphrodisia, ‘struck terror by its charge into the scattered mob of light troops, but retreated, upon being received by the heavy infantry, with the loss of a few men and some arms’ (τὸν μὲν ὄχλον τῶν ψιλῶν ἐσκεδασμένον ἐφόβησεν ἐπιδρομῇ, τῶν δὲ ὀπλιτῶν δεξαμένων ὑπεχώρησε πάλιν, καὶ ἄνδρες τέ τινες ἀπέθανον αὐτῶν ὀλίγοι καὶ ὅπλα ἐλήφθη) (4.56.1). The fact that some *perioikoi* managed to strike terror into the Athenians goes against any notion that they were unskilled and unreliable soldiers. We can see that the *perioikoi* of Laconia bore much of the brunt when it came to the consequences of the Peloponnesian War.⁸⁰ The textual evidence shows that the *perioikoi* in general could inflict just as much damage as the Spartans, and withstand enemy attack all by themselves.

Hence, the argument that the *perioikoi* were not reliable soldiers is flawed. None of them are seen either fleeing a battle or acting in a cowardly fashion. Their military roles were also very diverse. As we have seen they were fleet commanders, mercenaries, cavalrymen, spies, and elite soldiers; to be any one of these you had to be somewhat experienced in war, especially if your comrades were Spartans. But scholars have overlooked all of these instances. Humble indirectly places some of the blame on the *perioikoi* for Sparta’s military flaws and subsequent military downfall. She argues that ‘the *perioikoi*, not having been

⁸⁰ One must not forget that the *perioikoi* had been suffering from Athenian attacks since the early stages of the Peloponnesian War. Pausanias relates how the Athenian Tolmides attacked several perioikic cities in succession. According to Pausanias (1.27.5), Tolmides ‘when in command of the Athenian fleet inflicted severe damage upon the enemy, especially upon the Peloponnesians who dwell along the coast, burnt the dock-yards at Gythium and captured Boeae, belonging to the “provincials,” and the island of Cythera’.

brought up to believe death is better than flight, are liable to flee in disorderly situations'.⁸¹ But if one looks at the major Spartan battles where chaos and disorder ensued (e.g. Thermopylae, Plataea and Sphacteria) one can see no evidence of the *perioikoi* taking flight. At Plataea, the only time chaos and disorder breaks out is when Pausanias and Amompharetus, two high ranking Spartiates, not *perioikoi*, start to argue. In fact, there is no evidence whatsoever of a Spartan battle where the *perioikoi* are described as fleeing the battlefield. Thus, it is only when we discard the bad reputation modern scholars have sometimes given to the *perioikoi* that we can appreciate their positive and influential role in the Lacedaemonian army.

The *perioikoi* were skilled fighters and a reliable element of the Spartan military establishment. Xenophon says that the secret of carrying on in a battle with any troops at hand when the line gets into confusion is not so easy to grasp, except for soldiers trained under the laws of Lycurgus (*Lak.Pol.* 11.7). Yet Xenophon does not use the Greek word for Spartiate, but the more general term Λακεδαιμόνιοι. This can mean one of two things: either Xenophon is still referring to the Spartiates but chooses to use the word Lacedaemonians (for whatever reasons) or he does not specify Spartiates because he is including the *perioikoi* who were, of course, Lacedaemonians as well. The latter would also mean that there existed the possibility for some *perioikoi* to be trained under the 'laws of Lycurgus'. Xenophon, of all authors, knew that the *perioikoi* had a strong military presence in the Lacedaemonian army and using the term Spartiate would obviously mean excluding the *perioikoi*. The fact that we know much about the *perioikoi* from his texts attests to the familiarity he acquired either whilst living in Sparta or during his military exploits with them, both of which must have influenced the way he thought – and subsequently wrote.

It should not be shocking that the Spartans relied on non-Spartan forces to fight with them. The *perioikoi* fell under a completely different category; one that is safe to say was exclusive altogether from the rest. Unlike mercenaries they were not paid and unlike allies they were part of the Lacedaemonian army.⁸² However, the real difference and uniqueness of the perioikic soldiers is that they can be seen fighting alongside the Spartans during almost all battles, while the same cannot be said for either allies or mercenaries. After all, they were part of the same state as the Spartans, Sparta's wars were also their own, and Sparta's kings were their kings as well.⁸³

⁸¹ Humble 2006, 229.

⁸² On this matter see Shipley 2006b, 67.

⁸³ Shipley 2006b, 67-8. See also Hdt. 6.58.

Scholars have said that the real (and probably only) reason for the Spartans' over-reliance on non-citizen soldiers was simply that their citizen numbers were declining and they needed more manpower.⁸⁴ While to some extent this may be true, especially for the latter half of the fifth century and the early fourth century, the reason for having perioikic troops in the Lacedaemonian army had nothing to do with shortage of manpower. Van Wees argues, and I agree, that the *perioikoi* were already an integral part of the Lacedaemonian army during the Persian Wars, before manpower became an issue.⁸⁵ At Plataea, we have the same number of *perioikoi* as Spartiates (Hdt. 9.11; 9.28) and – if we are to believe Isocrates and Diodorus – more *perioikoi* than Spartiates at Thermopylae (Isoc.4.90, 6.99; Diod.11.4.2, 5). Van Wees says that seven hundred *perioikoi* fought at Thermopylae and that while other sources clearly mention this (i.e. Isocrates and Diodorus), Herodotus did not because he was too busy glorifying the Spartan war dead.⁸⁶

Thermopylae is very important in all regards concerning the *perioikoi*: it is important because it gives us the earliest evidence of perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army and because it shows how integrated into the army the *perioikoi* were. Yet van Wees is the only scholar who has really taken seriously the fact that perioikic soldiers were involved in Thermopylae.⁸⁷ In order to fully understand this peculiar story we must analyse the sources. While Herodotus does not mention the seven hundred *perioikoi*, Isocrates and Diodorus show that they were there (Isoc.4.90, 6.99; Diod.11.4.2, 5). Isocrates twice says that there were one thousand Lacedaemonians – not the usual three hundred Spartans we see on Herodotus and in the popular legend of Thermopylae – and twice says that all of them perished. We should not assume that Herodotus forgot to mention the *perioikoi* because they had been discharged before the final confrontation. He specifically says that the majority of the allies of the Lacedaemonians were discharged by Leonidas (7.220, 222). In that respect, the *perioikoi* could not have been part of that withdrawal because they were not allies. Shipley has strongly pointed this out as well:

Recent research has shown that, contrary to earlier suggestions, the *perioikoi* were not bound to Sparta by treaty. That relationship was enjoyed rather by the allies of the Spartans, or rather of the Lakedaimonians, outside Lakonike, the members of what modern scholarship dubs the 'Peloponnesian league'... The *perioikoi*, then, were

⁸⁴ See Cartledge 1987, 37-42 and Hodkinson 2009b, 421.

⁸⁵ Van Wees 2004, 83.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Hodkinson 2006, 151, n. 74, following van Wees, also mentions perioikic participation in Thermopylae as a given but only in passing.

not allies. They were part of the same state as the Spartans, a state that identified itself as οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, ‘the Lakedaimonians’.⁸⁸

Isocrates’ references are crucial because of the consistent way in which he reports that one thousand Lacedaemonians fought at Thermopylae. What is more, Isocrates is not the only one who mentions the ‘one thousand’. Diodorus also speaks of them (11.4.2, 5), presumably reflecting fourth-century sources not far removed in time from Isocrates. The first passage is almost identical to what we find in Isocrates. It is the second passage, however, that stands out. Here Diodorus mentions both Lacedaemonians and Spartiates in the same sentence; something that is not often seen in ancient sources. Although he does not specifically name the *perioikoi*, Diodorus does refer to the three hundred Spartiates – the same three hundred that appear in Herodotus and the ones we are all familiar with – and the other seven hundred Lacedaemonians must be *perioikoi*. If we acknowledge perioikic presence as early as Thermopylae we can be certain that the *perioikoi*, being part of the Lacedaemonian army, were always needed by the Spartans.⁸⁹ This would disprove the whole notion that the *perioikoi* only had an impact in the Lacedaemonian army when Sparta was lacking in numbers. To put it simply, the Spartans counted on the *perioikoi* because it made the Lacedaemonian army bigger and stronger. It worked at Plataea and, to some extent, at Thermopylae. The fact that there were *perioikoi* present at these two major battles, long before Spartiate numbers were on the decline, demonstrates that the *perioikoi* were always considered to be part of the Lacedaemonian army.

Perioikic presence in Thermopylae undermines everything that has been said in regards to their participation and integration into the Lacedaemonian army. If neither Isocrates nor Diodorus had mentioned the ‘one thousand Lacedaemonians’ nobody would have thought twice about perioikic presence in Thermopylae. This prompts the question: are there more forgotten *perioikoi* which we simply do not know about? My answer would be a strong yes; there could be many more instances in which the *perioikoi* fought alongside the Spartans and we simply do not know about them. In fact it is highly likely that the *perioikoi* fought with the Spartans on more occasions than the few that are known to us. If they are present from the very beginning of the classical period (i.e. Plataea and Thermopylae) all the way to the end of it (i.e. Leuctra) then the default assumption should be that the *perioikoi* fought in other battles before the Persian Wars and in many more during the classical period.

⁸⁸ Shipley 2006b, 67.

⁸⁹ Cartledge 2002, 123 proposes an even earlier date for perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army. He says the naval expedition to Samos in c.525 ‘certainly implies military co-operation of some nature between the Spartans and *Perioikoi*, for all naval muster-stations or ports in Lakonia were located in Perioikic territory’.

Underlying all of this is the fact that any Lacedaemonian army, archaic and classical, would have contained perioikic soldiers.

To conclude so far, the *perioikoi* were an indispensable group in the Lacedaemonian army. As soldiers and comrades they were reliable, professional, skilful, and adept. They did not cause confusion and consternation amongst the ranks; it was the exact opposite. They supported the Spartans, and they relied on each other to perform well in the battlefield. It did not make sense to have such a large group of soldiers in an army if that group was unqualified, inexperienced and substandard to the rest of the soldiers.⁹⁰ The analysis of the evidence suggests that the Spartans trusted them more than any other group from ancient Greece. It all comes back to the ideal of being Lacedaemonians. Ducat says that ‘it is Lakedaimon that is prominent: ‘the Lakedaimonians’ enter into negotiations, wage war, swear peace and alliance’.⁹¹

Honour among the perioikic war dead?

Thucydides relates how in the aftermath of the Pylos campaign an Athenian who was insulting the Lacedaemonian prisoners asked one of them ‘if those that had fallen were men of honor’, to which the Lacedaemonian replied: ‘[the arrow] would be worth a great deal if it could tell men of honor from the rest’. Thucydides says this was ‘in allusion to the fact that the killed were those whom the stones and the arrow happened to hit’ (4.40.2). What is remarkable here is the fact that the prisoner could have been a *perioikos*. After all, there were more perioikic prisoners than Spartans. Therefore, if a *perioikos* knew what honour meant for the Lacedaemonians, then surely the *perioikoi* could be honoured in the same way as the Spartans.

Most scholars today agree that the Spartan way of commemorating the war dead is unique. According to Pritchett, the Spartan practice was in sharp contrast to that of the Athenians.⁹² Polly Low similarly argues that we can at least be confident it is a genuine Spartan practice.⁹³ There is no doubt that the Spartans had a peculiar way of treating and indeed burying those who died in war, but it is much more complicated than just

⁹⁰ Also noted by Powell 2001, 251, who says that ‘If the *perioikoi* were indeed integrated into Sparta’s hoplite formation, that would say much both about their loyalty and about the amount of time they spent in military training. A phalanx which lost its coherence was, in Aristotle’s word, “useless”, and the Spartiates could not risk their difficult manoeuvres ending in disarray through the presence of *perioikoi* who were uncooperative or untrained’.

⁹¹ Ducat 2010, 190.

⁹² Pritchett 1985, 246.

⁹³ Low 2006, 86.

commemorating Spartan war dead. In order to really understand this peculiarity, we need to ask ourselves if it is actually a strictly Spartan practice. The *perioikoi* fought with the Spartans on most occasions and therefore would have been part of the Lacedaemonian way of commemorating the war dead. Fortunately, for this investigation we are not restricted to literary evidence. As we saw briefly in chapter 2, grave stelae have been discovered scattered all over Laconia, providing physical evidence of how the Lacedaemonian war dead were honoured after death.⁹⁴ It is important to acknowledge the existence of such grave stelae and that they could be referring to perioikic soldiers who fought with the Spartans because in the end, they could belong to a very limited group of archaeological remains that are linked closely to the *perioikoi*.

It is important to define what the *en polemoi* inscriptions are.⁹⁵ As mentioned above, the Lacedaemonians had a unique and very simple way of commemorating those soldiers who died in war. Dating from the fifth to the third century, the stelae mainly consist of the names of the fallen soldier followed by the phrase ‘*en polemoi*’ (ἐν πολέμοι, ἐμ πολέμοι, ἐν πολέμοι). There is written evidence in our sources which may allude to the inscriptions. Plutarch (*Lyc.*27.2) says that Lycurgus made it illegal to inscribe the name of the dead person on the tomb, unless it was a man who died in war.⁹⁶ In the *Instituta Laconica* (18), Plutarch says that Lycurgus wanted to have the tombs near the shrines. But here he uses the word *mnemeia*, which means memorial or remembrance. It is now widely accepted that these inscriptions were meant to commemorate those who died in war; not to mark the spot where the men were buried. There are two reasons for this: first, the Spartans were known to bury their dead either on the battlefield or abroad. For example, the Spartans that died at the battle of the Champions were buried at Thyrea (*Hdt.*1.82; *Paus.*2.38.5), those who died at Plataea (*Hdt.*9.85) were buried there straight away, and one cannot leave out the now famous Spartan tomb in the Kerameikos.⁹⁷ Secondly, these stelae were found in locations throughout Laconia, as Low indicates in her article. These geographical locations are associated with perioikic territories and not with known battlefields where soldiers died. But while Low and other scholars have extensively studied and analysed the *en polemoi* inscriptions and their

⁹⁴ The *en polemoi* inscriptions were briefly discussed in chapter 2 in the context of perioikic identification.

⁹⁵ Hodkinson 2009b has previously discussed the *en polemoi* inscriptions but more recently Low 2006 has dedicated an article to them, albeit none have really worked on the perioikic angle. For Pritchett’s definition see chapter 2.

⁹⁶ For a recent debate on this passage see Dillon 2007.

⁹⁷ On the battle of the Champions see Brelich 1961 and Low 2006. On the burials at Plataea see Clairmont 1983; Pritchett 1985; Low 2006. On the Lacedaemonian burial at the Kerameikos see Van Hook 1932; Tod 1932-3; Willemsen 1977; Knigge 1991; Low 2006; Hodkinson 2009b; Spathari 2009.

place in Lacedaemonian society, no one has analysed them from a perioikic perspective. Even though these inscriptions range from the classical period to the Hellenistic and even the Imperial period, the ones relevant to this work are from the classical period, when the Lacedaemonian army was fully functional and operational (see figure 15).

Out of the twenty published *en polemoi* inscriptions, eight come from Sparta and its immediate vicinity and the rest from scattered places in Laconia.⁹⁸ Low gives various theories for this phenomenon, from chance distribution to having been moved at some point.⁹⁹ Yet, she does not mention what would be the most obvious reason: that they were found in perioikic settlements because they were commemorating the perioikic war dead.¹⁰⁰

Inscription	Place	Source
Εὐάλκεϝ ἐν πολέμοι ἐν Μαντινέαι	Geronthrai	IG V, 1 1124
Τελεφάνεϝ ἐμ πολέμοι	Geronthrai	IG V, 1 1125
Ὀνάημος ἐν πολέμοι	Marios	Zavvou 1992-1998, 297, no. 1
Ὀλβιάδας ἐν πολέμοι[ι]	Pellana	IG V, 1 1591

Figure 15. Classical *en polemoi* inscriptions from perioikic territories in Laconia.

Looking at the inscriptions above closely one notices that, with the exception of the one from Pellana, all of them end in omicron iota instead of omega iota. Hodkinson says that ‘the absence of the omega is typical of Lakonian inscriptions before the mid-fourth century’.¹⁰¹ This would place the perioikic inscriptions listed above in the fifth and fourth century. And although the one from Pellana ends in omega iota, it is still believed to have belonged to the fourth century so we cannot rule out a classical provenance. Even though these four inscriptions are similar to the rest found in Sparta and Laconia, what is also special about them is the fact that they were found in perioikic territory (see figure 16 below).¹⁰²

⁹⁸ The complete list can be found in Pritchett 1985, 244-5. An updated version, with find-spots, can be found in Low 2006, 102, n. 3.

⁹⁹ Low 2006, 89.

¹⁰⁰ Although, Low 2006, 103, n. 20 does hint at the possibility of the perioikic stelae being of perioikic origin. If so, ‘the stones provide a medium by which those on the margins can make a claim for inclusion in the more narrowly defined political community’.

¹⁰¹ Hodkinson 2009b, 251.

¹⁰² These three towns are recognised as perioikic by the *IACP*. See Shipley 2004a.

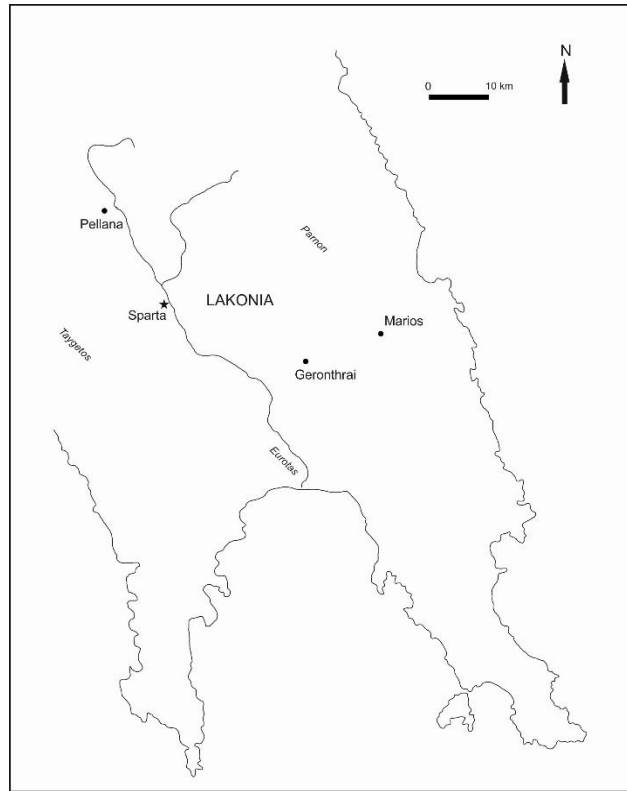


Figure 16. Map of Laconia illustrating the find-spots of the inscriptions.

Out of these four, and indeed out of all of them, 1124 stands out because it mentions a particular battle.¹⁰³ This is unattested in any of the other published *en polemoi* inscriptions, and we simply do not know why. The inscription has attracted the attention of scholars who have debated whether it refers to the first battle of Mantinea of 418 or to the second battle of Mantinea in 362.¹⁰⁴ The more accepted consensus is that it does belong to the fifth century and therefore refers to the battle of Mantinea of 418. A less accepted interpretation places the inscription in 385. Sekunda believes that ‘the inscription should be down-dated to 385, when the Lakedaimonian army...forcibly intervened to prevent the synoikism of Mantinea’.¹⁰⁵ This, however, is a different matter altogether. Relevant to the present analysis is that Eualkes comes from Geronthrai and in all probability was a *perioikos*, regardless of whether the inscription is from the fifth or early fourth century. Everyone talks about the Eualkes inscription because it is the only one that mentions a battle, but his inscription is otherwise no different from that of Telephanes, Olbiadas or Onásimos. These men could have all been perioikic war dead commemorated in the same way as the Spartans. The *perioikoi* were an

¹⁰³ See Jeffery 1990, 197-8, 202, n. 60 for discussion and information on the gravestone of Eualkes.

¹⁰⁴ See Sekunda 2011. Also discussed in chapter 2.

¹⁰⁵ Sekunda 2011, xxii.

integral part of the Lacedaemonian army, which is why they could also have been part of the unique Lacedaemonian way of commemorating the war dead.

As we have seen throughout this thesis, the *perioikoi* were no strangers to warfare. There is a reason why the army is never called the ‘Spartan army’ by our sources. Toynbee once said that ‘above all, Λακεδαιμόνιοι is the title of the army in the field’.¹⁰⁶ As I have already argued, the *perioikoi* were present in the army during the entirety of the classical period. They were there at Thermopylae and during the Theban invasion of Laconia. Shipley says that ‘despite references to deserters during the first Theban invasion...the people of Oios and (we can reasonably infer) Sellasia resisted the enemies of the Lakedaimonians’.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, as this chapter has constantly argued, there is no reason whatsoever to believe that the *perioikoi* had to keep up with the Spartans. I would suggest that if the *perioikoi* were just as part of the army as the Spartans, they would have shared all the benefits that came from being part of such a successful fighting force. One of these benefits was the way in which the war dead were commemorated. This is crucial because the implications of being part of the way Lacedaemonians commemorated their war dead were immense. Cartledge says that Eualkes was proudly commemorated exactly as if he had been a Spartiate.¹⁰⁸ Proudly commemorated is right, but being commemorated as if he had been a Spartiate is somewhat misleading because that would mean that this was strictly a Spartan practice, which we can now agree it was not. Many of the *en polemoi* inscriptions were found in perioikic territory, as already stated above, and since the Spartans were not the only soldiers of the Lacedaemonian army, suggesting that this was a Spartan practice would be unfounded. Therefore, starting from the assumption that the *perioikoi* were commemorated in the same way, it is important to go back to the inscriptions themselves.

Scholars have noted the simple aesthetic of the inscriptions.¹⁰⁹ However, what mattered to the Lacedaemonians was not the physical attributes of the stelae but what they represented. If we remember what Plutarch said, that only those who fell in war were commemorated, then the privilege and honour that came from having a memorial was special enough. The four inscriptions found in perioikic territories are important in both a political

¹⁰⁶ Toynbee 1913, 248.

¹⁰⁷ Shipley 2006b, 65.

¹⁰⁸ Cartledge 2002, 220.

¹⁰⁹ Pritchett 1985, 245 remarks that ‘the striking feature about these texts is their stereotype brevity and the uniformity in the suppression of any element of vainglory’; Hodkinson 2009b, 250 describes them as ‘simple undecorated’ and ‘roughly-worked’; Low 2006, 86-7 says they occupied ‘the minimalist end of the commemorative spectrum’, and that ‘the most conspicuous thing about them is how deeply unimpressive they are’.

and a personal sense. It is political in the sense that the stelae are connected not just with the local town where they were erected but with the main *polis*, Sparta. Sparta's wars were those of the *perioikoi* as well, which included conflicts with the helots – a matter of mutual interest as we saw in chapter 3. Shipley even suggests that having the threat from the helots could have brought the Spartans and *perioikoi* even closer than they were.¹¹⁰ Therefore, these stelae, in a sense, further illustrate that bond.

There is a strong lack of distinction between the stelae found at Sparta and the ones found at Geronthrai or Pellana. The soldiers commemorated at Sparta were commemorated in the same way as Eualkes, Telephanes, and the rest. Lacedaemonians who died in war were not just honoured because they died protecting Sparta, but because they were protecting Laconia as well, and the *perioikoi* were part of that. They died protecting their homeland, including Sparta. Low says that 'fighting and dying for one's *polis* is one of the most obvious ways to stake a claim to membership of the community'.¹¹¹ The community here in question is not Sparta alone, but the whole of Laconia. We must not forget that the Spartans probably held in high regard the *perioikoi* who fought and died alongside them, as echoed in Demaratus' speech to Xerxes (Hdt.7.234.2). The Spartans, above everyone else, knew what the *perioikoi* were capable of. Again, Low sums it up clearly when she says that 'these stones provide a medium through which individual Spartans – possibly even individual Laconians – can make a personal demonstration of, or even argument for their relationship to the larger community'.¹¹²

The stelae from perioikic territories had several purposes: they served as a way of commemorating the specific fallen soldier, and they provided a way of gaining recognition at Sparta by being commemorated equally to fallen Spartiates. Just as the *perioikoi* often travelled to Sparta to attend the funeral of kings (Hdt.6.58.2), for example, we also know that Spartiates travelled to perioikic territory frequently.¹¹³ Therefore, there are many reasons why Spartans would have ventured into perioikic territory. In doing so, they would have passed through the towns where the *en polemoi* stelae commemorating *perioikoi* would have been erected. This leads us to the personal implications. The task of erecting these monuments probably fell to the families of those killed in battle. Families would have felt a strong sense of pride not only because they could commemorate their loved ones, but because of the prestige of being the only ones who could honour the dead. People walking by or passing

¹¹⁰ Shipley 2006b, 70.

¹¹¹ Low 2006, 91.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ As discussed in chapter 4.

through perioikic territory would have been reminded of this, and it served as an added incentive if the Spartans glanced at those stelae commemorating perioikic soldiers. In a sense it was a mark of approval for perioikic families as well because their male relatives had achieved what Spartan soldiers desired the most. It also served as a private way of commemorating their loved ones. Low suggests that the monuments could act ‘as a focus for mourning and for personal commemoration (something which might be thought to be particularly necessary in the absence of a body)’.¹¹⁴

These stelae not only reminded others, including Spartans, that their loved ones had died in battle and gained recognition from it, but it also reminded the families themselves, and they could always seek solace and comfort in the presence of the monuments. One could also say that they had a similar effect and purpose to the equally simple epitaph for the fallen soldiers at Thermopylae. It was a way of reminding those passing by that they died accordingly to Lacedaemonian tradition. It also reminded any Spartan present that they served the Lacedaemonian army in the same way as the *perioikoi*. And the Spartans would have definitely acknowledged that without hesitation, both publicly and privately. After all, even though if the monument itself was not physically alluring, having a commemoration with an inscription was the highest possible honour. Hodkinson argues that ‘the sole criterion for epigraphic commemoration in Sparta was death in battle’.¹¹⁵ It is safe to say that the same applied to the rest of Laconia as well. It should not be shocking for us today if the *perioikoi* were commemorated in the same way as the Spartans, because the Spartans themselves would not have been surprised. Above everyone else, they knew what the *perioikoi* were capable of.

Thus, they should expect no less than to be commemorated equally to their Lacedaemonian comrades. To be in that specific army one had to possess certain skills that were required of everyone, both Spartans and *perioikoi*. In the eyes of the Spartans, the *perioikoi* were worthy of fighting alongside them because the latter proved themselves in battle on many occasions. The fact that all stelae follow the same model of commemoration goes to show the togetherness and the sense of unity that might have existed in the Lacedaemonian army. Low says that the existence of the stelae show a lack of centralisation.¹¹⁶ Yet, it only shows a lack of centralisation if looked at from a Spartan point of view. If one looks at it from a Laconian or Lacedaemonian point of view, then there is

¹¹⁴ Low 2006, 91.

¹¹⁵ Hodkinson 2009b, 256.

¹¹⁶ Low 2006, 91.

definitely a strong centralisation because the main purpose of the Lacedaemonian-war-machine was the protection of the whole of Laconia. Above all, as we have stressed continuously in this work, the Spartans and the *perioikoi* were Laconian before anything else. The simplicity and uniformity of the *en polemoi* inscriptions is, effectively, an extension to the entire Lacedaemonian community of what we might initially think of as Spartan values.

Therefore, by being commemorated in the same way as the Spartans, the *perioikoi* have staked a claim in achieving the highest possible honour in Laconia: dying in war. Being part of the Lacedaemonian army opened many doors, not just for perioikic soldiers but for their families as well. They could honour their sons and loved ones just as Spartan wives and mothers did. They could revel in the fact that their sons had achieved what even some Spartans never achieved in their lifetime. But most important of all, for the *perioikoi* who fell in battle, having an inscribed commemoration meant that all were equal in war, regardless of their position in the army and regardless of their birthplace. The way Lacedaemonians commemorated their war dead was indeed unique. This was not because it was different from other Greek city states like Athens, but, most importantly, because both Spartans and *perioikoi* were commemorated in the same way. Yet, credit should not be given only to the Spartans. They were aware of this, and the *en polemoi* inscriptions were a way of showing their respect and appreciation for the *perioikoi* that fought with them in the army. Shipley states: ‘perhaps another reason for there being a fellow-feeling among the Lakedaimonians was because of the hostility which all Lakedaimonians may have incurred as the possessors of the most feared army in Greece.’¹¹⁷

(Re) assessing the conventional view of the Lacedaemonian army

After analysing the presence, and indeed the impact, of perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army, one begins to grasp just how important and relevant the *perioikoi* were. Surely, if they could be honoured alongside the Spartans then they fought and died alongside them. However, an age-old debate concerning perioikic integration into the army has always been influential in modern scholarship. It has long been accepted that the integration or brigading of perioikic troops into the Lacedaemonian army occurred sometime before the Pylos campaign (i.e. before 425), but that they fought in separate units before that.¹¹⁸ The only true exception is Lazenby, who believes that perioikic integration happened

¹¹⁷ Shipley 2006b, 70-1.

¹¹⁸ Toynbee 1913, 266-8; Austin and Vidal-Naquet 1977, 85; Cartledge 1987, 42 and 2002, 154, 218-9; Gallego 1990, 34-5; Shipley 1992, 224; Lévy 2003, 144-5; Hodkinson 2006, 134, n. 74; Kennell 2010, 89.

much later, during the first half of the fourth century.¹¹⁹ This section will explore the possibility that the integration happened much earlier, at the very least during the Persian Wars.

The idea of significant military reforms taking place at Sparta – one of which was the brigading of perioikic troops into the Spartiate units – has been circulating since the beginning of the twentieth century. As early as 1913, Toynbee was stating that the *perioikoi* were already brigaded with the Spartiates by 425 because the ‘new system’ had already been put into practice.¹²⁰ Toynbee agrees that the *perioikoi* were an integral part of the Lacedaemonian army.¹²¹ In fact, most scholars today are more accepting of the fact that the *perioikoi* were an important element of the Lacedaemonian army and that they undoubtedly contributed to the Lacedaemonian army, but when it comes to the so called integration, they are wary and hesitant about pushing the date earlier. Cawkwell, however, has entertained the idea that the *perioikoi* could have been brigaded with the Spartans as early as the Persian Wars (case in point Plataea). He says that ‘the real weakness in Toynbee's case is in his ready assumption that in the army of the *lochoi* Spartiates and Perioecs were separately brigaded, not mixed up in the manner described by Isocrates (12. 180)’.¹²² He then uses Plataea as the primary evidence for the already present perioikic integration into the Lacedaemonian army.

Before considering Cawkwell's assessment of perioikic participation in Plataea the issue of perioikic integration must first be explained in detail. It all starts with Plataea, where Herodotus mentions that five thousand *perioikoi* were deployed alongside the same number of Spartiates. Fast-forward to Thucydides and Xenophon, and we see a ‘different’ Lacedaemonian army, one where there are *morai* (the largest units in the Lacedaemonian army), *lochagoi* (commanders of *lochoi*), *pentekonteres* (commanders of *pentekostyes*), *enomotarchoi* (commanders of *enomotiai*), *pentekostyes* (army units of 160 men), and

¹¹⁹ Lazenby 1985, 16. His theory has not found favour with most scholars, who firmly believe the *perioikoi* were incorporated after 425. Cartledge 2002, 219 says that ‘thus the *terminus ante quem* for the army reform would be 425’. The only scholar who agrees with Lazenby is Hawkins 2011. He believes the *perioikoi* were integrated after the battle of Leuctra. But his argument is deeply flawed and does not take into consideration all perioikic evidence available. His arguments are mostly focused on the belief that the Spartans fought separately because they felt superior to the *perioikoi*, whereas the latter only had an auxiliary role in the army. One could classify his depiction of Spartiate-perioikic relationship as containing negative undertones. For example he says that the Spartans exploited perioikic manpower aggressively (403). But as we have seen, an analysis of all perioikic evidence suggests the opposite of all his assertions. Forrest 1968, 132-5 has chosen somewhat of a middle ground; he believes that the *perioikoi* were still fighting separately at around 418 but that by 403 they had already mixed with the Spartans.

¹²⁰ Toynbee 1913, 269.

¹²¹ Toynbee 1913, 248.

¹²² Cawkwell 1983, 387.

Skiritai.¹²³ Many of these military terms do not appear in Herodotus, either because he did not know them, preferred to omit them, or simply because they did not exist at the time.¹²⁴ As mentioned above, scholars tend to agree that already by 425, at Sphacteria, the Lacedaemonian army had already been modified. Therefore, they believe that sometime between 479 and 425 a ‘significant’ change must have occurred within the Lacedaemonian army that made it different from the one in the time of Herodotus.¹²⁵ It was different not only in size and units but also in relation to the *perioikoi* because now, they say (i.e. 425), the *perioikoi* were already integrated into Spartan units. Yet, the only evidence scholars use is the account of Sphacteria itself. They say that because both *perioikoi* and Spartiates were mixed up among the captured soldiers, the *perioikoi* were already brigaded with the Spartans. They use this in tandem with the evidence of Plataea, where they say that because Herodotus mentions the perioikic and the Spartan contingent separately they must have not been brigaded together by then. Just at a glance one can see that such argument is inconsistent. For once, there is no evidence for a radical reform of the Lacedaemonian army anywhere in our sources. Ancient sources never mention it nor allude to it. They only speak about units never before mentioned, such as the ones mentioned above. The argument of Plataea (which will be discussed in detail below) is too vague to be used for the argument that perioikic integration occurred sometime during the middle to late fifth century. Yet scholars are convinced of this simply because Thucydides and Xenophon, mainly the latter, mention more details of how the Lacedaemonian army operated. Therefore, when they compare this with Herodotus’ accounts of the Lacedaemonian army they immediately believe that there is too big a difference there for a reform not to have happened.

The problem is that one cannot legitimately compare either Xenophon with Herodotus, or Thucydides with Herodotus. Each and every one of them had their own agenda and their reason for explaining or not explaining certain things about a battle or an army. The most obvious would be Herodotus, who we know did not really care for precise details of battles, let alone for exact details of how an army worked or operated. Lazenby suggests that Herodotus could have deliberately avoided using Spartan military terms in order to avoid

¹²³ Even the army depicted in Thucydides is different from the one in Xenophon. We know this mostly because of Xenophon’s *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*, where he gives a detailed description of how the Lacedaemonian army operated in the fourth century. For the organization of the Lacedaemonian army during the time of Xenophon see the Appendix in Anderson 1970.

¹²⁴ Cf. Lazenby 1985, 41.

¹²⁵ For the restructuring of the Lacedaemonian army see the Appendix in Anderson 1970; Lazenby 1985; Singor 2002.

confusing non-Spartan audiences.¹²⁶ Whatever his reasons, his very vague account of Plataea should not be used to support the idea of a military reform or to suggest that the *perioikoi* fought separately from the Spartans. In fact, if anything, it says the complete opposite, which goes back to Cawkwell's assessment of the battle.

Cawkwell is the only scholar who acknowledges that Herodotus' passage does not actually imply that the *perioikoi* were brigaded separately from the Spartiates at Plataea. He says, 'it is indeed true that in 479 B.C. the 5,000 Spartiates and 5,000 perioecs marched out separately (Hdt. 9. 10. 1, 11. 3), for reasons only to be conjectured. But once the Spartan army was assembled in Boeotia there is in Herodotus' account of the actual fighting *no trace of separate brigading*'.¹²⁷ This is very true, but to emphasize more his point, the real reason why Herodotus mentions them separately is because the Spartiates and the *perioikoi* did not march out of Sparta together: the latter only joined the former on the way to Plataea, as I have argued before. Cawkwell also recognises this and adds that 'the Spartans had to wait until the festival was ended to order out the army, which went out quickly and waited in Arcadia for the Perioecs, just as in 386 Agesilaus marched to Tegea and summoned the Perioecs thither (Xen. *Hell.* 5. 1. 33), at a time when it is sure that there was no separate brigading'.¹²⁸ Critics will argue that Herodotus never mentions the perioikic war dead, but this has nothing to do with the notion of the brigading. In fact, if the *perioikoi* had been brigaded separately then surely Herodotus might have mentioned something about their war dead. It would be far-fetched to think that the *perioikoi*, if fighting on their own, did not sustain any casualties at all. After all, not even the Spartans had the luxury of surviving the battle unscathed.¹²⁹

Cawkwell also asks about the perioikic war dead. He believes that the 'whole story is consistent not with separate brigading, but with the Perioecs being in the rear ranks. The Spartiates in front bore the brunt (61. 3) and turned back the Persian attacks (62. 3)'.¹³⁰

They could get no favorable omen from their sacrifices, and in the meanwhile many of them were killed and by far more wounded (for the Persians set up their shields for a fence, and shot showers of arrows). Since the Spartans were being hard-pressed and their sacrifices were of no avail, Pausanias lifted up his eyes to the temple of Hera at Plataea and

¹²⁶ Lazenby 1985, 41.

¹²⁷ Cawkwell 1983, 387 (my italics).

¹²⁸ Ibid. The previously mentioned Xenophontic passage on Eudamidas, who also waited for the *perioikoi*, is another good example of this. And we can add that by this time the *perioikoi* were brigaded as well.

¹²⁹ Herodotus says that 'of the Lacedaemonians from Sparta ninety-one all together were killed in battle' (9.70.5).

¹³⁰ Cawkwell 1983, 387.

called on the goddess, praying that they might not be disappointed in their hope.

καὶ οὐ γάρ σφι ἐγένετο τὰ σφάγια χρηστά, ἔπιπτον δὲ αὐτῶν ἐν τούτῳ τῷ
χρόνῳ πολλοὶ καὶ πολλῶν πλεῖνες ἐτρωματίζοντο· φράζαντες γὰρ τὰ γέρρα
οἱ Πέρσαι ἀπίεσαν τῶν τοξευμάτων πολλὰ ἀφειδέως, οὕτω ὥστε
πιεζομένων τῶν Σπαρτητέων καὶ τῶν σφαγίων οὐ γινομένων
ἀποβλέψαντα τὸν Πausanίην πρὸς τὸ Ἡραῖον τὸ Πλαταιέων
ἐπικαλέσασθαι τὴν θεόν, χρηρίζοντα μηδαμῶς σφέας ψευσθῆναι τῆς
ἐλπίδος.

(Hdt.9.61.3)

Although I agree that the story does not imply ‘separate brigading’, I do not find the theory of the *perioikoi* at the rear plausible. This passage never mentions the *perioikoi* explicitly, let alone the fact that they would have been in the rear ranks. At Thermopylae Herodotus makes no mention of perioikic troops; yet we know now that a strong case can be made in favour of perioikic presence there. Therefore, it is all too possible to assume that Herodotus failed to mention what happened to the *perioikoi* after the battle concluded. Flower and Marincola argue that Herodotus either ‘did not know or did not care to give the number of perioeci’.¹³¹

Therefore, if the Tegea episodes prove that separate march-outs have no implications, then when we analyse Plataea closely we can confidently conjecture that during the Persian Wars – more than fifty years before Sphacteria – the *perioikoi* were already brigaded with the Spartans. To go even earlier, as I have argued above, the *perioikoi* are also seen fighting alongside the Spartans at Thermopylae. This, of course, changes every notion that we have not only of perioikic involvement in the Lacedaemonian army but of the Lacedaemonian army itself because this would mean that the Spartans never truly fought by themselves, at least during the classical period. If the *perioikoi* were there from the beginning, then the modern idea of perioikic integration is purely myth because the evidence actually points to it never happening. However, if scholars want to argue that there was some type of integration, then at the very least we can say that, if it happened, it had already been placed in motion by the time of the Persian Wars and not during or after the Peloponnesian War. Now at least, since Spartan studies have increased rapidly over the past two decades, scholars are being more open to the debate of perioikic integration. For example, Hodkinson admits it could have happened earlier than the Peloponnesian War. As he says:

Lazenby's argument (1986) that the *perioikoi* were not incorporated in the army until after Leuktra has not met with wide agreement. In fact,

¹³¹ Flower and Marincola 2002, 231.

Spartiate-perioikic integration may have begun earlier than usually thought. The 'thousand picked Lakedaimonians' at Thermopylai already included 700 *perioikoi* alongside the 300 Spartiates; and even at Plataia their separation is not as clear as usually thought.¹³²

In conclusion, a re-evaluation of perioikic participation in the Lacedaemonian army was long overdue. We cannot fully grasp the true nature of perioikic activity in the army without taking apart the ancient and modern stigmas that surround their appearance in our texts. The *perioikoi* have had to compete with the ever-presence of Sparta in our sources, in scholarship and in our popular imaginaire, and this has made them fade into obscurity or, worse, it has made them appear to us as this inferior class undeserving of the same space as their Lacedaemonian compatriots. But by eliminating the stigma of the Spartans as a warrior-race, and taking apart the supposed barrier and pedestal between the Spartans and *perioikoi*, we began to see that they were not too different after all. The *perioikoi* looked, spoke, dressed, trained, and above all, fought in the exact same manner as the Spartans. This was all comprehensively reflected in the context of war, and shows that 'In the Classical age the experience of the battlefield fed the collective solidarity of all Lacedaemonians.'¹³³ Thus, if war always accompanied the *perioikoi* in our sources, it was crucial to discuss their reliability as soldiers and as representatives of one of the most memorable armies of ancient Greece. We found out that they were more than reliable; they carried out their duties accordingly and proved themselves both in the battlefield and outside. The fact that they were *perioikoi* was never an issue when it came to war. This was reflected in how those who died in war could have been commemorated. Here we saw that the famous *en polemoi* were not found in Sparta alone. That they were found in perioikic territories shows that honouring the war dead naturally extended to the *perioikoi* as well, who, just as the Spartans, sacrificed everything for Laconia. Finally, by opening the possibility for the *perioikoi* to be integrated with the Spartans from the very beginning of the classical period, we have come full circle and can now truly appreciate just how important and relevant the *perioikoi* were to Lacedaemonian society.

¹³² Hodkinson 2006, 134, 151, n. 74. Earlier, in 2000 (used here as 2009b), 199 he admitted that 'we lack details of precisely how they were integrated'.

¹³³ Nafissi 2009, 123.

Conclusion

By doing research on the *perioikoi* of Laconia, I hope to have contributed to the understanding of a particularly obscure group of people and what makes them distinctive. The initial aim of this thesis was to undertake a study of the *perioikoi* for the sole reason that this topic was lagging behind Spartan and helot studies. However, as my research progressed, I became aware that the *perioikoi* were a special, indeed unique, case because of a shared heritage with the Spartans. By virtue of being Lacedaemonians it was clear that the *perioikoi* had a *hidden* history to be told that involved all aspects of Laconia and not just Sparta. This examination of the *perioikoi* has, therefore, implicitly and explicitly contributed to the history of Sparta and Laconia and required of its readers a recalibration of their perspective on Sparta. We are not just dealing with an antiquarian issue regarding a subset of the Lacedaemonian population. Instead, one of the main objectives of this study has been nothing less than to invite people to look at Sparta in a different light.

The distinctive feature of the enterprise is choice of perspective. I am not claiming that all the results that come from this thought experiment are demonstrably true, where earlier results had not been: the necessary degree of speculation precludes this. What this thesis does maintain is that, if we choose to look at the data from a perioikic point of view, a different and coherent picture can be made to emerge in which the *perioikoi* constituted a crucial element in Lacedaemonian society and made a vital contribution to the success of the Lacedaemonian state. By changing perspectives we now know more than we did before and have done something further to reduce the effects of the Spartan mirage.

The *perioikoi*, I propose, were not a psychologically, economically or socially repressed group. A close analysis of all the occasions on which they appear in our sources suggests that they enjoyed all the freedoms and advantages of being Lacedaemonians in their own right and by working alongside Sparta for the benefit of all Laconia. Having a shared background and identity with the Spartans made the Lacedaemonian *perioikoi* altogether different from other *perioikoi* of the Greek world. However limited their appearances are in our sources, especially when compared with those of the Spartans, the reality is that they are more visible than other *perioikoi* because of their close ties to both Sparta and the Lacedaemonian army. This country of one hundred cities, as Strabo called it, was only able to function properly for as long as it did due to the collective efforts of the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. For example, we saw how one of the many functions of perioikic *poleis*, due to

their strategic geographic locations, was the defence of Laconia from foreign and domestic attack.

Furthermore, this study has shown that the *perioikoi* enjoyed the benefits of being free Lacedaemonians, from possibly owning and supervising helots to partaking in all aspects of Lacedaemonian life. Spartans and *perioikoi* had the same cultural and social interests; the former participated in perioikic festivals and games, and both presumably took part together on day-to-day activities such as hunting. It is not a coincidence that sources, the majority of the time, referred to the *perioikoi* as Lacedaemonians or Laconians and not as *perioikoi*, which suggests that, if external observers did not care to make this distinction, then in all probability the Spartans themselves saw them as fellow Lacedaemonians as well. This thesis has shown that the Spartans considered the *perioikoi* as one of their own. Evidence of this is the fact that the Spartans never speak ill of the *perioikoi* or regard them as inferior. In fact, as we have seen throughout this thesis, the Spartans trusted the *perioikoi* more than any other Greeks, and the *perioikoi* reciprocated this trust.

This study has shown that perioikic rebellion was very rare and rebellion by Laconian *perioikoi* even rarer. But we should not see this as the only evidence for perioikic loyalty and trust. A major component of this study is the military aspect of perioikic life; it is through this military sphere that we can truly appreciate perioikic trust in and loyalty to not just Sparta but the Lacedaemonian state. Yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, another feature of perioikic life clearly evident through their military participation is the inherent freedom they possessed. Perioikic military service is often described with negative connotations, sometimes referred to as a military burden. However, as we have seen throughout this thesis, the *perioikoi* enjoyed exceptional freedom when operating in the army, most clearly visible when we followed the footsteps of Dexippus and were treated to his (Lacedaemonian) exploits.

As individuals, the *perioikoi* could hold high-ranking positions: they were commanders, mercenaries, horsemen, ship commanders, and even spies sent on sensitive missions that could alter the course of action in a war. As a collective group, on the other hand, they could fight in specialist units composed of *logades*, *kaloi kagathoi* and *chariestatoi*, terms which acknowledged the existence of elite, accomplished, honourable, and ‘perfect gentlemen’ perioikic soldiers. This leads me to the last major conclusion of this thesis. If the military role of the *perioikoi* was as diverse as it was influential, then there is no denying their reliability in battle. One major aim in this study was to eradicate any notion that the *perioikoi* were unskilled and therefore unreliable in battle. Through a careful analysis of perioikic military life, this thesis has argued that *perioikoi* were indistinguishable from the

Spartans in battle. In all probability, they trained in a similar fashion, dressed in a similar fashion and fought in a similar fashion. As Lacedaemonians in the Lacedaemonian army, the *perioikoi* could not afford to be second-rank soldiers, and the evidence ultimately shows that they were not. The Spartans, above everyone else, knew they could rely on the skills of the *perioikoi* as soldiers. After all, one recurrent image we see in our sources is the *perioikoi* acting as companions and deputies of the Spartans, which shows that (i) the Spartans trusted them, (ii) they knew they were skilled and (iii) they probably consulted them for advice. Thus, if we believe that the *en polemoi* inscriptions are describing perioikic soldiers who fell in battle, then there is no better way for a Spartan to show appreciation towards his fellow Lacedaemonian for his military service. In a way, it underlines the fact that there was no such thing as a *Spartan* army. Just as the kings were kings of the Lacedaemonians, so too should we regard the army as the Lacedaemonian army, their religion as a Lacedaemonian religion, and their culture as a shared and united Lacedaemonian culture.

There is no denying that the insights of a small number of scholars have much improved our understanding of the *perioikoi* of Laconia in recent years, and one of the aims of this study is to contribute to the growing interest in the non-Spartan inhabitants of Laconia exemplified by these scholars' work. That work has been a major influence on this current study and without it I would have found it difficult to pursue this endeavour. I hope that, by presenting a different perspective, this thesis has helped achieve a more rounded assessment of the *perioikoi* of Laconia.

Further considerations

Doing research on the *perioikoi* has led to many positive conclusions and results. Nonetheless, new questions have also arisen and been introduced throughout the course of this study. The present work by no means marks the end of perioikic studies, nor should it be seen as filling *all* the gaps left by existing scholarship on the *perioikoi*. As mentioned above, one of the purposes of this study has been to contribute to the knowledge and history of both the *perioikoi* and the Spartans. I feel it can help us understand what sort of society Lacedaemonian society was and how it functioned. But there is still much more that we can learn by exploring further aspects of the *perioikoi* and perioikic life. Thus, this study can be improved by further investigations on themes and aspects not covered here.

For example, when setting out to find hidden or implicit examples of possible *perioikoi* in our sources, I found that there are more individuals described simply as Laconian or Lacedaemonian, without any additional background information, than previously thought.

Even though this was briefly discussed in chapter 6, it is important to acknowledge the fact that there are many individual cases where we simply cannot know whether we are dealing with *perioikoi* or Spartans. Since each case is unique, a separate study is required in order to analyse each of them carefully and work out (i) how many there are, (ii) how many could possibly be of perioikic status, and (iii) and how many would most likely be of Spartan origin. Since it would have been inappropriate to include and analyse all these cases in the present study, not least because of the danger of imbalance and apparent incoherence, a separate study into this matter would help us understand better the nature and scale of perioikic participation in the army.

Furthermore, as this thesis was limited to the classical period, a stand-alone study on the *perioikoi* during the Hellenistic and Roman periods would promote a more complete understanding of who these people were. These Ἐλευθερολάκωνες, as Pausanias called them, were not described in this fashion in classical times. A study of post-classical *perioikoi* (and particularly of the transition between the classical and post-classical situations) would cast light on classical *perioikoi* as well. Further investigation of perioikic life in classical, Hellenistic, and Roman times will allow us to construct a fuller and more solid history of a group that in reality does not need to be as obscure as it is still liable to seem.

Finally, as the reader may have noticed, the *Skiritai* were not discussed or mentioned in this study. Also an obscure group, the *Skiritai* were not included because I do feel that their distinct label entitles them to a separate study. It remains unclear whether the *Skiritai* were simply Laconian *perioikoi* but with another (or additional) designation, but much of the evidence points to this being the case. They lived in the frontiers of Northern Laconia bordering Arcadia, but it is possible they may have been *perioikoi* from Oios or other nearby perioikic settlements. More importantly, however, they fought in the Lacedaemonian army, where they occupied a prestigious position close to the Lacedaemonian king. As we have seen in this thesis, the *perioikoi* also had close ties to the Lacedaemonian king when it came to military matters, and there is, therefore, a case to be made for the perioikic status of the *Skiritai*. It would be beneficial to do a comparative study on the *Skiritai* and the *perioikoi* to see how much in common these two obscure groups have and to see whether we could be speaking about the same people.

These examples show that there is still much to be said about the *perioikoi* of Laconia. And they are a topic well worth attention, both because of the historical importance of Sparta and the institutional distinctiveness of the Lacedaemonian state. Neither a system of alliances nor a federated structure nor (because composed of a large number of formally independent

poleis) a unitary *polis*, the classical Lacedaemonian state has no real parallel in Greek political organisation. It presumably emerged as the unique solution to conflict in Laconia at some time in the archaic era. Historians tend to stress the contribution of another unique situation (helotage) to the empowerment of Sparta. But Spartan power was actually the power of the Lacedaemonian state and its army, and the role of the *perioikoi* was therefore indispensable.

Appendix A. Mention of the *perioikoi* in Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon¹

Herodotus

- Hdt.6.58.2 ‘When a king of the Lacedaemonians dies, a fixed number of their subject neighbors must come to the funeral from all Lacedaemon...’
- *Hdt.9.11.3 ‘With them went five thousand men-at-arms of the Lacedaemonian countrymen’.

Thucydides

- Thuc.1.101.2 ‘...secession of the Helots and the Thuriats and Aethaeans of the Perioeci to Ithome’.
- *Thuc.3.92.5 ‘...they sent off the colonists, Spartans and Perioeci’.
- *Thuc.4.8.1 ‘... the Spartans themselves and the nearest of the Perioeci at once set out for Pylos...’
- Thuc.4.53.2 ‘Cythera... the inhabitants are Lacedaemonians of the class of the Perioeci’.
- *Thuc.8.6.4 ‘...the Lacedaemonians first sent to Chios Phrynus, one of the Perioeci...’
- *Thuc.8.22.1 ‘...the fleet under Diniades, one of the Perioeci’.

Xenophon

- *Xen.*Hell.*1.3.15 ‘Within Byzantium was Clearchus the Lacedaemonian, its governor, and with him some Laconian Perioeci...’
- Xen.*Hell.*3.3.6 ‘...helots, freedmen, lesser Spartiatae, and Perioeci...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*3.5.7 ‘And Pausanias... waited for the troops from the outlying towns of Laconia...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*5.1.33 ‘Agesilaus...sent horsemen hither and thither among the Perioeci to hasten their coming...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*5.2.24 ‘...the Lacedaemonians sent out Eudamidas, and with him emancipated Helots and men of the Perioeci...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*5.3.9 ‘There followed with him also many of the Perioeci as volunteers, men of the better class...’

¹ Those marked with * are associated with the Lacedaemonian army.

- *Xen.*Hell.*5.4.39 ‘...among the horsemen Cleas and Epicydidas, who were Spartiatae, one of the Perioeci, Eudicus...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*6.5.21 ‘...[Agesilaus] let the Spartiatae go home and dismissed the Perioeci to their several cities’.
- Xen.*Hell.*6.5.25 ‘...some of the Perioeci appeared, asking the Thebans to come to their aid...and saying also that even now the Perioeci when summoned by the Spartiatae were refusing to go and help them...’
- Xen.*Hell.*6.5.32 ‘There were some of the Perioeci also who not only joined in this attack, but did regular service with the troops that followed the Thebans’.
- *Xen.*Hell.*7.2.2 ‘...at Leuctra, when many of the Perioeci had revolted from them and all the Helots also had revolted...’
- *Xen.*Hell.*7.4.27 ‘And the whole number who were captured of the Spartiatae and the Perioeci came to more than one hundred’.
- Xen.*An.*5.1.15 ‘...Dexippus, a Laconian perioecus’.
- Xen.*Lak.Pol.*15.3 ‘...and assigned to him enough choice land in many of the outlanders’ cities to ensure him a reasonable competence without excessive riches.’
- *Xen.*Ages.*2.24 ‘In addition the slaves and many of the outlander communities were in revolt, and at least as many of the Spartan nobles had fallen in the battle of Leuctra as survived’.

Appendix B. Periodic professions according to modern scholarship

- G. Grote 1884
 - Merchants
 - Metallurgic enterprise
 - Distribution of internal produce
- A. J. Toynbee 1913
 - αὐτουργοί
- G. Glotz 1938
 - Farmers
 - Wool, wood and clay industries
 - Fishermen and navigators
 - Metal industry
 - Miners
- K. M. T. Chrimes 1949
 - Blacksmiths
- H. Michell 1952
 - Commerce and manufacture
 - Shoe-makers
 - Crafters of objects of wood and iron
 - Garment makers (spartan cloaks)
- H. Bolkestein 1958
 - Blacksmiths (iron)
 - Weapon-making for Spartans
 - Making iron into few agricultural implements
- V. Ehrenberg 1960
 - Yeomen (local crafts and petty business)
- R.M. Cooke 1962
 - Aesthetic arts
 - Practice of the arts
- M. I. Finley 1968
 - Procurement of metals
 - Manufacture of arms
- W. G. Forrest 1968
 - Rich or poor
 - Artisan
 - Merchant
 - Farmer
 - Aristocrat

- J. A. O. Larsen 1970
 - Industry and commerce
 - Landholders
- R. T. Ridley 1974
 - Landholders
 - Herders
 - Farming
 - Fishermen
 - Stone-working
 - Aristocrats
 - Industry - exchange with neighbours and foreigners
- P. Cartledge 1979 and 2002
 - Traders
 - Manufacture and repairs of armours and weapons
 - Fishermen
 - Aristocrats/wealthy *perioikoi*
 - Farmers but with slaves to free them from constant labour with their hands
 - Slave-owners
- G. Shipley 1992 and 2006
 - Centred on agricultural and pastoral production
 - Quarrying
 - Suppliers of armour to the Army
 - Policing function against Helot farms
 - May have constructed and maintained the road network of Laconia
 - Fishing, maritime and seaborne trade

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