

Military and Strategic Studies

Case Study: Athenian and Spartan Strategy

A Case Study



Strategy in the Peloponnesian War



Sparta's Goal
The Dissolution of
Athenian Power

Athen's Goal
The Preservation of the
Antebellum Status Quo

Strategies in 431 BCE: Sparta



Peerless heavy
infantry

But, deployments
need to be limited

No naval forces or
naval experience

Strategies in 431 BCE: Sparta



No financial reserves

No experience or skill
in sieges

A very large and
restive slave
population

Strategies in 431 BCE: Athens



Wilhelm von Kaulbach. (1868). The Battle of Salamis. [Online Image]. Retrieved September 2019 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Wilhelm_von_Kaulbach#/media/File:Kaulbach,_Wilhelm_von_-_Die_Seeschlacht_bei_Salamis_-_1868.JPG

Strategies in 431 BCE: Athens



A superb navy

Reserves of wealth

An expansive empire

The long walls

Modest aims

Strategies in 431 BCE: Athens

Navy is very expensive

Empire resentful and perhaps rebellious

Army qualitatively inferior to Sparta's



Wilhelm von Kaulbach. (1868). The Battle of Salamis. [Online Image]. Retrieved September 2019 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Wilhelm_von_Kaulbach#/media/File:Kaulbach. Wilhelm von - Die Seeschlacht bei Salamis - 1868.JPG

A Case Study

Choose either Athens or Sparta

1 How Should Your State Best Proceed?
How Do You Achieve Your Goals?



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2 How Do You Exploit Your Strengths?
Mask Your Weaknesses?



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3 What factors will be most important to success?

4 How do you measure success?