

LIVY, TITUS MANLIUS TORQUATUS AND THE GLADIATORIAL *PROLUSIO*

I

Livy's description of the single combat between Titus Manlius (soon to be Torquatus) and the enormous Gallic warrior in Book VII is one of the most dramatic and finely crafted episodes in the *AUC*.¹ Faced with this massive opponent calling for a champion to face him in single combat, the Roman soldiers – specifically the *primores iuvenum Romanorum* – stood silent until Manlius finally accepted the challenge.² Livy recounts in detail the formal preparation undertaken. First, Manlius officially sought permission from the dictator to engage in single combat.³ He said that he intended to show “that beast” as he “danced around in front of the enemy” that he came from the family that had thrown the Gauls off the Capitoline (7,10,3: *volo ego illi beluae ostendere, quando adeo ferrox praesultat hostium signis, me ex ea familia ortum quae Gallorum agmen ex rupe Tarpeia deiecit*). When permission had been given, his comrades armed him and then led him to the site of the duel. Livy describes how the two men then stood alone between the two armies so that it appeared more a *spectaculum* – a gladiatorial fight – than a military encounter (7,10,6: *duo in medio armati spectaculi magis more quam lege belli destituuntur*). In appearance and demeanour the two men were entirely different: the Gaul, taunting Manlius by sticking out his tongue, was huge and elaborately

1) Liv. 7,9,8–10,14. The event is usually dated to 361 B. C. (cf. Livy 6,42,5, where he rejects the date 367 B. C.). For discussion, see S. P. Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy, Books VI–X, Volume II (Books VII–VIII)*, Oxford 1998, 113–148.

2) For a discussion of Manlius' status as a *iuvenis* in this passage, see J. P. Néraudau, *L'exploit de Titus Manlius Torquatus (Tite-Live VII, 9, 6–10) (réflexion sur la iuventus archaïque chez Tite-Live)*, in: *L'Italie préromaine et la Rome républicaine: Mélanges offerts à Jacques Heurgon*, Rome 1976, 685–94.

3) Manlius will later execute his own son for disobeying orders and fighting in single combat: see Liv. 8,7,1–22 for the whole episode.

equipped; Manlius was a much smaller man armed with simple, effective, yet unadorned armament. He was calm and quiet. This is how Livy describes Manlius immediately prior to the combat (7,10,8):

Non cantus, non exsultatio armorumque agitatio vana, sed pectus animorum iraeque tacitae plenum; omnem ferociam in discrimen ipsum certaminis distulerat.

The fight itself was brief; easily evading the overhand cutting stroke of the barbarian, Manlius shoved the Gaul's shield aside with his own, moved in close, and with two quick stabbing thrusts, felled his massive opponent. Manlius stripped only the torque from the defeated Gaul and returned to his lines a champion, hailed by his comrades with a new *cognomen*: Torquatus.

It is Manlius' behaviour, or rather his lack of behaviour (no singing, dancing or brandishing of weapons), immediately before the fight that interests me in this paper. Why did Livy tell us what Manlius was not doing? Claudius Quadrigarius, who had also recorded the events of this single combat and served as the key source for Livy, left out any such detail, noting only the difference in size between the two men and the simplicity of the Roman's attire and weapons compared to those of his Gallic adversary.⁴ It would seem obvious that Livy is here offering a further comparison between the Gallic and Roman champions: not only did their appearances sharply differ, but so too did their conduct. In that case, we may be meant to assume that it was the Gaul who sang and danced and brandished his weapons as Manlius stood there silent and still. Certainly that is how most scholars who comment on this passage interpret it. For example, Dirk Anton Pauw specifically ascribes the *cantus*, *exsultatio* and the *armorum agitatio vana* to the Gaul, as do Jutta Fries, Andrew Feldherr and Stephen Oakley among others.⁵ But while the *exsultatio* does call to mind the *praesultat* of 7,10,3, where Manlius himself complained about the Gaul

4) Claud. Quad. (fr. 10b) quoted in Gell. (9,13,7–19). Many scholars have commented on Livy's embellishment of Quadrigarius' version: see Oakley (see n. 1) 113–123 for a recent discussion (with bibliographic references at 114).

5) D. A. Pauw, The Dramatic Element in Livy's *History*, *Acta Classica* 34, 1991, 33–49, at 36; J. Fries, *Der Zweikampf. Historische und literarische Aspekte seiner Darstellung bei T. Livius*, Meisenheim 1985, 95; Oakley (see n. 1) 142; A. Feldherr, *Spectacle and Society in Livy's History*, Berkeley 1998, 101 and 185–7.

“dancing in front of the enemy lines”, there is no explicit mention in Livy of the Gaul singing or brandishing weapons.⁶ Furthermore, there does not seem to be a scholarly consensus on the meaning of these supposed actions. Oakley argues that such behaviour was an “ethnographic commonplace” expected by Roman readers in descriptions of barbaric Gauls (and Germans). He lists a number of parallels for Gallic (and other) barbarians shrieking and dancing or jumping around before battle.⁷ Feldherr instead considers the difficulty that Livy had in “making visible” the steady, inner resolve of the Roman: hence the negative description. He interprets the elaborate appearance and the presumed behaviour of the Gaul – singing, dancing and brandishing weapons – as intentionally reminiscent of Late Republican theatrical performances, arguing that Livy presented elements of the theatre as morally vacant and unable to offer the same sorts of proper edifying examples that history could.⁸

Although there is no doubt that Livy is contrasting both the appearance and the behaviour of the two combatants in order to emphasise the Roman’s (and the Romans’) superior nature and approach to battle,⁹ I would like to explore the possibility that, in describing Manlius in the way that he did, Livy was continuing his gladiatorial metaphor. Only a few lines before his (negative) description of Manlius’ demeanour, Livy had compared the image of the two men facing one another to a *spectaculum*, with the assembled soldiers of both armies gathered around to watch (7,10,6). Oakley has persuasively shown that Livy was thinking of this *spectaculum* as a sort of gladiatorial encounter.¹⁰ If the confrontation

6) Feldherr (see n. 5, 186) admits, “The term *cantus* is not strictly appropriate to the Gaul, who has only spoken and stuck out his tongue, but it is a component of dramatic performance and is explicitly mentioned as such by Livy.” Quadrigarius’ text described the Gaul as *cantabundus* (singing) before the fight, though other manuscripts have *cunctabundus* or *cautabundus*.

7) Oakley (see n. 1) 142; B. Kremer also ascribes the singing to the Gaul and describes it as *clamor Gallicus*, see B. Kremer, *Das Bild der Kelten bis in Augusteische Zeit*, Stuttgart 1994, 28.

8) Feldherr (see n. 5) 101 and 185–7.

9) So, e. g., J. Lipovsky, *A Historiographical Commentary on Livy, Books VI–X*, New York 1981, 95. Vegetius (Mil. 1.12) notes Roman attitudes towards the importance and superiority of thrusting with the weapon as opposed to simply cutting with it, as barbarians are supposed to have done.

10) Oakley (see n. 1) 140 and also S. P. Oakley, *Livy’s Duels*, CR 37, 1987, 34–36, at 35. Cf. Liv. 1,25,5 and 8,7,9. I. Borzsák, *Spectaculum: Ein Motiv der tragischen*

was like a gladiatorial *spectaculum*, then the two combatants were like gladiators. So how would Livy and his readers have expected gladiators to behave at the start of their fight? Our evidence suggests that a gladiatorial fight in Livy's day was typically preceded or opened by a distinct spectacle known as a *prolusio*. During this *prolusio*, the gladiators brandished their weapons with no intention to harm one another, performing (that is the best word for it) graceful movements, perhaps even with music and singing. The surprising actions of gladiators in the *prolusio* appear very much like those actions specifically denied to Manlius (and often assumed for his Gallic adversary): singing, dancing and the silly brandishing of weapons.

II

To my knowledge, we have no direct description of a gladiatorial *prolusio*. Nor is the term epigraphically attested.¹¹ Instead, we find it used metaphorically by Cicero in particular, not really to describe gladiators, but rather to clarify a rhetorical explanation. Speeches are like fights: the *schola* is like the *ludus* and the *forum* like the *arena*, as Seneca says.¹² This is in fact a common metaphor: many authors compare forensic oratory to combat.¹³ A passage

Geschichtsschreibung bei Livius und Tacitus, Acta Classica Debrecenensis 9, 1973, 57–67, at 60, describes the encounter as “Theatralität” rather than strictly gladiatorial. For other spectacular single combats, see Liv. 1,25; 21,42,1–43,2; 23,47,3; 28,33,16; 33,9,4. In each case the combat is described as a *spectaculum*. The visibility of the *exemplum* is an important aspect in the *exempla* collected by Valerius Maximus: see the discussion by M. Leigh, *Lucan: Spectacle and Engagement*, Oxford 1997, 181–4.

11) I thank Prof. Guy Chamberland for a helpful discussion of the Latin epigraphic evidence. Though *prolusiones* are not attested epigraphically, some scholars, in particular A. Degrassi (Ins. It. XIII¹ 227–228), have seen the *lusiones* as equivalents. For *lusiones*, see M. Fora, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell' Occidente Romano IV. Regio Italiae I: Latium*, Rome 1996, nos. 9, 10, 11, 17, and 30, each with bibliography. Amphitheatrical *lusiones* are not known before the time of Trajan, long after the literary evidence for the *prolusio* (see below). For discussion, see G. Chamberland, *The Production of Shows in the Cities of the Roman Empire: A Study of the Latin Epigraphic Evidence*, Diss., McMaster University, Hamilton 2001, 75–9, and M. G. Mosci Sassi, *Il Linguaggio Gladiatorio*, Bologna 1992, 159 n. 261.

12) Sen. Controv. 3 praef. 13.

13) E. g. Cic. de Orat. 3,86; Tac. Dial. 34,5; Quint. 5,12,17.

from Cicero's *de Oratore* is usually cited as the most important reference for the gladiatorial *prolusio*. Here Cicero compares the opening remarks made by an orator to the *prolusio* of gladiators (2,325):

Atque eiusmodi illa prolusio debet esse, non ut Samnitium, qui vibrant hastas ante pugnam quibus in pugnando nihil utuntur, sed ut ipsi sententiis quibus proluserint vel pugnare possint.

The gladiators, here samnites in particular, shake or brandish (*vibrant*) weapons before their fight, even though they will not use them during the actual combat. The orator, however, ought already to be using the words and arguments – his weapons – with which he intends to fight later in the speech. The actions of the samnites are particularly interesting for our purposes: they perform or show off military moves by shaking their spears. This happens before the real work of the combat begins and for that they do not even use the spears at all.

Starting from this passage, Georges Lafaye in the nineteenth century characterised the *prolusio* as a sort of 'séance d'escrime' in which the gladiators, armed with play weapons (*arma lusoria*), practiced and prepared for the combats to ensue. Lafaye further suggested that distinguished amateurs might have been able to enter the arena at this point to display their martial abilities, too.¹⁴ Most scholars follow Lafaye's interpretation.¹⁵ Recently, for example, Marcus Junkelmann has characterised the *prolusio* as a sort of spectacle involving blunted, play weapons. He reasonably suggests that these blunted weapons might even have been the wooden *rudes* used in training. According to Junkelmann, once the gladiators had "warmed up" in this way, having displayed their skills and

14) G. Lafaye, *Gladiator*, in: *Dar.-Sag.* II (1896) 1563–1599, at 1594, cites Cass. Dio 65,15,2 and 73,19,5 for examples of amateurs (actually the emperors Titus and Commodus) displaying their military / gladiatorial skills in the arena.

15) K. Schneider, *Gladiatores*, *RE Suppl.* III (1918) 760–784, at 781; L. Friedländer, *Darstellungen aus der Sittengeschichte Roms*, 10th Ed., Vol. II, Leipzig 1922, 72 (*Scheinkampf*); M. Grant, *Gladiators*, London 1967, 73–4; R. Auguet, *Cruelty and Civilisation: The Roman Games*, London 1972, 40–1; Mosci Sassi (see n. 11) 158–61; M. Junkelmann, *Das Spiel mit dem Tod: So kämpften Roms Gladiatoren*, Mainz 2000, 133 and 147–8 and also *idem*, *Familia Gladiatoria: The Heroes of the Amphitheatre*, in: K. Köhne and C. Ewigleben (edd.), *Gladiators and Caesars. The Power of Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, Berkeley 2000, 31–74, at 66; S. Shadrake, *The World of the Gladiator*, Gloucestershire 2005, 120.

put the spectators, as he says, “in the right mood for the spectacles to follow”, their real weapons (*ferra acuta*) would be brought out and inspected so that the official combats could begin.¹⁶ This inspection is known to us as the *probatio armorum*, though the evidence for the ceremony is limited and the phrase itself was coined by Lafaye.¹⁷ By this formulation, the *prolusio* appears to be a separate, warm-up event, held before the gladiatorial fights took place – before the gladiators even had their proper weapons.

Georges Ville, however, in his masterful volume on *gladiatura* in the Roman West, paid little attention to the *prolusio*, though he suggested that if it did exist, it would be “une démonstration élégante” and that its character would tend toward the showy.¹⁸ Furthermore, Ville would place the *prolusio* after the so-called *probatio armorum*, that is, opposite to the way that Lafaye and the others would have it. Ville assumes that this *prolusio* referred to a preliminary element in the actual combat – the gladiators’ showy opening moves – rather than a separate, ceremonial warm-up event. From Cicero’s description (above), it is difficult to be certain when this *prolusio* is supposed to have taken place. Does he imagine that it occurs at some sort of preliminary “warm-up” spectacle? Or at the beginning of the actual fight? *Ante pugnam* is too vague in this respect.

But there is more from Cicero. A little earlier he had been drawn into the comparison between the preliminary stages of gladiatorial combat (again between samnites) and the introduction to a speech.¹⁹ The passage is longer, but worth quoting in full (2,315–17):

Principia autem dicendi semper cum accurata et acuta et instructa sententiis, apta verbis, tum vero causarum propria esse debent; prima est enim quasi cognitio et commendatio orationis in principio, quaeque continuo eum, qui audit, permulcere atque allicere debet; [316] in quo admirari soleo non equidem istos, qui nullam huic rei operam dederunt,

16) Junkelmann, *Familia* (see n. 15) 66.

17) Lafaye (see n. 14) 1594; its existence is accepted by e.g. G. Ville, *La gladiature en occident des origines à la mort de Domitien*, BEFAR 245, Rome 1981, 407 (tentatively); Mosci Sassi (see n. 11) 57; Junkelmann, *Das Spiel* (see n. 15) 130. Ancient references to the procedure: see Cass. Dio 68,3,2 and Suet. Tit. 9,2. For sharp weapons, see now M. Carter, *Gladiatorial Combat with “Sharp” Weapons* (τοῖς δόξεσι σιδηροῖς), ZPE 155, 2006, 161–75.

18) Ville (see n. 17) 407–408.

19) Cf. Mosci Sassi (see n. 11) 159.

sed hominem in primis disertum atque eruditum, Philippum, qui ita solet surgere ad dicendum, ut quod primum verbum habiturus sit, nesciat; et ait idem, cum brachium concafecerit, tum se solere pugnare; neque attendit eos ipsos, unde hoc simile ducat, primas illas hastas ita iactare leniter, ut et venustati vel maxime serviant et reliquis viribus suis consulant. [317] Nec est dubium, quin exordium dicendi vehemens et pugna non saepe esse debeat; sed si in ipso illo gladiatorio vitae certamine, quo ferro decernitur, tamen ante congressum multa fiunt, quae non ad vulnus, sed ad speciem valere videantur, quanto hoc magis in oratione est spectandum, in qua non vis potius quam delectatio postulatur!

Even though Cicero does not call the actions of the samnites here a *prolusio*, it is clear that this introductory element of combat informs both passages: the gladiators are samnites and they are doing harmless things with spears “before they join battle” (*ante congressum*) “in an actual gladiatorial fight to the death” (*in ipso illo gladiatorio vitae certamine*). Cicero is drawing on the gladiatorial *prolusio* as metaphor for the introduction to a speech (*principia dicendi*): if a speech is like a combat (a *pugna*), then the introduction to a speech is like the *prolusio* to a *pugna*. According to this model, a *prolusio* therefore ought to be the opening element in an actual fight between gladiators, as Ville would have it, and not some preliminary, warm-up show, unconnected to the real fight. Indeed, that this is the case is suggested by the larger context of the passage: Cicero (at 325) specifically rejects the musical *prooemium* as a model for the introductory remarks of a speech, because it (the *prooemium*) has nothing to do with the rest of the musical piece that follows, whereas the *prolusio* has everything to do with the fight that follows; indeed, it is part of the fight.

Other authors and works, however, seem to imply that the *prolusio* was instead a sort of training exercise not immediately connected to a fight, and this has led to some confusion. Even Cicero himself in another work implies a difference between a *prolusio* and a real fight.²⁰ Ovid likewise seems to suggest that little Cupid played (*prolusit*) with blunt *rudes*, but then armed himself with sharp arrows for real combat.²¹ The fourth century

20) Cic. Div. Caec. 47: *sin mecum in hac proluisione nihil fueris, quem te in ipsa pugna cum acerrimo adversario fore putemus?*

21) Ovid, Ars Amat. 3,515–6: *Sic ubi prolusit, rudibus puer ille relictis / Spicula de pharetra promit acuta sua*. See also Verg. Aen. 12,103–106 and Georg. 3,232–234 where a bull prepares for battle.

author, Vegetius, a specialist in military science, twice uses the term *prolusio* to refer to drill, though more often he prefers simply to call it *armatura*.²² These later references, though brief, suggest that the *prolusio* could refer to preliminary practicing or shadow fighting: that is, training exercises unconnected to actual combat. This would seem to support the ideas of Lafaye, Junkelmann and others that the *prolusio* was a distinct, initial element of the *munus*, separate from the actual combat. How should we account for the difference?

I would argue that it was the nature of the *prolusio* that made it a suitable term to describe both the preliminary element in an actual combat as well as the practice of fighters in training. This is because, as Cicero says, during the opening stages of a gladiatorial fight the two combatants did not try to hurt each other, much as two soldiers or gladiators in training would have practiced moves but not deliberately attempted to harm one another. Thus, although the *prolusio* technically referred to the opening stages of a gladiatorial combat, the term described actions that were similar in nature to the playful fencing sessions during which gladiators and soldiers practiced with each other. For that reason the term could be applied loosely to this sort of weapons-practice.

III

It is the nature of the *prolusio* that so interests us. Technically the term referred to the showy opening stages in a fight between two gladiators. How closely did it resemble the singing, dancing, and empty brandishing of weapons that Livy denied to Manlius?

Armorum Agitatio Vana:

It seems clear from Cicero that one of the key aspects in the gladiatorial *prolusio* was the brandishing of weapons: he says that the gladiators at first shook their spears (*vibrant hastas*) and threw them as gracefully as possible (*primas illas hastas ita iactare leniter*,

22) Vegetius, Mil. 1,13: ... *et milites, qui parum in illa proluisione profecerant, pro frumento hordeum cogereantur accipere, nec ante eis in tritico redderetur annona, quam sub praesentia praefecti legionis, tribunorum uel principiorum experimentis datis ostendissent se omnia, quae erant in militari arte, complere* ... Cf. 2,23.

ut et venustati vel maxime serviant). But they did not attempt to harm each other during this initial phase and indeed they did not even use the spears in their actual encounter. The shaking of spears in this way was done as a sort of performance. While it was undoubtedly an entertaining spectacle, it was in many ways meaningless for the combat to follow, except perhaps as a means of intimidation. This is very close to Livy's phrase describing what Manlius was not doing: *armorum agitatio vana*.

Exsultatio:

According to Cicero, the gladiators' movements in the *prolusio* were not only harmless but were also meant to be as graceful as possible.²³ This gracefulness may have been encouraged and assisted by musical accompaniment. Petronius directly implies that a gladiator fought to the sounds of the *hydraulus*: *ut putares essedarium hydraule cantante pugnare* (Sat. 36.5).²⁴ In some more complex illustrations of the arena, musicians are shown accompanying gladiatorial combats. For example, the famous gladiatorial mosaic from Zliten (in modern Libya) twice depicts an orchestra of four musicians providing orchestral accompaniment for the combat of multiple gladiators. The musicians include one playing a *tuba*, one playing a *hydraulus* and two seated men playing the *cornu*.²⁵ Of equal importance is the inscribed graffito from tomb 14 EN outside the Porta Nocera at Pompeii, which depicts the combat of the gladiators, Hilarus and Creunus. On the right are depicted three trumpeters while to the left are three (or four?) people playing the *cornu*.²⁶ But the music, as Petronius indicates, did not only fill the time between fights, but actually accompanied them. Melanippos, a *retiarius* who died at Alexandria Troas, laments the fact that he will no longer hear the voice of the bronze trumpet nor when com-

23) Cicero expects that those trained in the use of arms were concerned both with avoiding and striking blows with gracefulness: *ut cum venustate moveantur* (de Orat. 3,200).

24) Ville (see n. 17) 373. See also C. J. Simpson, Musicians and the Arena: Dancers and the Hippodrome, *Latomus* 59, 2000, 633–9.

25) The orchestras appear at opposite corners of the mosaic. See S. Aurigemma, *I mosaici di Zliten*, Rome 1926, 150–4.

26) P. Sabbatini Tumolesi, *Gladiatorum Paria*. *Annunci di Spettacoli Gladiatori Pompei*, Rome 1980, no. 71 and A. D'Ambrosio and S. De Caro, *Un Impegno per Pompei*, Milan 1983, 14 EN.

peting rouse the din of the unequal pipes (the *hydraulis*): οὐκέτι χαλκε[λ]άτου φωνὴν σάλπιγγοσ ἀκούω[ω] [οὐ]δ' ἀνίσων αὐλῶν κέλαδον ἀ[εθ]λῶν ἀνεγείρω.²⁷ Other evidence specifies music at the beginning of the combat, when the *prolusio* was performed. An epitaph for a flute-player (*tibicen*) named Iustus records how his music called the gladiators to arms: *Tibicinis cantu ... gladiantes in arma vocavi*.²⁸ So we should imagine the gladiators during their *prolusio* behaving gracefully to musical accompaniment. I believe that we might think of this as dancing.

Can we think of this dancing as *exsultatio*? Certainly the term is derived from the verb *saltare* which connotes both jumping and dancing. The Gaul is said to jump around or dance in front of the enemy line in issuing the initial challenge (*praesultat hostium signis*). The verb *exsultare* would indicate especially vigorous leaping, though it could presumably also refer to dancing, especially martial dancing.²⁹ Statius provides one clear example of the use of the verb *exsultare* to describe (militaristic) dancing: *qualis Berecynthia mater / dum parvum circa iubet exsultare Tonantem / Curetas trepidos* (Theb. 4,789–91).³⁰ The Curetes, of course, danced about clashing their spears on their shields and to conceal the cries of baby Zeus. This *exsultatio* of the Curetes is similar to the actions of gladiators in the *prolusio*, specifically their jumping or dancing to musical accompaniment and the waving of their weapons. In many ways the *prolusio* is reminiscent of the Greek war dance, the *pyrriche*. Like the *prolusio*, the *pyrriche* involved rhythmic leaping and the avoidance of missiles real or imaginary.³¹

27) IGR III 43 = L. Robert, *Les gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec*, Paris 1940, reprinted Amsterdam 1971, 234–5 no. 298 = M. Riel, *The Inscriptions of Alexandria Troas*, Bonn 1997, no. 123 = R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber, *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten*. Band I: Die Westküste Kleinasien von Knidos bis Ilion, Leipzig 1998, no. 07/05/01. Cf. T. Corsten, *Die Inschriften von Laodikeia am Lykos*, Bonn 1997, no. 81 = Merkelbach and Stauber, no. 02/14/09 for the epitaph of the gladiator Asbolas from Laodicea who claims that he will no longer hear the voice of the bronze trumpet: χαλκελάτων δὲ βοὴν σαλπίνγων οὐκέτ' ἀκούω].

28) CIL X 4915 = ILS 5150 (lines 7–8). Cf. *Juv.* 3,34–7 for *cornicines* playing at *numera*.

29) OLD s. v. Quintilian (*Inst.* 9,4,91) does use it of rhythmic cadences.

30) I am using the 2003 Loeb text of D. R. Shackleton Bailey. At *Theb.* 4,659, Statius describes the triumphal procession of Dionysius with the *exsultantes Mimallones*. Later we hear about the musical accompaniment for the procession.

31) See W. J. Slater, *Three Problems in the History of Drama*, *Phoenix* 47, 1993, 189–212, at 200–205 (with earlier bibliography). Euripides famously de-

Cantus:

Although Cicero does not say anything about singing when he describes the *prolusio*, a famous fragment of Festus (285M) asserts that a *retiarius* taunted his opponent in song while fighting:

*Retiario pugnanti adversus murmillonem cantatur: "Non te peto, piscem peto, quid me fugis, Galle?" quia murmillonicum genus armaturae Gallicum est, ipsique murmillones ante Galli appellabantur; in quorum galeis piscis effigies inerat.*³²

Festus imagines that the *retiarius* sang as the two were fighting: that is the force of the present participle *pugnanti*, but we may speculate that this happened at the beginning of the fight, as the two combatants closed on one another, rather than during the heat of combat.³³ An initial *provocatio*, usually offered by the enemy, was a typical feature of military single combats.³⁴ Perhaps it was typical of gladiators too. The *provocator* is a well-attested armament-type. It may be, however, that the term, *provocator*, like *secutor*, is more an indication of tactics, that is, as one who especially challenges or incites combat. The gladiator Agroikos, who was buried in Tomis, describes himself as a "*provocator* in battle": πυγμῆι προβοκάτορα and a funerary inscription from Padua for the gladiator Iuvenis unusually describes his profession with the participle, *provocans*, rather than with the expected noun, *provocator*, defining who he was by what he did.³⁵ This would support the idea that the appellation, *provocator*, is as much a description of technique as it is an abstract name for a particular armament type.

scribes leaping and avoiding missiles: Eur. Andr. 1129–1136, cf. Plato, Leg. 815a–c. So E. K. Borhwick, Trojan Leap and Pyrrich Dance in Euripides' *Andromache* 1129–41, JHS 87, 1967, 18–23, and E. L. Wheeler, *Hoplomachia* and Greek Dances in Arms, GRBS 23, 1983, 223–3, at 231. Armed dancing in Italy was as old as the Etruscans: see G. Camporeale, La Danza Armata in Etruria, MEFRA 99, 1987, 11–42.

32) Cf. Lafaye (see n. 14) 1587 n. 18; Ville (see n. 17) 408; and Mosci Sassi (see n. 11) 144. Slater (see n. 31, 202) adds that the *pyrriche* was accompanied by singing.

33) In the dream of the Christian martyr Perpetua, her comrades celebrated her victory in combat (that is at the end of the fight) by singing: *et coepit populus clamare et favisores mei psallere* (Mart. Perpetuae et Felicitatis 12). Perpetua's fight was either a *pancratium* or gladiatorial fight.

34) Oakley (see n. 10).

35) Inscription from Tomis: J. Stoian, Tomitana, Contributii epigrafice la istoria cetatii Tomis, Bucuresti 1962, 199 no. 3 (pl. 51) = ISM II, 2 no. 288. Inscription from Padua: CIL V 2884 = ILS 5107 = G. L. Gregori, Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell'Occidente Romano II. Regione Italiae VI–XI, Rome 1989, no. 43.

IV

Livy certainly wished to distinguish the bearing and character of the two combatants, but I would suggest that Livy also wished to distinguish Manlius' behaviour from that expected of a gladiator. Only a few lines earlier he had directly compared the image of Manlius facing his Gallic opponent to a gladiatorial *spectaculum*. Were Livy's readers then to expect that they should behave like gladiators, too? The above discussion considered what that might have been like and whether the actions denied to Manlius were similar to gladiators' opening performances. I have argued that two gladiators began their combat with a *prolusio*, during which they brandished their weapons, without any attempt to harm one another, and performed graceful movements, probably to musical accompaniment, perhaps even with song, as they taunted or provoked one another and performed for the spectators. In a general way, therefore, the elements of the gladiatorial *prolusio* match those actions that Livy denies to Manlius (and that we assume for the Gaul): singing, dancing and the silly brandishing of weapons.

If indeed Livy's readers were expecting the two men to behave like gladiators at the start of a fight, then Livy corrects them: though the Gaul may have been acting like a gladiator, singing, dancing and foolishly brandishing his weapons at the beginning of the fight, Livy wants his readers to know that Manlius was not doing such things. However much the overall confrontation appeared – even to Livy himself – like a gladiatorial *spectaculum*, Manlius was not performing a gladiatorial *prolusio*: he was not acting like a gladiator. Instead, Manlius was holding himself with the reserved discipline expected of a Roman soldier.

Though the Romans recognised the similarities between gladiatorial combat and actual military fighting, they were also clear about the differences.³⁶ Ps.-Quintilian characterises the restrictions found in gladiatorial combat as a *lex pugnandi*, and notes the difference between the spectacle and actual military combat: *facinus indignum, illum animum, illum ardorem non contigisse castris, non*

36) See V. W. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome 327–70 BC*, Oxford 1979, 38–9; Fries (see n. 5); S. P. Oakley, *Single Combat in the Roman Republic*, CQ 35, 1985, 392–410; and especially T. Wiedemann, *Single Combat and Being Roman*, *Anc. Soc.* 27, 1996, 91–103, for the importance of single combat in Roman martial mentality.

bellicis certaminibus, ubi vera virtus nulla pugnandi lege praecircumscribitur (Decl. 9.9, as emended by Dessauer). Gladiatorial combat was confined by rules and expected behaviour whereas actual military single combat – and the resultant glory – was not so restricted.³⁷ Moreover, a gladiator was after all a slave condemned as infamous and worthless. The Roman hero Titus Manlius Torquatus could not be tainted with this sort of characterisation. Manlius was a famous Roman soldier, not an *infamis* gladiatorial slave.

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37) See M. Carter, Gladiatorial Combat: the Rules of Engagement, CJ 102, 2006, 97–113.