

# Visum est spectaculum Part 1

## Visum est spectaculum

### Gladiatorial games and the balance between the military and public security (Part 1)

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The relationship between the Roman legions and the entertainment industry, especially gladiatorial games, was not restricted to the soldiers' leisure time and the spatial between military camps and oval arenas. On the contrary, this reciprocal relationship manifested itself, inter alia, in a gladiator's oath, which was similar to that of a Roman legionary, as well as in the very different benefits military commanders and emperors drew from the gaming industry, especially in times of crisis. This was counterbalanced by the threat to public security, exemplified by the large number of men in the gladiator schools capable of bearing arms, who, in the Spartacus rebellion, first proved their threat potential as well as their destructive power to a wider public. The following observations will therefore outline the development of the gladiatorial environment and its uneasy relationship with the military, as well as its influence on Roman security policy.

### Gladiatorial Games in the Republic

The first documented fencing games, which took place in Rome in 264 B.C.[1], were perceived as a sacrifice to the dead, offered up in the context of funeral ceremonies for the social elite. According to Tertullian, a Christian Apologist at the turn of the third century A.D, the protagonists, who fought either next to the pyres or following the burials, were prisoners of war and *mali status servi*[2], slaves in bad physical shape. The latter proved to be of little use[3] to a society in which agriculture was the main source of livelihood and even some wealth[4]. Their masters could, therefore, 'sacrifice' them in a fight for life and death without any humanitarian or economic considerations. This selection of swordsmen, however, would seem to suggest that audiences were not regaled with outstanding examples of martial arts; the aim and purpose of such so-called games was a blood sacrifice.

Despite their doubtful entertainment value (not just from a modern viewpoint), these shows quickly began to fascinate audiences. In the following decades, this - quite possibly unexpected - success increasingly forced members of the upper classes to stage funeral games in honour of deceased relatives. The Roman system of patronage (*clientela*) and its importance for a political career[5] meant that especially young noblemen who wanted to follow the *cursus honorum* had to appear as public benefactors. Swordfights as part of funeral ceremonies, soon called *munera* by the Romans, especially lent themselves to ostentatious illustrations of ancestors' merits, and, not least, could be used to derive personal glory from hosting them. The increasing number of such festivities not only provided entertainment for the populace as well as the predicted prestige, but also allowed a direct comparison between the hosts, the *editores*. The audience critically observed equipment as well as fighters and subjected both to quantitative and qualitative assessments in their discussions in the streets and taverns. In this manner, the spectators as well as the hosts made the entertainment factor more important than any religious aspect, and therefore a central element of the festivities. This was the decisive step in the development from funeral to gladiatorial games.

In order to meet the growing demand, sustained investments in the infrastructure of the games had to be made, especially concerning the selection and training of the fighters. Up to then, these had mostly been men of no (more) use to their masters. Now, the selection criteria had to be changed fundamentally and permanently. The new generation of gladiators had to master the training as well as the fighting, and to offer the public attractive entertainment. To this end, they had to be as well trained as possible in the use of weapons.[6] What had originally been slaughter, thus became a fight to the death.

The growth of this 'industry' was made possible by the stream of slaves flooding into Rome and the Apennine peninsula as a result of the victorious wars of conquest in the third and second centuries B.C. This was the practical reason why classes of gladiators and their designation can be traced to the ethnic backgrounds and typical arms of prisoners of war - which is why often Samnites, Thracians, or also Hoplites[7] were to be found in the arena. The gladiators, as they were now referred to, had often fought in the armies of their home countries and therefore brought experience in the use of special weapons[8]. The styles of fighting which found entry into and were subsequently taught in the *ludi* (the gladiator schools now increasingly being set up) had their origins in the special features of the different suits of armour and weapons[9]. Although these were not typically Roman, the training methods and exercises of the swordsmen were oriented along those of the legions[10]. In this early phase, it was the owners of the gladiator troops themselves who were responsible for sword training.[11] These were mostly members of the upper class who wanted to secure the means necessary to launch or pursue their careers[12]. In the time of the Republic, power and prestige, and therefore a political career, almost inevitably intersected with a military career, which is why members of the upper class, for a large part, gained experience in the legions. In addition, their role on the battlefield also required practical experience in fencing[13], as can be gleaned from the early republican ideal of the duel between the Roman general and the enemy chief,[14] in the tradition of the archaic, noble warrior[15]. It is thus not surprising that they fell back on the training elements of the legions, which they knew, in order to structure the training for future fighters in the arena.

If the owners did not take responsibility for the future gladiators' fencing training themselves, they tasked associates conversant in army training standards with it. Only later, and following the further growth of the industry and the concomitant expansion of the circle of *editores*, the *lanistae* appeared on the scene, similar to modern sports managers, to take over exactly this part of the training and to offer combat-ready gladiator troops for rent or sale. The gladiators' fencing training had not only specialised and adapted to requirements, but had also further developed to such an extent that it enjoyed popular respect.[16]

### Army Reform and Overcoming Social Taboos

#### Rutilius Rufus and Fencing Training for the Legions

The training of young soldiers (tirones) was hampered by the fact that the legions had the character of militia armies.[17] This is why in the time of the Republic, it was the commanders' responsibility to take this problem into account when planning a campaign.[18] Thus, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus the Elder used most of the years 180 and 179 B.C. to train his (eventually successful) army.[19] To be up to the mark, the training of Roman legionaries was constantly adapted and set differing parameters.[20] The soldiers were trained in fencing by the centuriones[21], men who had proved brave and competent fighters on the battlefield.[22] They were characterised mostly by an unusually long time of service (for a militia army), and were therefore experienced and militarily skilled.[23] Practical training employed the palus[24], the wooden pole, as well as wooden arms to practise man-to-man combat. So, the basics of fencing training in the military corresponded to those of the gladiator schools; the further training steps, however, were geared towards formation combat[25] and mastering the typical weapons of the Roman army[26]. The gladiator, however, had to prove his excellence to a much greater degree in man-to-man combat. His arms were often exotic, or inspired by those of foreign nations. The special knowledge necessary to handle these weapons was taught by the doctores, who, for the most part, were former gladiators.[27] Individual gladiator training was soon standardised for each respective weapon, especially following the creation of a suitable infrastructure with the establishment of gladiator schools. There, the so-called dictata, universally recognised commands, were imparted to the swordsmen - commands still assigned to fencing training by Suetonius in the second century A.D.

Via a detour, these fencing techniques again found their way into the legionaries' camps. It was the results of the disastrous battles against the Cimbri and the Teutons[28] which formed the basis for a profound reform of legionary training. After the first encounters with northern nations had ended in the Romans being routed, the battle of Arausio[29] in 105 B.C. quite literally resulted in hardly any experienced legionaries left for the defence of Italy[30], and the army no longer being unconditionally trusted with being able to meet this threat. This prepared the ground for innovative measures to be taken together with, or in addition to, new recruiting steps. Aware of this situation, Rutilius Rufus, one of the Consuls of 105 B.C., therefore not only endeavoured to make this defeat a distant memory as quickly as possible, but also to implement improvements which should help to avert any invasion of Italy for good.

His approach was described by the writer Valerius Maximus:[31] "Dexterity in the use of arms was important to Consul Publius Rutilius, Cn Mallius' fellow consul; and he knew how to win over the army. Counter to the principles of all former commanders, he assembled all the fencing instructors from the school of Cn. Aurelius Scaurus[32] and, with far-sightedness, drafted new rules pertaining to the movements used to parry blows or to lunge. This way he showed how courage and art must be combined, so that art become stronger through the fire of courage, the latter, however, more cautious through rules." [33] Rutilius therefore sent doctores, the teachers from the gladiator schools already described, to the legions to conduct weapons training also there. The gladiator school mentioned here was in Capua, at that time already a centre of gladiator training in Italy.

Even before this decisive year and its innovations, which were without a doubt essential, Rutilius was regarded as a reformer and, not least, as a commander who paid special attention to his soldiers' discipline. He had served under Scipio Aemilianus as military tribune in Spain from 134 to 132 B.C., and had become aware, not only of the Roman forces' military shortcomings, but also of ways and means of remotivating demoralised units. From 109 to 107 B.C., he had been legate[34] under Quintus Caecilius Metellus Numidicus in Numidia[35]. The latter had taken command of the forces which previously had little success against King Jugurtha[36], and therefore had to take measures with regard to discipline and, quite possibly, training, in order to be finally able to operate successfully.[37] It was without doubt the experience gained in the various theatres of war which, in 105 B.C., made Rutilius Rufus take the path already described.[38]

With this measure[39], the consul primarily wanted to increase the army's fighting strength by preparing the legionaries for the type of combat adopted by the barbarians[40] and by adapting their training accordingly. This way of quickly and powerfully increasing an inexperienced army's combat effectiveness was novel, since, up to that time, the personal recruitment of veterans by the commander was regarded as the only alternative to the protracted training of recruits and, at the same time, to the enhancement of an army's combat effectiveness.[41] In doing this, Rutilius, however, also flouted social reservations, as gladiators and their doctores were regarded as infamous and therefore as social outcasts.[42]

There were gladiator trainers available for the different branches which had already formed by then.[43] In the case of the legionaries, their typical equipment implies special training akin to that given to gladiators carrying large shields[44]. Their opponents in the arena were, apart from similarly-equipped swordsmen, mostly nimble and light gladiator types, especially the retiarii, fighting with nets, as well as the Thracians. These types might well be compared to the warriors who, only a short time before, had harried the legions on the battlefield. The training therefore must be regarded as preparation for the opponents' individual styles of combat.

The skills now imparted were by no means limited to the offensive use of arms. Gladiator schools set great store by defence, especially dodging.[45] This was new to the soldiers being trained. They were therefore not only taught to hit the vitalia (vital parts)[46], common especially in the aggressive style of heavily armed gladiators, but also how to parry and feint[47], for which, e.g., also body and foot postures were important.[48]

Even if Rutilius relied expressly on persons who came from a sphere located outside the Roman military - that of private enterprise - on no account was it his aim to destroy traditional structures within the legions. The centuriones were not replaced by the doctores with regard to combat training; rather, their fencing training was complemented by specialist knowledge, and the training programme was suitably adapted. The training, which today would be referred to as robust, together with the new way of weapons handling, was carried out in the aggressive manner customary in the schools, and therefore must have seemed even more realistic. In the end, it was especially the physical superiority of the legionaries which, in the Roman historiography of the following centuries, was repeatedly credited with having been decisive in military success.[49] This is why Cicero[50] wrote that physical strength helps us not to panic and to better endure wounds.

Next, everything mentioned must be viewed in a larger context, which results in the realisation that the reform of fencing training was an important building block on the way towards a radical reform of tactics. What had been typical of the Roman legions up to the end of the second century BC, i.e. close order formation battles in the shape of maniple-type tactics, only required limited expertise in man-to-man combat and therefore also reflected the character of the Roman militia army. However, gladiators or their trainers now taught skills which could be employed most efficiently in loose or broken up formations. This strongly indicates that Rutilius planned to employ the more flexible cohort-type tactics, which had already been used in battles in Spain, more widely than before.[51] These would, on the one hand, have given individual legionaries on the battlefield the space to apply the newly practised skills effectively, but, on the other hand, they required a more thorough training of the movements required. The Consul would have met this necessity with the measures described by Valerius Maximus. It must therefore be assumed that these changes to fencing training laid the foundations for the reforms, which especially older research credited Gaius Marius with.[52] This Marius, who in the following year was given command of operations against the Cimbri and the Teutons, did not just take note of Rutilius Rufus' measures, he acknowledged and refined them.[53] He actually preferred troops that had been trained in this manner to those who had already served under him, and maybe even under Metellus in Africa. This seems incredible, as he exchanged units he knew and who trusted him as a commander for troops who had yet to convince him of their efficiency. After all, some of them were freshly recruited soldiers. This is how Plutarch's description has to be read. He stressed that Marius was in a coveted position, because the Cimbri were moving to Spain, which in turn not only gave him time to (further) train his soldiers, but also to boost their courage and to deepen the familiarity between commander and troops.[54] As Marius is described as a commander who attached great importance to discipline and the training of his troops, [55] it must be assumed that he rated both Rutilius and the measures he took[56] and recognised them as valid. With his measures, Rutilius Rufus made a decisive contribution to the reorganisation of the Roman army.[57]

## Morale and Religion

It does not seem surprising that the pursuit of drill and training served to characterise commanders at the turn of the first century BC. Campaigns tended to take longer and longer, with the soldiers facing more and more challenges. It was therefore essential for the cohesion of the Roman armies to produce a feeling of solidarity, which, contrary to the barbarian armies, was not based on tribal relations or familial bonds between the soldiers. The better the training and the surer of victory the legionaries were in consequence, the greater were the respect for and obedience to the general. Ultimately, only trust in their skills and taking pride in their unit and their commander produced the desired esprit de corps. In the wake of repeated defeats, and in the face of a feeling of impotence vis-à-vis the enemy, Rutilius' measures were not only a possibility, but a necessity, in order to gain self-confidence. The fact that he relied on the many branches of the 'entertainment industry' which had already developed around the gladiatorial games is proof of the trust and respect the arena fighters enjoyed among the legionaries, and not least among the military commanders from the upper class. It becomes obvious here that training in the ludi, which in the years before had been strongly influenced by army camp practice, had taken a great leap forward and now began to impact the army. This adaptation and the manifest pursuit of significant improvements was not alien to Roman military dogmatics in that it perfectly correlated with one of the Roman army's highest principles, which was to become ever more dominant in the late Republic and the Empire: learning to win.[58] Contrary to today's UN missions, the main aims of which are to support peace and avoid combat and casualties, the Roman legionaries lined up to achieve total military victory. Combat in the armies of antiquity was therefore like a combat in the arena, a fight to the death.[59] Rarely did losers avoid annihilation or, at the very least, enslavement. Defeat therefore meant carnage. The adage "A man does not go into battle to fight, but to win" [60] embodied here, was not just relevant to antiquity, but also to military dogmatics up to the nineteenth century.

In a further step, the Consul and his counterpart also used the 'entertainment industry' in its original form and organised ostentatious gladiatorial games that very year. These munera were designed to raise the public mood, which, due to the danger the Teutons posed, was rather bad, and to strengthen the troops' morale.[61] The soldiers were to be shown virtues regarded as typically Roman, such as courage, endurance, defiance of death, the will to win[62] as well as the will to achieve glory and honour.[63] not least, however, also the practical implementation of the training which they had received/were receiving from the doctores. The gladiators served as images of the soldiers and their idealised virtues. It was not just Cicero, therefore, who attached great military importance to the soldiers' physical excellence; the consolidation of the soldiers' mental strength was already of central importance to the men at the top of the military system in the second century BC.[64]

Apart from idealised virtues, the religious aspect was not to be underestimated. The munera never completely lost their original sacrificial character,[65] especially in the military field, where the gods had to be appeased before a campaign. Valerius Maximus' descriptions are reminiscent of Livy and his report of human sacrifices in Rome following the defeat at Cannae and in the face of a feared uprising by the Gauls in northern Italy.[66] At that time, a Greek woman and man, as well as a woman and man from Gaul, were buried alive; which means that the fencing competitions in 105 could be viewed as stylised human sacrifices against the background of a similarly disastrous defeat and the recurring fear of a barbarian invasion.

It was certainly not the first time that, in 105 BC, the 'entertainment industry' was instrumentalised to raise morale.[67] However, Rutilius and his fellow consul started a tradition which was to be kept up far into imperial times. Pliny confirmed exactly this in a description of Emperor Trajan's games at the beginning of the second century AD. The emperor staged the munera as a preparatory exercise for the war:[68] "Curiosity was now afforded games! But not those with a mollifying effect, lending themselves to weakening and breaking the men's energies, but games which spurred them on to receive honourable wounds and scorn death, because the appetite for glory and the craving for victory was discernible even in fighting slaves and criminals." [69] Whereas sources report such events even in the third century AD,[70] it was quite possibly the spread of Christian philosophy that finally put paid to this heathen practice in the fourth century AD.

## Effects of the Innovations

In the following years, the army, trained along Rutilius' lines, formed the core of the forces which, under Marius, vanquished both the Cimbri and the Teutons[71] and therefore decisively carried Marius' army reform. The subsequent creation of a professional army went hand in hand with the standardisation of training. The reforms could thus gain a foothold and contribute decisively to improving the fighting power of the Roman legions of both the late Republic and the Empire. Julius Caesar, for example, in *De bello Gallico* (5,44) describes how two rival centurions, Pullo and Vorenus, wanted to outdo each other in fighting the Gauls, and, to this end, left the fortified camp on their own. By turns, they advanced too far, got into trouble, and finally successfully battled a major number of enemies in clear view of the legionaries, before they managed to return to camp unharmed. This exaggerated and historiographically embellished narration not only shows the rivalry between the centurions but also strikingly illustrates the result of the reforms, which Tullius had introduced in 105.[72]

Not only the Roman army units of the late Republic and the Empire profited from the skills derived from the Empire's arenas and gladiator schools. The commanders and officers also used this infrastructure to acquire appropriate skills, which was also confirmed in Caesar's writings. He, for example, praised the fencing skills which members of the upper class had acquired, because he personally entrusted them with the training of inexperienced gladiators he later wanted to use in his games.[73] From this he expected the best possible training of the future swordsmen. The esteem expressed in this measure taken by Caesar must not be overlooked, as he relied on this means of mass entertainment far more than his contemporaries, not least to keep the public on his side, while he himself stayed in far-away Gaul. It must, therefore, be assumed that noblemen were more than capable of instructing the gladiators-in-training in the fencing moves mentioned above.[74] They had, in their youth, received the required specialist expertise from experienced fencers, as a rule former gladiators themselves. Juvenal still confirmed this practice for the first century AD.[75]

The interdependency described found its architectural expression in the architectural link between legionaries' camps and amphitheatres still visible today. Games meant entertainment, and thus a reward for soldiers, as well as a break in their daily routine in far-away provinces. This fostered the relationship between force and commander, or the emperor as the 'organiser'. The ovals were also used for combat training.[76] This was indispensable to maintain the legions' combat effectiveness, and the centurions and the commanders must therefore be presumed to have consciously moved at least parts of the exercises into the arenas for reasons of motivation. The soldiers thus saw themselves in the roles of sports stars, as the gladiators could justifiably be called. Maybe this fostered their ambition to improve their own skills, in order to emulate the example set by the celebrated fighters in the arena.

## Bodyguards and Gladiators

Even before Scipio Aemilianus took over command of the Roman army stationed at Numantia[77] in 134 BC, he knew full well that morale among the force there was extremely low.[78] Not least for this reason did he surround himself with friends and clients who formed a kind of elite force or life bodyguard.[79] This force, personally beholden to him, was to ensure his protection in the field as well as in the camp. It was, however, also a status symbol.

Here, a differentiation must be made between protection and escort. While some of those persons, who may be regarded as part of Scipio's clientele,[80] were tasked with the former function, the escort mostly consisted of advisors and young noblemen from friendly families.[81] Commanders had surrounded themselves with an entourage tailored to their requirements already in ancient times,[82] which was the most common type of Roman officer and general staff training, since this was not provided in any other way, either by the state or the military system. In this manner, young noblemen who, as officers, later were to take on command functions in the Roman legions, were given the chance to learn from seasoned commanders.[83] Rising to the highest ranks or being tasked with the command of formations was not solely decided by military success and individual skill, however, but especially by the respective person's (or his family's) influence in the senate or with the people.[84]

The young Marius also served under Scipio Aemilianus at Numantia, and thus came to learn about the importance of such a bodyguard. Already before the former had assumed command of the forces which were to bring the war against the Cimbri and Teutons to a successful end, he had surrounded himself with a bodyguard modelled on Scipio's. A description by Frontinus raises the possibility that also former gladiators were (quite possibly: as a matter of course) admitted to such guards. The writer has Marius answer a Teuton who had challenged him to a duel that if he wanted death, he could end his life with a rope. When the Teuton reiterated the challenge, Marius confronted him with a gladiator of negligible stature and high age, and said that if he managed to beat him, he would face him personally in combat.[85]

In this literary description, Frontinus not only conveys to the reader that Marius' army included at least one gladiator, but also that he was personally known to the commander. Despite the fighter's advanced age and the concomitant physical decline, Marius so trusted this man's skills that he no doubt deliberately suggested him to be the Teuton's opponent, since, as far as Marius was concerned, he would almost certainly win the duel. The focus on the gladiator's advanced age suggests that had already left active service in the gladiator school or the arena. Entrants to the schools were mostly young, and therefore no longer used for combat once they were old. That he was not a volunteer in the legions is implied by the address 'gladiator'. At the end of the second century BC, the majority of gladiators were still slaves. Military service was therefore no option for them, even after a possible release, because entry to the legions was reserved for Roman citizens. Although slaves and freed slaves may have been accepted in times of crises,[86] there were no such reports by historians concerning the campaigns against the Cimbri and Teutons.[87] The old gladiator must therefore be regarded as part of Marius' entourage, which also shows in the unconditional trust in the old man's skills.[88]

It does not seem odd, therefore, that (former) fighters of the arena were to be found especially among the bodyguards of important personalities, as well as of military commanders. Whereas Cicero had knights as his bodyguard,[89] Publius Clodius, as a plebeian tribune, was always accompanied by gladiators, also in the streets of Rome.[90] At that time, the employment of former or active swordsmen as bodyguards was the best possibility of ensuring the safety of influential personalities. As numerous nobles also owned gladiator schools, which they filled with slaves, it was quite possible that, after their active career, swordsmen found employment as bodyguards. If they had been released as a reward for their loyalty, they could, in this manner, discharge of their duty as *liberti vis-à-vis* their patron.[91] However, they could just as easily be rented out or sold to perform this task. It is thus not surprising that gladiators were again and again found in politicians' or commanders' escorts. They were thus the equivalent of modern special forces or private security companies, which are staffed with experienced personnel with a professional military background, and protect the lives of those who are entrusted to them. Ultimately, however, this was also a specific type of retirement package for ex-gladiators, which must have seemed tempting in a time without social security and promised lucrative employment to arena veterans even of an advanced age.

In the days after Marius, the guards and bodyguards of the Republic's generals, consisting of men personally linked to, or even dependent on, those they protected, were increasingly supplemented, or replaced, by elite forces from the legions.[92] This was one of the results of Marius' army reform.[93] The relationship of dependency and loyalty between the commander and his soldiers had become comparable to clientelism. The troops' loyalty was no longer (exclusively) to Rome, but especially to the commander.[94] This new development coming to the fore here, contributed to the creation of private armies and, finally, resulted in the civil wars of the first century BC, and therefore the end of the Republic. Even Octavian[95] relied on *evocati*[96] at the beginning of his political career, battle-hardened legionaries and veterans who had re-entered active service.[97] It was he, however, who, at the end of the Republic, transferred these bodyguards to the Pretorian Guards. This meant that he had a force of significant fighting power available in Rome itself, whereas armed legionaries were banned from entering the pomerium, Rome's actual municipal area.[98] The guard had security functions also outside the capital, and served the emperor as his elite force.[99]

Until the days of the Empire, however, the individual bodyguards, in which gladiators served again and again, did not completely lose their relevance. Tacitus, for example, mentions that provincial governors had gladiator troops, which they undoubtedly required to stage local games.[100] The historian actually insinuates that one governor employed gladiators against his own soldiers.[101] It must be assumed that the arena fighters were used as life guards/bodyguard, who were to be tasked with protecting their master also against the legionnaires/legionaries under his own command.[102] Elsewhere, he mentions fighters as marshals in the bodyguard of a commander, newly appointed, whose task it was to restore order among his troops.[103]

These reports may focus on the provinces; the tradition of nobles[104] and also emperors[105] surrounding themselves with gladiators as bodyguards, even in Rome, can be traced down to the fourth century AD. A law from 397 AD shows that even in late antiquity former arena fighters entered the service of senators, which was eventually banned by Emperor Honorius for reasons of public safety and to strengthen the council's authority.[106]

The relations described here between the 'entertainment industry', its protagonists and the state and its army require further elucidation. The quantitative growth of gladiature was to become a problem for public security, not only in the city of Rome. Apart from the military employment of gladiators, other parallels and interdependencies between the two spheres demand closer inspection. This will be covered in Part 2.

(To be continued)



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[1] Valerius Maximus (Val. Max.) 2,4,7.

[2] Tert. spect. 12,2.

[3] cf. Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, Cambridge, 1978, p.6.

[4] Christoph Ebner, 'Vom Scheiterhaufen ins Kolosseum - Die Gladiatorenspele als Wirtschaftsfaktor', in, *MBAH*, 30/2012, p. 69.

[5] Clientela was a relationship built on reciprocity. The patron had to actively support his clients financially, in court,... In return, he could demand assistance. Especially with regard to a career in public service, as well as the election of magistrates in the assemblies, clients' votes were of crucial importance for their patron's career (at least during the time of the Republic).

[6] Tert. spect. 12,1-4.

[7] Based on the heavily armed soldier, the Hoplites, who, as Greek citizen soldiers had fought in the Phalanx and had not only dominated military history this way, but also the battlefields until the second century BC.

[8] An excellent example can be found in Livy's description (Liv. 42,34,5-11) of the games staged by Scipio in Spain. Given the dearth of professional gladiators, volunteers fought in their traditional gear and manner.

[9] Another factor, however, was that the gladiators were fighting man against man. To make this situation as fair as possible, weapons and equipment were adapted by the Romans. Armour and mobility, should, for example, be balanced. As a result, fixed pairings developed, which were very popular with the public, as they guaranteed suspense and promised excellent martial arts.

[10] Veget. 1,11 and 3,4 lists gladiators and soldiers as being those who have to exercise at the palus and describes the daily lessons at the pole, which must have been the simplest and, at the same time, the most effective possibility of fencing training (cf. Iuv. 6,247). Gladiator and soldier training also shared the use of exercise swords, which were heavier than the originals. cf. Veget. 1,11-13 and Sen. contr. 9 praef. 4: *Gladiatores gravioribus armis discunt quam pugnant* (gladiators train with heavier arms than they use to fight with).

[11] Until the late Republic, the majority of gladiators was slaves, and therefore introduced to fencing by their masters.

[12] By winning the public's favour already before the elections.

[13] cf. Cass. Dio 65,15,2 concerning the training of young Romans as part of the *collega iuvenum*. He compared their way of fighting with that of the Thracians, a type of gladiator.

[14] It was the highest honour for commanders in early times to win the *spolia optima*, the opposing commander's armour, in a duel, and to then dedicate it to Jupiter Feretrius (cf. etwa Jörg Rüpke, *Domi militiae. Die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom*. Stuttgart, 1990, p. 217-226). This is proof of the importance of duels in early, republican Rome (William V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.*, Oxford, 1979, p. 38-39), as well as of the religious component. Both are reflected in gladiatorial combat.

[15] Pictured, for example, in reliefs in Campania, such as The Knight's Tomb in Paestum. It hails from 370 BC and shows a rider in armour and helmet, with trophies fixed to a lance, i.e. the symbol of a victorious warrior. cf. Ostrud Westheider, et al. (eds.), *Malerei für die Ewigkeit. Die Gräber von Paestum*, Munich, 2007, p. 53.

[16] Livy (Liv. 44,9,5) indirectly stresses the higher quality of gladiator fencing compared with legionary training.

[17] Gerhard Horsmann, *Untersuchungen zur militärischen Ausbildung im republikanischen und kaiserzeitlichen Rom*, Boppard a. Rh., 1991, p. 6-11.

[18] Such as Cato in 195 BC (Liv. 34,9,11; 13).

[19] Horsmann, l.c., p. 18-19.

[20] cf. Liv. 26,20,1-4 on the training of Scipio Africanus' troops in Spain.

[21] This is shown by the request of Syphax, King of the Numidians, of whom Livius (Liv. 24,48) reports that he wanted to task Centurio Q. Statorius with the training of his inexperienced infantry.

[22] The speech of Spurius Ligustinus, a veteran soldier, as quoted by Livy (Liv. 42,34,2-15), shows that promotions within the army (at least to positions for which men from the people were eligible) were awarded by the commander on the basis of individual courage. Marcus Porcius Cato is especially praised, as he seems to have been a keen observer and judge of his soldiers, which brought him a lot of respect among his troops.

[23] The trust in their military skills is shown by Sallust (Sall. bell. Iug. 93,8). Marius selected four centurions as escort and protection for five tuba players who had to carry out a deception operation.

[24] Polyb. 10,20,2; Liv. 26,51,4. In simulated battles, such as those already carried out by the Macedonian army in 182 BC (Liv. 40,6,5-6), the soldiers met, as though in a real battle. cf. sword training, which Scipio initiated following the capture of Carthago Nova (Polyb. 10,20 und Liv. 26,51,3-9). Weapons training as part of a simulated battle lasted a day. Duels were therefore practised within the unit (cf. Horsmann, l.c., p. 141).

[25] The legionnaire's decisive weapon was the sword. Livy writes in depth on the effect this weapon (so typical of the Roman armies) had on the battlefield. The author describes how Macedonians, who, in battles with Greeks and Illyrians, had become accustomed to wounds made by spears, arrows, as well as the odd lance, were viewing bodies, which had been maimed by the *gladius hispaniensis*, the so-called Spanish sword, which had been the main weapon of Roman legionaries since the third century BC: arms hacked off, heads severed from the body, open bowels, and other repellent wounds. Panicking, they realised what type of men and weapons they had to fight against. Such descriptions reflect the brutality of formation combat and the Roman legionaries' resolve.

[26] The word's Latin root suggests that something has to be learned intensively, which must be interpreted in that way that the trainers were former gladiators who remained in the schools after their active time.

[27] These were also known to the public and were often called out to the swordsmen in the arena. (Tert. ad mart. 1,2; Quint. inst. 5,13,54).

[28] cf. Kai Rohrschneider, 'Der Krieg gegen Kimbern und Teutonen 113-101 v. Chr', in *Mars - Jahrbuch für Wehrpolitik und Militärwesen* 6 /2000, p. 469-522.

[29] After the defeat at Aurasio, the number of prisoners is said to have exceeded even that of Cannae (Liv. 67). Until then, Cannae had been regarded as the worst-ever military catastrophe for Rome and had produced a massive trauma.

[30] Karl Christ, *Krise und Untergang der römischen Republik*, 8th ed., Darmstadt, 2013, p.156; Rohrschneider, l.c., p. 473.

[31] cf. Max. 2,3,2: *Armorum tractandorum meditatio a P. Rutilio consule Cn. Malli collega militibus est tradita: is enim nullius ante se imperatoris exemplum secutus ex ludo C. Aureli Scauri doctoribus gladiatorum accersitis vitandi atque inferendi ictus subtiliorem rationem legionibus ingeneravit virtutemque arti et rursus artem virtuti miscuit, ut illa impetu huius fortior, haec illius scientia cautior fieret.*

[32] The organisation of a gladiator school during the late Republic becomes clear here: The owner of a school recruits fencing instructors who are to guarantee the training of recruits and the fine-tuning of their skills. It must be assumed that Cn. Aurelius Scaurus was a member of the upper classes (in 108 BC, a Marcus Aurelius Scaurus was consul suffectus).

- [33] translated using Friedrich Hoffmann, ed., Valerius Maximus - Sammlung merkwürdiger Reden und Thaten. Unveränderter Nachdruck der Ausgabe, Stuttgart, 1828, p. 95.
- [34] Sallust once listed Rutilius as sub-commander in the context of a successful battle (Sall. bell. lug. 52).
- [35] This historical landscape, in North Africa, includes parts of what is today Algeria and Tunisia.
- [36] The war against King Jugurtha of Numidia lasted from 111 to 105 BC.
- [37] Beyond the measures employed to train troops physically, Sallust reports nothing in his text on the war against King Jugurtha.
- [38] Lawrence Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army*, London, 1984, p. 59-60.
- [39] Friedrich Münzer, 'Rutilius', in, RE 1 A, Sp. 1272-1273; Georges Ville, *La gladiature en occident des origines à la mort de Domitien*, Rome, 1981, p. 307.
- [40] Similar also Marius, who had his soldiers observe the enemies' armour and movements, before leading them into battle. (Plut. Mar. 16).
- [41] As described by Sallust, concerning Marius before the war against Jugurtha. Sall. bell. lug. 84,2. cf. also Plut. Mar. 7,6.
- [42] In public, gladiators were admired as heroes, yet, at the same time, regarded as infamous, and therefore excluded from important areas of civil law, as well as a political career. On infamy cf. Max Kaser, *Das Römische Privatrecht*, 2nd ed., Munich, 1971, p. 274-275.
- [43] cf. Roland Auguet, *Cruelty and Civilization. The Roman Games*, London, 1994, p. 160.
- [44] i.e. the provocator, whose arms and equipment were most similar to those of the Roman legionnaire, as well as the murmillo or the secutor.
- [45] This training was important, because some gladiators were nimbler, others had more protection. Combat was to last a long time and offer entertainment.
- [46] A hit here always meant death. There was thus a conscious focus on wearing down the opponent, which also became part of the rhetors' vocabulary (Quint. inst. 5,12,22).
- [47] Feints, described by Quint. inst. 9,1,20 were examples of offensive tactics. cf. Olaf Grodde, *Sport bei Quintillian*, Hildesheim, 1997, p. 18-19.
- [48] Quint. inst. 9,4,8-9.
- [49] cf. Sall. bell. lug. 44 or Marius during his campaign against the Cymbri (Plut. Mar. 13).
- [50] Cic. Tusc. 2,16,38.
- [51] Sallust mentions a battle grouping of four cohorts also for Metellus in Numidia (Sall. bell. lug. 51,3), which could mean that this tactical element had already been employed at that time - at least in certain situations. Rutilius could have had some practical experience of this formation and taken preparatory measures for its employment. It must, however, be noted that Sallust was writing at a time when Cohort-type tactics had long become the norm. He could well have used the terminology based on the point of view of the time he was writing at. Rutilius' measures in 105 BC, however, are clear, especially as regards his tactical experience.
- [52] cf. Herbert Aigner, *Die Soldaten als Machtfaktor in der ausgehenden Römischen Republik*, Innsbruck, 1974, p. 163-164.
- [53] Research states that it was Marius who adapted the soldiers' drill to the gladiator schools. (Christ, l.c., p. 158).
- [54] Plut. Mar. 13.
- [55] Frontin strat. 4,1,12. Frontin confirms Marius' choice (strat. 4,2,2) and thus the value of these troops. cf. Horsmann, l.c., p. 43 note 190.
- [56] Marius had met the latter in Africa. They had both served as legates under Metellus.
- [57] cf. Herbert Aigner, 'Gedanken zur so genannten Heeresreform des Marius', in, Franz Hampl and Ingomar Weiler, *Kritische und vergleichende Studien zur Alten Geschichte und Universalgeschichte*, Innsbruck, 1974, p. 13-15. He became an important ally of Marius.
- [58] Yann Le Bohec, *Die Römische Armee*, new edition, Hamburg, 2009, p. 118.
- [59] The bloody character of, and the slaughter following, Roman victories becomes clear in the granting of triumphal processions, which were only possible if at least 5,000 enemies were dead. In the time of the Republic (252 – 53 BC) over 70 such processions were celebrated in Rome.
- [60] Charles Ardandt du Picq, *Études sur le combat*, Paris, 1903, p. 5. Also cf. Le Bohec, l.c., p. 133.
- [61] The concrete reason is the object of academic discourse. The games of 105 BC described here are interpreted as the first time the Consuls, in their official function, staged public munera, which, thereupon, became an institution, regularly repeated. Bishop Ennodius, living in Italy at the time of the Ostrogoth King Theodorich, stated that it was the year in which, for the first time, said Consuls organised gladiatorial games on behalf of the state (Ennod. paneg. 85). This text, however, is simply a wrong translation or a conscious falsification of the statement by Valerius Maximus already quoted (Val. Max. 2,3,3). Older research therefore concluded that from then on, public munera became a permanent fixture in the Roman festival calendar (cf. Ernst Baltrusch, 'Die Verstaatlichung der Gladiatorenspiele', in, *Hermes* 116/1988, p. 324-337). This is certainly to be rejected. It must be assumed that the Consuls organised the games at their own expense, and not with financial means taken from the aerarium, the public purse.
- [62] Good fighters were rewarded in the arena as well as on the battlefield, bad ones were punished, with concrete associations being conjured up regarding past defeats.
- [63] In 218, Hannibal is said to have exhorted prisoners (Gauls) to fight for life and liberty, in order to avoid a slave's existence (Liv. 21,42-43; Polyb. 3,62-63). This most likely was to impress upon his soldiers the desired virtues: glory to the victor or death in battle.
- [64] Flavius Josephus, for example, stated that the Romans not only had strong bodies, but also strong souls (Ios. bell. lud. 3,5,7; 3,10,2; cf. also Herod. 2,10,8), and thus points out their superiority.

[65] cf. Liv. 29,27,1-5 and the sacrificial ceremony when his troops set out for Africa. The sacrifices were to recall the origins of the munera and were quite possibly already made for the legionaries who would fall in the campaign.

[66] Liv. 22,57,5-6.

[67] So, for example, the games in Scipio's camp in Spain. cf. Max. 9,11,1 and Liv. 42,34,5-11.

[68] Plin. Paneg. 33,1: Visum est spectaculum inde non enerve, nec fluxum, nec quod animos virorum molliret et frangeret, sed quod ad pulchra vulnera contemptumque mortis accenderet, cum in servorum etiam noxiorumque corporibus amor laudis et cupido victoriae cerneretur.

[69] Translation based on Werner Kühn, ed., Plinius der Jüngere - Panegyrikus, Lobrede auf den Kaiser Trajan, Darmstadt, 2008, p. 67.

[70] The Historia Augusta reports of Septimius Severus that he had organised gladiatorial games and only afterwards started out on his campaign against the Parthians (HA Sept. Sever. 14,11). There are similar reports of Maximus and Balbinus (HA Max. et Balb. 8, 5-7).

[71] In 102 BC in the battles of Aquae Sextiae (Aix-en-Provence, France) and Vercellae (Vercelli, Italy).

[72] The change from Maniple-type legion to a heavy, universal infantry was the last step towards the creation of a professional army, which meant longer service and specialisation, and therefore also specialised training (cf. Plut. Marius 13 and Frontinus 4,1,7 on Marius' measures in 104. Also cf. Michael J.V. Bell, 'Tactical Reform in the Roman Republican Army', in, Historia, 14/1965, p. 417). The episode described by Caesar shows that the legionaries of the late Republic were not only better fighters than those in the centuries before (especially because their individual skills had been trained far more intensively), but that they were also characterised by enormous self-assurance.

[73] Suet. Iul. 26,3.

[74] Horsmann, I.c., p. 139.

[75] Iuv. 3,157-158.

[76] Buildings were also used for training purposes (Le Bohec, I.c., p. 125-126); certainly amphitheatres (cf. Roy W. Davies, Service in the Roman Army, Edinburgh, 1989, 41. Horsmann, I.c., p. 64-65). Commanders as well as emperors checked during their visits to camps whether the training areas were regularly frequented. Examples: Emperor Hadrian's visits to Pannonia and Africa (Cass. Dio 69,9; HA Hadrian 10,2 and 26,2; CIL III 3676).

[77] Located today in the Spanish province of Soria.

[78] Frontinus 4,1,1.

[79] Michael Crawford, Die Römische Republik, Munich, 1994, p. 36-38.

[80] At the time of the Republic, such a bodyguard - consisting of slaves, freed slaves, and clients - often also had to guarantee their patron's safety in the city of Rome, or was a means of implementing personal and political goals (cf. Sall. Cat. 50). Juvenal, for example, wrote that a large number of escorts and purple would indicate those whom thugs should avoid by night. Ammianus (14,6,16) describes the troops among which members of the upper classes move around in the city.

[81] Metellus' twenty-year-old son served in his father's escort in Numidia (Sall. bell. Iug. 64,4).

[82] Rohrschneider, I.c., p. 479 note 56.

[83] There was no military or key personnel training (at least in today's sense) in the Roman army of the Republic. The commanders were thus 'amateurs' who had to learn the most important skills, such as leadership, planning, and tactics by themselves. There was also only a limited amount of specialised literature, which, in antiquity anyway, served more as a reflection of an ideal rather than as an astute description of reality. Politics and the military, however, followed the same tracks. Military training took place by accompanying and observing an experienced officer, a relative, a friendly aristocrat, or a patronus. This explains the importance of the tight circle around the commander (cf. Kate Gilliver, Auf dem Weg zum Imperium - Eine Geschichte der römischen Armee, Stuttgart, 2003, p. 9-11;16-17). Practical skills, such as weapons handling, were a given and had to be learned privately. Only in the days of the Empire and the concomitant, increasing challenges (defence of the Empire in the east and north) did a type of officer career develop, which produced promotions on the basis of merit and thus by the emperor, which were therefore, more or less, independent of the person's status. An example could be seen the career of Maximus Thrax, who entered the armed forces at a young age, and, given his physical strength and military skills, had a glittering career, which would eventually take him to the imperial throne. (HA Max. duo 2). cf. Horsmann, I.c., p. 49-53.

[84] This, in turn, was decided by the number of clients.

[85] Frontinus 7,5: C. Marius Teutono provocanti eum et postulanti, ut prodiret, respondit, si cupidus mortis esset, laqueo posse eum vitam finire: cum deinde instaret, gladiatorem contemptae staturae et prope exactae aetatis obiecit ei dixitque, si eum superasset, cum victore congressurum.

[86] Valerius Maximus, for example, describes that, following the defeat at Cannae, slaves were taken on by the Roman armies as volunteers (Liv. 22,57,9-12; Val. Max. 7,6,1). In addition, a commission was tasked with buying 24,000 slaves for such a purpose.

[87] cf. Sall. bell. Iug. 84,2-4 and 86,2-3 regarding measures taken by Marius to expand the legions.

[88] Marius had a gladiator whom he owned and whose skills he valued, whom he had observed closely during his active career and wanted close to him even at an advanced age.

[89] Plut. Cic. 16,1-2. Plutarch (Cic. 29) even writes that Clodius himself served as Cicero's bodyguard.

[90] Cass. Dio 39,7,2 and 39,8,1.

[91] cf. Kaser, I.c., p. 298-301.

[92] They were different from the other troops in their personal weapons. Flavius Josephus, for example, describes foot soldiers (Ios. bell. Iud. 3,5,5) who had been chosen to protect the commander.

[93] This means that the legionaries were economically dependent on their commander, who had to safeguard their rights and privileges, as well as their upkeep after their active service.

[94] Appian's report on the time immediately following Caesar's assassination. His veterans were either in the city, or had, although they had already received land, returned to Rome to escort him (App. civ. 2,119). This bespeaks close clientelism.

[95] App. bell. civ. 3,67.

[96] Especially Caesar employed battle-hardened veterans as elite forces (Caesar bell. civ. 3,88,5 und 3,91,1). Appian reports on bodyguards whom Caesar dispensed with (App. bell. civ. 2,107,444), Mark Anthony and his brother, however, increasingly relied on (App. bell. civ. 5,19,77). Before his war against Ariovistus, Caesar thus stressed that, should the troops refuse to follow him, he would meet the enemy with his 10th legion only, as he trusted them, as they were his cohorts praetoria (Caes. gall. 1,42. cf. Gerold Walsler, *Bellum Helveticum. Studien zum Beginn der caesarischen Eroberung von Gallien*, Stuttgart, 1998, p.56). Just as Caesar thought that the legionaries of the 10th legion were closest to him, Scipio Aemilianus could expect unconditional loyalty and commitment from troops with a close relationship to their patron. After Caesar, Marcus Antonius and Octavian also relied on such Praetorian Cohorts, for example in the battle of the Forum Gallorum in 43 BC.

[97] Only in Rome did Caesar release the Praetorian Cohorts, which had been by his side since the war, from service (App. civ. 2,107).

[98] Guard training was better than that of the legions, as they had more time and better infrastructure available in Rome. The exercises formed a link with the traditions of the Republic and created a special esprit de corps, which, in turn, produced a close, personal link to the emperor, who visited Praetorian training on their campus. (Le Bohec, *l.c.*, p. 127).

[99] An example was the naumachia on the Fucine Lake, organised by Emperor Claudius. This was a mock sea battle in which ships with 19,000 men - all of the convicted criminals - had to fight each other (on the sentencing of criminals ad gladium cf. Christoph Ebner, 'Die Konzeption der Arenastrafen im römischen Strafrecht', in *ZRG-RA*, 129/2012, p. 257-259). As there was a possibility that such a number of criminals would stage a violent attempt at escape, the Praetorian Guard secured access to the lake (Tac. ann. 12,57).

[100] It was therefore possible for him to stage fights for entertainment purposes or as a reward at any time. The presence of gladiators in camps was therefore normal.

[101] Tac. ann. 1,22: Et Vibulenus quidam gregarius miles, ante tribunal Blaesi adlevatus circumstantium umeris, apud turbatos et quid pararet intentos 'vos quidem' inquit 'his innocentibus et miserrimis lucem et spiritum reddidistis: sed quis fratri meo vitam, quis fratrem mihi reddit? quem missum ad vos a Germanico exercitu de communibus commodis nocte proxima iugulavit per gladiatores suos, quos in exitium militum habet atque armat. Translation based on: Erich Heller, ed., P.Cornelius Tacitus – *Annalen*, Mannheim, 2010, p. 43-44: "In front of Blaesus' tribunal, a certain Vibulenus, a common soldier, had himself lifted on the shoulders of the bystanders and called out to the excited comrades who were watching him intently: "You may have returned light and air to these poor men – but, who returns life to my brother, who returns my brother to me? Him, who had been sent to you from the German army because of our common interests, he had executed by his gladiators last night, whom he keeps and arms for the destruction of his soldiers."

[102] Even if the soldier's remarks quoted by Tacitus are "malicious". cf. Heller, *l.c.*, p. 825 Anm.65.

[103] Tac. hist. 3,57,2.

[104] Caesar's murderers had also surrounded themselves with bodyguards made up of gladiators, under whose protection they moved around the city (App. civ. 2,120).

[105] Emperor Nero is said to have been protected by soldiers and numerous gladiators during his nightly forays into the city (Suet. Nero 26). They were under orders to remain in the background and ignore minor disputes, which the emperor actively sought. As soon as those attacked and insulted began to defend themselves vigorously, however, they had to appear and come to the aid of the emperor (Tac. ann.13,25).

[106] CTh. 15,12,3: Si quos e gladiatorio ludo ad servitia senatoria transisse constabit, eos in extremas solitudines amandari decernimus. "If somebody is caught changing form a gladiator school into a senator's service, we will decide to have him banned into the most remote solitude."