

## Third Servile Revolt - Quintus Marcius Rufus - Roman

I, Quintus Marcius Rufus, am a Roman commander who has been recruited by Marcus Licinius Crassus in order to help lead the Roman army against Spartacus and his armies during the third servile revolt.<sup>1</sup>

The third servile war started as a small rebellion of approximately 80 men that has now evolved into a full-scale army that poses a serious threat to the Roman Empire.<sup>2</sup> This army is lead by Spartacus, and has now grown to be about 120,000 soldiers strong<sup>3</sup>. These soldiers are men, women and children who are escaped slaves, prisoners-of-war, peasants, and former gladiators, who now are fighting for their freedom. In order to win battles against an often better-trained and armed opponent the rebels rely on guerilla warfare tactics in which they do not meet the opposing force head-on, but instead rely on surprise in order win many smaller skirmishes. These tactics have proved to be difficult for our armies to handle, as they are often unpredictable and unexpected. An instance that illustrates this is when Spartacus and his rebels climbed up vines in order to surprise our forces, giving Spartacus an easy victory in battle.<sup>4</sup>As Spartacus went on to win more and more skirmishes using these new techniques he freed and amassed more followers, which is how he reached the 120,000 troops that he now has. In order to arm themselves they have taken weapons off of the soldiers they defeat and they have raided military camps.<sup>5</sup>

While this situation has become quite dire I have designed a plan of action in order to bring the conflict to a swift conclusion. This plan is outlined below:

1. Muster all available legions of the Roman army
2. Send scouts in order to confirm the location of Spartacus and his army
3. Use the roman road system in order to march troops to this location (assuming its in southern Italy as currently believe it should be roughly a 10 day march)<sup>6</sup>
4. Engage Spartacus and his armies in battle employing traditional Roman infantry techniques as well as placing cavalry on our flanks
5. Position troops behind Spartacus and his armies

This plan will be successful for a multitude of reasons the first of which is that as the size of the rebel's army grows, their guerilla warfare tactics become less and less effective due to how it much more difficult it becomes to surprise the opposing Roman force. With this, they are forced to fight us in a much more traditional battle which plays into our favor. The only real tactic that they are left with from guerilla warfare is to try to out maneuver us in battle using stealthy maneuvers and the terrain to their advantage. However, this is easily preventable through strategically planning where the battle takes place, ideally aiming for somewhere very open with an incline to have us slightly uphill of our opponents. The cavalry on the flanks is important, as it will make it incredibly difficult for them to out maneuver us as they

cavalry can quickly deal with any enemy troop movements. As for the tactics to be used by the rest of our army we would employ the traditional formations such as the tortoise and the wedge, which would be highly effective against the foot soldiers that made up Spartacus' armies.<sup>7</sup> Our armies would be effective against Spartacus' forces for many reasons the first of which is how most of them lacked training, as opposed to our troops that have often had years of preparation, experience and proper equipment. As well, while Spartacus has proven to be an effective leader in the smaller skirmishes he has currently fought in, these pale in comparison to the scale of battle that would be occurring and as a former gladiator he has no experience in being the leader for an army of this size. The meaning of this is that he is not going to have the same knowledge of formations and tactics as our generals, as well as that he is not going to have an effective command system in place in order to control his 120,000 troops on the battlefield. This is going to lead to our troops being able to march through Spartacus and his armies bringing a swift end to this conflict. Having troops positioned behind Spartacus and his army is important to make sure that none of his troops are able to escape, therefore making sure that this is the last battle of the conflict. The scouts are also crucial in this plan as we need ensure that we know where Spartacus and his army is before mobilize our troops as we need to be careful leaving the city of Rome partially undefended. Overall, this plan will be very successful in stopping the rebels and implementing it as soon as possible is important in order to ensure Spartacus' army can't grow any larger.

On top of the military aspect politics will also play an important role in this conflict for many reasons. The first reason is that in order for the army to properly operate there is a significant amount of logistics involved in terms of supplying proper military equipment, food and housing. If the politicians in charge fail to properly implement an effective system in which all these essentially elements are provided to the army, the armies' leg will be cut out from beneath it and we will fail to be able to properly deal the threat of Spartacus. As well as properly supplying our army the idea of limiting Spartacus access to these essential resources would be beneficial, as it would make his army weaker for when the battle occurs. The next significant element with regards to politics is that they need to properly deal with an discontent within the upper class families as if we are not united as one this makes us less powerful and will have detrimental effects on how effectively we are able to deal with Spartacus. Not only does the government need to focus unifying the upper ranks but it also needs to focus on keeping the plebeians happy, addressing issues such as the wealth gap and the over recruitment of farmers for the army. An other issue for that should be examined is slaves' rights as rebellions by slaves are becoming a systemic occurrence. This reform, however, should be undertaken after Spartacus is defeated, as the Roman Empire needs to show its enemies that it will not negotiate and that it is still powerful.

Overall, this rebellion needs to be quickly dealt with using powerful military force to stop it from gaining any more momentum. Once this is completed this will allow for

more resources to be devoted towards fixing the Roman Empire's social and political issues.

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<sup>1</sup> "Quintus Marcius Rufus." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 28 Jan. 2014. Web. 06 Nov. 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Kausel, Madeleine. *Third Servile Revolt: Rebels*. Montreal: Secondary Schools' United Nations Symposium 2016, 2016. Print.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> Sparks, B. "Spartacus' War: The Great Roman Gladiator Revolt, 73-71 BC." *Warfare History*. Warfare Historian, 01 Jan. 1970. Web. 06 Nov. 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Kausel, Madeleine. *Third Servile Revolt: Rebels*. Montreal: Secondary Schools' United Nations Symposium 2016, 2016. Print.

<sup>6</sup> "Loaded March." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, 16 Aug. 2016. Web. 06 Nov. 2016.

<sup>7</sup> "Roman Army Tactics." *Roman Army Tactics*. Illustrated History of the Roman Empire, n.d. Web. 06 Nov. 2016.