

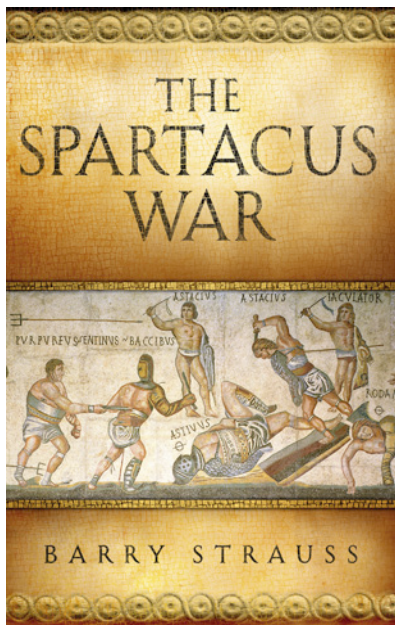
# The Spartacus War

## Barry Strauss

Praise for Barry Strauss (for his previous book, *The Trojan War*)

"Consumed in one of those burning-the-midnight-oil situations, I really enjoyed it."  
Michael Wood

"Barry Strauss is everything you want in a great historian."  
Bettany Hughes



A gripping account of one of the most dramatic episodes in Roman history, an accumulation of all we know about Spartacus and his campaign, based exclusively on ancient Roman, and Greek, sources and archaeological findings. Was Spartacus the first insurgent?

In 73BC, armed only with kitchen knives and skewers, a group of gladiators broke out of their barracks in Capua and headed for the slopes of nearby Vesuvius. They were led by a Thracian named Spartacus, who initially seemed to want little more than freedom for himself and his followers. But after a succession of spectacular victories over the Roman militias sent to recapture him, his fame began to grow. Local slaves flocked to join the runaways, and eventually the 74 gladiators who had started the revolt grew to an army of more than 60,000.

For two years Spartacus led his rag-bag army of slaves and desperadoes the length and breadth of Italy, defying the Roman Army, and subjecting them to a string of humiliating defeats. His skill as a tactician was exemplary, his leadership inspirational, and his ability to escape from the most impossible situations left his Roman enemies dumbfounded. The end, when it came, was brutal. Unable to escape across the sea to safety, the rebels were finally defeated by Crassus, one of Rome's cruellest generals. In the valley of the Silarus he butchered thousands of the rebels. Then, as an example to the rest of Italy's slaves, Crassus lined the entire length of road from Capua to Rome with 6,000 crucified prisoners.

**Barry Strauss** read History at Cornell University and gained a Ph.D at Yale in 1979. He is now Professor of History and Classics at Cornell. The author of nine books, he has appeared in many TV documentaries, and has written for the *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*. His popular histories of *The Trojan War* and *The Battle of Salamis* have been translated into six languages, and have won him international recognition.

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