

# SPARTACUS IMPERATOR



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 **HEXASIM**



# RULES OF PLAY

SPARTACUS IMPERATOR simulates the Servile Wars, which occurred in Italy and Sicily in the second and first centuries before our era. A player represents the rebels and controls the revolting slaves, the other player commands the armies of Rome.

If you have questions about the rules, we recommend you read them in parallel with the example of play.

## 0 ~ THE COMPONENTS

### 0.1 – The game board

The game board is reversible depending on whether the scenarios that you play are on the map of Italy (*Italia*) or Greater Greece (*Magna Græcia*) including Sicily and southern Italy.



Each map is composed of:

- Mountain zones (maroon marble),
- Plains zones (gray marble),
- Cities (red square) and,
- Sea zones (blue zone).

Each map also has a turn record, below the red Roman standard, recording the year and Season being played.

Two columns of **Action Points**, one per side, are used to record the number of **Action Points** remaining for each leader. (see 2.1)

On the *Magna Græcia* map, certain zones have ports (anchor) and the cities have a defensive value of I to IV.



### 0.2 – The units

There are 3 types of units: *leaders, military units and markers*.

#### 0.2.1 – The leaders

A leader unit represents an officer without troops.



**Tactical Rating:** (shown by one, two or no dice on the counter):  
(This represents the ability of a leader to direct his men in battle)

In the game it indicates the number of dice that can be rerolled by the leader in a combat.

**Strategic Rating:** (representing the command capacity of a general)  
This indicates the maximum number of units that can be commanded by this leader.

The **edging colour** shows the scenario in which the leader participates.

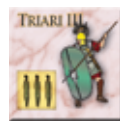
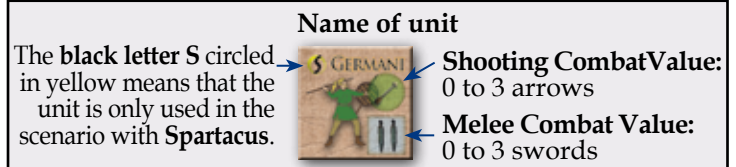


Each leader also has a marker without a rating but with his name, this is his **Action Points** marker. It records the number of **Action Points** of that leader remaining for that Season. It is placed on the map, in the relevant **Action Points** column.

#### 0.2.2 – Military units

A military unit represents a unit of 500 to 2,000 foot or 500 to 1,000 cavalrymen. In the following rules, the terms military unit and unit mean the same thing.

An army is composed of one or more units with or without a leader.



The majority of units have a coloured square around their Melee Value.

These show that in a full battle, the unit with the **blue square** is placed in the first line if the player is using the "Screening" tactic or if it has a **yellow square** when being used with the

"Frontal Attack" tactic (see 3.3).

#### The Loss steps

A unit has 2 loss steps.

When it suffers 1 loss, it becomes **Out of Action**. It can no longer inflict damage. However, it moves normally.

If it suffers a further 1 loss, it is **eliminated**.

If the player spends 1 Point of plunder, a **Out of Action** unit once again becomes **Ready for Combat**.

#### Face Front-Back

The units have a visible, front, side (a silhouette with arrows or a sword) and a hidden anonymous, back, side:



Hands with broken chains  
For the Rebels



Imperial eagle  
For the Romans

The rebel units are placed with their hidden side uppermost on the army sheets or on the map board. The Rebel Player may freely look at the front of the units but the Roman Player may not.

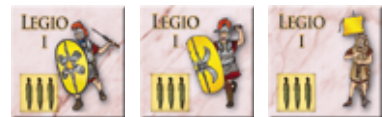
The hidden face of the Roman units is not used in the basic rules but in an optional rule (see 5.7).

#### The Roman military units

A marbled pink Roman unit represents a **unit of legionaries**: *Legio, Hastati, Triarii or Velites*.

A legion is composed of the 3 units carrying the same Roman numeral. These will differ depending on the period.

that is 3 Legio



that is 1 Hastati,  
1 Triarii,  
1 Velites.

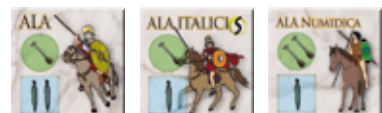


A marbled grey Roman unit represents a **unit of auxiliaries**: *Milites, Cohortes, Ala, Sagittifer, Funditores*.

Milites,  
Sagittifer,  
Cohortes,  
Funditores



Ala  
(cavalry)



### 0.2.3 - The markers

The markers are neither leaders nor units.



*Alea:*  
Represents a dice that may be re-rolled by a leader in combat.



It is reversed (on the ... *Jacta Est* side) once used.



*Tempus Anni* ("Time of the year"):  
Indicates the current Season. It is placed in the corresponding box on the game board.



*Anno* ("Year"):  
Shows the current year. It is placed in the corresponding box on the game board.



*Classis (Fleet):*  
Shows the side that controls a sea-zone.



*Coins (Plunder Point):*  
The number of coins on the front of the counter gives the number of points of plunder.

The Plunder Points are gained by *Ravage* (see 2.4.1) in a zone or following a victorious battle (see 3.5.2).

They permit the rebel player only to benefit from a bonus to the recruitment dice and/or to choose the troops recruited.

They permit both sides to recover *Out of Action* units.



*Ravage:*  
Shows a zone ravaged by a rebel army.



*Vae Victis:*  
Indicates *Out of Action* units on the map.



*Battle:*  
Indicates a combat zone.



*Memento Mori:*  
Used to record the losses of each side during a battle.

## 0.3 - The playing cards

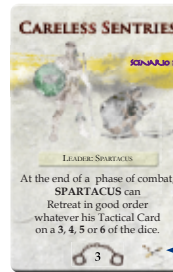
The game has 40 playing cards.

### 0.3.1 - The stratagem cards



Each side has 5 **stratagem** cards per scenario, identifiable by a stripe in yellow (scenario 1), blue (scenario 2), or red (scenario 3).

The back shows which side uses the card.

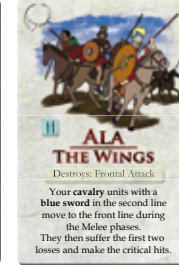


A **Stratagem** card is a special case, rather like a joker that is played by spending an **Action Point** (see 2.3.3).

You then follow the rule or event noted on the card.

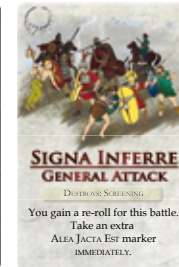
A Combat Stratagem card is shown by a sword in the bottom left corner.

### 0.3.2 - The Tactical Cards



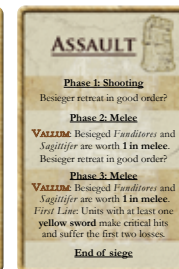
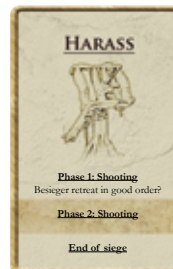
During a battle, each player secretly chooses a **tactical** card from the 4 that he has.

The card shows which units may be placed in the first line (see 3.3).



It also states which enemy **tactic** is "destroyed" (see Pursuit Table 3.5) in the event of victory.

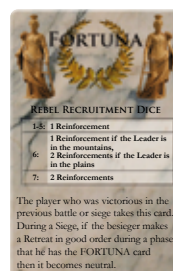
### 0.3.3 - The Siege Card



During a siege, the attacker takes the siege card and chooses the tactic that he wishes to use:

- *Harass*
- *or Assault*

### 0.3.4 - The FORTUNA Card



This card is allotted to the player whose army won the previous battle.

It gives a die-roll bonus and a rebel recruitment bonus.

The **FORTUNA** card is neutral (it belongs to neither player) at the beginning of the game or after a **Retreat in Good Order** by the besieger (see 4.2).

## 0.4 - The play aids

- A Battle play aid
- On the front, "battlefield" where the two armies face each other (see 3.).
- On the back, "siege" with a fortress on which is a "Fossa" (ditch) (see 4.).
- A description of each scenario.
- 3 army sheets front-back where the players place the commanded units in the box of the respective leader.

## 0.5 - The pool

You will need a bowl (or other receptacle...) into which are placed the Rebel units according to the scenario instructions. When the player recruits a unit he randomly draws them from this bowl (see 2.4.2).



# 1 ~ THE GAME SEQUENCE

SPARTACUS IMPERATOR moves through a series of game turns each representing one of the 4 Seasons.

Each Season has 3 to 5 Segments (5 in Spring [Ver], 4 in Summer [Aestas] and in Autumn [Autumnus], 3 in Winter [Hiems]).

## Segment 1: Reconstruction: in Spring [Ver] ONLY

- Throw a dice for each zone with a **Ravage** marker: on a score 4 or greater, remove the **Ravage** marker.
- All the **Out of Action** Roman units in **Roma** are changed to **Ready for Combat**.
- Rebel units **eliminated** (which were placed in the **Elysii Campi** box) in the previous year may now be recruited again, place them in the pool.

## Segment 2: Place Fleets EXCEPT in Winter [Hiems]

- The Roman fleet (**Classis Romana**) is placed in one of the seas at the choice of the Roman Player. The rebel player may then place the Cilician Pirates fleet (**Classis Piratarum**) where he wishes EXCEPT in the sea with the Roman Fleet.
- Each scenario describes how to use the fleets.

## Segment 3: Place reinforcements

According to the information given on the scenario notes

- Remove from play the Roman leaders sacked.
- Place the reinforcements.

## Segment 4: Alternating Activation Phase

- At the beginning of the Segment each leader receives **Action Points** the number of which depends on the Season (see 2.1). The **Action Points** marker of each leader is placed on the **Action Points** column.

Whenever an **Action Point** is used by a leader, his marker is moved down one box.

- An operation consists of an action **ONLY** with one leader (UNLESS otherwise stated on the **Stratagem** Cards).
- The Rebel player always takes **first action** of each Season.
- Players alternate operations until the completion of their respective actions.
- A leader who has no more **Action Points** can do nothing further that turn.
- **Action Points** cannot be stored from one Season to another. Unused points are lost.

## Segment 5: End of the turn

- The **Tempus Anni** marker is advanced by one Season.
- At the end of winter, advance the **Anno** marker.

# 2 ~ ACTIONS

## 2.1 - Distribution of Action Points

Each Season gives a number of **Action Points** per leader, whatever their strategic and tactical ratings:

- 4 in Spring [Ver],
- 3 in Summer [Aestas],
- 3 in Autumn [Autumnus]
- and 1 only in Winter [Hiems].

This number is recorded in Roman numerals on the box of each Season on the game board.

## 2.2 - The Leaders and units that activate

A leader activates only with the units that he commands based on his Strategic Rating.

### A. Units in command:

The Strategic Rating of the leader shows the maximum number of units that he can command.

(Example: 8 units maximum for the Rebel leader Crixus)

- They move with their leader.
- They can be placed in the front line for combat.
- They are kept on the player's Army Sheet, beside their leader (face down for the rebels).

### B. Units not in command:

- They cannot move.
- They participate in battles but may not be in the front line.
- Without a leader, they are placed on the map (face down for the rebels).
- An **Out of Action** unit, placed on the map without leader, must have a **Vae Victis** marker placed on it. If there are several in the same zone, they should be stacked under the same marker.

## 2.3 - Actions common to both sides

### 2.3.1 - Action: Do nothing

The leader passes his turn and spends **1 Action Point**.

### 2.3.2 - Action: Move an army

#### 2.3.2.1 - Moving

For 1 **Action Point**, a leader may move with a number of units equal to or less than his Strategic Rating. Movement occurs from a zone or a city to an adjacent zone or city. Terrain (plains or mountain) has no influence on movement.

For Example, move from Roma to Latium or from Sabinia to Umbria.

Similarly, it is not possible to move from Roma to Campania without first passing through Latium.

Clarification: it is impossible to move directly from Salento to Lucania. It is necessary to go via Apulia.

Units may not be left voluntarily without a leader.

**Exception: a leader may leave up to 3 units in a city on the Magna Græcia map.**

Units may find themselves without a leader, if the latter is sacked (for the Romans) or dies following a stratagem.

Un-commanded units can be collected by a leader of their side, without exceeding his Strategic Rating. He can exchange these for units he commands without leaving in the zone more units than were there originally.

Units cannot be exchanged between 2 leaders (there were too many rivalries and dissensions between leaders!).

#### 2.3.2.2 - Restrictions

Having several leaders of the same side in the same zone is prohibited.

**Exception: in Roma**, the Roman player has no limit of leaders present, but they still cannot exchange units.

**Exception: sometimes because of a retreat**, two leaders of the same side are in the same zone. Their next action must be to leave. If they are attacked, this is done separately (exchanges of units between leaders remains impossible) and the attacking leader chooses which leader defends first.

Attention, for each scenario, there are specific restrictions.



### 2.3.3 - Action: Play a Stratagem Card

A leader spends 1 **Action Point** to play a **Stratagem** card. A Stratagem card can only be played in the player's turn; however, a **combat Stratagem** can be played in a battle even if this has been started by the other side.

Each **Stratagem** Card may be used ONCE ONLY per scenario. After use, it is discarded.

It only applies to units commanded by the leader who uses it.

If a leader is named in the text of the Stratagem card, only he may benefit.

Certain Stratagems are only playable starting at certain dates.

Sometimes, a player may be able to spend 2 **Action Points** consecutively because a Stratagem card improves the current action.

*For Example during a combat:* 1 point to move his army and 1 point to play the Stratagem card in combat. For the same reason, an attacked leader can use a combat Stratagem card, and then carry out his operation, if he has an action point remaining of course.

## 2.4 - Specific actions

### 2.4.1 - Rebel Action: Ravaging



*Ravaging a zone and pillaging the land and ransoming the inhabitants allow you to collect plunder to equip your troops.*

A Rebel leader spends 1 **Action Point** and may ravage the zone he occupies (*with the exception of cities and Vesuvius Mons*). A **Ravage** marker is then placed in the zone.

- In Mountain, the leader automatically gets 1 **Plunder Point**.
- In Plains, the player rolls a dice. On a score of 6, the leader gets 2 **Plunder Points**, otherwise one only. (See table opposite)
- Place the Plunder marker on the Army Sheet in the box of the leader ravaging.
- A zone cannot be ravaged again if it has a **Ravage** marker in it.
- The **Ravage** marker is only removed in Spring [Ver] following a die roll of 4 or more.

### 2.4.2 - Rebel Action: Recruiting

#### 2.4.2.1 Recruitment

A Rebel leader spends 1 **Action Point** to recruit in the zone he occupies. To do this, he rolls a dice and adds the following modifiers:

- +1 is added to the dice if the Rebels have the **FORTUNA** card.
- After rolling the dice, the leader may spend Plunder Points if he has them. Each **Plunder Point** gives a bonus of +1 to the score.

In Plains, if the modified score is 6 or +, the leader recruits 2 units, otherwise 1.

In Mountain, if the modified score is 7 or +, the leader recruits 2 units, otherwise 1. (See table opposite)

The Rebel player recruits his units randomly by drawing them from the pool. If he pays 1 **Plunder Point** per unit, he may choose from the pool instead of drawing randomly. The player must announce his decision **BEFORE** drawing.

A Rebel leader may recruit more units than his Strategic Rating and choose the units to keep (this reflects the better equipping of his men). He returns the excess units to the pool.

A recruited unit is placed on the Army Sheet with the leader who recruited him. Only the Rebel player may look at it before placing it face down.

#### 2.4.2.2 Limitations

The Rebel leader cannot recruit if he is in a zone with a **Ravage** marker or on **Vesuvius Mons** or in a city.

An *eliminated* unit can only be recruited again starting the Spring [Ver] of the following year.

### RAVAGING & RECRUITING

Leader in Plains	Leader in Mountain	Punder Point or reinforcement gained
Result from 1 to 5	Result from 1 to 6	1
Result of 6+	Result of 7+	2

For Example, 5 on the dice gives 1 reinforcement OR 1 **Plunder Point** depending on the action chosen.

If the Rebel army recruits in Plains and has the **FORTUNA** card, it gets 2 reinforcements (5+1=6).

### 2.4.3 - Roman Action: Restore

For 1 **Action Point**, a Roman leader in a zone without a **Ravage** marker or a city may return to *Ready for Combat* one of his *Out of Action* units.

*Clarification: the Roman player does not recruit (all his reinforcements are automatic or by stratagem).*

## 2.5 - Free actions

### 2.5.1 - Actions involving Plunder Points



*In Antiquity, the soldier was motivated above all by plunder, especially where they did not receive a wage like the rebels!*

The **Plunder Points** are gained by a **Ravage** action (see 2.4.1) or a military victory (see 3.5.2).

Each Rebel leader or Roman may use his plunder for his own army *only*.

Each time a leader receives **Plunder Points**, he can immediately spend them to return to *Ready for Combat* his *Out of Action* units and without spending 1 **Action Point**. After all this, there may remain a maximum of 3 **Plunder Points** for a Rebel leader or 0 **Plunder Point** for a Roman leader. The surplus is offered to the gods!

A Roman leader who gains plunder must use it *immediately*. (He renders to Caesar...).

A Rebel leader, may retain up to 3 **Plunder Points**, place the *Plunder* marker on the Army Sheet.

During a Recruitment action (see 2.4.2.1), the Rebel player may spend plunder to augment the number of recruited units and / or to choose them.

### 2.5.2 - Retreat or disengage

Retreat movement is obligatory movement, and is therefore a free action (see 3.5.3).

When the besieger disengages from a **siege** to return to his starting zone, this is a free action (see 4. the siege rules).

#### EXAMPLE

##### The first turn of Scenario 1 Spartacus Imperator

We are in Spring [Ver], with 4 **Action Points** per Leader.

**Spartacus** goes from **Vesuvius Mons** to **Campania**. In addition to an **Action Point**, he uses the **Stratagem** card "Vines of Vesuvius Mons", he thus exceptionally uses 2 **Action Points** in the same operation.

This action starts a combat which the praetor **Glaber** loses. As a result, he retreats for 0 **Action Point** into **Latium**.

1<sup>st</sup> Operation for **Glaber**: he uses 1 **Action Point** to return to *Ready for Combat* a unit that had become *Out of Action* during the previous battle.

Then **Spartacus** recruits in **Campania** for 1 **Action Point**.

**Glaber** decides to move to **Roma**. 1 **Action Point** used.

Finally, with his **Action Point**, **Spartacus** *ravages* **Campania**.

There remain 2 **Action Points** for **Glaber** who decides not to do anything more.

End of the Season: move the Season Marker (*Tempus Anni*) to Summer [*Aestas*].

## 3 ~ COMBAT

Combat is initiated with the action: Move an Army. Thus, the combat and its phases do not cost a further **Action Point**.

When opposing armies (with or without leaders) are in the same zone, combat is *obligatory*.

If two leaders of the same side are in the same zone and are attacked, they resolve it separately (the exchange of units between the leaders is not possible) and the attacked player chose which leader will defend first.

### 3.1 – The course of a battle

A battle is composed of several segments.

#### Segment 0: Deployment

- Place the **Battle** marker on the map in the zone where the clash will occur.
- Take the play aid "Battlefield" and set up:
  - Each leader in his command box (with the helmet).
  - The units of each side in the second line [**Secunda Acies**].
  - The units that are already *Out of Action* in the **Vae Victis** box.
- The Rebel units are placed face down.
- Each player takes as many **Alea Jacta Est** markers (in his colour) as the **Tactical Rating** of his leader. They are placed with **Alea** side upwards in the boxes above **Tactikos**.
- Place a **Memento Mori** marker for each side in box 0. This allows the recording of losses during the course of the battle.

#### Segment 1 Simultaneously and secretly: Choose Tactic

- Each player *secretly* chooses a **Tactical** card (EXCEPT in the case of a Skirmish, see 3.2.1) which is placed face down on the **Tactikos** box.
- The **Tactical** Cards are revealed simultaneously.
- The player who chooses the **Tactical** card "**General Attack**" [**Signa inferre**] receives an extra **Alea Jacta Est** marker.
- The Rebel units are turned face up.

#### Segment 2: Battle array

In phases 1 to 3, announce, before throwing the dice, to which unit the roll relates.

The players roll their dice simultaneously to allow them to quickly make the re-rolls for leaders.

##### Phase 1 simultaneous: Shooting

- All the **Ready for Combat** units which have a Shooting Rating (symbolised by one or more arrows) may Shoot (see 3.4).
- Apply the results of this (see 3.4).
- At the end of this phase, a **Retreat in Good Order** can be chosen by a leader who has selected the **Tactical** card "**Screening**" [**Infestis Pilis**] (see 3.4.6).

##### Phase 2 simultaneous: Melee

- All of the in-command **Ready for Combat** units covered by the tactical card chosen by the player are placed in the front line [**Prima Acies**]. Move the corresponding units on the battle field.
- If the attacking leader cannot command all units, leave the un-commanded units in the second line [**Secunda Acies**].
- All of the **Ready for Combat** units with a melee rating (symbolised by one or more swords) may participate in the melee (see 3.4).
- The units in the front line may score **Critical hits** (see 3.4.1).
- Apply the results as they occur (see 3.4).
- At the end of this phase, a **Retreat in Good Order** can be chosen by a leader who has selected the **Tactical** card "**Screening**" [**Infestis Pilis**] (see 3.4.6).

##### Phase 3 simultaneous: General Melee

Same as phase 2

### Segment 3: Determination of victory

- To find out who has won a battle, the players compare losses since the beginning of the battle. (see 3.5).
- Then, there are different consequences for the victor (see 3.5.2) and the vanquished (see 3.5.3).
- Finally, the units are placed back on the game board or the army sheets (see 3.5.4).

### 3.2 – Specific cases in battles

#### 3.2.1 - Skirmish

If one of the two armies has 3 units or less, the battle is a Skirmish. There is no choice of a tactical card (segment 1 is ignored) nor are there critical hits or Retreat in Good Order.

**Clarification: if each army has at least 4 units even if some are Out of Action, it is not a Skirmish!**

#### 3.2.2 – Army without a leader

One or more un-commanded units may fight normally if attacked, they form a single army.

A defender without a leader cannot choose a Tactic; therefore there are no Critical hits or Retreat in Good Order for him.

On the other side, the attacking leader chooses his tactic (if the two armies have more than 3 units) and benefits from his bonus but may not destroy his opponent by his tactical choice (see 3.5.1).

### 3.3 – Tactical Cards

Each side secretly chooses a **Tactical** card, which will allow certain units to be placed in the front line.

Units in the front line may then score **Critical hits**, in **melee only**, but must suffer the **first two losses received during each Melee Phase**.

- Only in-command units may be placed in the front line and inflict **Critical hits**.
- To choose a tactical card, one must have at least 1 in-command unit which can go to the front line EXCEPT for General Attack where it is always possible.

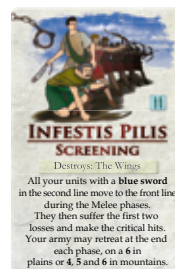


#### Wings [Ala]

The units of cavalry (*Ala*) are in the front line (while attacking from the flanks).

#### General Attack [Signa Inferre]

The player has an extra re-roll, he takes an extra **Alea Jacta Est** marker.

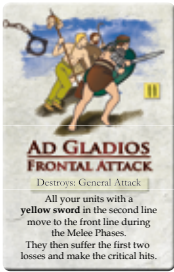


#### Screening [Infestis Pilis]

The units with a blue square under their swords (*Cohortes, Milites, Velites, Ala, Cilicius, Germani, Servi, Servuli, Syrii*) are placed in the front line (to harass the enemy with their javelins and pila).

The player may attempt a **Retreat in Good Order** at the end of each Shooting and Melee Phase.





### Frontal Attack [Ad Gladios]

The units with a yellow square under the swords (Legio, Hastati, Triarii, Daci, Galli, Gladiator, Thraces) are in the first line (to crush the enemy by blows of their swords and the bosses of their shields).

## 3.4 – Shooting and melee

During the Shooting and Melee phases, the players must follow these stages:

- The players roll a dice for each *Ready for Combat* unit with a Shooting or Melee Rating, whichever is the case.
- Units in the front line may score **Critical hits** (see 3.4.1) (Melee Phase only).
- Losses are calculated (see 3.4.1),
- Any re-rolls of the dice are made (see 3.4.2).
- Losses are then distributed (see 3.4.4) and recorded (see 3.4.5).

### 3.4.1 – Calculating losses

#### General rule

If the score of the dice is less than or equal to the Shooting Rating (phase 1) or Melee Rating (phase 2 & 3) of the unit, 1 loss is inflicted on the enemy. The player places a dice on the unit.

On the other hand, if the dice score is greater, there is no effect.

*Example: A Roman Funditores inflicts a loss in the Shooting Phase on 1, 2 or 3 on the dice. It cannot take part in Melee.*

*A Germani inflicts a loss in the Shooting Phase with 1 on the dice and on 1 or 2 in the Melee Phases.*

#### Critical hits

During melee only (phase 2 & 3), a unit in the front line inflicts 2 losses on a score equal to its Melee Rating. It inflicts 1 loss on scores less than its Rating.

*Example: A Gladiator (3 in Melee) inflicts losses in the Melee Phases on 1, 2 or 3 on the dice. If the Rebel Player chose "Frontal Attack", the Gladiator is placed in the front line and it inflicts ONE loss on 1 or 2 on the dice and TWO losses if it scores 3 on the dice.*

*A Germani is in the front line if its leader had chosen the "Screening" tactic, he inflicts ONE loss 1 on the dice and TWO losses, if he scores a 2 on the dice.*

### 3.4.2 – Re-rolls



During a Battle, each player may re-roll as many dice as he has *Alea (Jacta Est)* markers.

During the Shooting Phase or Melee Phase, he can roll again before the calculation of losses for his own units or those of his enemy.

It is not possible to re-roll a dice for a Retreat in Good Order.

For each dice re-rolled, an *Alea* marker ...is turned over to ...*Jacta Est*.

### 3.4.3 – The Effects of losses

A unit may suffer two losses.

At the first loss, they are treated as *Out of Action* (or *Vae Victis*) and cannot fight further. They are placed in the *Vae Victis* section of the "Battlefield" play aid.

At the second loss, the unit is eliminated. It is placed in the *Elysii Campi* box of the "Battlefield" play aid.

### 3.4.4 – Distribution of losses

The losses are distributed as decided by the player who suffers them respecting the two following imperatives:

- Initially, the units in the front line must suffer the first two losses received in each Melee Phase.
- Then, Roman blood must be saved. This is why the auxiliaries must be destroyed first then the *Velites* and finally the heavy legionaries (*Legio, Hastati and Triarii*). You must however respect the minima of losses imposed by the **tactical** choices.

*Example: The Rebel player chooses **Tactical** card "Frontal Attack". He suffers 1 loss during the Shooting Phase, he decides to apply it to a Funditores (a wise choice as the latter does not have a Melee Rating).*

*During the Melee Phase, he suffers 3 losses. He is obliged to attribute the 2 losses to a unit in the front line which is eliminated or to two units in the front line which are both rendered Out of Action. For the third loss, he may pick a unit of his choice.*

It is always possible to inflict losses on the same unit, and to sacrifice it, rather than make two units *Out of Action*.

The losses during a combat are simultaneous and take effect at the end of each phase then in process (Shooting, Melee).

### 3.4.5 – Calculating losses



In each Shooting and Melee Phase, the losses suffered by each side are recorded by the *Memento Mori* marker. This is advanced on the scale – running from 0 to 9.

If one side suffers more than 9 losses, the marker is turned to its +10 side.

### 3.4.6 – Retreat in Good Order

At the end phases 1 to 3, the player who chose the **Tactical** card "Screening" may attempt to make a *Retreat in Good Order*.

To do this, he rolls a dice.

With a score of 6 if the battle is fought on Plains and 4, 5 or 6 in Mountain, then the retreat succeeded. He is **declared vanquished**, but no destruction is possible, the leader keeps his units. They are put back on the Army Sheet depending on their status: *Ready for Combat* or *Out of Action*. The leader retreats into an adjacent zone according to the rules. (See 3.5.3)

In the case of a failure to *Retreat in Good Order*, the battle runs its course.

This option is free; the player may attempt another *Retreat in Good Order* during the next phase.

## 3.5 – The Final Results

### 3.5.1 – The end of the battle

A battle ends when:

- One of the armies suffers a *Retreat in Good Order* (see 3.4.6).
- One of the armies is destroyed (all its units are in the *Elysii Campi* box).
- 3 phases have been played.

If the 2 armies have non *eliminated* units after the 3 phases of combat, that which suffered the greater number of losses is declared vanquished.

**Remember:** to eliminate a unit, it must suffer 2 losses. One side may have, for example, 2 units eliminated (4 losses) and win against an opponent who has 5 units *Out of Action* (which equals 5 losses).

In the case of an equality of losses, there is a **Statu Quo** (see 2.5.4).

**EXCEPT Statu Quo or Skirmish**, check the **Pursuit Table** below and cross reference the tactics chosen by the two sides to find what fate is suffered by the vanquished army.

PURSUIT TABLE

Tactics of the winner	Tactics of the loser			
	Frontal	General	Screening	Wings
Frontal	R	AD	R	R
General	R	R	AD	R
Screening	R	R	SQ	AD
Wings	AD	R	R	R

AD: The vanquished army is entirely destroyed.

R: The vanquished army retreats.

SQ: Statu Quo (see 2.5.4).

### 3.5.2 – The Results for the Victor

- The victor takes (or keeps) the **FORTUNA** card.
- He takes possession of the plunder of the vanquished.
- He receives 1 **Plunder Point** for each enemy unit *eliminated* during battle.
- The army of the victor may spend **Plunder Points** to refresh his *Out of Action* units. (see 2.5.1)

### 3.5.3 – The Results for the Vanquished

- If all his units are destroyed, a leader is killed. He is removed from play.
- If the vanquished leader has any troops, they retreat into an adjacent zone.
- It is not possible to retreat into a zone occupied by the enemy or occupied by the enemy just before the battle or by crossing a sea.
- If the attacker is vanquished, he returns to the zone he occupied before the attack.
- If there is no other choice, the vanquished may retreat into zone with a friendly army (without being able to exchange units between them).
- If the vanquished cannot retreat, all his units are *eliminated* and these new losses are added to the Plunder calculation, in addition to *eliminated* units during the battle.

### 3.5.4 – Statu Quo

- Neither player gets a **Plunder Point**.
- The attacker moves back its original zone.
- The **FORTUNA** card does not change sides.
- If a Rebel army has previously acquired **Plunder Points**, they can be spent to return to *Ready for Combat* status the *Out of Action* units.

### 3.5.5 – Reposition of units

At the end of battle, reposition the units.

- The *eliminated* units on the **Elysii Campi** box on the map.
- The undamaged units are returned to the Army Sheet.
- The *Out of Action* units are placed in the *Vae Victis* box on the Army Sheet.
- If a unit does not have a leader, place it on the map. If it is *Out of Action*, place it under a *Vae Victis* marker of its side.
- Rebel units are placed face-down.
- The *Battle* marker is repositioned by the victorious leader.

## 4 ~ THE POLIORCETIC ART

(or the art of Capturing Cities...)

These rules are not used in scenario I SPARTACUS IMPERATOR.

### 4.1 – Occupation of cities



- A city without an army is Roman.
- A city without an army is captured without combat by a Rebel leader who goes there.
- *Exception*, a leader has the ability to leave up to 3 units in a city that he controls.
- A leader who arrives in a city may incorporate the units left as a garrison in his own army. If there are more units than his Strategic Rating, the excess units of his choice are *eliminated* and go to the **Elysii Campi** box on the game board.

• If the city is occupied by an enemy army, a leader can only take it by siege. (see 4.2).

### 4.2 – Sieges

A siege consists of several segments.

#### Segment 0: Declaration of siege

A leader spends 1 **Action Point** to move to the city and attack it.

#### Segment 0 bis: Besieged Sortie

The besieged can decide to make a sortie by spending 1 **Action Point**. The combat proceeds like a combat on the battle field (see 3) EXCEPT that the besieged may attempt a **Retreat in Good Order** in phases 1 to 3 whatever his tactical choice and even if the battle is a Skirmish (see 3.2.1). He succeeds his **Retreat in Good Order** on a 4, 5 or 6 on the dice.

In the case of the total destruction of the besieged, the besieger takes the city and gets the benefits of the victor in a battle (see 3.5.2).

If the besieged survive, they **must** return to the city. The besieger is replaced in the original zone. The sortie action is completed as in a siege.

The besieger may attempt a new siege in his next operation.

#### Segment 1: Deployment

- Take the "Siege" play aid and place on it:
  - Each leader in his command box (with the helmet).
  - The units of the besieger in the **Fossa** zone.
  - The units of the besieged in the **Castrum** zone.
  - Units already *Out of Action* in the *Vae Victis* box.

The Rebel units are placed face down.

- Each player may take *Alea Jacta Est* markers (in his colour) equal to the **Tactical** Rating of its leader. They are placed on *Alea* in the boxes next to the leader.
- The besieged player also receives *Alea Jacta Est* markers (in the neutral colour (blue)) equal to the Defence Rating of the city. The *Alea Jacta Est* markers are discarded after each siege and redrawn for each new siege.

*For Example, for a city at III like Murgantia, take 3 Alea jacta Est markers.*

- The besieger chooses one side of the Poliorcetic **Tactical** card: *Harass* or *Assault*, then reveals it and places it in the Tactikos box.
- The Rebel units are turned face-up.

#### Segment 2 : Siege

The conduct of Segment 2 differs according to the tactic chosen by the besieger: *Harass* or *Assault*.

The losses during a siege are not recorded.



**Harass:****Phase 1 Simultaneous: Shooting**

- All the *Ready for Combat* units that have a Shooting Rating may Shoot (see 3.4).
- After shooting, a *Retreat in Good Order* is possible for the besieger which succeeds automatically.

**Phase 2 Simultaneous: Shooting**

- All the *Ready for Combat* units that have a Shooting Rating may Shoot (see 3.4).

**Assault:****Phase 1 Simultaneous: Shooting**

- All the *Ready for Combat* units that have a Shooting Rating may Shoot (see 3.4).
- Apply the results as they occur.
- After shooting, a *Retreat in Good Order* is possible for the besieger which succeeds automatically.

**Phase 2 Simultaneous: Melee (on the ladders)**

- All the *Ready for Combat* units that have a Melee Rating may participate in a mêlée (see 3.4).
- Besieged *Funditores* and *Sagittifer* units have a Melee Rating of 1 and not of 0. Place them in the *Vallum* box.
- After the mêlée, a *Retreat in Good Order* is possible for the besieger which succeeds automatically.

**Phase 3 Simultaneous: Melee (on the walls)**

- Units with a yellow square under their swords (*Legio*, *Triarii*, *Hastati*, *Thraces*, *Galli*, *Daci*) are now in the front line. Place these units in the *Prima Acies* zone.
- All the *Ready for Combat* units that have a Melee Rating may participate in a melee (see 3.4).
- Besieged *Funditores* and *Sagittifer* units have a Melee Rating of 1 and not of 0 leave them in the *Vallum* box.

**Segment 3: Determination of victory**

To win a siege, all the besieged units must be destroyed. The enemy leader is then removed from play.

**The besieger wins**

The besieger takes the city and benefits from the results of the victor following a battle (see 3.5.2).

**The besieger loses**

If the besieged has at least one unit at the end of all the segments or if the besieger decides to retreat at the end of any phase, the besieger is vanquished.

In this situation,

**The besieger:**

- Retreats into his original zone.
- Loses the **FORTUNA** card, if he had it.
- Retains his **Plunder Points** and may spend them.

**Exception:** if the besieger makes a *Retreat in Good Order* during a segment and if he had the **FORTUNA** card, the latter becomes neutral until the next combat.

**The besieged:**

- Wins **Plunder Points** only if he has eliminated all besieger units. 1 **Plunder Point** per *eliminated* unit.

**5 ~ GETTING STARTED****5.1 - Read**

- After reading the rules, chose one of the 3 scenarios. They provide situations that are very different from each other. Scenario I with Spartacus is the simplest to grasp, scenario III is the longest to play.
- Before starting, we recommend that you read the play-aids and the cards of each side; that will prevent you falling into enemy stratagems too easily!

**5.2 - Choose a side**

If no-one agrees, it is the player that does not own the game that decides, this is a game of the rebellious!

**5.3 - The map, the play aids and the markers**

- Take the chosen scenario sheet.
- Place on the game board the markers:
  - *Tempus Anni* at Spring [Ver],
  - *Anno* on Anno I.
- The **FORTUNA** card is neutral.

**5.4 - The units**

Place the leaders and units as shown on the scenario sheets.


- The leaders in play are placed on the map.
- The **Action Points** markers of each leader are placed on box IV on the **Action Points** display.
- Units having a leader are placed on the Army Sheets on the space of the specific leader.
- The Rebel units are faced place down. Only the Rebel player may check their fronts. Units without a leader are placed directly on the map (face down for the Rebels).
- The remaining Rebel units are placed in the pool.

A legion is comprised of 3 pink-marbled units, differing between scenarios covering -107 and -104, after several bloody defeats, Marius reformed the Roman army to defeat the Cimbri and Teutons.

Scenario I with Spartacus occurs after the reform, a Marian legion is comprised of 3 *Legio* units.

Scenario III occurs before the reform, a legion has as follows: 1 *Velites* unit, 1 *Hastati* unit and 1 *Triarii* unit.

Scenario II is in the midst of the reform. The legions at the beginning are formed of 1 *Velites* unit, 1 *Hastati* unit and 1 *Triarii* unit, the reinforcement legions are comprised of 3 *Legio* units.

Regarding auxiliary units, only take the ones with an  for the SPARTACUS IMPERATOR scenario I. For scenarios 2 and 3, take those without the (s).

**5.5 - The Stratagem Cards**

Take your **Stratagem** cards. They are specified by each scenario. Read them well! They are invaluable assets.

**5.6 - Play!**

A game can be very quick if Fortune smiles on you. Rebellion often starts with a handful of men which if it is not nipped in the bud, may degenerate into a slave war. In case of a savage defeat, do not hesitate to start again and change sides!

**5.7 - Variations**

- The Roman player may play with his units face down.
- Place the auxiliary units in the pool. When the Roman player recovers an auxiliary unit (by stratagem or reinforcement), he draws the counter randomly from the pool.

You can play with one or two variations at the same time.

The map illustrates the Roman Empire's expansion into Italy. Key locations include ROMA, SABINIA, LATIUM, CORFINIUM, SAMNIUM, CAMPA, TYRRHENUM MARE, and HIRPINI. A red banner on the left contains a list of events: ANNO I, ANNO II, ANNO III, and ANNO IV. A small inset map shows the location of the game area within the Roman Empire. A small inset map shows the location of the game area within the Roman Empire.

1 **Rebel player** (he always goes first)  
Spartacus (1/4) moves from **Vesuvius Mons** to **Campania**.

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**Summer [Aestas] -73, there are 3 Action Points per Leader.**

Roman reinforcements in **Roma** (see scenario sheet).

**Glaber** is sacked; his troops are split between the two new Leaders: **Cossinius** and **Varinus**.

**Spartacus**, based in **Campania**, has 5 combat units with him. The Scenario special rules require the Rebel player to place **Oenomanos** and **Crixus** on the map, in zones adjacent to **Spartacus** and to give them 2 units each. There remains thus 1 unit with **Spartacus**.

The Rebel player chooses to place **Crixus** in **Samnium** and **Oenomanos** in **Hirpina**.

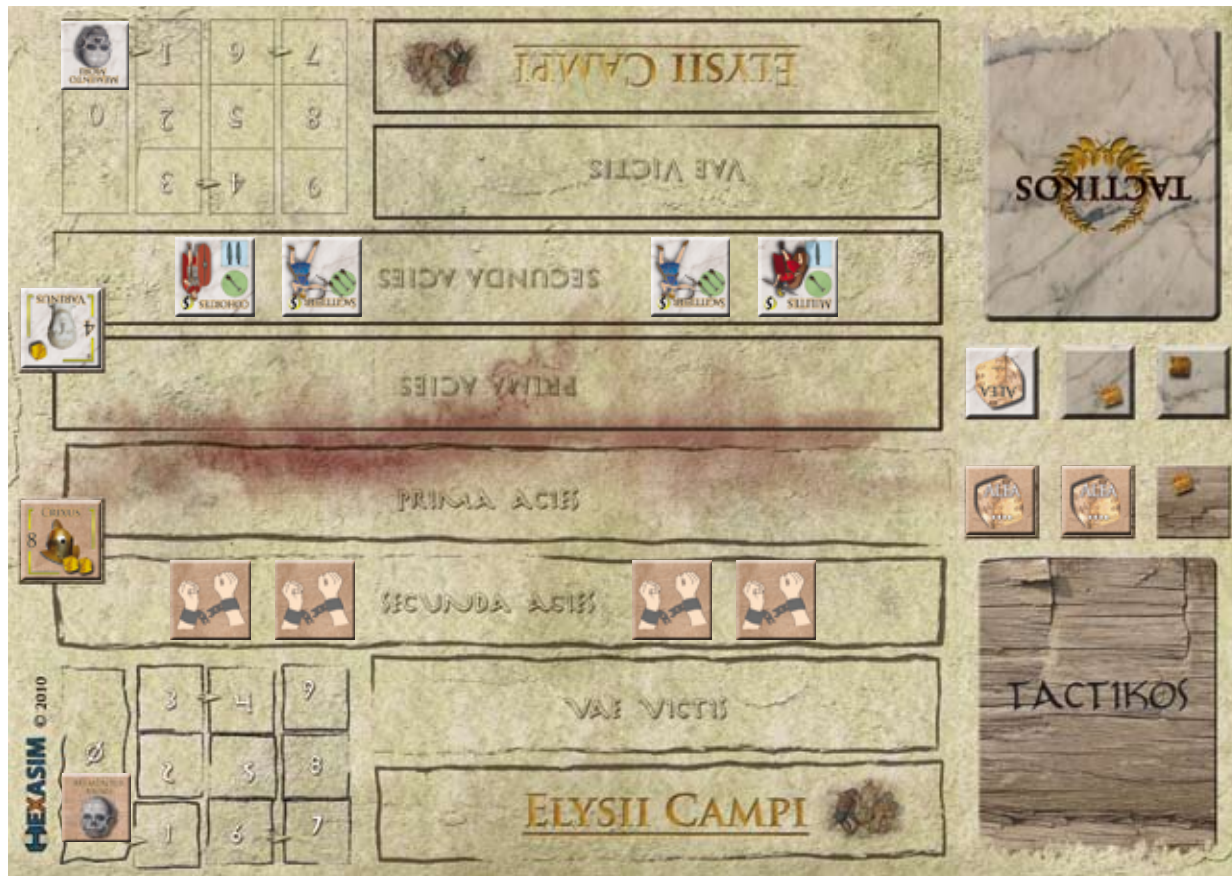


- 1 **Rebel player**  
**Crixus** (1/3) moves from **Samnium** to **Corfinium**.
- 2 **Roman player**  
**Cossinius** (1/3) moves from **Roma** to **Etruria**.
- 3 **Rebel player**  
**Oenomanos** (1/3) recruits. He scores 6 on the dice. He draws 2 Rebel units from the pool, which raises his army to 4 units. However, he is limited by his Strategic Rating (3), he thus returns to the pool the unit of his choice amidst the 4.
- 4 **Roman player**  
**Varinus** (1/3) moves from **Roma** to **Latium**.
- 5 **Rebel player**  
**Spartacus** (1/3) moves from **Campania** to **Lucania**.
- 6 **Roman player**  
**Varinus** (2/3) moves from **Latium** to **Samnium**.
- 7 **Rebel player**  
**Crixus** (2/3) recruits. He scores 5 on the dice. As the Rebel player possesses the **FORTUNA** card, he draws 2 Rebel units from the pool instead of the usual 1.
- 8 **Roman player**  
**Varinus** (3/3) moves from **Samnium** to **Corfinium**. This movement action causes combat....



## Varinus attacks Crixus

The combat is a major battle because there are more than 3 units for each side.



### Segment 0 Deployment

Placement of units and markers

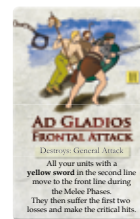
Face down for the units of the Rebel player

### Segment 1 Tactical choice



#### Varinus: *Screening*

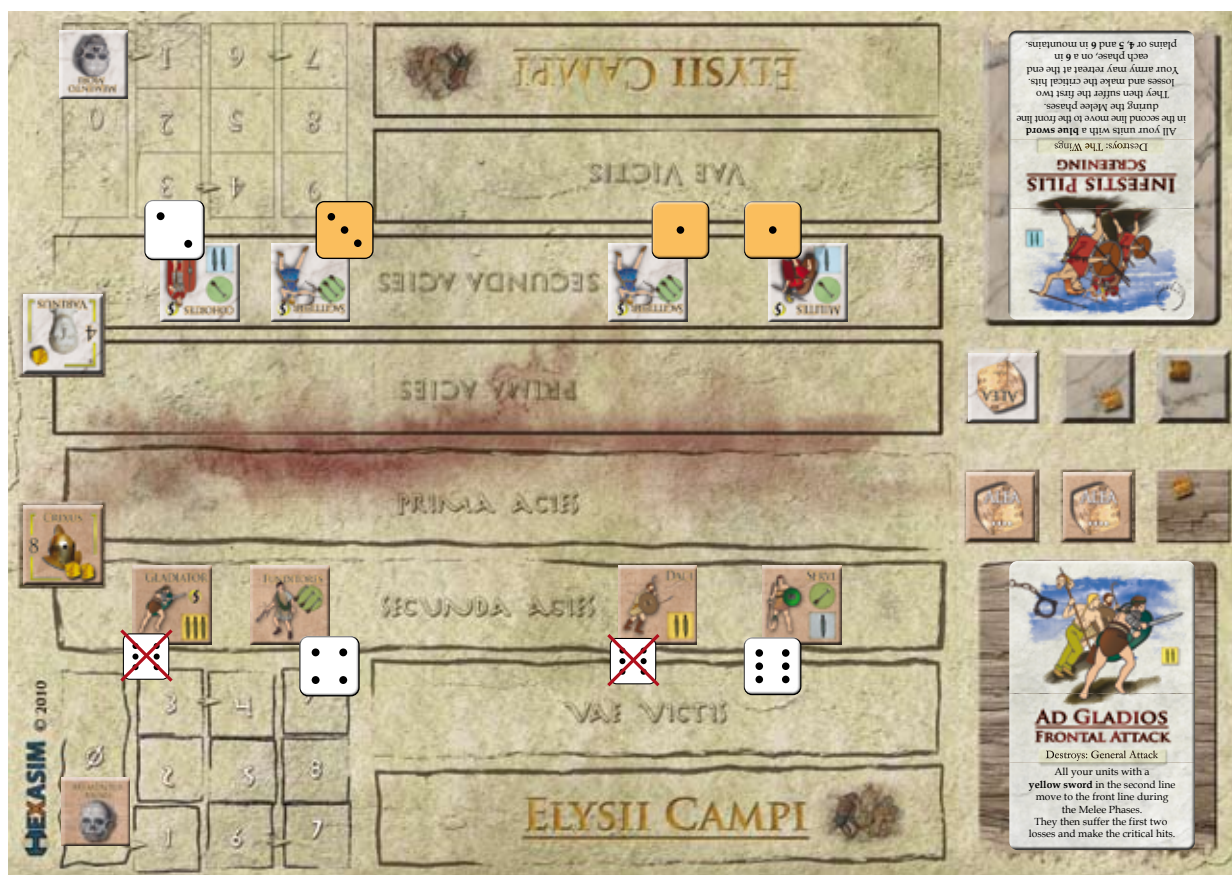
The Roman player makes this choice because he has units with **blue swords**. Furthermore, his enemy has one more re-roll, the combat risks going against him, he will then try to make a **Retreat in good order**.



#### Crixus: *Frontal Attack*

The Rebel player has units with **yellow swords** and he hopes to strike hard!

Then the rebel counters are turned face up.



### Segment 2 Battle Array

With phases 1 to 3, announce, before rolling the dice, to which unit they apply.

#### Phase 1 *simultaneous:* Shooting

Results  
For The Roman player:  
of 4 shots, 3 losses inflicted on the Rebel player.  
For the Rebel player:  
of 2 shots, 0 loss.

#### Legend

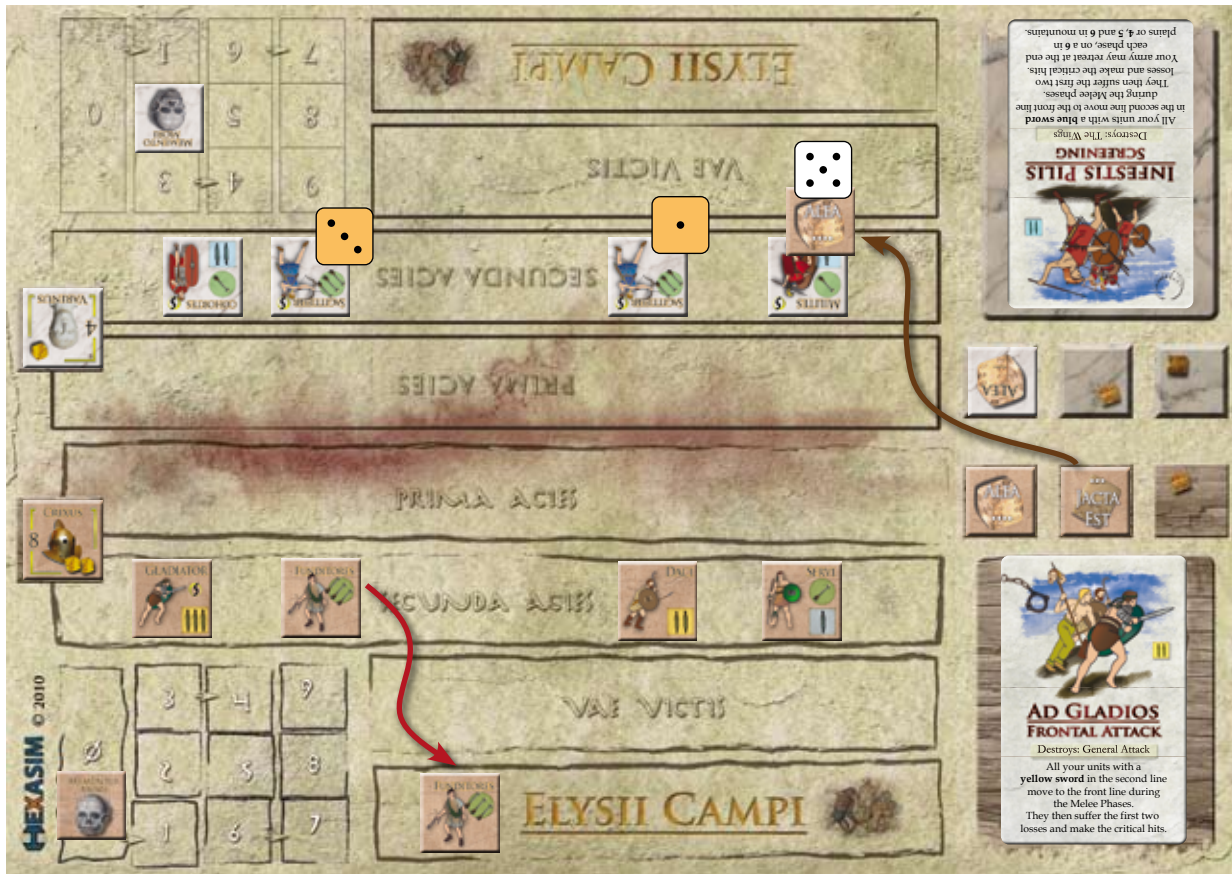
- White dice: roll missed
- Coloured dice: roll succeeded 1 loss
- Crossed dice: No dice roll



## Segment 2 Battle Array

## Phase 1 simultaneous: Shooting

## Possible re-rolls and application of losses



The Rebel player uses one re-roll, the **Milites** rerolls his dice, He scores 5 and misses. The initial loss is thus reversed.

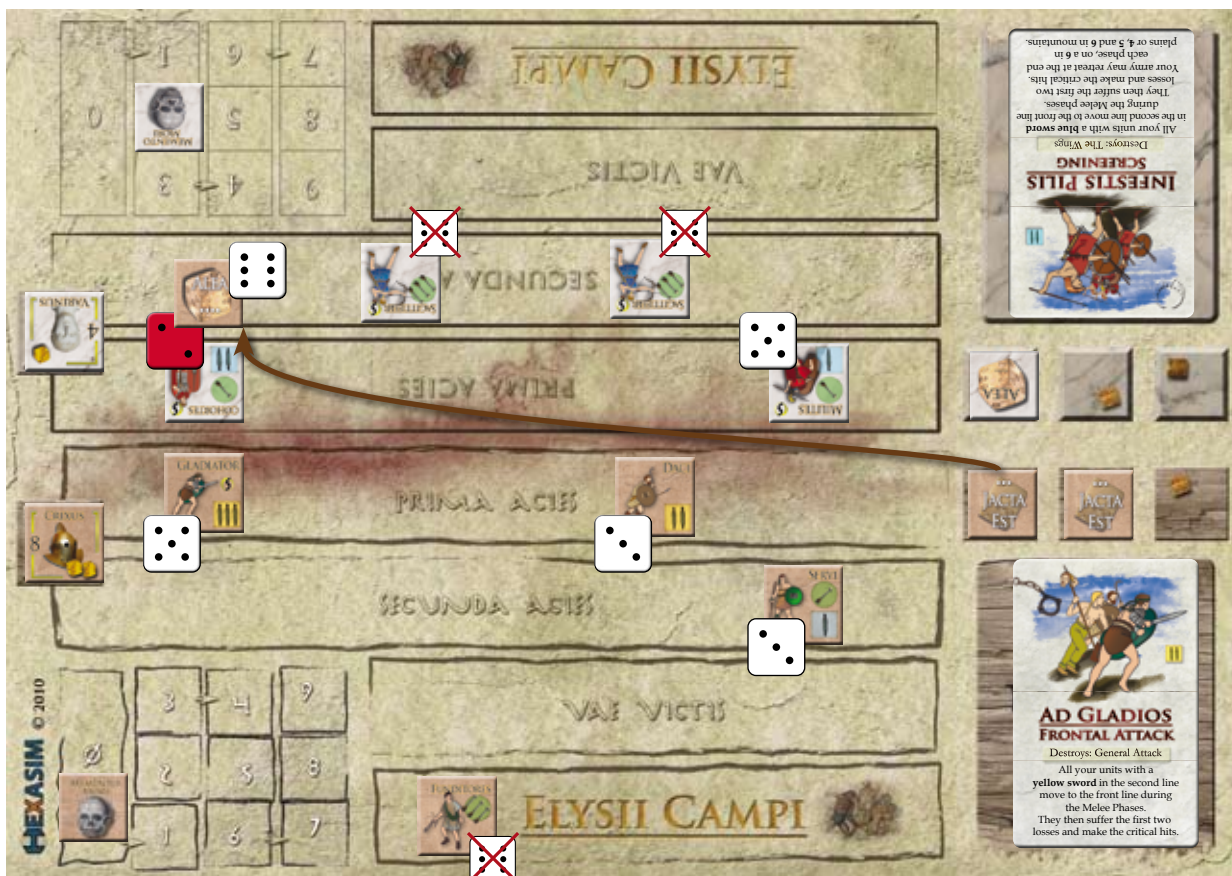
The Rebel player must suffer **2 losses**. He decides to inflict them on the **Funditores** who have no Melee Value. With 2 losses, the Funditores counter is *eliminated* and is placed in the **Elysii Campi** box.

The Roman player does not attempt to **Retreat in good order** because for the moment, he has inflicted more losses than his opponent.

## Segment 2 Battle Array

## Phase 2 simultaneous: Melee

Certain units go into the front line and roll dice  
Possible re-rolls and application of losses



During the Melee Phase, the players apply the effect of the tactical cards.

The Roman player with his **Screening** tactical card positions the **blue sword** counters in the front line.

The Rebel player with his **Frontal Attack** tactical card positions the **yellow sword** counters in the front line.

The Rebel player uses one re-roll, The **Cohortes** must re-roll their dice, He scores 6 and misses. The **critical hit** of the initial die roll is thus cancelled.

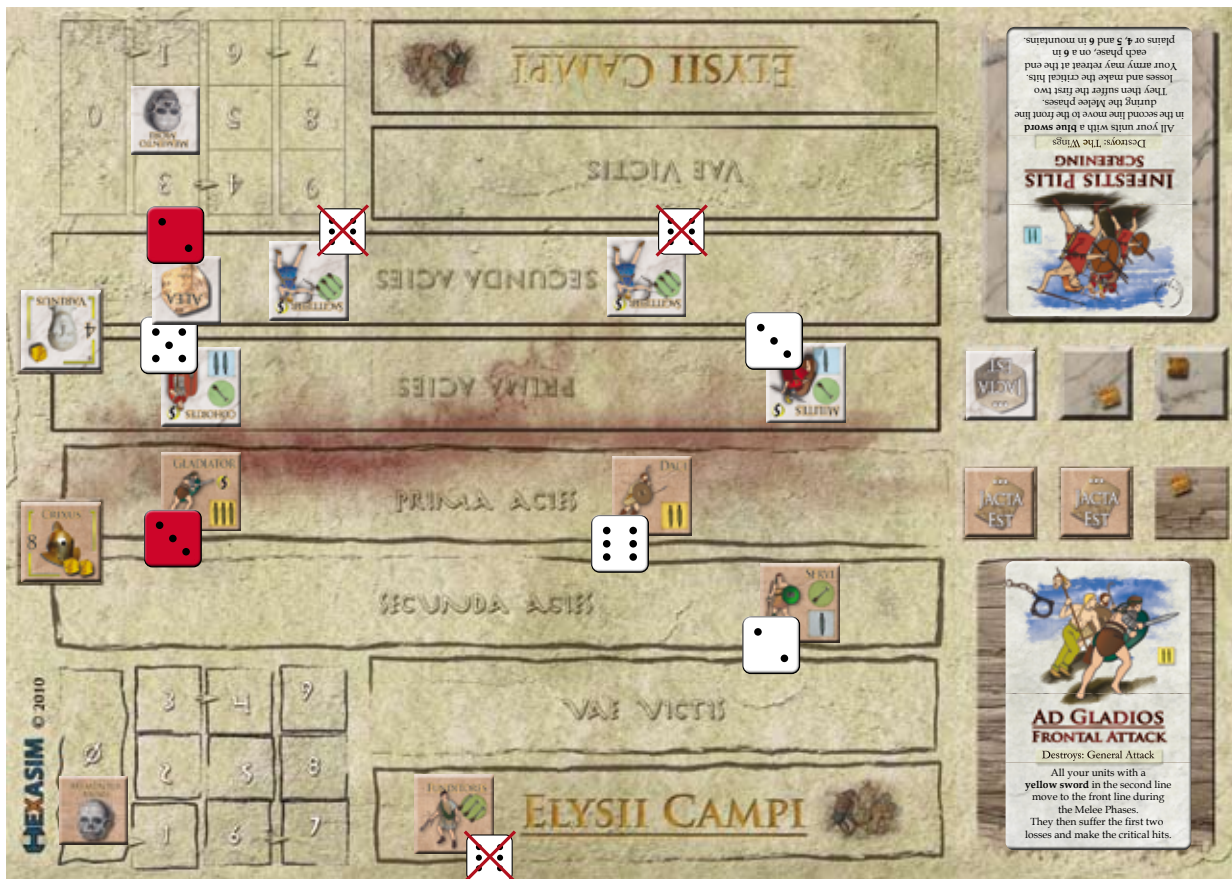
The Roman player does not attempt to **Retreat in good order** because for the moment, he has inflicted more losses than his opponent.



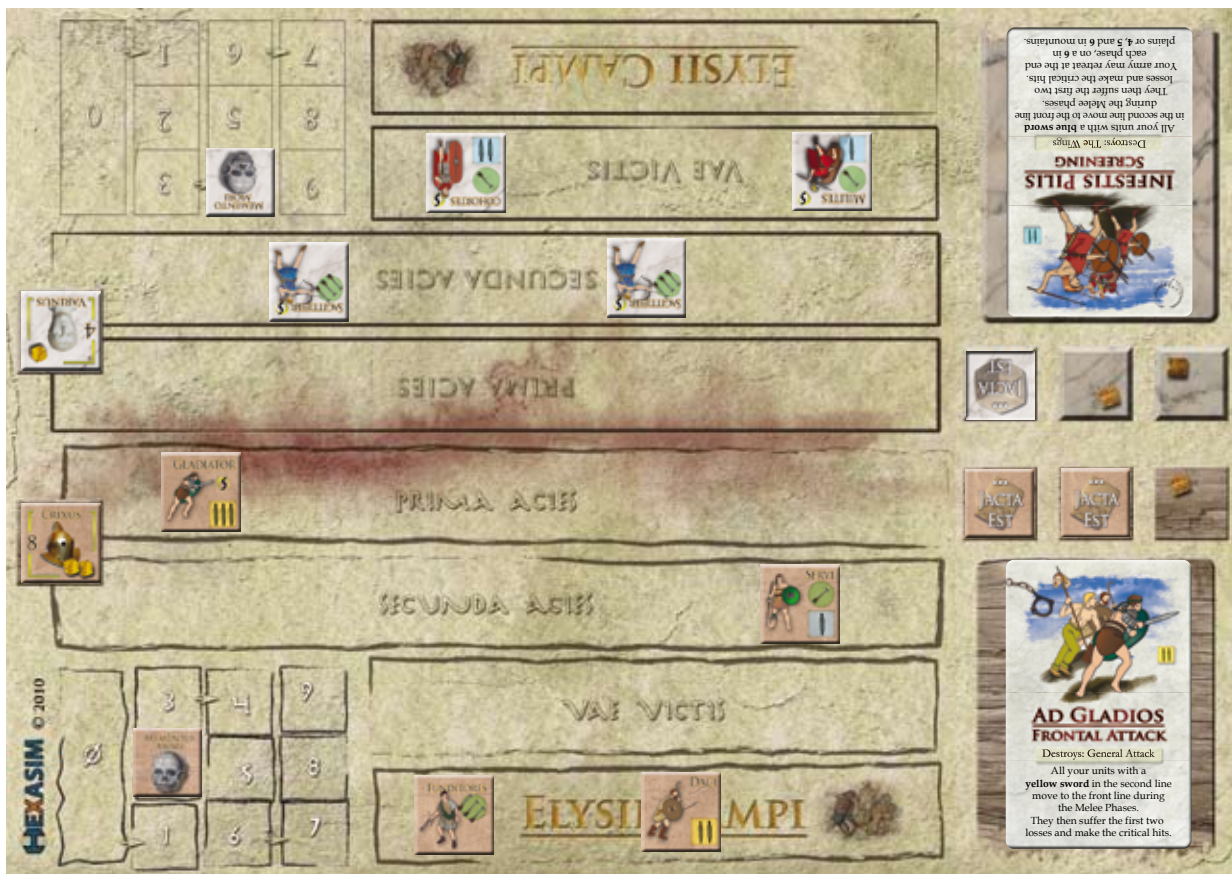
## Segment 2 Battle Array

## Phase 3 simultaneous: General Melee

## Rolls of dice, possible re-rolls



Application of losses



The Roman player uses one re-roll. The **Cohortes** may re-roll his dice, he scores 2 and thus succeeds in his attack. It is also a **critical hit**, he inflicts 2 losses.

Each side suffers 2 losses.

## Legend

 Red dice: critical hit 2 losses

The Strategems cards state for both players the units that must suffer the first two losses.

They must be chosen from the yellow swords for the Rebel and blue for the Roman.

The Rebel player *eliminates* the **Daci**. It is placed in the **Elysii Campi** box.

The Roman player puts *Out of Action* his **Milites** and his **Cohortes**.



**Consequences of combat**

**Varinus** wins the Battle because he has inflicted more losses (4 Rebel losses against 2 Roman losses).

**Varinus** wins 2 **Plunder Points** thanks to the 2 *eliminated* units of Crixus. He does not keep the booty and immediately returns to *Ready for Combat* his 2 *Out of Action* units.

The Roman player takes the **FORTUNA** card.

**Crixus** retreats to **Picenum** for 0 **Action Points** with his two remaining units.

At the end of the battle:

The *eliminated* units are in the **Elysii Campi** box of the map.

The other units are returned to the Army Sheets.



9 **Rebel player**  
**Oenomanos** (2/3)  
moves from **Hirpina** to  
**Campania**.

10 **Roman player**  
**Cossinius** (2/3)  
moves from **Etruria** to  
**Sabinia**.

11 **Rebel player**  
**Crixus** (3/3)  
moves from **Picenum** to  
**Ravenna**.

12 **Roman player**  
**Cossinius** (3/3)  
moves from **Sabinia** to  
**Samnium**.

13 **Rebel player**  
**Oenomanos** (3/3)  
*ravages* **Campania**.  
He scores 6 on the dice  
and gains 2 **Plunder**  
**Points**.

14 **Rebel player**  
**Spartacus** (2/3)  
moves from **Lucania** to  
**Apulia**.

15 **Rebel player**  
**Spartacus** (3/3) recruits.  
He scores 5 on the dice.  
No longer having  
the **FORTUNA** card in his  
possession, the player draws  
only 1 Rebel unit.



# HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

Note: The Roman historians are printed in blue. Latin words are in green, the rebel leaders in bold black and the Roman leaders in red.

## THE FIRST SLAVE WAR

### 139 BC - the Magician's Revolt

After centuries of struggle between Greeks, Romans, and Carthaginians, Rome emerged the victorious conqueror of Sicily. The great Roman landowners organized their new gains into huge farming estates called *latifundia*.

To work the fields and pastures of these immense farms required hundreds of slaves. Some of them had to be given arms to protect the flocks from wild beasts. The boldest of these armed slaves would steal from the neighboring small farmers, who had no recourse against the landlords. One day from amongst these slaves one rose up to lead an army, and he would leave his mark on the history of Rome as the historian *Florus*<sup>1</sup> would write: "A Syrian named **Eunus** - the great disaster that he caused will make us never forget his name."

He began as a shepherd. His reputed gift for prophecy and feats of magic led his master to bring him to banquets to entertain guests. They were especially amused when he predicted that one day he, a slave, would become a king. He gained sway over his fellow slaves by astounding them with his conjuring tricks: "to prove that he was inspired by a god, he hid a walnut filled with burning sulfur within his mouth, so that whenever he spoke he would blow flames from his mouth" (*Florus*<sup>1</sup>). However, what actually pushed the slaves to revolt is given to us in the account of *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>2</sup>: "A citizen of the city of Enna named Damphilus, whose riches had made him vain and barbarous, treated his slaves with a severe cruelty, and his wife named Megallis would daily suggest new torments for him to try. Pushed to their limit, the desperate slaves finally decided to overthrow their masters." **Eunus** seized the opportunity and led them to revolt. Some four hundred rebels seized whatever arms were at hand and tortured and then finished off their masters, before going on to sack the city of Enna. Flushed with success **Eunus** gathered up weapons from the city, spread the news of the uprising, and recruited the slaves from the neighboring *latifundia* and farms and went on to sack the cities of Heraclee, Murgantia, and Tauromenium.

### 138 to 134 BC - The Years of the Incompetent Praetors

The local authorities were quickly overwhelmed. Rome sent out a *praetor* (or prefect) to deal with matters, but he was defeated. The revolt then spread like wildfire. **Cleon of Cilicia**, another slave, gathered up another group of escaped slaves and ravaged the region of Agrigentum, drawing close to the areas controlled by **Eunus**. In Rome, the Senate rejoiced at this news, hoping that the two rivals would fight amongst themselves for the control of Sicily. What came to pass, as *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>2</sup> recounted: "**Cleon** submitted fully to Eunus, hailing him as king, and he offered to bring five thousand men to serve which he would command as Eunus's lieutenant". Each year the Romans would send a *praetor* with an army, but **Eunus** defeated them in succession. These victories confirmed to the credulous that he had the gods' favor, so, **Eunus**, as he had prophesied, proclaimed himself as a king and took the name **Antiochus**. He assumed the trappings of a king, which was an enormous slap in the face to the Romans, who saw their armies beaten by simple slaves with the loss of control of their most important province, which had been so hard won during the Punic Wars.

### 133 to 132 BC - The end of the slave kingdom

With the ending of the war against the Numantians in Iberia (present day Spain), which had lasted ten years, the Romans were able to bring home their troops and now had a reserve of veteran troops to send to Sicily. They also had experienced consuls to lead instead of the *praetors*. A powerful Roman army was landed at the port of Messina, which was still under Roman control, and it set out immediately to pacify the rebel held areas. These experienced troops brought the slaves to battle and quickly defeated them. But the rebellious slaves still held many fortified places and the Romans were forced to lay siege to them. The slaves fought to the death, and the Romans finally took the rebel cities of Enna, Murgantia, and Tauromenium by assault, but at the cost of heavy losses.

Many slaves chose suicide rather than face crucifixion. *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>2</sup> retells the horror of the sieges: "the Roman general **Rupilius** had taken Tauromenium after a lengthy siege, during which the people in the city were driven by extreme famine to eating their own children, then their wives, and finally each other." The slaves finally surrendered, and **Cleon** died a brave death during an assault. **Eunus**, more cowardly, let himself be captured and died in a

vermin ridden prison cell. But even with the death of their leaders many of the rebels continued to fight from hideouts and grottoes, until they were finally hunted down and crucified.

### The Romans try to pass new laws

This slave war traumatized the Romans, who began to fear that this example would inspire their domestic slaves to cut their throats while sleeping in their own beds. They also feared that the loss of slaves would lead to a collapse of their agrarian economy.

In Sicily, the consul **Publius Rupilius**, conqueror of the slave revolt, imposed a set of laws termed the *Lex Rupilia*. The decree reformed the administration of the province with the aim of correcting the old abuses. It limited the number of slaves that could be assembled in one place, including in prisons. The effect of this revolt that had become a full scale war gave impetus to Roman reformers. In Rome, the party of the Gracchi took advantage of the public fears to try and push through agrarian reforms. Their aim was to redistribute land amongst the poor and to limit the size of land holdings. They pointed out that the large *latifundiae* were leading to the impoverishment of small farmers and also served as possible breeding grounds for revolt because of the large number of slaves that were quartered there.

The reforms of the Gracchi however proved to be too radical for the Senate to enact them. None of the conditions that had led to the slave revolt were addressed. There would be future slave revolts, and although they would not last as long as the Sicilian War they would be just as murderous and destructive.

## THE SECOND SLAVE WAR

### 104 BC - The Knight's Revolt

Before the outbreak of the Second Slave War in Sicily, there were several smaller revolts which showed that Roman authority was beginning to break down during this period. "The first broke out in Nucerie, where some thirty slaves rose up but were quickly punished for their audacity. The second happened in Capua. This involved two hundred men, but was put down as quickly as the previous uprising. The third occurred under very peculiar circumstances." So runs the account of *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>2</sup>, who insisted that the events that follow were very unique. This was a revolt that was started by a rich Roman who belonged to the social class the Equites, or Knights, from Campania named **Titus Vettius**, who in a moment of folly armed a number of slaves to march on Rome itself. He was hopelessly in love with a slave girl after an amorous encounter with her, but her asking price was too high for him to be able to buy her. So he devised a desperate scheme. As *Diodorus Siculus*<sup>2</sup> recounts **Titus Vettius'** misadventures: "after gathering some four hundred fugitive slaves, he placed a diadem on his brow, and then whipped and decapitated the master of the slave girl he loved. Then he led his band and seized all of the neighboring villages. He gathered up and gave arms to all the slaves who agreed to join him, and massacred anyone who refused. In this way he wound up with some seven hundred armed followers, and he built a camp which was well closed off and disciplined, and he took in any slaves who were fleeing their masters."

In Latin the phrase *servilis amor* means love for a slave. It was a known risk that a master could become bewitched by his slave. **Titus'** story becomes a tale worthy of classical tragedy, and it has an appropriately bloody ending. At this time the Romans were tied down fighting the Cimbrii, the Teutons, and the Helvetiae who were ravaging the province of Gaul, and several legions had already been destroyed by the barbarians. A small force was raised hastily and sent under the command of a *praetor* named **Lucullus**. Arriving in Campania, **Lucullus** immediately attacked the rebels' fortified camp, and was repulsed. He then decided to switch tactics and tried deceit. He contacted one of **Vettius'** officers and offered him a public amnesty if he would betray **Vettius**. The camp was betrayed, the rebels seized and their throats cut, and the rebel Equites committed suicide to preserve his honor. **Lucullus** had won, and he hoped to return to Rome to celebrate a triumph, but he was suddenly called to go to Sicily.

### 104 BC - A libertarian law is overturned

The events in Sicily that led to **Lucullus'** summons were tied to the ongoing war in Gaul which was going badly, and the barbarians were now menacing Italy itself. **Marius**, who had just taken the reins of the Roman army, needed fresh troops badly. He pressed the Senate to allow him to offer freedom to any slaves who would agree to fight for Rome. Enrolling slaves in exchange for their freedom was a ploy that would see use in the later civil wars between **Mark Anthony** and **Sextus Pompey**. The Senate preferred to



edit a particular law to raise manpower instead. A *senatus-consultum* was proclaimed that would restore freedom to Roman allies who had been sold into slavery by pirates and former prisoners of war that were enslaved by their Roman captors. **Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup> recounts the success of this law as well as its unexpected results: "As a result of this decree **Licinius Nerva**, the *praetor* of Sicily, examined in a state tribunal all qualifying slaves. After several days he had eight hundred slaves who could be freed. But this enfranchisement brought on a dangerous situation, namely that all of the slaves on the island would realize that they could free themselves. The local nobility immediately came to see the *praetor*. The magistrate, seeing that he stood to gain from the gifts being offered, and aware that he didn't want to be on bad terms with the nobles, annulled the *senatus-consultus* and returned to their masters all who had come to plead with him".

Faced with this injustice, a revolt broke out in Syracuse. Some one hundred slaves slit their masters' throats while they slept and fortified themselves on the heights. Alerted to this new uprising, the *praetor* **Licinius Nerva** launched an assault on the slaves but to no avail. He finally dislodged them thanks to a traitor in their ranks. But immediately after he was called to the center of Sicily to deal with yet another revolt!

### 104 BC - The Soothsayer's revolt

About a hundred escaped slaves were loose near the city of Heraclea. After a week of marauding, their numbers swelled to eight hundred, and soon grew to two thousand. The Roman garrison at Enna, only some six hundred strong, tried to disperse the gang of rebels but they were quickly routed. For the slaves of Sicily, this victory served as a spark that that quickly set the entire island ablaze with revolt. "They abandoned their masters in such great numbers that in just a few days there were more than six thousand runaways. They chose as their leader a certain **Salvius**, who knew how to make divinations from the flights of birds, and who played the flute incessantly during holidays" (**Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup>). **Salvius**, a flute player, soothsayer, magician and finally a general led his army of slaves against the city of Murgantia and quickly launched a siege. Rome reacted promptly at the news, and as **Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup> tells us "the *praetor*, aiming to relieve the city, advanced with ten thousand men raised in Italy and even Sicily itself under cover of darkness towards the city walls".

But when the *praetor* reached the city, he was lured by the prospect of easy loot to attack instead the slave army's camp, which was left undefended as the slaves were busy attacking the city walls. Loaded down with booty, the Romans were caught and quickly routed by the slave army which had quickly returned to protect their camp. After putting the Romans to flight, **Salvius** took up the siege of Murgantia anew. He called on the slaves within the besieged city to rise up and join him. But the city slaves turned him down, as they had been offered freedom by their masters if they would fight in the defense of the city. **Salvius** never did capture Murgantia but afterwards the *praetor* refused to grant liberty to the city slaves who had helped save the city from the rebels.

### 104BC - The revolt of a second soothsayer

**Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup> recounts for us the consequences of the *praetor*'s shortsightedness: "However, when the *praetor* **Nerva** annulled the promises of the masters, the majority of the slaves decided to go over to the enemy. Because of this bad decision rebellion spread like a plague to the cities and territories of Segestus and Lilybaeum. The leader of these new revolts was **Athenion**, a Cilician. He was a man of great courage. People were convinced he was a great astrologist, and the slaves gathered around him, first some two hundred then more than a thousand. They named him their king, and only the bravest were recruited to his service." **Athenion** tried to seize Lilybaeum but failed when the city was reinforced by Numidians brought in by sea. Rome had now lost control of Sicily. However the Mediterranean was still controlled by the Roman navy, so Rome was able to keep the rebels isolated.

Soon after **Salvius** decided to proclaim himself a king as well. He took the royal name of **Tryphon**. The two slave kings, despite their unsuccessful sieges finally managed to take Tauromenium. There they reached an agreement: **Athenion** declared himself second to **Tryphon**, who tasked him with building a proper residence. Tauromenium was declared **Tryphon**'s capital. **Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup> wrote "A magnificent palace was raised there, and there was built in the middle of the city a market which could hold an immeasurable number of people. A council or senate of wise and enlightened men was assembled, and (the king) took their advice and listened to their voices when administering justice." The slaves had essentially founded for themselves a state!

### 103 BC to 102 BC - A praetor is sacked despite a victory

Following these events **Licinius Lucullus**, flushed with his victory in Campania, was now sent to Sicily to deal with this much more serious rebellion. Rome also sent an army of seventeen thousand Romans and Italian allies with a *praetor*, the best available troops to stop the invading Gauls and Celts. Worried at the news, the slave king **Tryphon** gave command of an army of forty thousand slaves to **Athenion** to face the

Romans. **Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup> described the battle: "Fortune [*Fortuna*] held the battle in its balance, and the number of dead on one side was nearly the same on the other, when **Athenion**, accompanied by two hundred horsemen, strewed the ground around them with the bodies of the enemy. But **Athenion** was wounded twice in his knees, and then received yet a third wound which felled him; as a result all his soldiers became discouraged and lost heart and they were put to flight. Left for dead, he took advantage of the darkness when night came to flee and save himself. That is how Romans won a complete victory, and in the following pursuit twenty thousand men perished." **Lucullus** proceeded to besiege Tauromenium which still held out, as the slaves knew that what sort of death awaited them. But the Roman Senate felt that **Lucullus** was too slow in bringing victory, so they summarily relieved him of his command. Outraged, he disbanded his army while it was in the middle of the siege! His successor, **Caius Servilius** reassembled what forces he could but proved to be less successful. "**Servilius** who was sent to take his place did not accomplish anything of note, and as a result he was condemned to exile like **Lucullus**." the one piece of food news for Rome out of all of this was that **Tryphon** had died, not from fighting but of natural causes! **Athenion** succeeded him as the head of the rebellion.

### 101 BC - Calm is restored, thanks to the legions

After years of defeat at the hands of the Gauls, **Marius** instituted successful reforms of the Roman Army, transforming it into a well-trained professional force. Victory against the barbarians followed, and the Helvetiae no longer dared to leave their tribal lands and raid Italy. The Romans finally had their hands free to deal with the slave revolt.

The consul **Manius Aquilius Nepos** arrived in Sicily with his veteran troops, and he rapidly crushed the now weakened insurgents. Most of the vanquished slaves killed themselves to escape the fate of crucifixion. **Athenion** was killed in combat, either by the consul himself according to **Diodorus Siculus**<sup>2</sup>, or at the hands of the soldiers who captured him according to **Florus**<sup>1</sup>: "Surrounded by a crowd of soldiers who commenced to fight over their prey, in the ensuing struggle he was torn to pieces."

Afterwards the sparks of the revolt continued to smolder throughout Sicily, and from time to time further revolts broke out, but never reached such a large scale. However, the next major slave war would strike this time at the heart of Italy...

## THE THIRD SLAVE WAR

### 73 BC - The Revolt of the Gladiator

While the civil war of Sertorius was ravaging Iberia and the Kingdom of Pontus was threatening the eastern possessions of the Roman Republic, the proconsul Curion upheld Roman honor by conquering the Dardanians, one of the tribes of Thrace.

He did not realize that among the spoils and captives he was bringing home was the future scourge of Rome: **Spartacus**.

**Florus**<sup>1</sup> paints a portrait of this man of destiny: "**Spartacus**, who hailed from Thrace, had been a soldier, then a deserter, a brigand, and finally a gladiator thanks to his strength." Imprisoned in a *ludus* - a camp for training gladiators - in Capua, **Spartacus** escaped with a dozen or so fellow gladiators. Hastily grabbing whatever arms they could find, "**Spartacus** and his soldiers had shields of wicker covered with animal hides" (**Frontinus**<sup>5</sup>), they formed a band of brigands and lived by plundering. To put down these runaway slaves Rome sent out some militia "Rome set against them **Glaber**, then **Publius**, not with a Roman army but with whatever troops could be hastily gathered; because the Romans did not think this was a war. They thought it was an isolated incident, nothing more than a bunch of bandits." (**Appian**<sup>4</sup>) The slaves, too few in number to face the militia, took refuge on Mount Vesuvius where the heavy terrain allowed them to face the Romans on even terms. The Romans surrounded the mountain and laid siege to them. **Spartacus** had ladders made from the grapevines that were plentiful on Vesuvius and climbed out over the siege works. Bold and audacious, he launched a surprise attack instead of fleeing. "the Romans, who were unaware of the maneuver, found themselves surrounded and they were charged so vigorously that they broke and fled, leaving their camp in the enemy's power." (**Plutarch**<sup>3</sup>) After this astonishing success, the rebels saw thousands of slaves come to join them. With so many men to feed and manage, dissension broke out. **Crixus**, a Gaul, left with a strong contingent of Germans and Gauls to ravage the South of Italy while **Spartacus** and his followers went north to try to return to their native Gaul and Thrace. Rome sent out fresh troops to put down the rebels but they were defeated in turn.

### 72 BC - Italy in flames

The Republic, always pugnacious, decided to send two new armies led by consuls. Each consul set out after one of the slave armies. "One of them fought **Crixus**, who commanded thirty thousand men in the area near Mt. Garganus." (**Plutarch**<sup>3</sup>) **Spartacus** found himself between the two consular

armies. "Spartacus attacked each army in turn, defeating one after the other." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>) Spartacus was pressed by his victorious troops to turn round and sack Rome itself! "The consuls came at the quick against him in the country of Picenum. A great battle was joined; but the consuls were beaten once again. In honor of Crixis he made three hundred Roman captives fight as gladiators, which was very humiliating. Despite his success, Spartacus renounced his first plan to march on Rome because he felt he was not knowledgeable enough in the arts of war and that his troops were not well armed enough, and he had no city to support him." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>)

Spartacus found himself at an impasse. He couldn't vanquish Rome by himself. Like Hannibal and Pyrrhus before him, he did not have a source of supplies, a fleet, or siege engines sufficient to lay siege to a city. His only hope was that the slaves would join in the uprising and that Rome's enemies might intervene. Meanwhile, as his army continued to grow, he continued to ravage the countryside and to attack the smaller cities. He was not able to create a slave kingdom as had Eunus and Salvius.

## 71 BC - A Desperate Army

In Rome, where the populace was becoming paranoid, Crassus, the richest man in the city, profited by this civil war to raise his political standing. He equipped six legions. He hunted down the army of Spartacus relentlessly. But he would not personally lead the troops. "He ordered his lieutenant Mummius to take two legions and to shadow the slave army without giving battle. But Mummius, greedy to win glory, attacked Spartacus instead. Many men were killed: the rest of the troops had to throw away their arms in order to save themselves." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>) Crassus pitilessly decided to subject the beaten troops to the punishment of decimation to set an example. This draconian measure had not been employed for decades, and it shocked the populace. Nonetheless, it did revive the fighting spirit of the legions.

Despite his victory Spartacus, faced with more legions, retreated into Bruttium. There he tried to embark for Sicily, but his rafts could not overcome the currents and the Cilician pirates who were supposed to be providing transports pocketed the gold they had been paid and never showed up. The slaves were hemmed in by Crassus and trapped behind their entrenchments. The Roman general saw no advantage to be gained by launching an assault and decided instead to starve the slaves out. Then Crassus made a political mistake: he asked for help. "Crassus had written to the Senate that Lucullus whose army was in Thrace and Pompey who was serving in Iberia had to be recalled to lend a hand. He soon regretted this decision, and, worried that the credit for any success would be given to those who were coming to help him, he rushed to bring an end to the war." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>) Crassus finally decided to attack the slaves, who met the assault with a sortie from their entrenchments. Castus and Gannicus, chief of the Gallic rebels, attacked the Roman cavalry which feigned a retreat. Then, surprised by Roman infantry that was laying in wait, they were torn to pieces. During this time Spartacus tried to flee with his army to Brindisium. Frontinus <sup>5</sup> tells us of the large amount of booty that the slaves had amassed, and cites this source: "Titus Livy reports that thirty five thousand combatants perished with their chiefs that day, and that five Roman eagles, twenty six pennants, and a large amount of booty was recovered, including five fasces with their axes." Proof that the slaves had indeed beaten numerous legions!

## An Heroic End

Spartacus made for Brindisium. He was pursued by the troops of Crassus, and bearing down on him from the north was Pompey and his army. "Spartacus learned that Lucullus, who had recently returned from the war against Mithradates whom he had beaten, had arrived at Brindisium" (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>). The gods had abandoned him. His army was routed and all of Rome's enemies had been defeated! He was the last enemy of the Republic still standing. He decided to once again face Crassus' army. His troops were much less experienced compared to Pompey's and Lucullus's hardened veterans. Crassus tried to gain an advantage by using a new ploy: camouflaged legionnaires. "He sent six thousand men to seize some heights, with the order to do everything possible to keep from being discovered. They hoped to conceal themselves by covering their helmets with tree branches; but two women discovered them" (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>). Spartacus decided to attack as well. The slaves fought with fury, but they were massacred. Spartacus died in combat alongside his men. Small bands of survivors fled into the mountains. "They were killed to the last, with the exception of six thousand men who were crucified all along the road from Capua to Rome" (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>).

Like all the other slave wars, these slaves finished either dead on the field of battle or on the cross, but these men would forever win renown, and Spartacus in spite of his barbaric origins and slave status was recognized as a true general by the Romans! He earned from them the title of Imperator (victorious general) because he had vanquished Roman consuls!

## The Legend of Spartacus

The sources contradict themselves on many of the details of Spartacus' life and the events of the revolt. But they all agree that he was an extraordinary man who was physically very strong: "Spartacus, a Thracian by nationality but of the Numidian race, who was extremely strong of body and possessed extraordinary courage combined with prudence and a sweetness of character despite his origins, more in his dignity like a Greek than a barbarian." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>). "Spartacus killed with own hand the horse of (the praetor) Glabrus." (Florus <sup>1</sup>). "...there was a Thracian, named Spartacus, who had served in the legions, and, after being taken prisoner and sold into slavery, was thrown in with a number of gladiators." (Appian <sup>4</sup>)

Thanks to his Roman masters, he mastered the use of a sword and knew how to lead an army, as proved by the many victories he won compared to the other slave generals who were beaten. He was surely blessed by the gods as was said by his wife, a prophetess.

His end did not lack for splendor.

"Spartacus was finally wounded in the chest by an arrow. He fell to his knees, and covering himself with his shield, he fought on against all challengers until, surrounded by a swarm of men, overwhelmed, he finally succumbed." (Appian <sup>4</sup>)

"When he brought his horse, he drew his sword and killed it: 'If I am victorious, he said, I will have my pick of many fine horses from the enemy, and if I am beaten I will no longer need one.' With these words, he threw himself into the middle of his enemies, trying to reach Crassus, pushing through a hail of missiles and covered with wounds. But he was not able to reach him, and he killed by his own hand two centurions. Finally left alone in the midst of his enemies, he fell dead, after having sold his life dearly" (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>). Florus <sup>1</sup> also recounts the end of Spartacus:

"Finally, they hurled themselves at the Romans and died as brave men. As sworn soldiers of a gladiator, they did not ask for quarter. Spartacus himself fought valiantly and died in the front ranks, like a true general."

"Spartacus himself died with some sixty thousand of his followers" (Appian <sup>4</sup>).

All of these accounts of his end are epic, and speaks to the courage of the man who had a destiny that befitted a tragedy. Even in death he became larger than life, because as Appian <sup>4</sup> recounts: "the body of Spartacus was never found" and this just added to the legend. It gave credence to the prediction by his wife the prophetess that he would steal away in the end to a final freedom and happiness.

## THE SLAVE WARS

### The Causes of the Revolts

These three slave revolts were the result of Roman expansionism and its mistakes.

In the beginning, Rome's military victories brought in thousands of new slaves into her Empire because an enemy soldier captured on the battlefield became the property of the victor. Later on, new military campaigns drew the veteran Roman legions ever farther away to the frontiers, and at the slightest hint of defeat the slaves would take hope that their chance had come. They armed themselves with aim to fight for their liberty, especially since many of these barbarians were former warriors. There were several categories of slaves within the Roman Empire. There were those who worked in the cities: artisans, teachers, house servants, all of whom were valued and better treated than those who toiled in the fields: peasants, miners, herdsmen, were treated no better than cattle. Most of the field hands were kept chained up by the hundreds in slave quarters or the mines, working to the sound of the lash. Their only hope lay in death or running away. If runaways were caught, they were put to death. By comparison the city slaves lived a life that was not as harsh, and they rarely joined a revolt, many of them choosing to fight alongside their masters in their defense.

The ancient texts cite many instances of how slaves were mistreated: "they were treated very harshly, and were given the bare minimum of food and clothing." Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup> writes of the constant outbreaks of revolts: "Some thirty slaves who had risen up were punished for their audacity. A revolt caused by two hundred men was put down as quickly as the one before." Any free citizen who owned a slave could wind up getting his throat cut in his sleep: "Penetrating inside the houses, they committed horrible massacres, not even sparing babies who they tore from their mother's breasts and smashed against the ground; and one cannot begin to describe the shameful and bloody acts that were done to all the women even in the presence of their husbands."

In Latin the term "servilis terror" signified the fear brought about by the slaves. One finds a large vocabulary in Latin to describe the relations between slaves and free men. This reveals a state of mind that is difficult to understand in our time. Knowing how to master a slave was a real art at the time.

The worst part of the revolts was that the slaves would be joined by large number of free men, coming from small farms and holdings which had been put in bondage by the great landowners to settle their debts. Sometimes



the estate slaves would freely pillage the small farmers, knowing that they would be protected by their more powerful masters. These slave wars were essentially civil wars between the rich and the poor.

### *Live free or die*

These men who had lost all by becoming slaves still held on to a spark that kept them alive: the hope that they would regain freedom through fighting instead of just resigning themselves to their servitude. It was not a coincidence that many of the leaders of slave revolts (in the case of Spartacus, his wife) claimed to commune with the gods: diviners, soothsayers, magicians. They convinced their fellow slaves that the time was ripe for revolt through their reading of the signs or prophesies. In antiquity the belief was that victory was inspired by the gods. Whenever they gained a victory over their masters, the rebel leaders would claim that this proved they had the favor of the gods with them.

The goddess of *Fortuna* would protect them. Once a revolt became credible, other slaves would flock to join it inspired by hope and the prospects for success.

The slaves were courageous fighters in combat, as outlined by all of the authors of antiquity, because they had nothing to lose. They preferred dying with a sword in their hands to being crucified, the usual fate for slaves who we taken prisoner. Many chose to die with their honor intact by committing suicide rather than letting themselves be captured, which was a virtue held by the Romans themselves.

"**Cleon** who had made a vigorous sortie was killed by the very hand of **Rupilius** after putting up a heroic fight. His comrades, when they learned about **Rupilius'** approach, saw no other solution but to cut their own throats one after the other." "One group of rebels was killed during the first approach of the enemy. The rest, to avoid the tortures that surely awaited them, threw themselves from the walls and the rocks." (Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup>)

"Finally, they threw themselves at the Romans at died like brave men. Since they were sworn followers of a gladiator, they did not demand any quarter. **Spartacus** himself fought valiantly and died in the first rank, like a true general. They might have surrendered but for the fear of torture that made them choose to die instead." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

"Amongst the dead slaves, only two were found who had been wounded in the back; all the others died fighting with the greatest valor and fell where they made their stand." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>)

These accounts were also parables from the ancient historians, to show their contemporary Roman readers how one should comport himself in combat (to be a man and fight to the death, and to choose suicide over dishonor) and that when facing desperate men behind entrenchments it was more prudent to starve them out then to risk a frontal assault.

### *The Domino Effect of Victory - recruits and arms*

The slaves showed high morale during their battles, in part because their armies were made up entirely of volunteers! And with each successive victory came more recruits who were willing to join the fight. "This feat enabled him to assemble around him about two thousand new recruits that he met on the way, and then, with arms in hand, he broke down the prison doors and built up an army of sixty thousand men." "**Spartacus, Crixus, Oenomaus**, after breaking down the doors of the (gladiator) school of Lentulus, fled to Capua with thirty fellows like themselves. They called the slaves to follow their flags and soon were joined by more than ten thousand men." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

"They attacked the rebels who numbered about twenty thousand, and with them won a complete victory. Soon after this victory, their numbers grew." (Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup>)

The new recruits were not just raw hands: "This success drew to their party a large number of herdsmen and shepherds from the fields, all robust and agile men: they armed some and used others as scouts and light troops." (Plutarch <sup>3</sup>) They even managed to raise some cavalry: "having gathered in this way a large number of animals of different species, they found themselves in a short time in possession of two thousand horses, and they had no less than twenty thousand infantry who were already drilling and doing military exercises." (Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup>) "So that they would be fully equipped as befitted a regular army, they also seized troupes of horses that they came across and organized a cavalry corps." (Florus <sup>1</sup>) At the beginning they had to make do with the most rudimentary arms: "Using wicker and animal hides they made large shields; and they reformed their iron chains into swords and spears." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

And again: "**Spartacus** armed himself and his band with cudgels and swords from the travellers that they robbed." (Appian <sup>4</sup>) "In three day's time they had more than ten thousand men, equipped with all manner of arms which they had managed to seize, and others came armed with hatchets, slings, scythes, pikes, and even cooking spits." (Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup>) With these motley weapons they confronted the militia, and then armed themselves with weapons stripped from the Roman dead and from seizing the armories. At the same time they quickly forged proper weapons by these means: "They put to death all of the citizens of Enna that they took alive, sparing those who knew the art of making

weapons; they put them to work as slaves." (Diodorus Siculus <sup>2</sup>)

The slaves had the foresight to realize that only by force of arms did they have a chance of regaining their liberty. They had no possible political solution that would be acceptable in the eyes of Rome. The rebels possessed many well trained and motivated fighters, weapons, cavalry, and especially remarkable leaders. They were natural leaders because of their former lives as administrators (**Athenion**), veteran soldiers (**Spartacus**), warriors (**Crixis**), and above all religious zealots (**Tryphon**, **Eunus**). The wisest of them joined together to found a kingdom!

### *Why was there such success?*

The slave revolts that met with some measure of success took advantage of extenuating circumstances. During times of peace, an uprising was quickly put down. Whenever the Romans were facing foreign threats, slave wars would quickly break out. **Spartacus** profited by the ongoing civil war against Sertorius and a war with the king of Pontus. The greatest danger confronting Rome was that recounted here by **Diodorus Siculus** <sup>2</sup>: "The Romans had already suffered bloody losses in the war against the Cimbres in Gaul when they learned that thousand of slaves we rising up in Sicily. This news threw the Republic into consternation, and then the news came that an army of sixty thousand elite troops sent against the Cimbres was lost. They didn't have any idea where they would be able to find new recruits." The combined threats from the outside (Gauls, Germans, Asiatics, Celts, Africans, rebellious Romans) gave the slaves had a free hand to cast off their chains. The Roman Senate was so preoccupied with meeting these outside threats that they had no veteran troops or competent generals to spare to meet these internal rebellions.

The Romans could only call on hastily raised militia and mediocre *praetors*, who saw little glory or purpose in fighting slaves and because they only held their office for a single year they were obliged to leave service when their term was up even if the revolts continued. The Roman generals saw a command fighting mere slaves as a demeaning assignment: "Repulsed and put to flight, the enemy- I blush to dignify them (the slaves) by giving them this name-took refuge in the far reaches of Italy." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

**Appian** <sup>4</sup> even reports that no one wanted to confront **Spartacus**: "It had already been three years that the war had been going on, frightening for the Romans, yet they mocked the idea, and spoke of it with disdain, of fighting a war with gladiators. When it came time to give the command to a leader, they all made themselves scarce." The Roman generals saw no chance to gain glory or the title of *Imperator* (honorific given to a victorious general), at best they would have to settle for a mere vote of thanks.

"**Crassus** did not think to ask for the honor of a triumph: it seemed an insult to Rome even to receive an ovation for the defeat of mere fugitive slaves." and "**Perperna**, their vanquisher, was content with an ovation, in order to not sully the dignity of a triumph by admitting to a victory won over the slaves." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

The soldiers themselves were not enthusiastic either. These battles against slaves would yield very little booty since the enemy would not yield and submit to being enslaved again, and if they were killed their good would remit to their former masters!

However, the threat was very serious. It was necessary to eradicate these revolts: "Emboldened by his victories, **Spartacus** now thought to marcher on Rome, and the thought of this was enough to cover us with shame." (Florus <sup>1</sup>)

### *The End of the Revolts*

Once Rome had gotten rid of her foreign threats, she was now finally able to send her best troops and capable consuls to lead them. The Romans no longer looked on the slave revolt as a mere police action but an official war. This war was expected to last no more than a year, a typical military campaign. The rebels would not be able to stand in the face of the power of a Roman legion, in full strength and well commanded. An army of slaves might beat the militia but not an army of combined legions. To be sure **Spartacus** had, to his credit, routed two legions but he had not destroyed them. When **Crassus** rallied his routed men, he did not hesitate to subject his own troops to the ancient punishment of decimation to 'motivate' them, then he set out in a relentless pursuit of **Spartacus**. During each of the three slave wars the rebellious slaves were crucified to the very last man. The Romans were stubborn opponents and once in a war would not yield, especially against their former slaves, who they refused to acknowledge as equals. The Roman Republic did try to deal with the epidemic revolts by political and military means, but in vain. To try and prevent a large concentration of mistreated slaves that could turn into an uprising, the Gracchi proposed laws to break up the latifundia into smaller farm holdings, but the large landowners blocked them. **Marius** reformed the Roman army; instead of depending on the rich and aristocrats to serve, he enrolled the poorest citizens and equipped them at the State's expense to serve in the legions. By doing so he avoid the chance that the poor would join the slaves to seek revenge against the rich. In addition, **Marius** increased the number of men in the army and improved their training. Rome would now have a better army and therefore a better force to police internal rebellion.

However by the time of Imperial Rome slave revolts had disappeared. There were several reasons for this change. Gradually the slaves received better treatment under the influence of new philosophical movements and Christianity. There was also a gradual return to using freemen to work on the farms, and the passing of more humane laws that promoted peace between the social classes. Finally the Roman Empire reined in its rapid expansion and reached its natural boundaries which slowed down the influx of large numbers of slaves. After a victorious campaign tens of thousands of captured warriors would wind up in the slave markets. This flood of large numbers of new 'merchandise' had an economic impact, as the price of some kinds of slaves would drop because of the sudden glut. A popular expression in Rome was "*it is not even worth a Sardinian!*" (not worth a nail) because of the large numbers of Sardinian captives being sold.

Slave revolts continued throughout Antiquity but never achieved any lasting results. There were no successful slave revolts until the slave revolt in Haiti led by Toussaint Louverture against the French in 1791.

### The Timeline of a Slave Revolt

At the start, several dozen slaves would decide to rise up against their masters: "*They commenced by killing their masters as they slept*". In reaction Rome would send the local militia to squash the revolt in its infancy. Most times that would be the end of the rebellion. The suppression of an uprising was typically a police action against highwaymen. On the other hand, if the initial clash was won by the slaves, the band of runaways would grow more and more numerous, which wasn't the case for a band of brigands on the run from the militia. Sometimes even freemen would join the runaway slaves according to Appian<sup>4</sup>: "*There, numerous fugitives and some men liberated by the rebels came to join Spartacus*." Rome would then send out a *praetor* and his troops. If he was defeated in turn, that would be the start of a slave war. It would change from a *servilis tumultus* (slave revolt) to a *bellum servile* (slave war). The rebels would become numerous enough to where they could

look to besiege and sack a town. Which act would bring with it the start of new revolts which would sometimes ally themselves with the original band. The leader who seems to bring the best luck with him would even be named a king! Such a person would have jumped from the bottom the social scale to the highest! These slave kings were legitimized by the gods, for only men inspired by a divinity could have been so destined. In ancient times anything was possible for men who were courageous, competent and lucky, even if they came from low origins or had fallen in social status. Once Rome was free to bring force to bear (first priority was always dealing with external threats) a slave war would rapidly come to a close with the surviving slaves winding up on the cross. Only the consuls, who could command more troops than a praetor, were able to put down these revolts that were large scale and always difficult to defeat!

### Sources

#### Bibliography:

<sup>1</sup> Florus, *Épitome of Roman History*, III, XX, XXI

<sup>2</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, XXXIV, XXXVI

<sup>3</sup> Plutarch, *Life of Crassus*, VIII-XI

<sup>4</sup> Appien, *The Civil Wars*, I, 116

<sup>5</sup> Frontinus, *the Stratagems*

Tite Live, *Book LXIX*

I consulted the many writings of Yann Le Bohec, a French specialist on the Roman army. You'll find an abundant bibliography in his works.

Patrick Receveur

## A LITTLE DOG LATIN

*Alea Iacta Est*: The die is cast! Represents the number of re-rolls available to a leader during a battle or a siege.

*Bellum Servile*: The wars initiated by rebellious slaves. The title of the original game.

*Classis Piratarum* and *Classis Romana*: Pirate and Roman fleet  
The Mediterranean had always been infested by pirates. Only Rome can staunch this wound and assure prosperity and cohesion to their Empire.

*Consul*: title given to the two leaders of the Roman State elected for a year. Only the consuls have the power to defeat the rebellious slaves.

*Elysii Campi*: The Elysian Fields. The name for paradise for the Romans.

*Fortuna*: Goddess of good fortune, of chance.

A good general is always favoured by Fortune in the view of the ancients or by luck Napoléon. Caesar speaks frequently of Fortune to justify his defeats and his victories.

*Imperator*: signifies a victorious Roman general, it was an honorific. In French, the nearest term would be marshal not emperor. Declaring Spartacus Imperator, was a provocation to the roman Military nobility who sought this honour above all others!

*Memento Mori*: Remember that you must die.

*Praetor*: The praetor, elected for one year, can recruit and lead an army in combat. He often replaces a consul who is busy elsewhere. Equipped with few resources, he was often beaten by more numerous rebel armies.

*Tempus Anni*: The Seasons of a year (Ver: Spring, Aestas: Summer, Autumnus: Autumn, Hiems: Winter)

*Vae Victis*: Woe to the vanquished! A phrase attributed to Brennus when he defeated the Romans and demanded a heavy tribute.

On the marker is a statue of a defeated Gaul, a statue of a defeated Roman did not exist.....!

### CREDITS

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**Dedication:** This game is dedicated to all those oppressed who struggle for liberty and to my third child who arrived at the same time as the game!

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