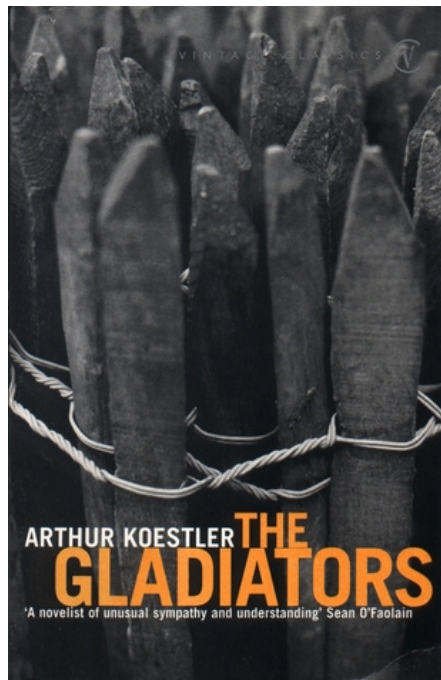




# The Gladiators

*Arthur Koestler , Edith Simon (Translator)*

Download now

Read Online ➞

# The Gladiators

*Arthur Koestler , Edith Simon (Translator)*

**The Gladiators** Arthur Koestler , Edith Simon (Translator)

Arthur Koestler's first novel, set in the late Roman Republic, tells the story of the revolt of Spartacus and man's search for Utopia. The first of three novels concerned with the 'ethics of revolution', it addresses the age-old debate of whether the end justifies the means, an argument continued in his classic novels *Darkness at Noon* and *Arrival and Departure*.

## The Gladiators Details

Date : Published November 4th 1999 by Vintage Classics (first published October 1st 1939)

ISBN : 9780099459811

Author : Arthur Koestler , Edith Simon (Translator)

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Classics, Novels



[Download The Gladiators ...pdf](#)



[Read Online The Gladiators ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Gladiators Arthur Koestler , Edith Simon (Translator)**

---

# From Reader Review The Gladiators for online ebook

## Juan Escobar says

Espartaco es el Che Guevara de un siglo antes de Cristo.

Imagina que alguien te dé una lanza a ti y otra a mi y luego nos diga que tenemos que espertarnos mutuamente para divertir a la gente.

Este libro es la ampliación de la aventura de 50 gladiadores que se fugaron de su circo, en la Italia dominada por la República Romana. Los historiadores minimizaron al máximo las letras para contar la historia de Espartaco, y el autor, **Arthur Koestler** le tocó inventa (después de estudiar mucho) los nombres, toda la hazaña, e interpretar y darle sentido a una revolución que durante dos años tuvo en jaque a lo que iba a ser una súper potencia.

Llegaban labradores, pastores, jornaleros, esclavos y hombres libres por igual. Vaqueros de los Hirpinios, mendigos y bandidos de Samnio, esclavos de origen griego, asiático, tracio o galo, prisioneros de guerra y hombres nacidos para servir. Llegaban del campo y la ciudad; artesanos, holgazanes, andrajosos doctrinarios

**Espartaco** y su gente (100 mil esclavos, locos y ladrones) es lo que hoy llamamos "tribu de zombies", protagonizan una historia que a pesar de lo histórica es ficción y sirve para hacerle unas preguntas a las revoluciones y a las democracias. Es una manera de imaginarse a Espartaco y compararlo con los locos revolucionarios de hoy. Es una radiografía de por qué fallan los intentos de derrocar la injusticia y las violaciones de derechos humanos en masa.

Espartaco no era más que el común denominador de todas las esperanzas y deseos contradictorios.

No es spoiler, porque todas sabemos que la revolución de los gladiadores, muy violenta y a veces sin sentido, no funcionó, pero demostró que Roma, republicana o imperial, era vencible... o bueno, por lo menos herible. Logró incluso que *"Los ricos asustan a los niños desobedientes con la amenaza de que Espartaco vendrá a llevárselos"*.

La política no es mas que una conspiración de fuerzas invisibles con el único propósito de robar al ciudadano común y fastidiarle la vida.

---

## **Olethros says**

-Con los romanos como excusa, repaso a ciertas tendencias de los “ismos” en nuestra historia.-

Género. Novela histórica (pero bastante especial, sigan leyendo).

Lo que nos cuenta. El galo Crixus y el tracio Espartaco lideran al grupo de gladiadores que se han levantado en armas contra el dominio de Roma, uniendo a su causa a otros esclavos según avanzan por la Campania, aunque no todos los siervos se unen a ellos. El senado de Roma resuelve enviar tropas para sofocar la rebelión que, en ese momento, no es demasiado grande. Libro también conocido como “Los gladiadores”.

¿Quiere saber más de este libro, sin spoilers? Visite:

<http://librosdeolethros.blogspot.com/...>

---

## **Erwin Maack says**

“Apronius dá de ombros, aprendeu a lição e sabe que a política não é nada mais que uma conspiração sinistra de forças invisíveis com o objetivo de roubar o homem comum transformar sua vida numa miséria.

A razão foi uma bússola tão defeituosa que ao guiá-los por um caminho tortuoso e cheio de meandros, o próprio objetivo acabou desaparecendo no meio da névoa.”

---

## **Ronan McDonnell says**

A polemic imagining of the Spartacus wars, written from within the rebels' camp. It drips with sweat on parched skin, cut and slashed with swords and bringing the Iron Age to the twentieth century amid revolutions and world wars.

---

## **Lysergius says**

This is a deeply disturbing novel about the failure of mass revolutionary movements. It contrasts the conscious self-interest of privileged elites with the self-interest of the masses and observes that there is one fundamental 'law' that operates beneath the surface of the facades of 'order' and 'patriotism', namely the fatalistic assertion of the leader of the fierce and melancholic Celts, the gladiator Crixus, that the law is simply, "Eat, or be eaten"!

Every ideal of human progress is punctured in this often underrated novel, yet, as asserted in the chapter in

which 'the man with the bullet-head', an Israelite Essene, inspires the Thracian gladiator Spartacus with a vision of universal justice from the latter Jewish prophets, the tattered nobility of this defeat is reminiscent of the Christian version of a death on a cross that was also to lead to some final victory over brute nature. And Spartacus, at the end of the book, walks post-mortem, like a resurrected Jesus, among the devastated; his vision they refuse to let die.

Based upon the historic revolt of 73-71 BC this event was one of the great revolutions of ancient history, a slave revolt that threatened the power of the Roman empire; a revolt that if it had succeeded would have mirrored the triumph of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917-20. Lenin's favorite character in history is said to have been precisely the gladiator of the school in Capua, Spartacus, who emerged as the primary commander of the slave forces; however, the real leader, in Koestler's novel, is the gladiator without ambition or ideals, 'the man with the seal's head', Crixus.

Crixus is the expression of vengeance as justice and indulgence as the compensation for privation and exploitation, understanding that the rich and the powerful always win in the end so the only sensible response is to take everything you can while you can. It is an ignoble, even ignorant, attitude, but the cynicism of the fat, equally self-indulgent (and also deeply unhappy) Roman banker-become-general, Marcus Crassus, quite reflects Crixus' own. (In a scene of a pre-'last battle' interview between Crassus and Spartacus, the latter actually notes even the physical resemblance between the rich man and the proletarian slave-gladiator which of course is a recognition of kindred motivation, the union of 'eaters' from 'above' and 'below', so to speak.)

There is plenty of mayhem in this book but essentially it is for those who are willing to ask questions about base human nature and live with the results. The characterizations are finely drawn, complex and varied, and the novelized history is fascinating.

---

### **Inma says**

Read this book in the Spanish version published by "Circulo de Lectores" ages ago. It's a terrific book about the development of social ideas and movements (revolutions), the politics involved, etc. It could be considered a premonition of the failure of Communism and the reasons behind it. And it not only applies to Communism but to any other political structure from the past and as things go by, from the future.

---

### **Mazel says**

En 73 avant J.-C., en plein c ur de l empire romain, une troupe de soixante-dix gladiateurs conduite par le Thrace Spartacus s échappe d un cirque.

Semant la terreur sur leur passage, revendiquant leur liberté, ils sont en quelques mois rejoints par une foule d esclaves et de laissés-pour-compte, jusqu à former une armée de milliers d hommes.

Pendant deux ans ils vont tenir en échec le pouvoir de Rome, détruisant des villes entières sur leur passage, avant d être vaincus par Crassus.

Scrupuleuse reconstitution historique d'une révolution tragique qui frappe encore aujourd'hui les esprits, ce roman est l'histoire d'un homme et de son combat, vaincu car il n'a pas su être impitoyable.

Comme le dit lui-même Arthur Koestler : « Spartacus hésite néanmoins devant l'ultime étape : [...] l'instauration d'une tyrannie implacable ; parce qu'il hésite, il condamne la révolution. »

---

### **Jo says**

Tells the story of the Spartacus rebellion in Koestler's dry yet gripping style. Philosophical / sociological / dare one say dialectical considerations are well spun out in dialogue between main characters. Koestler's vision on the doomed-to-fail nature of armed rebellion, no matter how just the cause as well as the chronicle of the demise of the idealism that fuelled it are classic. Far more enjoyable a read than *Darkness at Noon*.

---

### **Lupo says**

Bel libro politico, scritto alla fine degli anni trenta da un comunista antistaliniano. Ed è della rivoluzione, che scrive Koestler, più che di Spartaco e dei suoi gladiatori in se, del quale in fondo non sa che quel poco che è scritto nei libri di storia antichi. Scrive di rivoluzione e, soprattutto, di rivoluzione impossibile senza tradirla. Scrive di libertà e fratellanza, di egoismo e settarismo. Questi due ultimi vengono da Koestler considerati insiti nella natura umana e quindi nucleo dell'impossibilità di una rivoluzione di libertà. Pessimismo senza margini: anche alla religione, nel libro ritratta attraverso il simpatico vecchio esseno con la testa a pallottola, Koestler non fa sconti.

Non cercate quindi in questo libro l'epica del film di Kubrick, la figura di Spartaco non è quella del campione della libertà, quanto quella molto più tragica del fallimento della ricerca della stessa.

Un chicca a parte è costituita dalle pagine in cui Licinio Crasso compie una lucida (Koestler la chiama cinica) analisi marxiana dell'economia romana nel 75 a.C.: grandiosa nella sua semplicità.

---

### **Rafa Sánchez says**

Una novela histórica interesante por muchos motivos, te traslada a 21 siglos atrás y tiene la virtud (como tantas que reviven el mundo romano) de demostrar que el elemento humano de la historia no ha cambiado prácticamente nada; los mismos sentimientos, anhelos, envidias, conspiraciones y dudas... Lamentablemente, desde el punto de vista técnico, la novela sufre parones y algunas pérdidas de rumbo, como si el escritor dudara de cómo seguir la trama porque, en mi opinión, solo a partir de la segunda mitad la obra coge ritmo y consigue engancharte hasta el final. Según confiesa el propio Koestler, tardó en escribirla 4 años y... vaya 4 años: desencanto con la "religión" comunista, guerra civil en España, condena a muerte en Sevilla evitada in extremis, repudio del comunismo y ostracismo intelectual... Con tantas peripecias vitales no me extraña que la novela parezca escrita por distintas personas.

---

## Bonnie says

From Orwell's *As I Please* 28 July 1944:

I have just been reading Arthur Koestler's novel *The Gladiators*, which describes the slave rebellion under Spartacus, about 70 B.C. It is not one of his best books, and, in any case, any novel describing a slave rebellion in antiquity suffers by having to stand comparison with *Salammbô*, Flaubert's great novel about the revolt of the Carthaginian mercenaries. But it reminded me of how tiny is the number of slaves of whom anything whatever is known. I myself know the names of just three slaves—Spartacus himself, the fabulous Aesop, who is supposed to have been a slave, and the philosopher Epictetus, who was one of those learned slaves whom the Roman plutocrats liked to have among their retinue. All the others are not even names. We don't, for instance—or at least I don't—know the name of a single one of the myriads of human beings who built the pyramids. Spartacus, I suppose, is much the most widely known slave there ever was. For five thousand years or more civilization rested upon slavery. Yet when even so much as the name of a slave survives, it is because he did not obey the injunction 'resist not evil', but raised violent rebellion. I think there is a moral in this for pacifists.

---

## Muhsin Dogan says

Koestler'in süper anlatımıyla yazılmış bir kitap. Tarihsel araştırmalar iyi yapılmış ve güncel dizilerle pek alakası yok. Eğer Spartacus dizisini izlediyseniz bu kitaptaki olaylar, kişiler ve mekanlar size deşifre gelebilir. Fakat bu konuda farklı kaynaklar okumak biri olarak Koestler'in eseri epey derinlikli ve gerçeğe daha uygun bir şekilde kaleme alınmış. Koestler'in daha önce "Geliş ve Gidiş" isimli kitabını okuyan biri olarak, Spartacus destanının onun satırlarından okumak epey iyi geldi.

Azınlığın çokunuza savaşın, imkansız olanın mümkün kılınması bir hikaye okumak isteyen herkese nazikane tavsiyemdir.

---

## Astartiée says

- éditions Calmann-Lévy, collection pourpre, 1945 -

Ah bon sang, mais quelle déception ! Je m'attendais à du grandiose, du pathos, des combats, de nobles sentiments, des paysages bucoliques ! Et bien non, c'était juste plat. Crixus est sans fond. Spartacus est très loin d'avoir les traits d'un héros ou d'un leader. L'écriture est morne, dans une vague tentative d'imitation du style antique pour certains passages. Et que dire du traitement des femmes ! Je sais que cet ouvrage a été écrit dans la première partie du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Mais enfin ! Elles sont sans noms, sans âmes, sans réelle existence et utilité à l'exception de remplir les couches des chefs de guerre quand l'envie leur prend. L'une d'entre elles est presque évoquée dans les dernières pages, en tant que sorcière ou prophétesse. J'ai eu tellement de mal à finir ce bouquin. J'avais l'impression d'être engluée, que rien n'avancait. Une bonne grosse déception, pourtant le sujet était prometteur. Mais peut-être me suis-je trop attachée à la série, très romancée il est vrai, mais beaucoup mieux fournie en termes d'actions et de héros.

---

## Sarah (Presto agitato) says

I've been on an ancient Roman kick lately, and I liked *Darkness at Noon*, so how could I resist reading Arthur Koestler's *The Gladiators*? Especially when I found a used copy of it with this incredible cover. There are scantily clad dancing girls in the background and half (mostly?) naked men going at each other with swords and tridents. Plus an oddly Old Western font for the title.

Unfortunately, the book does not live up to the promising cover art. Koestler's tale covers the slave rebellions of 73-71 BC, led by Spartacus, a gladiator. The historical events were sensational enough in their own right. The army of slaves, eventually growing to more than 100,000, survived events such as a siege inside Mount Vesuvius to defeat Roman legions and capture several towns. Rome did not take the uprising seriously at first, but eventually was forced to send out armies led by Crassus and Pompey to crush it. If it hadn't been for some double-crossing pirates, Spartacus may have escaped, but he was eventually killed in battle. Thousands of survivors of the slave army were crucified for 200 miles along the Appian Way.

*Stanley Kubrick's Spartacus, better clothed than Koestler's*

It's a compelling story, and certainly fits with Koestler's theme of failed revolution. He uses this theme to tie together a trilogy that includes *The Gladiators* (published in 1939), *Darkness at Noon* (1940), and *Arrival and Departure* (1943), three books on different topics, but all about aspects of revolutions gone wrong.

It's in the philosophizing, though, where Koestler goes awry. He frequently interrupts the action for the characters to engage in long conversations about economics, unemployment, and government. These conversations seem more appropriate to a 1930s Parisian coffee house than a tent on the eve of a famous battle of antiquity, especially when sprinkled with terms like "proletariat." There are oblique references to Christian themes like resurrection that are not really explored. These allusions end up seeming anachronistic. The characters' motivations remain obscure, and it's hard to sympathize with the oppressive Romans or the raping and plundering slave army. *The Gladiators* is part history, part fiction, and part allegory, but doesn't really succeed at any of these.

---

## Susan says

Interesting take on the story. Now to re-read the next one in the trilogy - *Darkness at noon* - which I read in college. So many of the factors that Crassus mentions are very applicable now. This made me wonder when the wage slave rebellion will start and how will it end?

---