

# **Beyond the Arena:**

A Literary and Epigraphic Study of 1<sup>st</sup> Century

Conceptions of Gladiators

Honors Thesis in Classics

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## Preface

Romans knew the names of their gladiators. Some knew from firsthand experience with the arena and others from secondhand experience through graffiti. Others still knew from literary accounts or material objects distributed throughout the empire. Even if they never saw the gladiators in person, many Romans of the 1<sup>st</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> century were still able to be fans just as many of us are today.

In this thesis, I will be investigating how gladiators became popular and how fans interacted with these entertainer fighters using an increasingly written, not oral, tradition. Gladiators became a common expression of ‘Roman’ culture that manifested itself in a variety of different ways. However, the transmission of the names of these gladiators made this Roman cultural manifestation distinct from others. Romans from all echelons of society participated in different contexts for the same purpose of acting as the ‘fan’. At every turn, whether on the walls in places of heavy pedestrian traffic<sup>1</sup> or at the centerpiece of dinner party discussions, they wanted to share their intrigue in particular fighters with one another. Outside of the arena, gladiators became subject to the discretion of fans. Certain fights were emphasized and errors made in recounting the details especially at considerable temporal and spatial distance from the original performance.

Let us begin with a particular gladiator named *Spiculus*. *Spiculus* is known from literary and epigraphic sources alike. From the historian Suetonius, we learn that the fighter rose to such popularity that he became a protégée of the emperor Nero. Suetonius also reveals that Nero, in his final days, wanted *Spiculus* to assist him in his suicide. The fame brought on by his interactions with Nero was not without its downsides. According to the historian Plutarch, angry

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<sup>1</sup>Benefiel, 2010, 87.

mobs brutally murdered *Spiculus* following Nero's death. From a graffito at Pompeii, we know that *Spiculus* won a pivotal fight that launched his career. According to the body of glass fragments with inscriptions and depictions of gladiators, *Columbus* was the quintessential enemy that *Spiculus* overcame. As we look to the ancient sources—archeological and literary—the narrative of *Spiculus's* life begins to take shape. But the implications of his story through artifacts will prove most vital to this study of the fans of the arena.

## Chapter I: *SPICVLVS*

Evidence from literary and historical sources pinpoints the scenes on glass cups found largely *outside* of Italy to fights largely performed *within* Italy. *Spiculus*, *Petraites*, and *Columbus* are among those named on the cylindrical or ovoid glass cups who, for different reasons, warrant mention by historians and poets. In this chapter, by an in-depth investigation of the most renowned gladiator across sources, *Spiculus*, it will be possible to reconstruct his life and will provide context for the study of Roman mold-blown glass cups with depictions of gladiators and inscriptions of their respective names in Chapter IV.

### The Rise

Mentioned ten times on known gladiator cup fragments<sup>2</sup>, *Spiculus* fought as a *murmillio* as is explained by historical, epigraphic, and visual evidence. Suetonius twice calls him

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<sup>2</sup>PBH 4, 6, 8, 14, 17, 25, 29, 37, 47, and 52.

“*Spiculum murmillonem*”<sup>3</sup> whereas Plutarch does not specify, simply labeling him as a “gladiator” in Greek (“*Σπίκλον...τὸν μονομάχον*”<sup>4</sup>).



**Figure I.1: Spiculus defeats Aracintus (PBHG 16)**

“*ad. sin. SPICVLVS NER(ONIANVS) V(ICIT) / TIRO*  
*ad. d. APTQNETVS P(ERIT) / LIB[E]R(TVS) XVI*”

His fighting class is corroborated by his appearance on the walls of the House of the Faun in Pompeii (VI 12.2.5)<sup>5</sup>, as we see in Figure I.1. On the right, *Spiculus* stands in a victorious pose against his veteran opponent *Aptonetus*. According to the inscription, *Spiculus* killed *Aptonetus* from the “P” next to his name, which is an abbreviation for “*Periit*”, meaning “perished”. We will consider the additional information supplied by the other parts of the inscription in subsequent sections. For all intents and purposes here, the illustration is what we will analyze. In the graffito, *Spiculus* is clearly labeled and drawn with a distinctive pointed crest atop his helmet, a large *gladius*, large rectangular *scutum*, and armored limbs. These are all telltale indicators of a *murmillo* (See Figure I.2).<sup>6</sup> Finally, the similarity between figures on the glass cups hinders the strength of inferences made about fighting class. Having said that, the rather large size of his

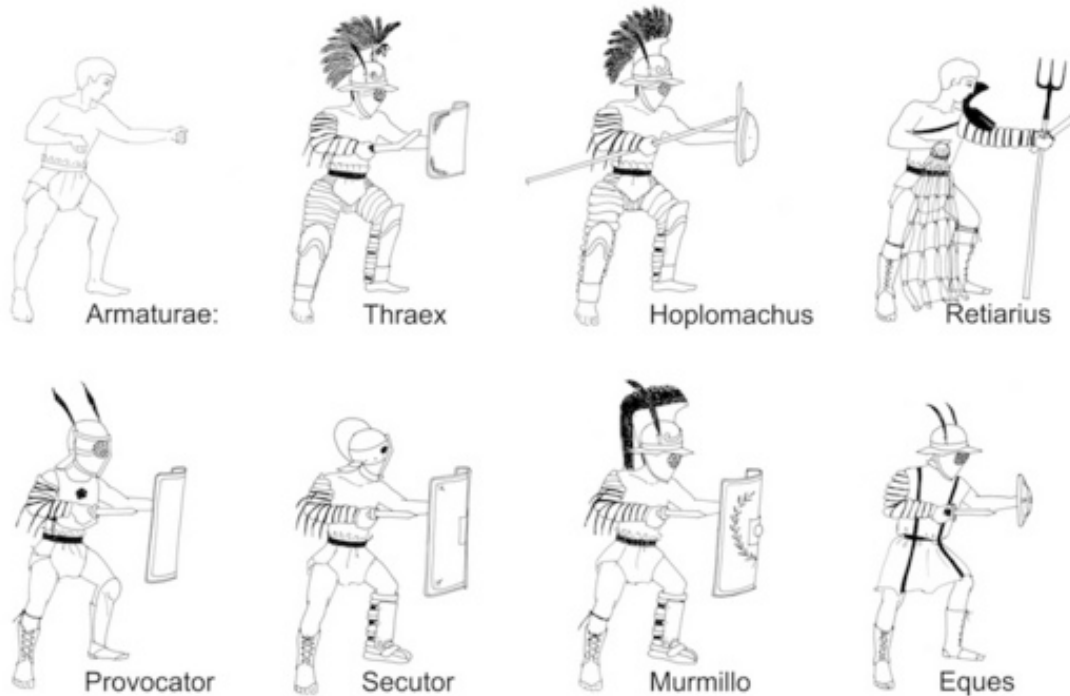
<sup>3</sup>Suetonius, VI.30; VI.47.

<sup>4</sup>Plut. *Vit. Galb.* VIII.

<sup>5</sup>CIL IV.1474

<sup>6</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 15.

*scutum* and the sloping spine of his helmet do seem to indicate that he was a *murmillo* as will be presented in both Chapters III and IV.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure I.2: Gladiator Class Illustration<sup>8</sup>**

Observe the representation of a *murmillo* and of a *Thraex* in Figure I.2. As a *murmillo*, from *μόρμυλος* which was a type of salt-water fish<sup>9</sup>, *Spiculus* would have had decorations of fish adorning his helmet and would have fought a *Thraex* or an *oplomachus*.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, the curved sword in the graffito from Pompeii indicates that he fought a *Thraex* named *Aptonetus*, other parts of the illustrated figures being equal.<sup>11</sup> As will be discussed later, the pose that *Spiculus*

<sup>7</sup>PBH 14.

<sup>8</sup>Kanz and Grossschmidt, 2007, fig. 1. These gladiator classes were solidified by the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE and continued well into the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries CE (Jacobelli, 2003, 6).

<sup>9</sup>Liddell and Scott, 1940, s.v. *μόρμυλος*.

<sup>10</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 15.

<sup>11</sup>CIL IV.1474.

strikes against *Aptonetus* here is similar to the one which he most frequently strikes on the *vascula vitrea*. Our famed gladiator defeats *Columbus* with the same posture and outstretched weaponry. However, *Columbus*, lying on the ground (a sign of defeat) to the right, contains features too vague to assign him to a fighting class. Because he was a *murmillo* of incredible popularity in his prime, *Spiculus* must have exerted even greater authority over perceptions about and within his fighting class. The sensationalism of his narrative ark as told by graffiti, historians, and glassmakers only furthered such authority.

We know the start of *Spiculus*'s fame from the graffito in Figure I.1 that has been briefly described. Along the entrance to the House of the Faun in Pompeii (VI 12.2.5)<sup>12</sup>, we see that *Spiculus* came from the Neronian *ludus* in Capua. Julius Caesar first adopted this gladiatorial school (*Ludus Iulianus*) and then Nero renamed it under his reign (*Ludus Neronianus*).<sup>13</sup> It was as a *tiro* or “novice” of the arena in the preeminent locale for training that *Spiculus* came to defeat *Aptonetus*, a *Libertus* with 16 appearances. What a spectacle it must have been for a young fighter to beat the clear favorite, a veteran of the arena. Not only was the fight a huge upset, but also only one gladiator survived as indicated by the “P” for *perit* next to *Aptonetus*' name. Perhaps the astonishment of the upset motivated the crowd or the *editor* of the arena to allow the death of *Aptonetus* out of sheer embarrassment. Or maybe *Spiculus* bested him with technical skill or even by chance. Regardless, the fight launched his career and his very name, a diminutive meaning “little sharp point” from *spiculum*, contributed to the craze surrounding his early success.

Sometime thereafter when he had become more experienced in the arena, *Spiculus* faced two fights (in our awareness) from which his fame grew exponentially. One among the

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<sup>12</sup>CIL IV.1474.

<sup>13</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 19.



discovered *vascula vitrea* testify to an opponent named *Aemilius* (“*AEMI\IV*”)<sup>14</sup> who fell to *Spiculus* as indicated by *Aemilius*’s dropped shield. However, several times higher in incidence, the gladiator *Columbus* (frequently “*COLVMBVS*” or some abbreviation) appears on glass sports cups alongside *Spiculus*.<sup>15</sup> In every instance and regardless of his opponent, *Spiculus* is victorious, towering over his challenger who lies helpless and prostrate. Exactly who were these enemies? Concerning *Aemilius*, there is no information in historical, literary, or epigraphic sources. For *Columbus*, on the other hand, Suetonius mentions that the emperor Caligula abused *Columbus*’ name for his own mad quirks. Caligula renamed the poison, that he applied to the small wound that *Columbus* had received after winning a fight, “*Columbinum*”.<sup>16</sup>

He gave some Thracian gladiators command of his German body-guard. He reduced the amount of armor of the *Murmillones*. When one *Columbus* had won a victory, but had suffered a slight wound, he had the place rubbed with a poison which he henceforth called “*Columbinum*”; at least that name was found included in his list of poisons. (LCL: Suet. *Calig.* IV.55)

No other mention of *Columbus* exists today. But, is this the same *Columbus*?

### ***Spiculus and Columbus***

The answer may not be as convenient as one would like. If we consider the information supplied by the Pompeian graffito, which labels *Spiculus* as a member of the Neronian school, then *Spiculus* must have entered the gladiatorial scene somewhere between 54-68 CE. Nearly 14 years span the gap between the reign of Caligula, in which *Columbus* is mentioned, and that of Nero. Is it possible that the *Columbus* of Caligula’s time was the same as the *Columbus* pictured alongside *Spiculus* of Nero’s time? Further consider that Suetonius refers to *Columbus* among

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<sup>14</sup>PBH 52.

<sup>15</sup>PBH 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 17, 25, 29.

<sup>16</sup>Suet. *Calig.* IV.55.

Caligula's delusional exploits that eventually led to his murder on January 24, 41 CE, described only several chapters later in his historical work.<sup>17</sup> Thus *Columbus*, though more popular in the late 30s and early 40s CE, could have survived long enough to have become *Spiculus's* victim in the mid 50s CE. And yet, it is equally likely that a gladiator from a subsequent generation began calling himself '*Columbus*' so as to be associated with his predecessor's glory. After all, a 14-year minimum gap presents a difficult problem when gladiators had a lower life expectancy to begin with because of sustained injuries, brutal training, and the obvious dangers of the arena.

### The Fall

Undoubtedly, Nero not only knew of *Spiculus*, but also was infatuated by the *murmillo*. The emperor, notorious for having little regard for controlling his finances, bestowed estates and land upon the gladiator *Spiculus* equal to what those celebrating a triumph would receive.<sup>18</sup> Consider the account from Suetonius about the emperor Nero's profligate actions, written about half a century later than the period of the emperor's reign.

Accordingly, he made presents and wasted money without stint. On *Tiridates*, though it would seem hardly within belief, he spent eight hundred thousand sesterces a day, and on his departure presented him with more than a hundred million. He gave the lyre-player *Menecrates* and the gladiator *Spiculus* properties and residences equal to those of men who had celebrated triumphs. He enriched the monkey-faced usurer *Paneros* with estates in the country and in the city and had him buried with almost regal splendor. (LCL: Suet. *Ner.* VI.30)

When Nero was deemed an enemy of the Senate and many of his trusted attendants had fled taking even the poison acquired from the alchemist *Lucusta*, Nero pleaded with *Spiculus* or anyone else experienced in executing others ("*alium percussorem*") to take his life.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Suet. *Calig.* IV.58.

<sup>18</sup>Suet. *Ner.* VI.30.

<sup>19</sup>Suet. *Ner.* VI.47.

Having therefore put off further consideration to the following day, he awoke about midnight and finding that the guard of soldiers had left, he sprang from his bed and sent for all his friends. Since no reply came back from anyone, he went himself to their rooms with a few followers. But finding that all the doors were closed and that no one replied to him, he returned to his own chamber, from which now the very caretakers had fled, taking with them even the bed-clothing and the box of poison. Then he at once called for the gladiator *Spiculus* or any other adept at whose hand he might find death, and when no one appeared, he cried "Have I then neither friend nor foe?" and ran out as if to throw himself into the Tiber. (LCL: Suet. *Ner.* VI.47)

In this intriguing way, *Spiculus* is no more a man than an instrument, a product of his deadly training and victories. Shortly following Nero's inevitable death, *Nymphidus Sabinus*, the usurper to Galba's emperorship and Prefect of the Praetorian Guard, attempted to gain the goodwill of the people by letting them have free reign over the fates of Nero's inner circle. Thus, a mob threw *Spiculus* under a statue of Nero being removed from the forum and murdered him on the spot.<sup>20</sup>

Again, in [*Nymphidus Sabinus's*] desire to gratify the people, he would not prevent them from beating to death any follower of Nero who fell into their hands. Accordingly, they cast *Spiculus* the gladiator under statues of Nero that were being dragged about in the forum, and killed him. (Plut. *Vit. Galb.* VIII)

His death was among the deaths of many others, many of whom were caught on the losing side despite not having committed any atrocities themselves. As we will learn in Chapter II, Nero's close relationship with *Spiculus* during the emperor's lifetime has serious implications on how fans viewed another contemporary gladiator, *Petrates*, as seen on Roman glassware and in *Petronius's Satyricon*.

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<sup>20</sup>Plut. *Vit. Galb.* VIII.

## **Chapter II: *Trimalchio's* Obsession with Gladiators in Epigraphic Art Forms is not Coincidental in the Literary Genius of *Petronius***

### ***Cena Trimalchionis* in *The Satyricon***

The *Satyricon* by *Gaius Petronius Arbiter* provides excellent insights into the lives of the Roman masses and, in particular, the popular culture of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. Constructed during the reign of Nero, the satire is a remarkable work of prose with some metrical insertions that details the adventures of *Encolpius*, the protagonist, through an uncanny representation of Roman society. For the purpose of this thesis, it will be useful to focus on the *Cena Trimalchionis*<sup>21</sup> because this part of the novel shows what ‘new-money’ citizens indulged in, what the epigraphic habit looked like in practice, and, in particular, the fervor for gladiators by the masses. Even though the work is fictional and exaggerates the social interactions and the materiality of the time period, we can still learn so much about Roman society in ways that we cannot from Roman historians and from modern archeology.

At the house of *Trimalchio*, an extremely wealthy freedman, *Encolpius* and his companions are entertained with several courses of extravagant foods, amazed by the decadence of material possessions, and told perversely false stories. The episode harkens back to the episodic structure and banqueting of the *Odyssey*. Although *Petronius's* work is meant to amuse his audience in the way of a fictional dinner party, the jokes seem to reveal conceptions of the popular culture of his time with unexpected twists. As a note of caution, *Encolpius*, is a relatively passive reporter of the happenings in the world that *Trimalchio* has created behind his walls.

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<sup>21</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 26-78.

Episodes include scenarios which are divorced from reality as much as reality is taken to the extreme. Suffice it to say that modern scholars can learn a great deal about ordinary life under Roman rule from *Petronius* that they would not otherwise learn from Tacitus, Suetonius, and other 1<sup>st</sup> century CE historians (at a risk of saying too much).

### Epigraphic References

By the period of Nero's reign when *Petronius* published the *Satyricon*, already the habitual act of inscribing for popularity, political power, and posterity had been transferred, as so many aspects of culture are, from the wealthy to the lower classes. *Trimalchio* thus becomes the recipient of this cultural manifestation through his desire to be remembered in publicly available writing. The first inscription comes at the beginning of the dinner party, the guests are welcomed into the dining room and at the entrance, Encolpius notices an imitation of the bronze beak of a ship ("*quasi embolum navis aeneum*")<sup>22</sup> on the doorposts. Here, he reads the following inscription:

*C. POMPEIO TRIMALCHIONI*

*SEVIRO AUGUSTALI*

*CINNAMUS DISPENSATOR*<sup>23</sup>

This inscription follows the standard formula for a philanthropic accreditation of the time with the recipient of the dedication in the Dative case, any titlature in the Genitive, and the dedicator in the Nominative. As one can come to expect with *Trimalchio*, there are many things which the freedman states that are slightly off the mark

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<sup>22</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 30.

<sup>23</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 30. Translated as: "For *G(aius) Pompeius Trimalchio*, *sevir Augustalis*" (priest of the imperial cult of Augustus), *Cinnamus*, the distributor (of this)"

in certain respects that first century CE readers would easily pick out. What is odd is not only the seeming outrageousness of gifting a ship's bow to another, but also who is being named as the recipient of the dedicatory inscription. It is rather humorous that *Trimalchio's* name comes prior to any mention of any real imperial figure. Nonetheless, the position of *sevir Augustalis* was a great honor, reserved for a small number of super wealthy freedmen. The priesthood of this imperial cult gave status and prestige to the honorees, despite conferring no real political power. Taken within the context of the growing epigraphic habit in the early empire<sup>24</sup>, the inscription affirms standardized norms and comments on the desire to be remembered by anyone who could afford to have an inscription made in his or her honor. Curiously though, there is only one abbreviation (*C.* for "*G(aius)*") and only one implicit verb (*dispensator (est)*). Because the inscription seems so explicit, it could be inferred that *Cinnamus* did not want the reader to be confused. The subtle distinction between this made-up inscription combined with the materiality of the fake artifact upon which it is written contributes to the decadence of *Trimalchio*.

Additionally, the epigraphy within his house highlights the importance of writing for the consumption of guests. This is a lesser form of public display that was ubiquitous across the empire at the time that *Petronius* was writing. Special incentive was provided for those previously having served as slaves to inscribe at higher frequencies than their freeborn counterparts.<sup>25</sup> This was because to overcome the lack of honor associated with their time as a slave, freedmen, as we will soon see, desired to have their accomplishments following manumission well-known by public display via epitaphs.

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<sup>24</sup>MacMullen, 1982, 244.

<sup>25</sup>Bodel, 2001, 108-109.

However, there is even more compelling evidence that *Trimalchio* ascribes to the epigraphic habit in ridiculous fashion. Towards the end of the feasting and discussions, *Trimalchio* turns to matters of his will and posterity. The wealthy freedman asked *Habinnas* to dedicate a monument in his honor. From *Habinnas*, unsurprisingly he expects a large monument of 100 by 200 feet (*in fronte pedes centum, in agrum pedes ducenti*)<sup>26</sup>. This form of remembrance was available to only the wealthiest Romans to commemorate one's life. *Trimalchio* discusses his epitaph, upon which the freedman appears to have given considerable thought, and he begins with the accompanying disclaimer that the monument will not be under the ownership of his heir.<sup>27</sup>

HOC MONVMENTVM HEREDEM NON SEQVITVR  
 C.POMPEIVS TRIMALCHIO MAECENATIANVS  
 HIC REQVIESCIT  
 HVIC SEVIRATVS ABSENTI DECRETVS EST  
 CVM POSSET IN OMNIBVS DECVRRIIS  
 ROMAE ESSE TAMEN NOLVIT  
 PIVS FORTIS FIDELIS  
 EX PARVO CREVIT RELIQVIT HS CCC<sup>28</sup>  
 NEC VMQVAM PHILOSOPHV AVDIVIT  
 VALE ET TV<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>27</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>28</sup>*Trimalchio* says, “*sestertium reliquit trecenties*” but, since *sestertium* in the Genitive plural is used with the ellipsis of *centena milia* if there is a numeral adverb, the true sum of the man's wealth is thirty million (300 x 100 x 1000). See the entry for *sestertius* in Lewis. 1890. See the entry for *sestertius* in Lewis and Short. 1879.

<sup>29</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71. Translated as: ‘This monument does not pass to my heir...*G(aius) Pompeius Trimalchio* freedman of *Maecenas* lies here. To him in his absence it was decreed that he be a priest (of Augustus). He might have been able to be in all the *decuriae* at Rome, but refused it. Pious, brave, faithful, he grew from very little and left thirty million *sestertii*. He never listened to a philosopher. Farewell: and you too.’

His apparent worry that his monument might be tampered with or defiled even by his own kin reflects a concern with the reputation he wishes to uphold even in death. Rather than thinking that *Trimalchio* is aware of the superficial narrative that he has created for his life and that it would lend reason for others to desecrate his monument, the freedman wants to protect his name and highlight what he has as his major accomplishment—that he grew from rags to riches (“*ex parvo crevit, sestertium reliquit trecenties*”).

Traditionally, one would expect to see political offices and professions that would distinguish a man on his epitaph. To be clear, detailing accomplishments is a common formula. However, detailing one’s amassing of wealth is uncommon, though true as it may be.

As for the mechanics of the inscription itself, the inscription differs from customary epitaphs in form because *Trimalchio* is recounting his would-be inscription in conversation. Above is a recreated version of how it might have looked, partially based on John Bodel’s reconstruction<sup>30</sup> and partially on the epigraphic conventions of the time. *Trimalchio*’s name, the common phrases *hic requiescit*, *pius fortis fidelis*, and *vale et tu*, as well as the sociopolitical positions *seviratus* and *decuriis* all might at first seem to indicate the dead man’s social stratum. Underneath this layer, there is the actual life of the man in glaringly honest departures from the epitaph of an equestrian, a rank *Trimalchio* never attained. As was mentioned earlier, professional or political successes combined with dedication and service to the empire in largely administrative roles were the hallmarks of a successful equestrian’s epitaph. To his own dismay or denial, *Trimalchio* falls short of being able to deliver this sort of pride after death.

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<sup>30</sup>Bodel, 2004, 42.



To the Roman eye, it would be curious that *Trimalchio* left out the accustomed ‘*Dis Manibus*’ in the beginning. This may be because he was discussing his epitaph in conversation and would thus have key differences from written conventions. Nevertheless, he does note that he was *pius* at the halfway mark. This apparent piety stands in stark contrast to the materiality of the subsequent phrases “*Ex parvo crevit reliquit sestertium trecenties (centena milia) / nec umquam philosophum audivit*”, citing his accumulation of great wealth and what can be inferred as any rejection of the philosopher’s “*auream mediocritatem*” or “golden mean” suggested by the Augustan poet Horace<sup>31</sup> in favor of the profligate indulgence of Nero or even *Petronius* himself. Indulging would seem only too necessary especially for a freedman, so desirous of being accepted by the Roman upper classes and having spent time lacking in access to luxuries as a slave. To have wealth was not enough for *Trimalchio*. To spend it on living in decadence was all too fulfilling.

The inscription is also odd considering that the man to whom it is dedicated remains in the Nominative case throughout the course of the message, when a dedicator in the Nominative usually dedicates to another in the Dative. In no small way, the freedman appears to be infatuated with himself. One cannot help but to be reminded of the pedantic first-person voice of Augustus’s *Res Gestae* when reading the Nominative force of *Trimalchio*’s name and his implied subject throughout the epitaph. Moreover, his sociopolitical accomplishments are hindered by the boast that he would have become a member of all the *decuriae* at Rome if only he had accepted the positions. Here, the use of the subjunctive in “*posset*” is exceptionally unusual to an epitaph. It does seem to

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<sup>31</sup>Hor. *Carm.* II.X.5

emphasize the dialogue between the reader of the monument's inscription and *Trimalchio* himself suggested by the ending phrase "*Vale: et tu*", though it is painful to hear the man rationalizing the course of his life even in death.

### **Gladiator References**

Another element of popular culture found throughout the dinner party discussions at *Trimalchio's* home is gladiatorial contests. Talk on the sport in general, the fighters themselves, the sponsors, and specific games are common themes of discourse. All of these segments of the popular sport and illustrations of gladiators are mentioned throughout *Trimalchio's* dinner party in the *Satyricon*. As *Encolpius* and his companions tour a particular hallway before the dining room, the steward explains that the heroic scenes on the walls. Paintings of the heroes from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* appear with paintings of the gladiator fights of a man named *Laenas*, the steward says.<sup>32</sup> This obviously comical display of the epic next to the bloodthirsty sensationalism of the gladiatorial arena demonstrates how fans would elevate gladiators with heroes. In fact, the specific fights of *Laenas*, not just fights in general, take on a mythical aura and the gladiators themselves become more than entertainers to their audience.

Just as the Greeks had conceptions of heroes as those capable of committing impossible acts—sometimes even impossibly cruel acts like the rage of Heracles against his wife and children—and suffering tremendously as Odysseus suffers from Poseidon's wrath, the Romans had similar conceptions of their best gladiators. The potential for incredible violence within a gladiator who had a number of past successes in the arena was enough to make a *fautor* crave for his favorite's next success. The allure of enduring great suffering too was a significant part of the

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<sup>32</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 29-30.

arena that is difficult for us to understand thousands of years later. The mythical became real right before a crowd's eyes in the moments of injury and death. By realizing this cultural framework, we will more accurately be able to understand how fans viewed gladiators in the first century CE.

The comparison is especially ridiculous in light of the fact that few gladiators in the epigraphic record took on the names of heroes. At Pompeii, there is only one hero's name among the ranks of fighters named in the graffiti: *Diomedes*<sup>33</sup>. However, there are a few instances in which gladiators adopt the names of divinities. *Oceanus*<sup>34</sup> is named several times in Pompeii and Herculaneum. *Hermes*<sup>35</sup> appears several times on the mold-blown glass cups as we will see in a later discussion of *Trimalchio's* vessel collection adorned with dueling combatants.

Gladiators and games were the subject of discussion during the dinner too. In a particular instance when *Trimalchio* is offering food at his table, the servant, whose name means "Carver" (*Carpus*), is called upon with the vocative (*Carpe*) and ordered with the imperative (*carpe*) to slice the meat. *Petronius*, through *Encolpius*, offers an odd description to accompany the excessive movements of *Carpus*, comparing the servant to a gladiator in a chariot (*essedarius*) fighting with a water-organ playing in the background.<sup>36</sup> This metaphor points to the pervasiveness of gladiatorial combat in Roman society. Beyond this, the reference clearly marks the hybrid combination of a gladiator and a charioteer (*essedarium*) as an entertainer alongside another entertainer, a water-organist (*hydraule cantante*). These displays mark the excesses of the performance in *Trimalchio's* home. *Encolpius*, our narrator, seems to have stumbled into a theater or an arena rather than a dinner party or a symposium.

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<sup>33</sup>PBHG 6.

<sup>34</sup>PBHG 5, 10; CIL IV.10523a; CIL IV.10578.

<sup>35</sup>PBH 17, 18, 21, 38, 41, 45, 52, 55, 57.

<sup>36</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 36.

In a conversation about gladiator spectacles offered by wealthy Romans, it is possible to understand the popularity surrounding gladiators. Through the compliments and criticisms of certain benefactors of the games like *Titus*, *Glyco*, *Mammaea*, and *Norbanus*, we can understand what about these contests was so appealing and how certain sponsors were remembered. As the freedmen guests and host sit around conversing over typical topics of the era, one freedman, *Echion*, specifies his views on specific games and their sponsors. *Echion* tries to be optimistic about living in Rome and says that there will soon be games put on by *Titus*. For three days, professional and freedmen gladiators will fight.<sup>37</sup> The comment that freedmen gladiators were more entertaining to watch is an interesting one. Perhaps, the appeal of liberated fighters to an audience is that they are more experienced by the time they earn their freedom in the arena. Or the audience recognizes the intrigue of a fighter who has willingly given up social status in order to remain an entertainer in a slave profession. There is also the excitement of a man fighting of his own volition. Not surprisingly, anything special or extraordinary is preferred: *Echion* praises *Titus* for offering the best fighters, the most gore, and the greatest violence committed directly in front of the audience. Interestingly, *Echion* even discusses the financing of the games in some detail. He explains that, because *Titus* inherited thirty million (“*sestertium (centena milia) tricenties*”) *sestertii*, he would easily be able to pay up to 400,000 (“*quadringenta*”) *sestertii* for high quality gladiator games.<sup>38</sup> At a later point in the *Cena Trimalchionis* as mentioned in this chapter earlier, we find out that *Trimalchio* is worth thirty million (“*sestertium (centena milia)*

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<sup>37</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45.

<sup>38</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45. Although *Echion* only explicitly says “*sestertium tricenties*”, *sestertium* in the Genitive plural is used with the ellipsis of *centena milia* if there is a numeral adverb such that the true sum of the *Titus*’s wealth is thirty million (300 x 100 x 1000). However, in the case of “*quadringenta*”, the fact that it is an adjective and not an adverb like *tricenties* makes the value become four hundred thousand (400 x 1000). Had *Echion* said “*quadrigenties*”, then the value would have been forty million. See the entry for *sestertius* in Lewis.1890. Also, see the entry for *sestertius* in Lewis and Short. 1879.

*reliquit trecenties*”) according to his would-be epitaph.<sup>39</sup> As a relative cost comparison, this provides enough information from the *Satyricon* itself to imagine the sort of expense putting on a spectacular and memorable *munus* would require. *Echion*’s specified amount is only one and a third of a percent of the overall holdings of *Titus*, an extremely wealthy man! Consequently, there are not the same limitations on *Trimalchio* and his contemporaries’ coffers, even if many of their assets were tied up in investments, properties, and financing activities. For men, of such net worth, the cost of getting one’s *cognomen* out there in public discourse was not steep at all, and all the more noticeable when the wealthy put on cheap contests, according to *Echion*.

Regardless of the speculation over the relative value of this benefaction, it is clear that the need to be remembered is commonplace among the wealthy and encouraged by the masses. At *Titus*’s upcoming show there will be some oddities among the customary bloodshed, namely a female *essedaria* (chariot fighter) and a slave. What is interesting about this slave is that he had sex with the wife of his master *Glyco*. Humorously, *Echion* explains that the slave was not at fault because the slave was just doing what his *domina* instructed. In this instance, the slave is caught between his ties to his *dominus* and his ties to his *domina* which were weaker, making his *dominus Glyco* appear even weaker. *Glyco*, we are told, is a *sestertarius*<sup>40</sup> (a man only worth two and a half *asses*)—he is cheap. *Mammea*, another benefactor, *Echion* predicts, will offer a much better performance, valued at two *denarii* per viewer<sup>41</sup>. Like *Glyco*, the prominent lawyer, *Norbanus*, was particularly sleazy when it came to throwing his own gladiator show with a *ludus* of cheap (*sestertarii*) runaways (*fugae*).<sup>42</sup>

“After all, what has *Norbanus* ever done for us? He produced some decayed two-penny-halfpenny gladiators, who would have fallen flat if you breathed on them; I

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<sup>39</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>40</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45.

<sup>41</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45.

<sup>42</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45-46.

have seen better ruffians turned in to fight the wild beasts. He shed the blood of some mounted infantry that might have come off a lamp; dunghill cocks you would have called them: one a spavined mule, the other bandy-legged, and the holder of the bye, just one corpse instead of another, and hamstrung. One man, a *Thraex*, had some stuffing, but he too fought according to the rule of the schools. In short, they were all flogged afterwards. How the great crowd roared at them, 'Lay it on!' They were mere runaways, to be sure. 'Still,' says *Norbanus*, 'I did give you a show.' Yes, and I clap my hands at you. Reckon it up, and I give you more than I got. One good turn deserves another."  
 (*Echion*; LCL: Petron. *Sat.* 45-46)

As *Echion* says, *Norbanus*'s puny band was flogged afterwards because they failed to entertain their audience with their lack of skill and training. Nothing could be more frustrating to an audience than a whole set of gladiators not fit to be gladiators when the audience was very much accustomed to seeing real talent of the caliber of *Petraites*, for instance. Thus, the games become a dialogue between the sponsors and their audience in which fame is quite literally purchased from the poor by the highest bidder.

### Gladiator Cups References

As we will see later, in Chapter IV, gladiators were sometimes depicted on glassware. In another strange encounter of excessive *xenia* at his dinner party, *Trimalchio* brags about his Corinthian dinner plate and his glass collection.<sup>43</sup> He says that he actually would prefer glass even to gold if it were not so breakable before digressing into an anecdote about a glassmaker who made glass that dented like metal but did not shatter and presented it to the Emperor Tiberius. According to *Trimalchio*, Tiberius had the sole maker of this special glass beheaded so that all of the emperor's gold would not become worthless.<sup>44</sup> Out of this story, *Trimalchio*

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<sup>43</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 50-52.

<sup>44</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 50-52. Presumably, the tale of the emperor and the glassmaker refers to an account described also by *Dio Cassius* about the emperor Tiberius. Out of jealousy for the renown that an architect/inventor received following his ingenious method of restoring a large Roman colonnade ("στοὰ μεγάλη") to its upright position, Tiberius exiled

arrives at an illogical point as he turns on his strong preference for glass only to highlight his own silver collection. Of course, to the Roman of his time period, *Petronius* would most certainly have evoked the mass-produced, molded glass drinking cups that so many collected around the empire. On these cups, mythic scenes might unfold or the winners of several gladiator *pugnae* revealed. To this end, the satirist subtly continues to note how nothing ordinary is an acceptable collectible for *Trimalchio*.

Possessing fine cutlery does not necessarily make one an expert on the pieces themselves, *Petronius* points out. When the host boasts of the scenic vessels that he has attained, he botches the details saying that some depict Cassandra murdering her sons (rather than Medea) and others depict Daedalus securing Niobe in the Trojan horse (instead of securing Pasiphae in the imitation cow). These mistakes mark an obvious attempt to impress the guests with his depth of knowledge which actually turns out to be quite shallow. The misplaced effort to impress with mythological flourishes rather than getting the details right is a scathing criticism of the uneducated *nouveau riche* and further corroborates the attack on the epigraphic habit as purely for the sake of appearances.

While such details make the satire an amusing invective, what is far more important for this study is the mention of *Trimalchio* owning *pocula* (“little drinking cups”) with the fights of *Hermes* and *Petraites* (“*Hermerotis pugnas et Petraitis in poculis*”).<sup>45</sup> These cups were among *Trimalchio*’s vast collection of silver vessels with mythological stories and themes, which, as just noted, are grossly inaccurate. *Trimalchio* would display items from his extensive collection

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the man. When the man sought the emperor’s pardon, he brought an unbreakable glass vessel (“ποτήριόν...ἄλοῦν”) for demonstration to appeal to him with his talents. Tiberius subsequently killed him (“ἀπέκτεινεν αὐτόν”). Thus, *Petronius* attempts to explain why the emperor did this, cleverly having *Trimalchio* assert that the motive was to protect the value of his assets. Placed under similar circumstances, the wealthy freedman might have done the same. (Dio Cass. *His. Rom.* LVII.21).

<sup>45</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

and would especially use them to entertain at a dinner party. Oddly and perhaps purposefully on *Petronius's* part, *Trimalchio* never shows his current audience any of these silver cups. As for the cups that depict the gladiators *Hermes* and *Petraites*, these *Trimalchio* would have used for the same entertaining purposes except that they meant more to their collector in this case. *Petronius* is undoubtedly referencing the popular phenomenon of collecting glass cups with the illustrations of either four or two pairs of gladiators with their corresponding names inscribed above the fighting scenes (See Chapter IV).

“Myself I have a great passion for silver. I own about a hundred four-gallon cups engraved with Cassandra killing her sons, and the boys lying there dead—but you would think they were alive. I have a thousand jugs which a patron bequeathed, where you see Daedalus shutting Niobe into the Trojan horse. And I have got the fights of/between<sup>46</sup> *Hermeros* and *Petraites* on my cups, and every cup is a heavy one; for I do not sell my connoisseurship for any money.”

(*Trimalchio*; LCL: Petron. *Sat.* 52)

Contrary to *Trimalchio's* favoritism of his glassware collection and glass in particular<sup>47</sup>, these cups are made out of silver (“*in argento*”).<sup>48</sup> The scholar Henry T. Rowell notes that not only is silver a more luxurious medium for display, but also that the fights of *Hermes* and *Petraites* occupy their own space on the silver cup contrary to the shared space on the glass cups that we have found and catalogued within the past half century.<sup>49</sup> It is not clear whether *Petraites* and *Hermes* were on separate cups fighting different opponents or whether they were fighting one another. We will resolve this issue in Chapter IV. For now, suffice it to say that *Petraites's*

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<sup>46</sup>I incorporated an alternative translation from LCL from “between” to “of” to reflect the absence of any sort of preposition such as *inter* and the fact that in the phrase “*Hermerotis pugnas et Petraitis in poculis*”, *Hermeros* and *Petraites* are Genitive singular nouns. However, an argument could be made for “between” given that *Hermes* and *Petraites* face off against one another four times on the mold-blown glass cups distributed and collected primarily in the northwestern provinces (See Chapter IV).

<sup>47</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 50-52.

<sup>48</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

<sup>49</sup>Rowell, 1958, 23.



main opponent was not *Hermes* on the glass cups, but *Prudes*. While Rowell may or may not have correctly recounted the display of *Petraites* and *Hermes* as it stands in the *Satyricon*, the effect of the three other fights going on within the same cup only elicits more not less appeal to the owner of the cup. Each fighter magnifies the renown of another fighter in the mind of an on-looking *fautor* or fan. Consider that *Trimalchio* included *Hermes's* name specifically when he named *Petraites*<sup>50</sup> prior to saying that he wanted to have all the fights of *Petraites* on his funerary monument,<sup>51</sup> as we will soon discuss. *Fautores* commonly knew *Petraites* in relation to an opponent or to a contemporary—*Hermes* could have been either. However, for the owner, the pleasure of self-indulgence is all the more meaningful because it becomes an obsession. On this point, *Trimalchio* remains conflicted: He wants others to recognize and praise him for the fights of *Petraites* and yet he himself wants nothing more than to fantasize about his hero alone. All of this is to say that while the precious metal makes the cup more valuable, the sole expression of the fights of *Petraites* and *Hermes* may not.

Rowell asserts that *Trimalchio* must have had a set of cups for the fights of *Hermes* and a set for those of *Petraites*.<sup>52</sup> Yet, he does not consider the full extent of the evidence because it was simply not available in 1958 when the scholarly discussion of gladiator cups largely went cold. At the time of his research, most of the fragments indicated that *Petraites* more frequently fought *Prudes* and they still do by a wide margin of cups (11 potential to 2 certain pairings). When considering the 57 fragments of mold-blown cups with gladiators and inscriptions found in the northwestern Roman provinces, *Petraites* battles *Prudes* (22 times) more than *Hermes* (only four times). Moreover, *Hermes* appears on 11 fragments whereas *Petraites* and *Prudes*

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<sup>50</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

<sup>51</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>52</sup>Rowell, 1958, 15.

both appear on 29 fragments. However, as we will come to see in Chapter IV, it is not so much about the frequency of appearances and with whom as the result of the fights of both *Petraites* and *Hermes*.

In another section of *Petronius's* episode, *Trimalchio* proves to his audience just how obsessed with a particular famous gladiator he is. *Trimalchio* states that he wants all of the fights of *Petraites* (“*Petraitis omnes pugnas*”) at the foot of his funerary monument.<sup>53</sup> The afterlife that he believes in is through the commemoration of his monument (“*post mortem vivere*”)<sup>54</sup>, not, more likely than not, in a mythical Underworld where he would be positioned according to his station and deeds in life. In such a life after death, as Rowell suggests, *Trimalchio* wants to be associated with *Petraites* in order to facilitate a dialogue between his former life and those who stop to read about his monument<sup>55</sup>. The commonality of rooting for the same fighter or an opponent in the arena would allow the memory of his life to take hold in another fan’s mind. It is also not inconceivable to think that *Trimalchio's* grave might become not only somewhat of an attraction to those passing by, but also, as a site to visit like an emperor’s mausoleum, for example. Beyond the conveniences afforded by a broad array of reliefs about a famous gladiator there is the question of *Trimalchio's* relationship with death. If he loved gladiators and *Petraites* so much, why not host a set of spectacular funerary games with *Petraites* at center stage in his honor? It seems as though in his philosophy of living what mattered most was the possession of extravagant materials that satisfied his superficial taste for nice things while remaining impressive to his captive guests. Cast away from the equestrian and patrician classes by his stature as a former slave, *Trimalchio* created a fictional realm in which he could live out the

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<sup>53</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>54</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>55</sup>Benefiel 2010, 60.

indulgences of a life he can never attain.<sup>56</sup> Etching a legacy into the marble of his monument alongside the legacy of his favorite gladiator can thus be viewed as the most permanent method of remembrance, framing his own life on the side of a vessel with illustrated and labeled gladiator fights.

## Conclusion and Implications

*Trimalchio's* obsession with gladiators and, in particular, with *Petraites* may have very much to do with the parallels between this professional gladiator's rise to fame and fortune and his own. He wanted to be remembered and revered in the same way that people remember and revere gladiators. But, of course, this may be only a fraction of *Petronius's* satirical force. Consider that as a freedman he would not be allowed to attain certain political positions and especially the respect he desires most because of the *infamia* or shame associated with servitude, the sort of passive character that could hardly equal the dominant character of an equestrian or a patrician. Likewise, a gladiator, even one who has risen to such prominence among *fautores* as *Petraites*, is still bound by the same *infamia* of servitude and of being the instrument of a greater and wealthier man's display of influence. Perhaps for both social states, freedmen and gladiators alike, the only escape is epigraphic, written for a posterity willing to read and gawk at a decorated object without acknowledging the *infamia* of the former reality.

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<sup>56</sup>Bodel 2004, 42.

### ***Spiculus and Petraites***

One cannot help but to think about the emperor Nero's fascination with the gladiator *Spiculus* mentioned in Chapter I, the former, a contemporary of *Petronius*, and the latter, a contemporary of *Petraites* and a fellow victor across many molded glass cups. The strength of *Trimalchio's* attraction to *Petraites* is thus hardly coincidental or for the sheer fame aroused by the gladiator as many scholars such as Rowell and Bodel suggest.<sup>57</sup> According to historical sources, Nero made *Spiculus* quite wealthy because he was so infatuated with him, asked *Spiculus* to assist him in suicide, and was responsible for the mob that brutally murdered *Spiculus*, following the emperor's death.<sup>58</sup> The point of this comparison is that until now the corpus of *vascula vitrea pugnis gladiatorum ornata* ("glass vessels decorated with the fights of gladiators") has not been functionally included in the scholarship of the *Satyricon* since Rowell solidified his discussion of the subject with a limited set of six fragmentary cups in 1958. Furthermore, the graffiti on the walls of Pompeii and Herculaneum uncovers even more pertinent information about *Spiculus* and the analogy that *Petronius* was attempting to make with *Petraites* and *Trimalchio*.

### **Nero and Petronius**

In Chapter I, it was briefly noted that *Petronius* had a very close relationship to Nero. The historian Tacitus recorded the author of the *Satyricon's* rise to and fall from fame. *Titus Petronius*, as he is referred to, was a self-made man of social initiative. After serving as a

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<sup>57</sup>Rowell, 1958, 24 and Bodel, 2004, 43.

<sup>58</sup>Suet. *Ner.* VI.30, 47 and Plut. *Vit. Galb.* VIII.

proconsul and a consul, he became Nero's personal confidante for extravagant luxuries as his "*elegantiae arbiter*".<sup>59</sup>

*Petronius* calls for a brief retrospect. He was a man whose day was passed in sleep, his nights in the social duties and amenities of life: others industry may raise to greatness—*Petronius* had idled into fame. Nor was he regarded, like the common crowd of spendthrifts, as a debauchee and wastrel, but as the finished artist of extravagance. His words and actions had a freedom and a stamp of self-abandonment which rendered them doubly acceptable by an air of native simplicity. Yet as proconsul of Bithynia, and later as consul, he showed himself a man of energy and competent to affairs. Then, lapsing into the habit, or copying the features, of vice, he was adopted into the narrow circle of Nero's intimates as his Arbiter of Elegance (*elegantiae arbiter*); the jaded emperor finding charm and delicacy in nothing save what *Petronius* had commended.

(LCL: Tac. *Ann.* XVI.18)

Through Tacitus and Pliny the Elder, who also described a certain *Titus Petronius* in his description of rare and expensive *myrrhine*<sup>60</sup> vessels and instruments in his *Naturalis Historia*, we know that *Petronius* committed suicide following an altercation with Nero. Tacitus tells us that *Petronius* was accused of being a part of *Gaius Calpurnius Piso*'s plot to overthrow Nero by a political enemy named *Tigellinus*. *Petronius* was in cahoots with another known conspirator, *Scaevinus*, according to *Tigellinus*'s unfair charges.

His success awoke the jealousy of *Tigellinus* against an apparent rival, more expert in the science of pleasure than himself. He addressed himself, therefore, to the sovereign's cruelty, to which all other passions gave pride of place; arraiging *Petronius* for friendship with *Scaevinus*, while suborning one of his slaves to turn informer, withholding all opportunity of defense, and placing the greater part of his household under arrest. (LCL: Tac. *Ann.* XVI.18)

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<sup>59</sup>Tac. *Ann.* XVI.18-19.

<sup>60</sup>*Myrrhine* is considered to be fluor spar or fluorite, a mineral crystal that comes in vivid colors used in expensive ornamental pieces. (LCL 322)

In custody, he took his life in 66CE on his own terms after deriding Nero with an exposé of his debaucheries with many men and women.<sup>61</sup>

In those days, as it chanced, the Caesar had migrated to Campania; and *Petronius*, after proceeding as far as Cumae, was being there detained in custody. He declined to tolerate further the delays of fear or hope; yet still did not hurry to take his life, but caused his already severed arteries to be bound up to meet his whim, then opened them once more, and began to converse with his friends, in no grave strain and with no view to the fame of a stout-hearted ending. He listened to them as they rehearsed, not discourses upon the immortality of the soul or the doctrines of philosophy, but light songs and frivolous verses. Some of his slaves tasted of his bounty, a few of the lash. He took his place at dinner, and drowsed a little, so that death, if compulsory, should at least resemble nature. Not even in his will did he follow the routine of suicide by flattering Nero or *Tigellinus* or another of the mighty, but—prefixing the names of the various catamites and women—detailed the imperial debauches and the novel features of each act of lust, and sent the document under seal to Nero. His signet-ring he broke, lest it should render dangerous service later. (LCL: Tac. *Ann.* XVI.19)

Also, to spite Nero, *Petronius* purposely shattered a *myrrhine* serving utensil worth three hundred thousand sesterces so that Nero could not take it from him posthumously.<sup>62</sup>

Consequently, given his relationship with Nero and what he would come to do immediately prior to his death, it is likely that *Petronius* made a caricature of Nero in his character, *Trimalchio*—notwithstanding some of the more apparent social differences between the emperor and the made-up, wealthy freedman. Perhaps then, the author was taking Nero's fixation with *Spiculus* to more outlandish proportions with *Trimalchio's* fixation with *Petraites*. Whereas Nero knew *Spiculus* personally just as he knew *Petronius*, *Trimalchio* might not have even seen *Petraites* fight much less know him from any personal meeting. Yet, at the heart of the juxtaposition, there is the idea of companionship with a famous gladiator. On the one hand, to be associated with someone so expressive of manly virtues and success is the ultimate comparison

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<sup>61</sup>Tac. *Ann.* XVI.18-19.

<sup>62</sup>Plin. *HN.* XXXVII.7.

for *Trimalchio's* self-made legacy. On the other hand, it is a bit ridiculous to presuppose too much companionship as when Nero relegates *Spiculus* to a utility as “any other adept at whose hand he might find death” or specifically as “*alium percussorem*”.<sup>63</sup> Such is the subtlety of virtue and shame as well as gladiators and the wealthy and powerful which *Petronius* articulates in his literary genius. In Chapters III and IV, we will observe a different perspective through archeological evidence for the conception of gladiators. However, even these sources are not entirely divorced from the attitudes toward fighters elicited by *Petronius*.

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<sup>63</sup>Suet. *Ner.* VI.47.

## Chapter III: “Fighting Walls”: The Implications of Pompeian Graffiti about Gladiator Fights

### Introduction

At the end of Chapter II, we found that the web of ties between *Petronius*, *Nero*, *Spiculus*, and *Petrates* influenced *Petronius* in his writing of the *Cena Trimalchionis* in the *Satyricon*. *Trimalchio*'s relationship with *Petrates* mirrored *Nero*'s with *Spiculus*. Although *Petronius*'s commentary on gladiators is fictional, it reflects the attitudes and convictions of fans with the same historicity as the epigraphic evidence about gladiators which we are about to analyze. We have another type of material that illustrates the widespread popularity of gladiators: hand-drawn graffiti on the walls of Pompeii. These drawings and inscriptions are a snapshot from just before the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. Anyone—slaves, masters, patricians, plebeians, travelers, and vacationers—could have participated in the interactive forums in which one inscriber could respond to another and important discussions could be noted publicly. Areas with the heaviest pedestrian traffic within houses, shops, taverns, and other buildings contained the most graffiti just as such areas do in modern times.

### Epigraphic Evidence at Pompeii Provided by *Fautores*

To be careful, even though we are now entering a world of archeological testimonies of life in Pompeii within the decades leading up to 79 CE, we need to be similarly reserved as we were in analyzing the *Satyricon*. We cannot be sure that the *fautor* or fan, inscribing and drawing detailed information and illustrations of a specific gladiator or a pair of gladiators is a trustworthy narrator of historical events. That being said, those who inscribed on the walls had, if



they had not seen the games themselves which they described, at the very least heard the talk of the town about particular gladiators and fights. Graffiti was a great social equalizer in Pompeii as a range of literacy or lack thereof was acceptable under the normative practices of composing a graffiti. Likewise, the gladiatorial contests were enjoyed by members of all classes. Inscribers could draw only a piece of gladiator weaponry or they could illustrate two fighters in extensive detail with all of their fighting class-specific armor and weaponry and provide a caption of such information as each fighter's name, number of wins, number of appearances, gladiatorial school, and the match result.

The scope of the study of gladiator graffiti from Pompeii is limited to gladiators in subject matter and to those drawings with accompanying inscriptions. Although there is only one name from the graffiti of gladiators that also exists on the mold-blown cups from roughly the same time period or later (*Spiculus*), there is considerable commonality between the two epigraphic sources. While there is far more variation in the illustrated parts of the graffiti, the subtleties of a corpus of cups that falls into several mold-type categories provides more insight into the fame of a gladiator. However, the repetition of certain figures and their associated names within the graffiti does provide a basis for the popularity of specific gladiators. In the illustrated duals on the walls, a narrative tale or a dialogue between scenes becomes frequently apparent in ways that the cups only allude to. Suffice it to say that the study of graffiti informs the upcoming study of Roman glassware with gladiator themes.

### **The Repetition and Reappearance of Certain Fighters in Pompeii**

First, we will learn about the reoccurring names in the single-fighter graffiti. Four drawings among the graffiti at Pompeii include the names of the gladiators drawn. In the case of

PBHG 2, there are 12 names next to a single drawing. Why this is the case is only conjecture. There could have been multiple inscribers or a single inscriber. In the theater corridor (VIII.7, 20), one can imagine a high volume of traffic to create the ideal conditions for such a graffito. *Valerius* appears three times as *Valer(ius)*. Next to his name is “XXV”, meaning that he has fought in the arena 25 times.

<b>Gladiator Name</b>	<b>Number of Appearances</b>
<i>Valer(ius)</i>	3
<i>Viriota Cl.</i>	2
<i>M. Valerius</i>	1
<i>Servilius C.</i>	1
<i>Marcus L. Sequan(us)</i>	1
<i>Sedula</i>	1
<i>Viriod(ius)</i>	1
<i>Onarto</i>	1
<i>Sextius C.</i>	1
<i>Pantacathus</i>	1

**Figure III.1: Shows the gladiators’ appearances in the *gladiator singularis* corpus**

It is possible that he could even be named a fourth time because there is a gladiator named *M. Valerius* on PBHG 3. Furthermore, *M. Valerius* is a freedman since he has “LIB” for *Libertus* next to his name just as *Valerius* from the other graffito has an “L” which stands for *Libertus*

next to his number of appearances (“XXV”) in two out of the three inscriptions. The artist of PBHG 2 also repeated “*Viriota Cl.*” or *Viriota Claudius* twice.

We now turn to the pairs of gladiators with accompanying inscriptions. In Chapter I, we remarked on the fascinating life of *Spiculus* as we caught glimpses of him between a variety of literary and epigraphic sources. As with *Spiculus*, who is also mentioned in PBHG 16, we catch glimpses of a handful of gladiators from Pompeii at different points in their careers as gladiators.

<b>Gladiator Names</b>	<b>Number of Appearances</b>
<i>M. Attilius</i>	4
<i>Hilarus</i>	2
<i>Nasi(ca)</i>	2
<i>Oceaneanus/Oceanus</i>	2
<i>Equillus</i>	1
<i>Asteropaeus</i>	1
<i>Euticus</i>	1
<i>Diomedes</i>	1
<i>Creunus</i>	1
<i>Aracintus</i>	1
<i>Severus</i>	1
<i>Albanus Sc(auri)</i>	1
<i>Aure(li)us</i>	1
<i>Myrinus</i>	1
<i>Inacrius</i>	1

<i>Faustus</i>	1
<i>Priscus</i>	1
<i>Herennius</i>	1
<i>Spiculus</i>	1
<i>Aptonetus</i>	1

**Figure III.2: Shows the gladiators' appearances in the *gladiatorum paria* corpus**

Their names are repeated so that their stories would be told on the walls of the city. Among these are *M. Attilius*, *Hilarus*, *Nasica*, and *Oceaneanus/Oceanus*. For now, we will discuss *Nasica*<sup>64</sup> as the others will be featured prominently in the *gladiatorum paria* section. When someone is called *Nasica*, they mean that the person to whom they are referring has a long and pointed nose.<sup>65</sup> Such a nose protrudes from the face of *Nasica* in PBHG 13 as he defeats his opponent, *Aure(li)us*.

What is interesting is that another graffiti artist interacted with this graffiti within the same *insula* or city block and only one building apart. One graffiti (PBHG 13) we find in the entranceway into the House of *M. Obellius Firmus* (IX.14, 2.4) and another (PBHG 17) in the rear side-entrance to a nearby *hospitium* or inn (IX.9, 13). This raises an important question. How does the frequency of repetition of a specific name indicate popularity? In this case, given the scant evidence about the fighter's major wins over formidable opponents, it is more likely that someone encounter a graffiti about *Nasica* and subsequently felt encouraged to write his or her own graffiti about *Nasica* on a nearby wall. In contrast, two high-profile fighters whose names are repeated in different parts of Pompeii, *M. Attilius* and *Hilarus*, are featured on the

<sup>64</sup>PBHG 13, 17.

<sup>65</sup>Lewis and Short, 1879, s.v. "*nasica*".

same graffito (PBHG 8). Whoever inscribed this graffito was drawing upon the first moment of fame for *M. Attilius* and the passing out of fame for *Hilarus*, as we will see soon enough. In this case, the subject matter of the gladiators themselves was the most powerful motivator for the inscriber.

## Narrative Histories in the Graffiti

### *Gladiator Singularis*

Only a handful of the 36 drawings of a single gladiator figure include an accompanying inscription. Most of these inscriptions provide information such as the gladiator's name. Some provide a record of appearances in the arena. Others let their viewer know whether the gladiator was a freedman (*L(ibertus)* or *Lib(ertus)* or whether he belonged to an imperial gladiator training school. Each figure is drawn with details of their armor and weapons that place them into a specific fighting class so long as the inscriber has some level of drawing capabilities and/or the graffito is well preserved. For example, in Figure III.3, we can see the handwritten name of the gladiator whose illustration lies immediately below. Transcribed from the handwriting by epigraphers, his name is *Parthacus*. He is a likely a *Murmillio* because of his large rectangular shield, the arching fin atop his helmet, his straight short-sword, and his armored greave on his shield-side leg.<sup>66</sup> See Figure I.2 in Chapter I for an illustration of gladiator fighting classes. His number of victories is indicated by ((*palma*)) XXXII ((*corona*)) (VI.12, 2.5; PBHG 1). For the inscriber, *Parthacus* was known only by his identity as a *Murmillio* and by his number of wins. However, 32 wins is an exceedingly high number when compared even to the epitaphs of gladiators.

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<sup>66</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 15.



**Figure III.3: *Pantacathus* (PBHG 1)**

Those that could afford epitaphs so that their lives could be remembered beyond death generally were more successful as fighters.<sup>67</sup> Many had eventually earned their manumission. Also, those who were killed in the arena or in the brutal training regimen or from an injury sustained in the arena after only a brief experience as a gladiator would not have had time to prepare the necessary arrangements to be remembered on an epitaph by themselves or with others. The Pompeian that inscribed the exaggerated win streak of *Parthacus* expresses his or her admiration based on the fighter's skill and showmanship alone.

Other inscribers reflect similar feelings of praise and esteem for individual gladiators. Consider the *Murmillio* who appears on the corridor of a theater alongside a collection of 14 names and numbers, all of which exceed 25 for example (VIII.7, 20; PBHG 2). Notably, the inscriber depicted the facial features of this gladiator. This implicitly communicates a reverence, or at least an acknowledgement, for the human behind the helmet, not just for his fighting skills or his armor, since there are so few faces in gladiator graffiti. There also seems to be a considerable effort to memorialize freed gladiators or gladiators of an imperial *ludus* (training

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<sup>67</sup>Hope, 2000, 98.

school) such as *M. Valeriu(s)*, who was a *Provocator* based upon the cuirass on his chest (VIII.7; PBHG 3; Figure III.4). We cannot tell whether he was a freedman or a slave belonging to a *ludus*.



**Figure III.4: *M. Valerius* (PBHG 3)**

His *nomen* and *cognomen* suggest in combination with an alternative and, perhaps better, transcription from the fragmentary *IVL(ianus)* is *LIB(ertus)*. These two readings are in stark contrast with one another. In the former case, *Iulianus* marks *M. Valerius* as a slave, a gladiator of the *Ludus Iulianus*, which will be described in the subsequent section. In the latter case, *Libertus* clearly marks *M. Valerius* as a manumitted gladiator. Regardless of the reading, there was roughly equal sensationalism surrounding a freedman as that surrounding a gladiator from an elite *ludus*. We will realize that in the *gladiatorum paria*, there are 7 mentions of freedmen<sup>68</sup> and 13 mentions of either *Iuliani*, *Neroniani*, or *Augustiani*<sup>69</sup>. In three instances, these two variations of skilled gladiators appear on the same graffito (PBHG 5, 15, 16). Adorning a *Murmillio* illustration are the words *Pri(me, vale)* which are either taken to mean “Farewell, first [gladiator]” or “Farewell, Primus” (Graves, Porta Nocera 12; *CIL* IV.10230). For either case,

<sup>68</sup>PBHG 5,10, 11, 15, 16.

<sup>69</sup>PBHG 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

sufficient evidence to infer the identity of this gladiator does not exist—consequently, it does not appear in the appendix PBHG. Regardless of the translation, the fan that scratched this message above his or her drawing obviously admired this heavily armored champion.

The most interesting and provocative inscription of this category supplements a drawing of a *Murmillio* with a palm frond (*palma*) in his hand descending the steps of the arena (VI.9,6; CIL IV.1293). *Campani victoria una / cum Nucerinis peristis* (“At Campania you perished together in victory with the Nucerinians.” See Figure III.5)



**Figure III.5: A victorious *Murmillio* (CIL IV.1293 = Langner 2001; 927)**

By *Nucerinis*, the inscriber refers to the rival townspeople of Nuceria who, in 59 CE, rioted at the gladiator theater in Pompeii.<sup>70</sup> According to Tacitus, the fight escalated from verbal invective to *caedes* (bloodshed) and ended with the Pompeians greatly overwhelming the Nucerians.

Following the brawl, the Nucerians brought suit in Rome against the Pompeians and further contempt upon themselves when the Senate decreed a prohibition of games for 10 years (“*in decem annos*”) in Pompeii.<sup>71</sup> Paired with the vibrant display of palm fronds, it can be concluded that attitudes in Pompeii were of gratitude and praise towards the gladiators who perished

<sup>70</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 71; Tac. *Ann.* XIV.17.

<sup>71</sup>Tac. *Ann.* XIV.17.



alongside the rival Nuceriaans. However, the graffiti oddly juxtaposes the *Murmillio* representing *victoria* with the condemnation of *peristis* from the inscription. The result is that the lives of the gladiators who died in the arena that day seem as trivial as those of the fallen Nuceriaans. Despite the existence of some degree of *infamia* towards the *Murmillio*, whoever etched the inscription on the wall wanted to memorialize the slain gladiators in the arena in the triumph over the rival townspeople.

It is worthwhile to note two other drawings with nearby inscriptions; but, these are only related to gladiatorial contests rather than portraying armed fighters. Above a rectangular shield “*Mucro hic [est]*” most likely labels the sharp edges of the convex *scutum*, although it is possible for *Mucro* to be a cognomen (VII.7,2; *CIL* IV.4708). “*Equillus*” labels a decorated horn (*cornus*) of the arena (VII.3, 12; Langner, no. 989). If these are indeed both *cognomina*, then they could add to our understanding of the individuals involved in putting on the games.<sup>72</sup>

### ***Gladiatorum Paria***

Much more frequently, gladiators were drawn as pairs. In Pompeii, 22 out of the 82 instances of gladiator graffiti<sup>73</sup> displayed duals, 16 of which include inscriptions. A wealth of information is explicitly and implicitly provided about the gladiators themselves and the attitudes of fans. The *gladiatorum paria* follow a relatively standardized formula of illustration and labeling. Although they range in level of descriptive detail, in every case, two fighters stand in opposition to one another as they would in a real spectacle. A cognomen, a record of wins and appearances, and the outcome of the match—*V* for a win (*vicit*), *M* for a loss (*missus*), and *P* for

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<sup>72</sup>Like the graffiti about *Pri(me)* (*CIL* IV.10230), neither *Mucro*, nor *Equillus* can be included in the PBHG corpus as each does not definitively name a gladiator.

<sup>73</sup>36 single figures, 22 duals, 23 gladiator paraphernalia, and 1 miscellaneous inscription about a *ludus* sum to a total of 82 instances of gladiator graffiti.

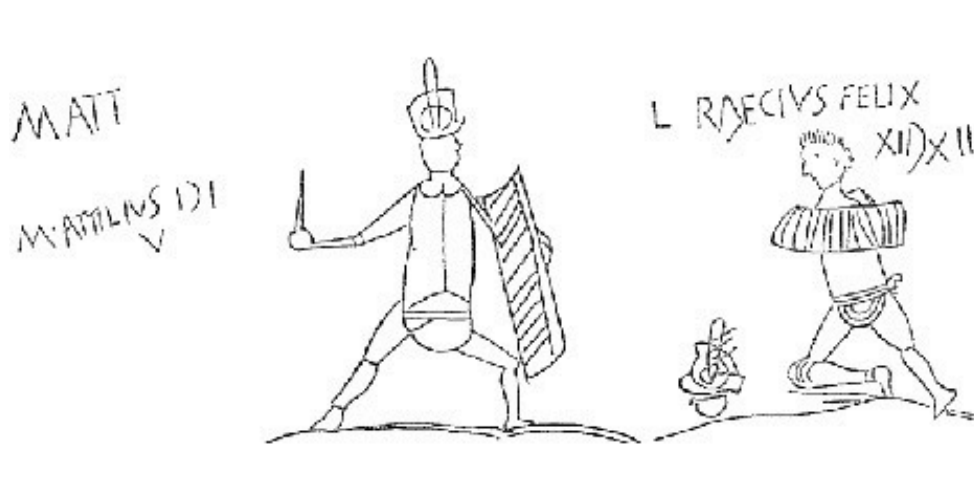
a death (*perit*)—identify each gladiator. Not all of the *gladiatorum paria* offer this level of epigraphic detail. Only the cognomens *Euticus* and *Diomedes*, label a *Murmillo* and an *Oplomachus*, respectively (IX.8, 6.3a; PBHG 6) with no other supplemental inscriptions to aid the viewer. Oftentimes, a dropped shield will denote the loser of a contest. There are many instances of this symbolism displayed. Two prominent examples feature freed gladiators on the walls of the *Casa dei Ceii*. In the first, *Oceanus* killed *Aracintus* (*perit*) whose shield has fallen and arm is scratched to indicate a wound by the inscriber (I.6,15; PBHG 10). In the second, *Albanus* killed *Severus* (*perit*) bereaved of his shield (I.6, 15; PBHG 11).

Because of the focus on the contest between famous fighters, the inscriber of pairs did not invest as much detail into the armor and weapons and, by extension, the class of gladiator as the inscriber of individuals. The fascination becomes the story behind the fight. A vignette about *M(arcus) Attilius* will help to illustrate this point. *Attilius* was designated as *T* or *tiro*, a title a novice of the arena would bear, when he fought against *Hilarus* of the Neronian imperial gladiator school (Figure III.6). The young gladiator from Nola, which is north of Pompeii, beat the highly favored *Hilarus*, who boasted a 12-2 record indicated by *XIV* (*coronarum*) *XII* (Graves, Porta Nocera 14; PBHG 8).



**Figure III.6: *M. Attilius* and *Hilarus* (PBHG 8)**

In two other depictions at the same tomb (*sepulchrum* 19), *Marcus Attilius* went on to defeat what appears to be an unlabeled *Thraex* (Graves, Porta Nocera 14; PBHG 9) and *L(ucius) Raecius Felix*, 12-0 (XII ((*coronarum*)) XII), whose helmet is cast aside (Graves, Porta Nocera 14; PBHG 12; Figure III.7). What is most striking about this story is not only that *Attilius* defeated such a formidable opponent as a *tiro*, but also, the development of a protagonist through three inscriptions at the same site.



**Figure III.7: *M. Attilius* and *L. Raecius Felix* (PBHG 12)**

Like the narrative of *M. Attilius*, there are elements in a handful of inscriptions that reference the *Iuliani* and *Neroniani* and reveal more than a mere obsession with gladiators for their virtuous fighting talents. The *Iuliani* were gladiators trained by the imperial school in Capua adopted by Julius Caesar. Under the reign of Nero (54-68 CE), this school was renamed the *Ludus Neronianus*.<sup>74</sup> For the Romans, this gladiator school produced the premier fighters in the early Empire. Represented on the walls of Pompeii are several matches of gladiators from the same *Ludus*. A fragmentary cognomen marks [...]*rius Iulianus* as he defeats, *Primigenius*, the

<sup>74</sup> Jacobelli, 2003, 19.

*Iulianus* with 23 appearances in the arena (*XXIII M(issus); ((abiectum scutum))*) (VII.7; *CIL* IV.1773) on the outer wall of the Temple of Apollo. Also at this temple, a figure we can no longer see killed an unnamed *Iulianus* of 22 appearances (*P(eriit) Iul(ianus) XXII; ((abiectum scutum))*) (VII.7; *CIL* IV.1773). It is uncertain yet highly likely that a battle between two brothers-in-arms occurred in this inscription since the remaining two inscriptions mentioning *Iuliani* are contests of this type. An unnamed *Iulianus*, labeled *Murmillio* slayed Aurelius, a *Iulianus*, labeled a *Murmillio* (*p(eriit)*) (Graves, Porta Nocera 11; PBHG 13). Above these two captions is another reference to a *Iulianus* in a different fight (*Iu[li]anus nasi[ca ] / Prim(i)ge(nius) / v(icit)*). At the House of *M. Obellius Firmus*, two *Iuliani*, *Myrinus* a *Murmillio* with 31 appearances (*XXXI*) and *Inacrius* with 12 appearances (*XII*), fight until *Inacrius* lost (*m(issus); ((abiectum scutum))*) (IX.14, 2.4; PBHG 14). Oddly enough two of these battles resulted in deaths rather than just dismissals.<sup>75</sup>

But why would two *Iuliani* fight each other, much less kill one another, if gladiators were highly valued by their masters? The answer seems to be implicit in the fact that townspeople drew these depictions to tell the narratives of the most athletic and skilled fighters from the imperial school. By comparison with the example of the slaughter of *Aptonetus*, a *Libertus* with 16 appearances (*XVI*) by *Spiculus*, a *Neronianus* and a *tiro* (VI.12, 2.5; PBHG 16), we can see that the inscriber drew the favored *Aptonetus* fallen and helpless, thereby sensationalizing the unusual fight (See Figure I.1 and accompanying discussion in Chapter I). The Pompeians were enthralled by such a display of spectacle that some of them felt the need to document the scenes of brothers-in-arms pitted against one another. Undoubtedly, these inscriptions possess a wealth of information and still interest scholars today.

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<sup>75</sup> Only 6 out of the 16 inscriptions of the *gladiatorum paria* category result in deaths (*periit*).

Two decades before the eruption of Vesuvius, inscribers captured the battles of the well-trained *Neroniani*. The aforementioned defeat of a *Neronianus* by *M. Attilius* sparked a motivation to illustrate what happened. *Asteropaeus*, a *Neronianus* with 7 wins (VII), beat *Oceanaeus* with 6 wins under his belt (VI / *M(issus)*), whose *gladius* rested in his left hand and *scutum*, in his right (VI.11, 9.10; PBHG 5). The scene is detailed enough to accurately suggest that *Asteropaeus*, who holds a spear and a round *scutum*, was an *Oplomachus* and *Oceanaeus*, who fights with a large *scutum*, a Samnite. An elaborate inscription illustrates *Hilarus*, *Neronianus* with 14 appearances (XIV), defeating *Creunus*, an *Oplomachus* with 5-2 (VII)V record (Graves, Porta Nocera 14; PBHG 7; Figure III.8).



**Figure III.8: *Hilarus* and *Creunus* (PBHG 7)**

Because the inscriptions are close in proximity to one another and the figures almost identical, the caption of *Hilarus* must refer to the same Thracian who lost to *Attilius*. And so, the narrative of *Attilius* and *Hilarus* becomes more complicated by the wins and losses of the arena, much like transitive thinking in sports today—X beat Y, Y lost to Z, X ought to beat Z—which is disrupted by upsets and stirs rivalries. Another interesting element of the *Hilarus* v. *Creunus* inscription is that it contains the only mention of benefaction (*munus*) by *M. Cominius Heres* who hosted the games for four days at Nola (*Nolae de / quadridu(o)*) in the graffiti at Pompeii.

Three scenes about *Neroniani* inscribed on the walls of the *Casa del Labirinto* further substantiate the narrative attitude towards the gladiators (VI.11, 9.10; PBHG 15). “*Faustus It(h)aci Neronianus Ad Amp(h)itheatr[um]*”, emphasized by large letters, spans the top of the inscription to remind the viewer that a famous gladiator from the *Ludus Neronianus* fought at the amphitheater in Pompeii. Furthest to the right, a man sits on a chair atop a podium and surveys the *Retiarius* who holds a trident and descends the steps towards a third man in a tunic who holds a spear. On the far left, there is a man in a tunic almost identical to the third one on the right. Between these bystanders, *Priscus*, a *Neronianus* with 6 wins (VI), is in the act of killing *Herennius*, a *Libertus* with 22 appearances (XIX). Consequently, the higher standard of gladiators brought excitement to Pompeii, manifested through inscriptions like this one.

### **Fighters on Both the Pompeian Graffiti and Other Literary and Epigraphic Materials**

#### ***Spiculus***

As mentioned in Chapter I, *Spiculus* appears in a variety of ancient sources, not the least of which are the graffiti at Pompeii and the mass-produced glass cups that will be analyzed in Chapter IV. As an unexperienced fighter, *tiro*, he fought the veteran *Aptonetus* to the death and emerged with considerable fame (PBHG 16). His greatest victory, with a widespread consensus on the glass drinking cups (PBH 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 17, 25, 29), was against *Columbus*. Nero, attracted by his growing good fortune, augmented the gladiator’s wealth.<sup>76</sup> As a member of Nero’s inner circle, *Spiculus* was called upon by Nero to help the emperor commit suicide in the final months of his reign.<sup>77</sup> Anti-Neronian mobs, without fear of reprisal from the new regime under

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<sup>76</sup>Suet. Ner. VI.30.

<sup>77</sup>Suet. Ner. VI.47.

*Nymphius Sabinus*, assassinated *Spiculus* at the base of one of Nero's statues while they were sacking the remnants of the former emperor's legacy in the Forum.<sup>78</sup> Undoubtedly, *Spiculus* was the most successful fighter to ever come out of the arena at Pompeii. He transcended the regional limit on the popularity of those gladiators named on the walls of Pompeii.

### **Other Mentions of Fighters from Pompeii within *Italia*: Plausible and Implausible**

Concerning the immediate popularity of the fighters named on the walls of Pompeii, only two are likely matches to gladiators mentioned elsewhere in Pompeii and *Italia*, namely *Oceanus* and *Aracintus*. There are, however, potential references to *M. Atillius*, *Hilarus*, *Asteropaeus*, respectively. As a note of caution, the epigraphic record that exists today or that has been documented as of modern times is only a tiny fraction of what actually existed in antiquity. This is precisely why the study of Pompeii and Herculaneum is so important because it is an archeological outlier. When attempting to reconstruct the lives of gladiators across sources, the temptation is to make sweeping inferences based solely off of what is available. In this pursuit, we must remain cautious as we entertain the possibilities of the same person existing in different inscriptions and graffiti. For some, there is considerable evidence, for others, almost none.

#### ***Oceanus***

The gladiator *Oceanus*, also labeled *Oceaneanus*—a nearly indisputable equivalent given the variation in the Romanized Greek name (*Ὠκεανός*) for a water titan—faces off against *Asteropaeus* and *Aracintus* in matches with different outcomes according to graffiti at Pompeii (PBHG 5, 10). *Oceaneanus* (:*Oceanus*) loses to *Asteropaeus* near a peristyle in a large house

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<sup>78</sup>Plut. *Vit. Galb.* VIII.

(VI.11, 9.10) and *Oceanus* defeats *Aracintus* near the entrance to the House of *L. Ceius Secundus* and *Fabia Prima* (I.6, 15) roughly ten blocks to the east (See Figure III.9).



**Figure III.9: Asteropaeus and Oceaneanus (PBHG 5); Oceanus and Aracintus (PBHG 10)**

*Oceanus* has six appearances (“VI”) when he loses to *Asteropaeus* of 7 appearances (“VII”). These are obviously exaggerations when compared to the other graffito in which *Oceanus* wins with 13 (“xiii”) appearances and *Aracintus* loses with only four appearances (“iiii”). This information corroborates the convention that winners typically have more experience than losers. Upsets like those when *tirones* defeat veterans as in the wins of *Spiculus* (PBHG 16) and *Hilarus* (PBHG 8) in separate fights do happen and can kick-start a gladiator’s career as we have seen in both cases.

At a *taberna* in nearby Herculaneum (IV.10), there is a graffito, naming “*Oceanus*”, (CIL IV.10523a) only a block to the west of a small curbside shop which contains a similar reference to “*Ocaeanus*” (: *Oceanus*) (CIL IV.10578). The latter graffito provides further evidence for the lack of a consistent spelling of this gladiator’s name because underneath the name is an “*o*”. It is as if the graffitist was attempting to sound out the Roman spelling of *Oceanus* according to his or



her familiarity with the Greek spelling  $\Omega\kappa\epsilon\alpha\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ . Perhaps he or she lingered on the smooth breathing when determining whether or not to write *Hocaeanus* or *Ocaeanus*. In fact, the inscriber must have been more familiar with Greek because he or she placed an *-ae* or *-η* sound when there should have been only an *-e* or *-ε* sound on the antepenult.<sup>79</sup> Whatever the case was the gladiator *Oceanus* commanded a highly saturated fandom across Pompeii and Herculaneum.

What is even more interesting is that the tavern inscription at Herculaneum (CIL IV.10523a) includes the letters “*SPI*”, a very likely reference to *SPI(CVLVS)*, a famous gladiator whose career began as a novice fighter according to a graffito at Pompeii (PBHG 16). Although *Oceanus* never appears next to *Spiculus* or even in the body of fragmented mold-blown cups at all, the match could still have taken place as suggested by the graffito. As a note of caution, the peculiarities of the vertical orientation of the inscription stand in stark contrast to the usual horizontal pairing of *gladiatorum paria* across both the body of graffiti in Pompeii and the mold-blown cups from the northwestern Roman provinces. If the inscriber is referencing a contest between *Spiculus* and *Oceanus*, he or she is doing so outside of the established norms of inscribing a gladiatorial match. But, perhaps the inscription is indicating that *Spiculus* defeated *Oceanus* because “*SPI*” is capitalized and written above “*OCEANVS*”.

It is also worthwhile to mention that, in addition to the graffiti referencing *Oceanus*, a painting from the Tavern of Salvius (VI.14.35/36) in Pompeii cites *Oceanus* in a humorous way (CIL IV.3494). Two men sit while a serving woman comes toward them drink in hand. One of the customers says, “*Hoc*” (“Here”). To which the other customer says, “*Non, mia est*” (“No, it’s mine”). In order to settle the argument, the server jokes, “*Qui vol(et) sumat Oceane veni bibe*” (“Whoever wants (it), take (it), you *Oceanus*, come, drink.”). Used as such, *Oceanus* becomes

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<sup>79</sup>Väänänen, 1959, 25.

the popular figure of victory in a social setting dominated by plebeians, freedmen, travelers, and slaves. It is as if she is saying, the one who is most like this famous and victorious gladiator will be the one to win the drink. To imagine at a bar in modern times this decorative painting with the name of a regional or national sports hero or even such an episode occurring is not difficult. In this way, fandom spreads with fleeting references and the drive to emulate a hero, like the gladiator *Oceanus*, in everyday life. The conversation between *Trimalchio* and his guests, as we have seen before, presents a similar situation in which the host attempts to elevate his status by equating himself to the famous gladiator *Petraites* in a hypothetical funerary monument and in a boast about the material marks of his fandom.

### *Aracintus*

At the entrance to the House of *L. Ceius Secundus* and *Fabia Prima* (I.6, 15), a graffito portrays *Aracintus*, a less experienced gladiator of 4 fights, who is defeated by *Oceanus*, a veteran of 13 fights (PBHG 10). According to an epitaph found in an unknown location in Rome, there was a Spaniard *retiarius* by the name of *Marcus Ulpus Aracanthus* who trained at the imperial gladiator school in Capua (CIL VI.10184). He died at age 34.

*D(is) M(anibus).*

*M(arco) Ulpio*

*Aracintho, retia(rio)*

*Hispano, p(alo) primo*

*natione Palanti=*

*nus, pugnavit*

[in ludo] Imp(eratoris) XI,  
 [vixit? an]n(is) XXXIII.

Could the gladiator who lost to *Oceanus* be the same as the gladiator in the funerary inscription? Much, but not all, of the evidence points toward the contrary. First, the graffitist clearly draws *Aracint(h)us* as a *murmillio* or potentially a *Thraex* given that the figure has a large rectangular shield, a helmet with a sloping fin, and a short sword that could either be straight or curved depending on how one reads the etching stroke. Second, the epitaph labels *Aracint(h)us* as a *retiarius*, which would mean that his weapon would have to be a trident, an unmistakable illustration in a graffito—which we do not see. Third, there is no mention in the graffito of *Aracint(h)us*'s *ludus*, which is usually only added to a *gladiatorum paria* illustration and inscription if the fighter belonged to the imperial school at Capua (*Iulianius* or *Neronianus*). However, there is a counter argument that considers the rarity of the name *Aracint(h)us*—with the aspiration or not—in the epigraphic record, the plausibility that *Aracint(h)us* was just 'dismissed' ("*Missus est*") rather than being handed over to be killed by beasts ("*Bestiario (datus)*"), and that "*Bestiario*" was a mere interpolation. On the latter two accounts, there is considerable merit as it is certainly possible that "*Bestiario*" was a part of another nearby graffito and falsely categorized in *CIL*. In addition, if "*pugnavit / Imp XI*" means "he fought for the imperial school 11 times", then it is possible that *Aracint(h)us* could have recovered from the loss to *Oceanus* and gone on to survive 11 matches. Of his nationality in *Hispania*, nothing can be inferred from the illustrated match with *Oceanus*.

***M. Attilius***

Despite the gladiator *M(arcus) Attilius*'s famed rise to success in Pompeii, it seems as though his popularity was largely regional at best. In addition to the three graffiti fights discovered on the walls of the city, there is another potential regional reference to this fighter from an advertisement at Pompeii (EDR 081696).

*Glad(iatorum) par(ia) XXIII et venatio pug(nabunt)*

*in Falerno Foro Popili L(uciorum) Attiliorum*

*a(nte) dies XIII XII XI X K(alendas) Iuni(as)*

Although highly speculative, the case might be that *M. Attilius* received his name from the benefactor of the *ludus Attiliorum* in which he trained. This would be dependent on an alternate reading of the abbreviated *L* as *L(udorum)* instead of *L(uciorum)*. Given the gladiator's humble origins as a *tiro* (PBHG 8, 9) and his surprising defeat of the veteran *Hilarus* (PBHG 8) among other impressive wins (PBHG 10), one has to wonder whether *M(arcus) Attilius* the *cognomen Attilii* is mere coincidence in the aforementioned advertisement.

***Hilarus***

In an epitaph found along the Aurelian Walls at the southernmost point of the ancient city of Rome near the Via Appia and the Via Latina, *Hilarus* is mentioned (CIL VI.4343). Could he be the same decorated gladiator (PBHG 7) that fought and lost to *M. Attilius* (PBHG 8)? According to the inscription from Rome, he appears to have been in the ranks of Nero's German bodyguard "*Neronis / Caesaris (servus) corpore / custos*". This is the same elite protective force that all of the Julio-Claudians employed. Although at first it seems as though this reference could be referring to the *Hilarus* mentioned on the walls of Pompeii who is from the Neronian

(imperial) gladiator school (PBHG 7, 8), this possibility is unlikely. Consider that the epitaph explicitly spells out “*Neronis*” instead of abbreviating *Ner* which could indicate Neronianus. Furthermore, it would have been difficult to simultaneously be a bodyguard and a gladiator, especially in two different cities—Rome and Capua. His Frisian origins (“*natione Frisiaeo*”) in northern *Germania* are shared by another fallen man commemorated in a nearby epitaph, *Bassus*, with a nearly identical inscription (CIL XI. 4342). In sum, the *Hilarus* of Rome and the *Hilarus* of Pompeii and Capua are not the same because the former belonged to the Julio-Claudian bodyguard who appear to be buried in the same location.

### *Asteropaeus*

Even less likely is that the gladiator of the *Neronian* school who fought *Oceaneanus* and won (PBHG 5) appears in an epitaph found in an unknown location in Rome (CIL VI.23833).

*D(is) M(anibus).*

*Parthenopaeo*

*f(ilio), v(ixit) a(nnis) XVII, d(iebus) VII.*

*S(it) t(ibi) t(erra) l(evis).*

*Asteropaeus pat(er)*

*b(ene) m(erenti) <:fecit>*

It is difficult to say that “*Asteropaeus pater*” was a gladiator or to infer much at all since he is only the dedicator of the inscription to his deceased son, *Parthenopaeus*, who died at the young age of seventeen. And yet, the rarity of the name *Asteropaeus* possibly indicates a match. For the sake of not leaving anything left to coincidence, the *Oplomachus* with 7 wins (*VII*) (PBHG 5) could have lived to the age of fatherhood only to witness his son’s premature death.

## Conclusion

Investigating *gladiator singularis* and *gladiatorum paria* endowed us with new insights about how the townspeople of ancient Pompeii experienced gladiators and what inspired them to share these sentiments in local dialogues. What was discovered was that the attitudes of those who marked the walls all over town reflected much less *infamia* than virtue of battle and narrative praise.

Based upon inferences about the *gladiatorum paria* on the walls of Pompeii, the inscribers had most likely attained a more advanced level of literacy and education. They emphasized the context and the spectacles of the arena between two famous fighters with more frequent documentation of names, records, and outcomes. Granted the inscriptions are systematic with relatively simple syntax; however, they do not reflect the same obsession with the purely sensory thrill of a gladiator and his subsequent *virtus* or virtue. Instead, the captions and drawings of the more literate creators of graffiti underscore popular fights and how they develop between two opponents with inflated personas in the town or region.

This interpretation of the higher literacy of inscribers of *gladiatorum paria* is apparent by comparison to the *gladiator singularis* representations. Those who relayed the images of their favorite gladiator and a brief message about him seemingly accentuated the armor, weapons, and stance with a brief descriptive phrase—often just a name. Rather than contextualizing and sensationalizing the fights of the arena, the inscribers of the *gladiator singularis* praised the virtue of battle and the swagger of armored, athletic individuals and, in some cases, acknowledging their *infamia*. Recall the instance of equivalence of the fallen gladiators with the fallen Nuceriaans at the match in 59 CE.

As we look to the mold-blown cups in Chapter IV, there is the same reverence for the fights and the development of gladiators across their careers in the *gladiatorum paria* graffiti as the molded *vascula vitrea pugnis gladiatorum ornata*. And yet, the information displayed on the cups lies somewhere between the information displayed in singular gladiator drawings and duals. However, the distinct lack of information regarding a gladiator's record and fighting class makes tracking down the stories behind the famous gladiators more difficult.

## Chapter IV: *Vascula Vitrea Pugnis Gladiatorum Ornata*

### Introduction

Thus far, we have seen specific gladiators named across literary and epigraphic sources. We observed how the gladiator *Spiculus* exemplifies the numerous ways in which famous gladiators were referenced in Chapter I across the Roman empire. We investigated the *Cena Trimalchionis* for *Petronius's* precise mentions of *Hermes* and *Petrates* in Chapter II and, in Chapter III, we looked into the Pompeian graffiti as a regional source for fighters and their histories. Now we will turn to the most recently discovered and partially catalogued element of the archeological record. What follows is an effort to bring together several geographical groupings of fragmented glass into a single corpus and analysis.

### Methods of Data Collection and Interpretation

Several hundred fragments have been found across areas formerly under Roman occupation. These finds are all that is left of an industry of mold-blown glass cups sold and distributed to a range of *fautores*. I have chosen to consider only those unique fragments that pertained to gladiator games. Other cups with mythological references have been found too, but I will not consider them. Furthermore, fragments that contained no epigraphic remains were not included in the case of the mold-blown cups. Charioteer racing and beast-hunting games were likewise excluded from consideration. What remained were 57 molded and mass-produced pieces of glass or reconstructed, combined fragments from a particular cup.



### Context

Make no mistake, the eliminations were not to narrow the scope of research as much as to examine a particular convergence of the epigraphic habit<sup>80</sup> and the height of popularity for gladiator contests. Interestingly, nearly all of the cups have been dated from the mid 1<sup>st</sup> century CE to the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE<sup>81</sup> which is precisely when the number of inscriptions peaked in the Roman Empire<sup>82</sup>. As we will see later in this chapter, this is surely not coincidental.

### Find-spot

Featured in Figure IV.1, the *vascula vitrea pugnīs gladiatorum ornata* (“glass vessels decorated with the fights of gladiators”) were discovered across continental Europe with the largest concentrations in France and Switzerland. It is curious that none of the fragments were found in *Italia* where the fights depicted actually took place. Unlike the graffiti at Pompeii in which the inscriber represented the fights of the nearby arena with the impression of accuracy—although we have no way of knowing for sure whether or not the fighting records are correct—the mold-blown cups are a work of considerably less-informed craftsmen and were traded by a wider audience in the northwestern provinces. This fundamental difference in the local versus the large and diverse population of the inhabitants of the provinces manifests itself in the illustration and narration of each fight.

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<sup>80</sup>Bodel, 2001, 6-10 and MacMullen, 1982, 244.

<sup>81</sup>Senn. et al., 1998; 99.

<sup>82</sup>Bodel, 2001, 6.

Modern Country	Number of Unique Mold-blown Glass Fragments
France	30
Germany	2
Switzerland	21
Austria	1
Hungary	2
England	1
TOTAL	57

**Figure IV.1: Find-spot Country and Unique Mold-blown Glass Fragments**

### Mold Types and Location

In 1978, Geneviève Sennequier and other scholars created the first attempt to categorize the known fragments of *vascula vitrea pugnīs gladiatorum ornata*, found mainly in modern France.<sup>83</sup> Rütli et al. updated Sennequier's corpus with finds from modern Switzerland and established the current coding system in 1988.<sup>84</sup> Again, a decade later, Sennequier revised her original corpus and combined it with the fragments found in Rütli et al. to form the categorization that I have chosen to use in this study.<sup>85</sup> Although I am using this typology, I have updated the corpus with several finds from *Narbonensis* (south France)<sup>86</sup>, from modern Austria, Germany, Hungary, and France in the *CIL*<sup>87</sup>, and from France in the catalogue of the Corning Museum of Glass<sup>88</sup>.

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<sup>83</sup>Senn. et al., 1978.

<sup>84</sup>Rütli et al. 1988.

<sup>85</sup>Senn. et al., 1998.

<sup>86</sup>Fontaine and Foy, 2015, n. 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 30.

<sup>87</sup>from *CIL* III, XII, XIII.

<sup>88</sup>from *CMOG* 533.

Before our discussion of the mold types used to produce the glass vessels, it is useful to note that there are groupings of cups based off of the epigraphic and visual content that concentrate in particular areas in the Roman provinces (of what is now continental Europe). Bear in mind that the A and B molds consist of charioteer racing themes, the E mold consists of athlete themes, and the J mold consists of the victors of the *Circus Maximus*. These, I will not consider here. C and D molds, which will be explained shortly, tend to be scattered across south-central France and northwestern Switzerland and are the most common mold type. F mold cups are found across northern and northwestern Switzerland. Two G types—one of these could be an H type—was found in southern France, another two in northern Switzerland, and two to three in eastern Austria. A single type I fragment (PBH 19) shows up in Lillebonne, northern France. In addition, a variety of six fragmented cups cannot be classified into a mold type and are scattered about the continent.

### **Timespan of the *Vascula Vitrea***

As place and time can hardly be separated, it is important to understand the setting in the 1<sup>st</sup> and early 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries CE when Roman borders were as fluid as they had ever been. However, there are a number of difficulties when trying to determine dates within a decade or so of precision. Because so many of the mold-blown glass fragments were discovered in trash heaps among various other artifacts or similarly ambiguous contexts from a wide range of dates, it is rather difficult to date such fragments by their context. Additionally, many of the fragments which can be dated accurately according to archeological setting, are not considered within the scope of this study. Although scholars can only attribute the collection of Roman mold-blown glass tableware to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries CE, it is possible to ascertain a more precise date for

the gladiators who were named on the cups in other primary sources such as we have seen with *Spiculus* in Chapter I and *Petraites* in Chapter II. Using literary and epigraphic evidence together, we can pinpoint when a gladiator was fighting and set a reasonable start date for the range of certain molds. This constitutes our *terminus post quem* because the cups could not have predated the gladiators which they name and depict. What the archeological dating does is to provide an extreme end date to the cup craze.<sup>89</sup> Several cups (PBH 1, 2, 3) were found within a context of materials dated to 14-68CE, the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, in the establishments of *Aventicum* and *Lousonna*. Likewise, a fragment (PBH 19) from a Roman encampment in *Narbonensis*, modern Fréjus, comes from the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. As we come across different molds, we will provide more specified dates as determined by scholars and archeologists.

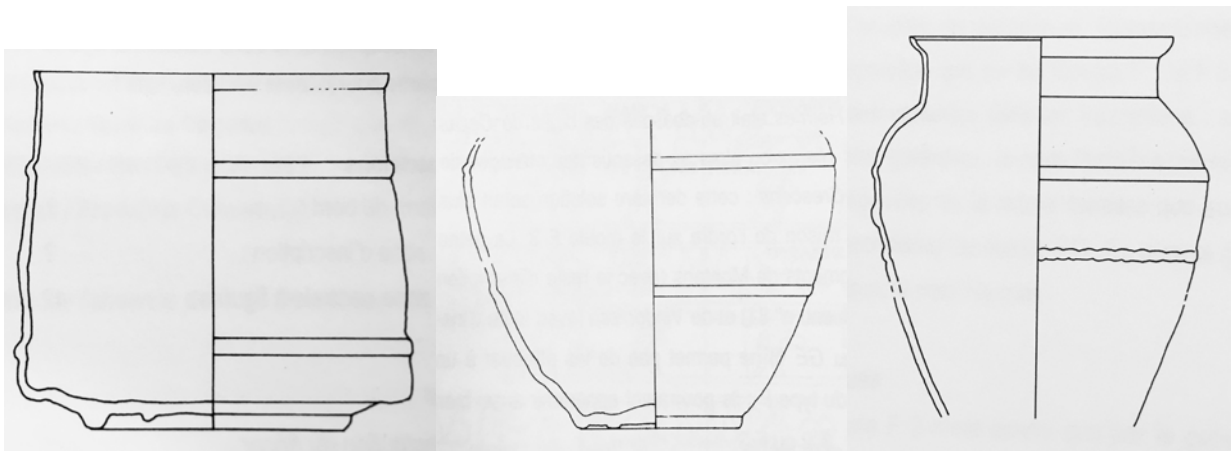
### **Roman Mold-blown Glass Cups Content**

In total, there are 57 unique fragments of Roman mold-blown glass cups with illustrations of gladiators, and their accompanying inscriptions of the gladiators' names. Commonly, each cup depicts eight gladiators fighting in pairs, though a significant number depict four gladiators fighting in pairs. When first approaching the *vascula vitrea pugnis gladiatorum ornata*, it is important to keep in mind the whole and now just the parts we have left. Because there are only three complete cups in existence today (PBH 14,17, 49), it is easy to disassociate the fragments from what the whole looks like. The complete cups appear in three main forms as seen in Figure IV.2. However, like the variants within the mold classifications as we will soon discover, there are deviations from these three normative versions of a cup. Archeologists, spearheaded by

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<sup>89</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 99.

Sennequier and Rütli, have pieced together fragments to reconstruct the shape of the former cup. They have found slightly different ovoid shapes and slightly different cylindrical shapes, measuring diameters and the height of zones that wrap around the cup.<sup>90</sup> The seams that appear on the finished cups or on the sides of fragments are a product of the molding and glassmaking processes, which will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections. When there are three seams, this indicates that the mold consisted of three parts—two side pieces and a bottom piece—into which glass was blown. Likewise, a two-part mold shows only two seams on the sides of the cup (as in the F1 cup in Figure IV.2).



**Figure IV.2: (From Right to Left) Cylindrical tripartite mold of the C5 mold type; ovoid two-part mold of the F1 type; and ovoid tripartite mold of the G1 type (PBH 14; 17; 49)<sup>91</sup>**

### **Identifying the Fighting Class from Visual Details**

From the visual details, it is possible to discern the fighting class of a few gladiators on the cups (see Figure I.2 in Chapter I for an illustrative overview). At least one figure presents a

<sup>90</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 48-74.

<sup>91</sup>Only to relative scale; The dimensions of the C5 cup are 63mm in diameter, 16mm in the inscription area, and 32mm in the area with gladiator figures, and 91mm total height. The dimensions of the F1 cup are 27mm in the upper area with charioteer figures and 30mm in the lower area with gladiator figures. The dimensions of the G1 cup are 65mm in diameter, 10mm on the shoulder, and 17mm in the upper area with gladiator figures. (Senn. et al. 1998, 52, 62, 68.)

*Retiarius*, an unnamed figure in PBH 37, who has dropped his trident<sup>92</sup>. The *sicus* or curved short-sword is another weaponry detail that sometimes is visible and other times not, depending on the quality of the mold and how well the artifact was preserved. In several different cup scenes, *Holhes* (2x)<sup>93</sup>, *Ories*, and *Hermes* extend a curved *sicus* against their opponents, the weapon of a *Thraex* (PBH 4, 13, 17, 30). Another figure with an uncommon appearance stands facing left to the immediate left of the *Retiarius* in PBH 37. He extends what looks to be the outline of a small, round shield in his right hand and draws back his straight short-sword as he prepares to strike a blow. His shield marks him as an *Oplomachus*<sup>94</sup>.

While all of the other shields—besides that of the *Oplomachus* in PBH 37—which we are still able to see are rectangular or square, they are not all the same size. *Spiculus* almost always has a bigger shield than his opponent *Columbus*<sup>95</sup>, likewise for *Calamus* and his opponent *Holhes* or *Holes* or *Ories* or *Hermes*<sup>96</sup>, for *Petriates* and his opponent *Prudes*<sup>97</sup>, and for *Cocumbus* and his opponent *Proculus*<sup>98</sup>. This indicates that *Spiculus*, *Calamus*, *Prudes*, and *Cocumbus* are likely *Murmillones*, a gladiator class with a distinguishing fin atop his helmet, a straight sword, and a big, rectangular shield<sup>99</sup>. Their opponents can be any of three fighters—*Thraex*, *Provocator*, and *Secutor*. We have already seen that *Holhes*, *Holhes*, *Ories*, and *Hermes* tend to be armed with a *sicus* and so it is probable that *Calamus*'s opponent was always a *Thraex*

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<sup>92</sup>the hallmark weapon of a *Retiarius* (Jacobelli, 2003, 13-14.)

<sup>93</sup>Although "*Holhes*" does not specifically appear on PBH 4 and 30, the C1 mold type allows us to infer that the figure named is indeed *Holhes*. In the case of the *Thraex* in PBH 4, he stands in the same position as *Holhes* does in other C1 fragments and he is appropriately a space away from the pairing of *Spiculus* and *Columbus* who are actually named. Presumably, he would be paired with *Calamus*. In the case of the *Thraex* in PBH 30, he takes up the same position as *Holhes* does in other C1 fragments and he is immediately to the right of *Calamus* who is actually named on the fragment.

<sup>94</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 9.

<sup>95</sup>C1, C5, D2, G/H1 mold types.

<sup>96</sup>C1, C2, C4, C5, D2, G1.

<sup>97</sup>C1, C5, D2, F2, G1, G/H1.

<sup>98</sup>C1, C5.

<sup>99</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 15.

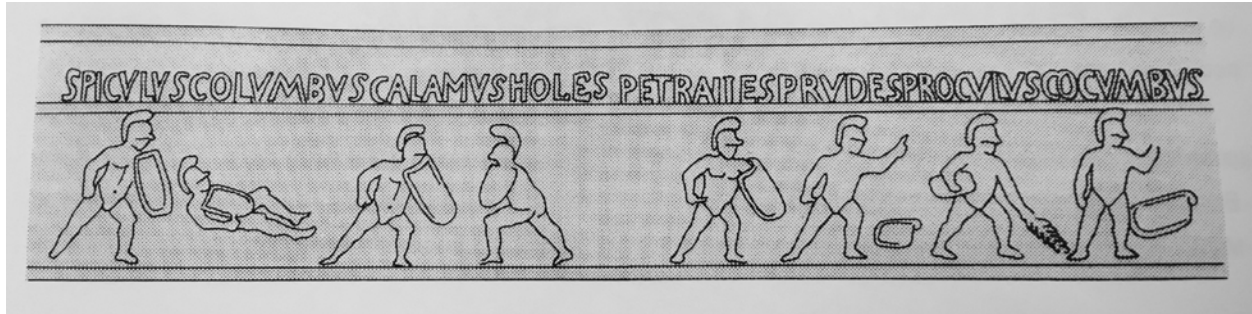
on the *vascula vitrea*. Even as the seemingly consistent portrayal of each figure's helmet seems at odds with any analysis, this makes sense in light of the fact that many of the most common gladiators, *Thraex*, *Murmillio*, and *Oplomachus*, wore helmets with an arching fin, oftentimes with horse hair or plumes. In a subsequent discussion of mold typologies, we will realize the full extent of the similarities between the depictions of the fighters on the cups.

### How to Read the Cups

We will now learn how to read the cups using PBH 14 of the C5 mold type as a benchmark, as it is in arguably the best condition of preservation. Figure IV.3 shows the central band of a cylindrical tripartite cup and the accompanying inscription of the names of each figure above. Within this central band, each figure is paired with another as there are always an even number of figures.<sup>100</sup> Many of the visuals we have just discussed, including the weaponry and armor, produce helpful cues for the observer of the cups. However, there are other elements presented on the cups that are not as readily apparent upon first glance. On the majority of figures, one can note the appearance of a loincloth, mainly by the absence of genitalia. All of the gladiator types recognized in this study would wear a loincloth (*subligaculum*) fastened at the waist with a belt (*balteus*). Below, in Figure IV.3, *Proculus* holds a *palma* or palm branch. This detail symbolizes victory as we will come to see soon. On other cups, such *palmae* are decorative and have no implication on the match result (Figure IV.4). Context most appropriately determines the meaning of the palm frond.

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<sup>100</sup>A slight exception to this pairing rule is apparent in PBH 20 of the I1 mold type. Here there are three figures to the left of the partition and three to the right. Although the total number is even, it seems as though the fighters are fighting in trios against one another. Even in the commonplace pairing of *Petraites* and *Prudes*, which we know from the remaining inscription, the figures do not appear to be fighting one another. *Prudes* appears to fight a third unnamed figure in the left frame.



**Figure IV.3: Mold type C5 as the benchmark example of four-pair cups (PBH 14)**

“*SPICVLVS COLVMBVS CALAMVS HOLES PETRAITES PRUDES PROCVLVS COCVMBVS*”

Some of the figures are armored with an *ocrea* (a metal greave than can either be restricted below or stretch past the knee) on their shield-side leg. These leg pieces are best seen in Figure IV.4. Presumably, gladiators would block blows with the left side of their bodies and attack with their more coordinated dominant hand on the right. That being said, it is curious that, *Holhes* in the C1 mold type and *Ories* in the C4 mold type are lefties as the left-side *sicus* is clearly imposed over the right-side *scutum* from our angle. The unnamed *Oplomachus* in the C3 mold type is also a lefty based upon his fighting stance and the observer’s view. Though many gladiators would armor their dominant weapon-wielding arm with a *manica* (a full-arm guard of leather, cloth and metal), we cannot discern such details on the cups. With an understanding of these details, we will move to how to determine the outcome of each match between a pair of gladiators.

### **Losers**

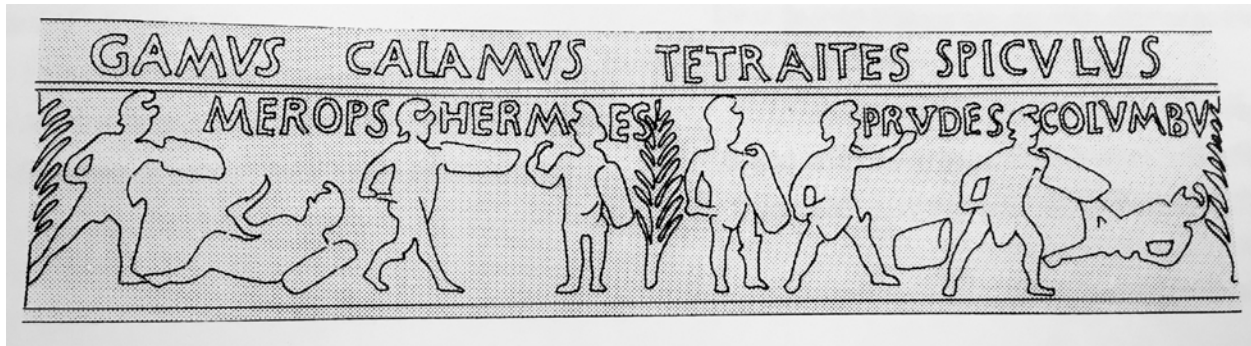
Furthermore, within the relief, the artist has undergone considerable effort to communicate the results of the matches. A fallen gladiator indicates a loss, which would either



lead to death or discharge. In the majority of cases, exactly what happens to the loser after the fight is unclear. That being said, the gladiators were most likely not killed in contrast to modern media portrayals of gladiator battles. The sheer expense of training was enough to deter this option from the *editor* of the games save for particular circumstances.<sup>101</sup> If the crowd encouraged the defeated gladiator to be killed, the *editor* could oblige. Still though, the *editor* had to reimburse the *lanista*, or owner of the gladiator, for a gladiator he sentenced to death. Sometimes the stakes were death to all losers on a particular day of games. On other occasions, a conceited emperor might be the *editor* and vote for death. In any case, following the conventions of the graffiti on the walls of Pompeii, my convention is P for *Periit* or “killed” and M for *Missus est* or “discharged”. It is difficult to rule out the possibility of death as opposed to discharge and vice versa. And yet, there is indeed a difference between a fallen gladiator and a gladiator who has dropped his shield. For example, in the more detailed illustrations from PBH 17, *Prudes* has dropped his shield and appeals to the *editor* while his opponent *Tetraites* appears to be waiting for this appeal in a non-threatening posture, *Columbus* lies on his back before *Spiculus* with his shield covering his chest, and *Merops* lies on his back with his weapon up in defense from *Gamus*'s incoming blow. Across these three scenes, there are differences—some subtle and others not so subtle. Perhaps, *Prudes* is asking to be spared, *Columbus* is killed, and *Merops* is in the process of being defeated and will likely appeal to the *editor*. There is another important deviation from the largely standardized exterior of the mold-blown glass cup. As shown below, the winners are named in bigger font in the top band of the cup and the losers are named in smaller font in the band below. Only in the D mold category is this the case. All other cups have the gladiators named as they appear one after the other in the relief in Figure IV.4.

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<sup>101</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 20.



**Figure IV.4: Mold type D2 demonstrates the variations of losing a match (PBH 17)**

*TETRAITES SPICVLVS GAMVS CALAMVS*

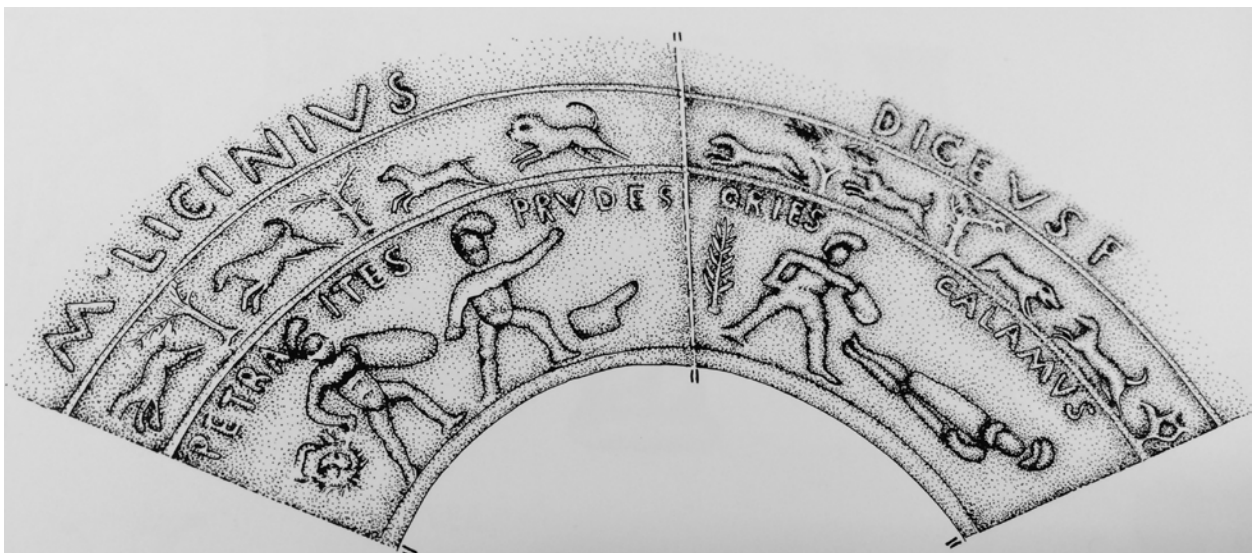
*PRVDES COLVMBVS MEROPS HERMES*

This important difference can clarify some of the ambiguity of the *Calamus-Hermes* pair. Although they appear to have come to a draw, *Calamus* is still in the top line and *Hermes* in the bottom. This trend of winners' names in large font above the losers' names gives the impression that *Hermes* has lost in some way or is about to lose. Consequently, so as to avoid making generalizations about winners and losers, it is necessary to understand the varying degrees of winning and losing and the variance across cups.

### **Victors**

There are many different gestures and details to mark a victor. A gladiator still standing and often extending his weapon or, in a few instances, surrounded by palm fronds means that he has beaten his opponent, *Vicit* or "won". Consider PBH 14 in Figure IV.3, in which the victors are generally the first to be named in each pair and yet *Calamus* does not definitively beat *Holes*. Their posture is much the same fighting stance only *Holes's* shield does not angle to the side as *Calamus's* does. Again, the trend of naming victors first in succession is much like the trend of

enlarging the font and displaying the victors at the top of the cup (PBH 17). On PBH 17 in Figure IV.4, the victor is clearly *Calamus* because his name is in larger font in an inscription area above the scene of gladiators. It is generally the case that the winner's name comes first in the pair of names across the cups save for instances that are too fragmentary to tell. As with the previous example in Figure IV.3 (PBH 14), there seems to be inconsistencies in the actual timing of the captured illustration. How are we to know whether or not *Spiculus* killed *Columbus* right away in the heat of the match or if *Columbus* first made an appeal to the *editor* to be declared “*missus*”? This is to say that not all of the scenes take place directly after the fight has concluded. Some amount of time may have passed and the end result would then be “*perit*”. If we examine another benchmark cup from the ovoid tripartite mold type G1 (Figure IV.5), *Petrates* and *Prudes* appear just as they do in the majority of cases. To *Petrates*'s left, however, there is a victory crown, a garland that is another indication of his win over *Prudes*. To *Ories*'s left, there is a *palma*, denoting his victory after killing his opponent *Calamus*.



**Figure IV.5: Mold type G1 as the benchmark example of two-pair cups (PBH 49)**

### ***Incertum***

Many of the fights have an unknown outcome (I for *Incertum* or “unknown”). Given the fragmentary nature of the majority of the finds, the figures’ names, stances, weapons, shields, and/or body parts are no longer preserved. The issue is worsened by the fact that there are only three fully complete cups (PBH 14,17, 49). These do however yield a paradigm for typology as we have seen and will come to see more extensively. Many of the most fragmented cups have come from newer archeological digs and dives in southern France in recent decades.<sup>102</sup> These pieces of glass are all from the Roman province of *Narbonensis*, numbering 8 in total that name gladiators. It is important to note that in this study the parameters excluded all fragments that did not contain inscriptions of gladiator names and those that are associated solely with charioteers and mythic scenes. The pieces that are analyzed here fit the typology of Rützi et al. (1988) and Sennequier et al. (1998).

### **Number of Gladiator Names that Appear across the *Vascula Vitrea***

Among the many gladiators named on the known Roman mold-blown glass cups the most prevalent are *Petraites* (also seen as *Tetraites* and *Petraes*), *Prudes*, *Calamus*, *Holes/Holhes/Ories/Hories* (who all refer to the same gladiator as I will argue), *Spiculus*, *Columbus*, *Hermes*, *Proculus*, and *Cocumbus*. When we analyze the cup typology, we will discover that they are often featured together on the same cup. The number of times each gladiator appears among the *vascula vitrea* is displayed in Figure IV.6.

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<sup>102</sup>Fontaine and Foy, 2015, 97-111.

Gladiator Names	Number of Appearances
<i>Petraites/Tetraites/Petraes</i>	29
<i>Prudes</i>	29
<i>Calamus</i>	19
<i>Holes/Holhes/Ories/Hories</i>	17
<i>Spiculus</i>	17
<i>Columbus</i>	15
<i>Hermes</i>	11
<i>Proculus</i>	9
<i>Cocumbus</i>	9
<i>Gamus</i>	1
<i>Merops</i>	1
<i>Studiosus</i>	1
<i>Aemi(l)ius</i>	1

**Figure IV.6: Counts of Named Gladiators<sup>103</sup>**

Some of the names are diminutives including *Spiculus* (*spica* + *-ulus*<sup>104</sup>) and *Proculus* (*procus* + *-ulus*<sup>105</sup>) meaning “little spike” and “little suitor”, respectively. Here, the comparative connotation of ‘poor’ or ‘little’ must be noted as a trademark of the entertainers’ trade much as it is today. It is not that these two gladiators were weak—in fact, they were both victors according

<sup>103</sup>For every case in which a mold type could be determined, I added not only the gladiators mentioned by the inscription and/or illustration below, but also their opponents according to the mold typology. For several cases, I did not take such liberties because we no longer have access to a few fragments whose inscriptions are documented in *CIL* (PBH 50-56). Some names I excluded entirely because the names were too contested (PBH 23, 38) or the names were not in keeping with the rest of the corpus (PBH 39, 47).

<sup>104</sup>Miller, 2018, 10; Väänänen, 1959, 61-62, 100-101.

<sup>105</sup>Miller, 2018, 1; Väänänen, 1959, 61-62, 100-101.

to the reliefs they occupy on the glasses—, but that a Roman audience seemed to delight in the alternating vowel-consonant dance across syllables that is also present in *Columbus*, *Calamus*, and *Cocumbus* too. For a gladiator to be distinguished by a single name, a stage name, his name must stand out when announced in the arena. The undertones of “little spike” and “little suitor” still provided an ironic kicker to an otherwise unique name. Only at the height of the popularity of gladiatorial games, such diminutives, that produced the same effect as a three-syllable name in speech, were probably too commonplace to mark a gladiator with any noticeable irony. This is to say nothing of *Spiculus*’s physical dominance or *Proculus*’s savage behavior because these are unknown from the literary and epigraphic record.

### **How Are the Illustrations Presented?**

We now come to an in-depth description of the typology established by Rützi et al. in 1988 and updated by Sennequier et al. in 1998. First though, here is a note on the progress of the catalogue. From *CIL*, we received a variety of scattered fragments with inscriptions that correspond to the current body of *vascula vitrea pugnīs gladiatorum ornata*. Subsequent work by scholars over the fragments centered around Switzerland in 1988 and over the those centered around France in 1978 and 1998 yielded the typology we have now. I have made several additions as stated earlier in this Chapter. When accessing the names in particular it is important to understand the cataloguing efforts done in previous scholarship. With the exception of six independent fragments (most from the poor cataloguing of mold-blown cups in the *CIL*), the gladiatorial molded cups fall into six types (letters) which are further subdivided by mold (numbers). Figure IV.7 displays the six relevant types. Mold types A, B, E, and J were excluded

for reasons mentioned in an earlier section of this chapter. As a helpful aside, the lower number of the mold does not indicate that a mold predates another.

Type	Description
C	“cylindrical bowls with gladiator fights with all names in the inscription area”
D	“cylindrical bowls with gladiator fights with the names of the winners in the inscription area and the names of the losers in the zone with figures”
F	“ovoid goblets with charioteers and gladiator fights”
G	“ovoid goblets with the name of the manufacturer on the shoulder, animal friezes and gladiator fights on the main body”
H	“ovoid goblets with gladiator names on the shoulder, animal friezes (and gladiator fights?) on the main body”
I	“ovoid goblets with gladiator names on the shoulder, animal friezes and gladiator fights on the main body”

**Figure IV.7: The Typology Created by Rütli et al.; Updated by Sennequier et al.<sup>106</sup>**

### **Manufacture and Tradition**

Given the lack of textual evidence for the glassmaking industry, many of the answers lie in the archeological remains and especially on the cups themselves. The high degree of similarity among the cups leads us to believe that glassmakers had developed a cultural system of passing down the knowledge of their wares to subsequent generations of glassmakers. These traditions

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<sup>106</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 22.

are restricted in variation and maintain continuity with the past.<sup>107</sup> That is not to say that they were as highly organized as a guild<sup>108</sup> or as invariable as to produce glass from even the same metallurgical and mineral recipes. Typologies constructed by scholars often give the impression that traditions were very conserved over time and that the artisans' works had a 'Roman' identity. This is to ignore the fact that only certain areas of the empire, i.e. the northwestern provinces, experienced the phenomenon of mold-blown cups of gladiatorial contests. A 'Roman' typology is at best an indicator of the general cultural place and time created by scholars to help organize not to give meaning. What is more important is to understand that a 'Roman' culture was lived in differing ways across the empire and that any variation in the cup is due to changing artisan preferences, consumer demand, symbolic interactionism on the meaning of *vascula vitrea*.<sup>109</sup> However, in the instance of gladiators who were a quintessential aspect of Roman popular culture set largely by the norms and interactions within Italy itself, there is reason to think that the conceptions of gladiators within the northwestern provinces was idealized. In addition, the interactions between a few emperors and famous gladiators such as that between Nero and *Spiculus* raises the question of how centered on Rome the molded glasses with gladiators really were. It is with these words of precaution and careful consideration that we investigate the typology established by Rütli and his coauthors.

### **Types and Molds**

Six mold types (C, D, F, G, H, I) present identifiable gladiators fighting opponents. They describe particular sets of décor on the exterior of the cup and the shapes of the cup. These are

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<sup>107</sup>Lemke, 1998, 270-1.

<sup>108</sup>Lemke, 1998, 272-3.

<sup>109</sup>Lemke, 1998, 273.



further subdivided for variations like different combinations of gladiator names, illustrated fight scenes, and accessory reliefs. Most of the spectacle molds are tripartite, especially the cylindrical ones certified in France and Switzerland, though a few of the ovoid ones are two-part. These molds were formed with all of the inscriptions and illustrations as indentations into terracotta clay.<sup>110</sup> The glassmaker would blow the hot, semi-solid glass into the mold which wrapped around the outside and left the impression coming out from the finished glass in three dimensions. The molten glass was blown in such a way that pockets of air trapped in between the mold and the new glass structure were minimized. Jointures between parts of the glass had to be used because in order to access the inside of the mold for carving, a glassmaker needed to be able to carve and shape the clay from top to bottom before drying and cooking it. Thus to see and perform the work, multiple pieces had to be used and can be seen on the glass itself. Usually, three pieces were used to create the mold, though some use only two. We know of only one mold that was likely used to produce the chariot fighting glass cups which are not considered here.<sup>111</sup>

### **Prototype Mold and Over-Molding**

In order to make the multi-part molds out of clay which provided the hollow structure which glassmakers used to fix the elaborate details and inscriptions on the glass, a prototype mold had to be crafted. This prototype would have resembled its corresponding, finished cup in appearance with three dimensional projections coming outwards toward the observer. Only a skilled craftsman in pottery could have made this prototype mold for the mass production of spectacle glassware. Shaped, cut, and fashioned to produce the figures fighting in pairs, the accompanying inscriptions of their names, and other decorative additions, the master mold would

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<sup>110</sup>Senn. et al.; 1998, 23.

<sup>111</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 147.

then be used to make the multi-part, hollowed-out mold.<sup>112</sup> The outer would thus come apart in order for the details to be properly etched-in, for mistakes to be corrected, and so that the parts could easily be reassembled for the glassmaking process.

Interestingly, Sennequier et al. hypothesize that, given the similarities in the mold typologies with marked differences, the clay molds were formed around a central mold over which innumerable identical over-moldings were performed in order to mass produce the *vascula vitrea*. As for the relative number of workshops that produced glass based off of the same prototype mold we cannot know with any certainty. However, since the cups are so widespread across the northern provinces, we can conceive of a mold making cottage industry that could supply or work in conjunction with a glassware industry. The glass cups themselves were likewise over-molded just as much and are likely responsible for most of the deviations within our modern typology. Whoever was copying another glass already in circulation could have made errors in making a new mold based off of a specific cup. The details of the fights that took place in the near past (within several decades) and far away (in *Italia*) could have escaped the mind of the copying craftsman. Indeed, the matchups and un-attributable gladiator names in a cup consisting of fragments from Windisch, Switzerland and Lattes, France (PBH 12, 37) entertain the possibility of copy errors.

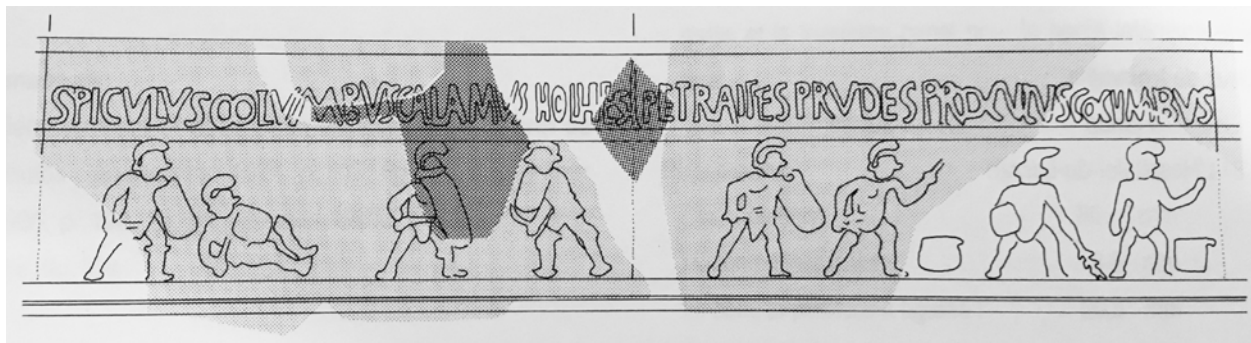
### **C Mold Types**

The cups classified as C1-5 are all assembled according to a tripartite mold for the inscription zone, the central zone with figures, and the lower zone including the bottom of the

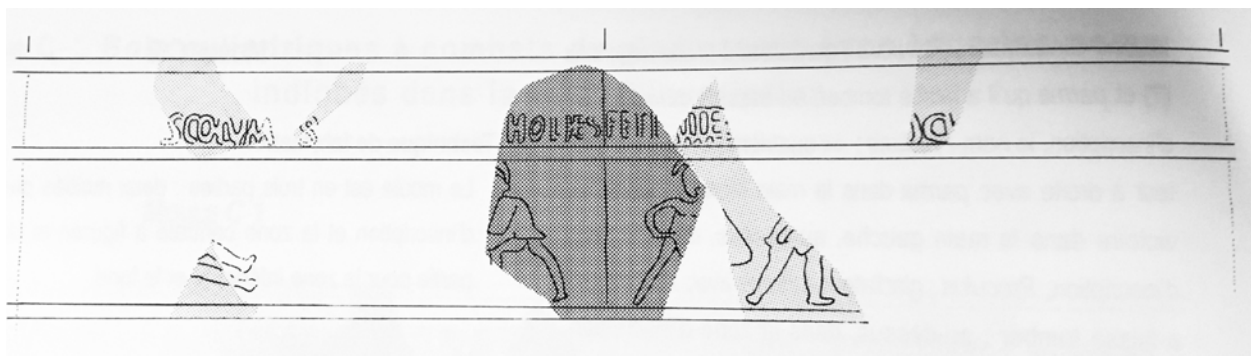
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<sup>112</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 23.

glass.<sup>113</sup> The benchmark for the cylindrical C type cups is the C5<sup>114</sup> mold (Figure IV.3). It reads, “*SPICVLVS COLVMBVS CALAMVS HOLES / PETRAITES PRUDES PROCVLVS COCVMBVS*” and contains more detailed decorations such as musculature lines and a palm frond in the hands of *Proculus*. All of the other C type cups follow the same formula of fighting pairs and fighting results so much so that even the stances of each fighter are the same. The next most closely related mold type to the C5 is the C1<sup>115</sup> by a single difference between “*HOLES*” and “*HOLHES*”(Figure IV.8). Given that the lettering and figurines are less rigid and symmetrical compared to the benchmark C5, the C1 mold type is likely a product of an over-molding from the C5 mold.



**Figure IV.8: Mold type C1 (PBH 4-8, 30-33)**



**Figure IV.9: Mold type C2 (PBH 9, 10, 34)**

<sup>113</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 48-53.

<sup>114</sup>PBH 2, 3, 14, 15, 27.

<sup>115</sup>PBH 4-8, 30-33.

Molds C1 and C2<sup>116</sup> are identical in dimensions, the content of the inscription—“*SPICVLVS COLVMBVS CALAMVS HOLHES / PETRAITES PRVDES PROCVLVS COCVMBVS*”—, and the depictions of the figures (Figure IV.9). However, just as C1 was an over-molding of C5, so is C2 an over-molding of C1. The use of the same prototype mold explains the minor differences in the font.<sup>117</sup> The C1 type has an inscription with long, narrow, and clearly-defined letters while the C2 type has small, blurred letters and conjoins the letters H and E in “*HOLHES*”. As before, this minor difference around the opponent of *Calamus* constitutes a single difference between C2 and C1.

In another iteration based off of the original C5 benchmark, the C4<sup>118</sup> mold, *Calamus* and *Ories* are clearly marked facing each other as the inscription notes, “[---]AMVS ORIES / PETRAITES [---]” in the top horizontal relief over a slightly larger zone of figures (Figure IV.10). *Petraites* is also featured and fights *P(rudes)*. Notably, *Ories*—rather than *Holhes* or even *Holes* as we have seen in other C types—appears as a gladiator with the curved *sicus* of a *Thraex*, and fights *Calamus* to a draw. The fight between *Calamus* and *Ories* is shown with an alternate ending in the G1 mold type as we will soon realize.



**Figure IV.10: Mold type C4 (PBH 1, 13, 40)**

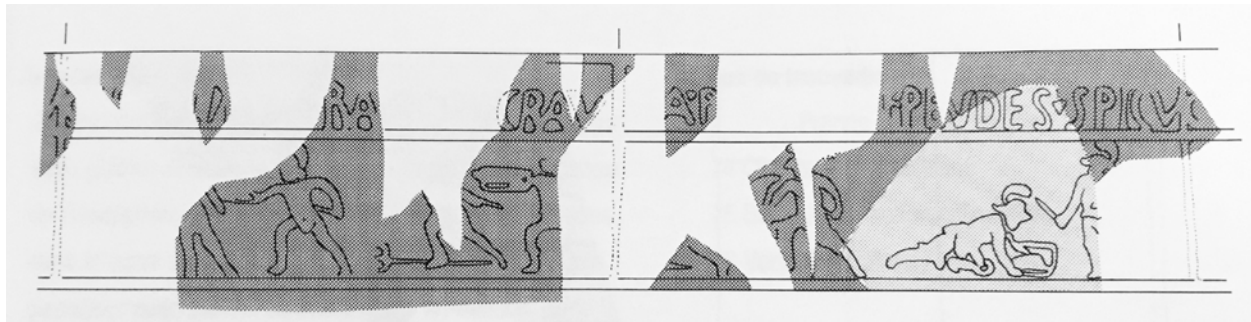
<sup>116</sup>PBH 9, 10, 34.

<sup>117</sup>The artist carved out changes (from the prototype mold) into the multi-part, hollowed-out mold.

<sup>118</sup>PBH 1, 13, 40.

Likewise, we will analyze the significant relationship between the varied opponents of *Calamus* in a subsequent section. C1 and C4 are perhaps the most closely related in the sense that the *sicus* can be seen in the left hand of the fourth fighter from the left.<sup>119</sup> Concerning C2 and C5, we cannot say the same.

C3<sup>120</sup> presents considerable deviations not in the dimensions of the three parts of the mold, but the inscription itself which is extremely difficult to read and highly fragmentary: “L(V)S[---]LM(?)[---]RA[---]CRAV[---]A P[---]PRVDES SPICV” (Figure IV.11). The figures are not in the same stances as they are in any of the other C types too. As noted earlier, the second fighter from the left has the armor and weapons of an *Oplomachus* and the third fighter from the left has a trident or *fuscina*, the weapon of a *Retiarius*. Also, only the names *Prudes* and *Spiculus* are in C1, C2, and C5. Triangles with the point facing down mark the spaces between names, which is uncharacteristic of any mold type. The rest of the letters, which are too fragmentary to make sense of, are interpolations from the craftsman who created this mold.



**Figure IV.11: Mold type C3 (PBH 12, 37)**

In fact, the differences are so great that one can hardly imagine that an over-molding over the prototype mold or a cup of the C type already in circulation took place. It could very well be the case that the glassmaker was not entirely literate and, while he may have possessed a copy of a

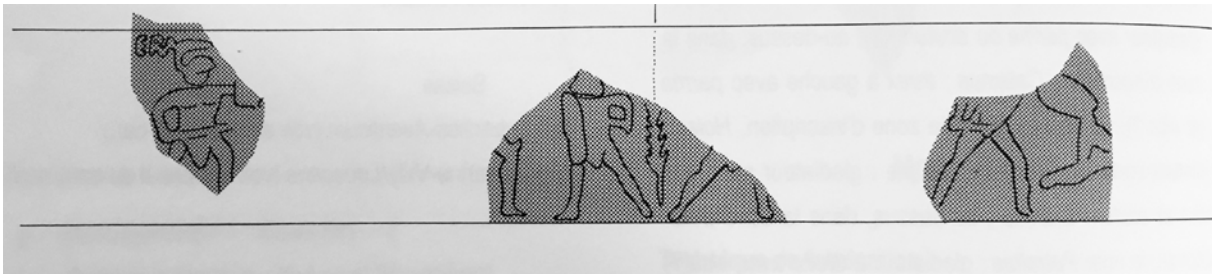
<sup>119</sup>See note 117.

<sup>120</sup>PBH 12, 37.

mold in the C class, he may have inserted false names or even a random assortment of vowels and consonants. Considering that we have no conception as to the historical accuracy of the fight result, the C3 mold type provides an interesting alternative convention to *Spiculus's* traditional opponent, *Columbus*. However, the major differences, in name and illustration, from each of the four pairs do not lend credibility to the historical accuracy of the C3.

### D1 and D2 Molds

Another category of mold types is the D class. These cups have been formed with a tripartite mold and, thus, have two main parts that come together in the figure zone around a tall palm frond. The most recognizable characteristic of the D type is that the names of the fallen and those who have lost appear in smaller font in the figure zone whereas the names of the winners appear in the inscription area (See Figure IV.4 of PBH 17). In this type, there are no draws as in other mold categories which are less definitive.



**Figure IV.12: Mold type D1 (PBH 38, ~55)**

Specifically, for the D2<sup>121</sup> molds, the epigraphic evidence that remains is quite well-preserved especially in PBH 17 (Figure IV.4). In large type across the inscription zone, there appears “*GAMVS CALAMVS / TETRAITES SPICVLVS*” (the winners) and below and indented in the figure zone appears “*MEROPS HERMES / PRVDES COLVMBV*” in smaller type (the losers).

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<sup>121</sup>PBH 17.

*Merops*, it seems, is a *Thraex* because he defends himself with the characteristic curved sword or *sicus* of the fighting class.

D1<sup>122</sup> molds contain the following inscription: “[---]ERM[---]”, suggests the name *Hermes*. But, this is misleading. The fragmentary nature of many of the cups of this category render it difficult to reconstruct the full inscription in both the inscription and figure zones. An alternate reading is not of “(G)AM(VS)” as one would think based off of the first figure on the left in D2 who holds the same stance, but of “(M)ER(OP)” with the “OP” outside of the fragment to the right of the figure’s head. The main problem with this reading is that the figure should be *Gamus* whereas *Merops* should be on the ground to the right of the figure in question. *Hermes* likewise should not be this figure but the fourth from the left next to the partition and the palm frond, as a defeated *Thraex* holding up his *sicus* in defense as in the D2 type. In any case, there is an error that must have occurred during a process of using the same mold as the D2 type or a deliberate change for an alternate convention for the gladiator *Hermes* or *Merops*.

### C/D Molds

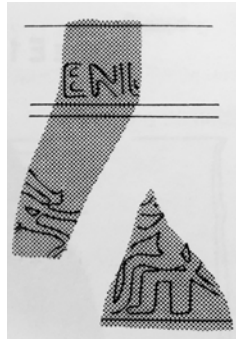
Some fragments cannot be reasonably placed in C or D without speculating and presupposing too much. In this case, the fragments are categorized under the C/D type<sup>123</sup>. On the left of one particular fragmented cup is a fallen gladiator with a *hasta* (spear) or a *fuscina* (the trident of a *Retiarius*) in his right hand. Above this figure are the last few letters of his name— “[---]ENI[---]” or “[---]ENE[---]” or “[---]ENL[---]”—which to date cannot be attributed to any known gladiator who might have such a combination of letters in his name. In other respects, too, the C/D mold from PBH 39 is rather unorthodox. There is a figure seated and facing left

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<sup>122</sup>PBH 38, potentially 55.

<sup>123</sup>PBH 22, 39.

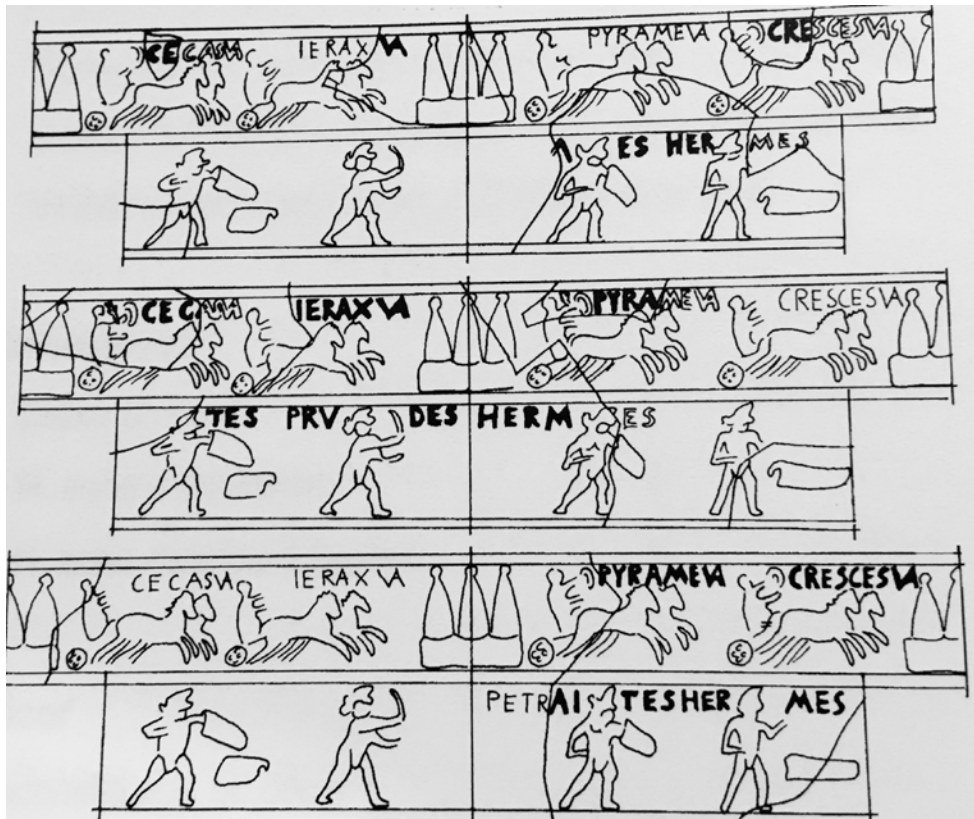
who appears to be holding some sort of instrument in his hands. He is either a musician or an *arbiter* (referee) governing the arena. It is also possible that the figure is a gladiator trainer.



**Figure IV.12: Mold type C/D (PBH 22, 39)**

Could the scene be taking place in the *ludus* instead of the arena? We cannot know for certain.

### F1, F2, and F3 Molds



**Figure IV.13: (Top to Bottom) Mold types F1; F2; F3 (PBH 41, 44, 45; 42, 43; 57)**



In recent years, because of new evidence from Villeneuve-sur-Lot/Eysses, France and Hartlip, England, there have been revisions to the F-mold corpus, formerly compiled solely from the Rützi et al. finds.<sup>124</sup> These drinking cups are ovoid in shape and depict four charioteers and four gladiators—a large deviation from the norm—with names to populate both the race zone above and the fighting zone below. However, the charioteers will not be considered within the scope of this study. When looking at the first mold type, F1<sup>125</sup>, one cannot help but to notice that all of the figures face right. Indeed, it is the same for all of the molds in class F, as uncharacteristic of the *vascula vitrea* as it is. Furthermore, the “MES” or “AES” presumably refers to an abbreviated version of *Petraites* as *Petraes* because *Hermes* is named immediately to the right so it cannot be an “M” prior to the “ES”.

*sup.* “CE[---]            VA [---]    /                                    CRE[---]  
*sub* [---]AES    HER[---]” (F1)

The transcription of the abbreviated inscription above is as follows: *sup. Ce[cas va(le)] or Ge[gas va(le)] [Hierax va(le) Pyrame va(le)] Cre[sce(n)s av(e)]* and *sub [---Petr]aes Her[mes--]*—underneath *Pyramus* and *Cresces*. For the charioteer scene, the *vale* means either “be strong” as an imperative or “goodbye” and the *ave* means either “fare well” as an imperative or “hail”. *Ave* also denotes the victor. In the absence of illustrative cues like those used to denote the result of a gladiator match, other information must be supplied epigraphically for the charioteer races. A fragment found in Hartlip, England of form F3, east of London, corroborates the form of the F1 mold in both illustration and inscription.

*sup.* “[---]PYRAMEVA CRESCESAV  
*sub.* [---]AITES HERMES” (F3)

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<sup>124</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 60-61.

<sup>125</sup>PBH 41, 44, 45.

*Petraites* defeats *Hermes* underneath *Pyramus* and *Cresces*. In the F3<sup>126</sup> mold, the part of the name of the third gladiator from the left is “TES” to the right of his head. In contrast, in the F1 mold the part of the name of the third gladiator from the left is “ES”. Discovered exclusively in England (Hartlip, Southwark and Topsham<sup>127</sup>), Sennequier et al. is right to suggest that the find-spot warrants a separate typological distinction between the F1 and F3 molds.<sup>128</sup> In keeping with the concept that some molds were formed from over-molding molds already in circulation directly from the glass cups themselves, it is highly probable that the F3 molds were lifted off of the F1 molded-glass cups. The resulting mold could then have been amended to meet the craftsman’s desire to clarify who *Hermes*’s opponent was by adding the “I” and the “T”. This would explain the discrepancy and uncanny appearance of *Petraites*’s name.

While the fragments of the F1 form come from Windisch and Oberwinterthur, Switzerland, ancient *Vindonissa* and *Vitudurum*, respectively and those of F3 come from Hartlip, England, those of F2<sup>129</sup> come from both Windisch and Bern, Switzerland, as well as Villeneuve-sur-Lot/Eysses, France.

*sup.* “CEC[---]      IERAXVA /      PYRA[---]  
*sub* [---]TES PRVDES / HERM[---]” (F2)

Transcribed, the upper portion of the F2 mold is identical to that of the F1. On the other hand, the lower portion is considerably different in both illustration and inscription. Whereas *Petra(it)es* defeats *Hermes* in the F1 mold, *Petraites* defeats *Prudes* underneath *Cecas* or *Gegas* and *Hierax* and *Hermes* defeats an unknown opponent underneath *Pyramus* and *Cresces*. In the former,

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<sup>126</sup>PBH 57.

<sup>127</sup>Rütti et al. 1988, 51-53.

<sup>128</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 60-61. This cannot be the primary reason to classify a set of fragments in *Britannia* nearly identical to another set of fragments in *Vindonissa* and *Vitudurum* because of the high connectivity between different parts of northwestern provinces through military roadways.

<sup>129</sup>PBH 42, 43.

*Hermes* is sent away (*missus*); in the latter, he is victorious. Concerning the gladiator scenes from the F2, the content is not as similar to mold type C5 as D2 is, but more similar to C5 than F1 and F3, which do not preserve the *Petraites* v. *Prudes* tradition.

### G1, G2 Molds

Just like the C5 mold, a complete cup was found and has been restored to a good condition such that the G1<sup>130</sup> mold is known in its entirety (See Figure IV.5 of PBH 49). The goblet is ovoid with the name of the manufacturer *M(arcus) Licinius Diceus*— “*F(ecit)*” or “he made this” follows his cognomen—on the shoulder before the neck rounds up to the brim. It is also adorned with animal reliefs in addition to the two gladiator fights represented on the main body of the cup. As the frieze wraps around the cup, animals (deer, dog, lion, doe, dog, boar, dog) with four interspersed sapling trees chase each other all facing left with the exception of a boar fighting a dog on the far-right side underneath “*Diceus F*”. Below, *Petraites* defeats *Prudes* in one frame and, in the other, *Ories* kills *Calamus*.

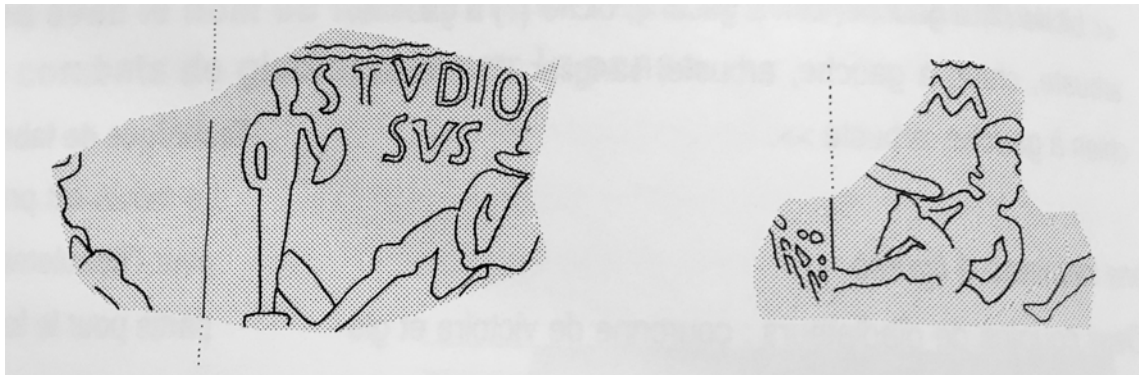
*sup.* “*M LICINIVS* / *DICEVS F*  
*sub* *PETRAITES PRVDES* / *ORIES CALAMVS*” (G1)

This scene of winner-loser-winner-loser agrees with the majority of the other fight results in that *Petraites* generally wins, *Prudes* generally loses, etc. Also, this mold type, found in concentrations in both northern Switzerland and in eastern Austria, was relatively well-distributed across the northwestern provinces. That being said the matchup between *Ories* and *Calamus* is an alternate finale compared to that offered by C4 in which *Calamus* and *Ories* come to a stalemate. Their order is switched and *Calamus* appears first.

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<sup>130</sup>PBH 46,47, 48, 49, 50, 51.

Though ovoid in shape, the G2<sup>131</sup> mold has little to do with its typological assignment (G) because it is so fragmentary. No part of the shoulder, which could have shown the manufacturer's name, or the upper relief, which could have shown the animal and plan decorations, have survived from antiquity. Thus the G type is largely superficial in this instance.<sup>132</sup> Likewise, the fragments do not fit together with any certainty, only the relative size and stylizations of the figures and letters indicate any similarity. We can then split the two into G2(a), corresponding to the “STVDIOSVS” fragment and G2(b), corresponding to the “[---]M[---]” fragment.



**Figure IV.14: Mold type G2(a) (PBH 19) and G2(b) (PBH 23)**

“STVDIO

[---]M[---]

SVS” (G2)

The inscriptions too do not seem to correlate. *Studiosus*, presumably the gladiator turned to the right, appears on only one fragment<sup>133</sup> without any indication of an opponent other than the herm-like statue holding out a *parma* to the right. A solitary “M” on another fragment<sup>134</sup> could refer to any number of gladiators such as *Aemelius*, *Calamus*, *Gamus*, *Cocumbus*, *Columbus*,

<sup>131</sup>PBH 19.

<sup>132</sup>Senn. et al. 1998, 70.

<sup>133</sup>PBH 19.

<sup>134</sup>PBH 23.

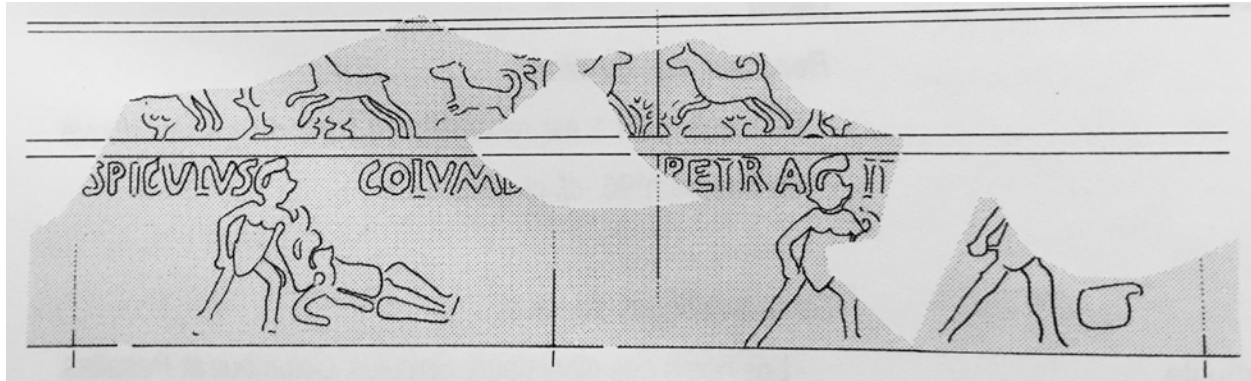
*Hermes* and *Merops* though it seems as though the letter is placed toward the middle or an abbreviated end of his name because there is another gladiator's leg immediately to the right. I hypothesize that the figure lying on his back in the G2(b) mold type is either "*M(EROPS)*" or "*(COLV)M(BVS)*" as portrayed on the D2 mold type. Both *Merops* and *Columbus* lie on the ground facing left as an indication that they have been killed after a match. The figure's head position (facing right), the palm frond to the left, and even the direction of the foot (turned right) that appears in the far right of the fragment are still irreconcilable differences between the G2(b) and the D2 mold types. Perhaps, the G2(b) is a close spin-off from the themes present on the D2 mold type. That being said, the similar imagery in the scenes makes the G2(b) equally similar with notable differences to the G2(a).

### **G/H1, I1 Molds**

The G/H1<sup>135</sup> mold is categorized with even less certainty because it has many of the characteristics of the other ovoid cups of F and G types with animal reliefs on the upper portion and gladiator fights along the main body like the G types and many of the characteristics of the C type scenes and names. From left to right above the gladiators, there are the hind legs of a dog, a deer, a dog, a dog or a doe's torso facing right instead of left like the others, and a dog on the other side of the connective partition. Grass, shrubs, and saplings are interspersed in the frieze. *Spiculus* sends *Columbus* to his grave and *Petraites* defeats his opponent. Because the positions and appearances of the figures are identical to those of the figures in C5 and C1, which is likely an over-molding of C5 as mentioned earlier, the G/H1 mold must contain *Prudes* as the opponent of *Petraites*.

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<sup>135</sup>PBH 29.



**Figure IV.15: Mold type G/H1 (PBH 29)**

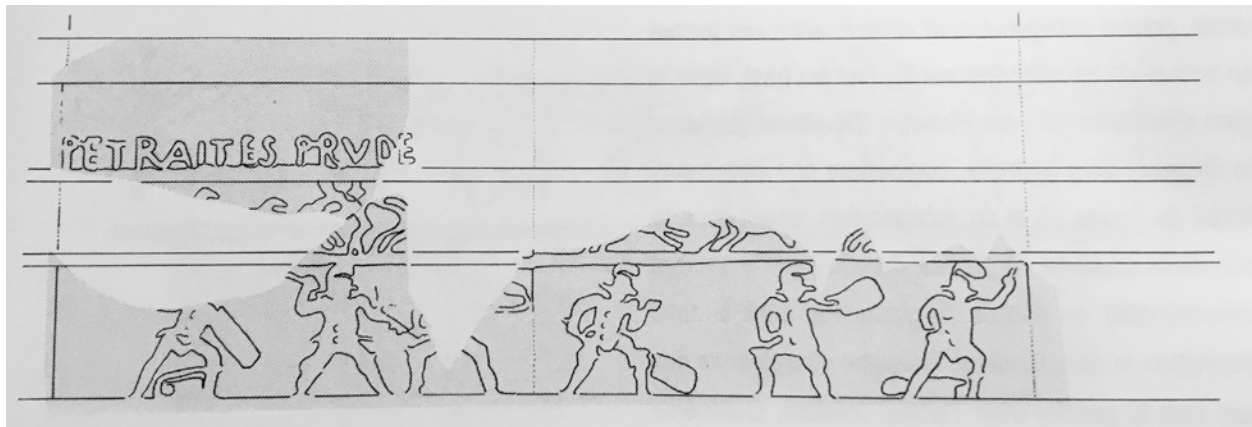
“SPICVLVS COLVMB[---] / PETRAIT[---]” (G/H1)

The manufacturer, who could have even been named on the missing shoulder of the G/H1 mold, must have excised the fights between *Calamus* and *Holhes* and between *Proculus* and *Cocumbus* and replaced them with the fights between *Spiculus* and *Columbus* and between *Petraites* and *Prudes* over a condensed, ovoid shape. This theory is further supported by the fact that the pairs from G/H1 touch the partitions of the cup to their left just as those same pairs touch the partitions of the cup to their left in the first and third pairing positions on both the C1 and C5 molds. On mold type D2, even though the order is reversed between the pairs of G/H1, the illustrations of both *Tetraites* (i.e. *Petraites* as we will see soon) and *Prudes* along with those of *Spiculus* and *Columbus* are identical to C1, C5, and G/H1. As it so happens the scene from G/H1 between *Petraites* and *Prudes* alone is replicated almost exactly in C2, C4, and G1.

The final mold type that spans the scope of this study is I1<sup>136</sup>. In keeping with the F, G, and H molds, this one is also ovoid and has a scene of animals and plants above a scene of fighting gladiators. However, the similarities end here. Though *Petraites* and *Prudes* are named

<sup>136</sup>PBH 20.

side-by-side as is customary, it is unclear whether or not they are actually fighting one another or to which of the two gladiators underneath “*PRVDE*” is supposed to be *Prudes*.



**Figure IV.16: Mold type I1 (PBH 20)**

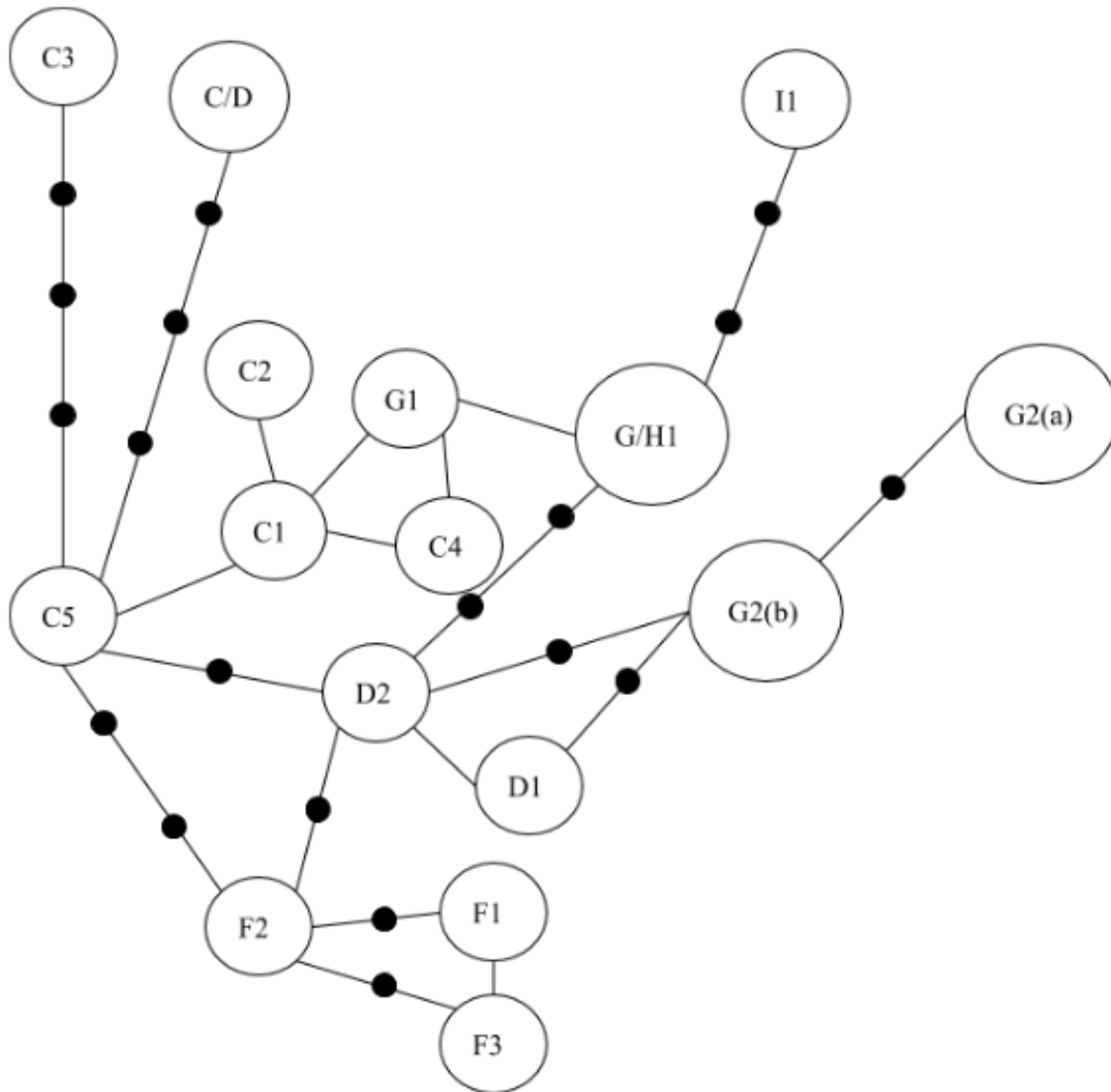
“[---] / *PETRAITES PRVDE*[---] / [---]” (I1)

In total, six gladiators, instead of four, occupy the mold, which is odd for a cup of this shape.

Either we are looking at the only instance of a visual depiction of a fight between three gladiators, or we are looking at a confused attempt by a manufacturer to create and sell a cup that has all of the trappings of the other cups without conveying the same unified information about the fight result. In the first scene on the left, it is unclear who the winner(/s) is(/are). On the right, the unnamed gladiator in the middle is the only one still holding his weapon and *scutum*. Another remarkable oddity is that the inscription is the second panel above the illustrated fighting panel.

For these reasons, the mold type of this cup from modern Lillebonne, France or ancient

*Juliobona* deserves its own category apart from the others.



**Figure IV.17: Pair Difference Map (Line = one difference; Dot = an additional difference)**

Featured above in Figure IV.17 are the connections between the mold types beyond the typological framework established by Rütli et al. and Sennequier et al. which I am using to amend the catalogue. Each circle contains a specific mold type, each connecting line represents a significant difference within the scene or inscription area around a pair of fighters, and each dot represents an additional difference of this same sort. It becomes immediately clear that the main



conventions cluster around the C and D mold types with F, G, I and other combination mold types at the periphery. This is expected. However, upon further examination there are three main variations.

The first is the C5, C1, C2, C4, G1, and G/H1 group—all separated by only one difference. All of the commonalities between this grouping arise from the benchmark C5 mold type which features *Spiculus* v. *Columbus*, *Calamus* v. *Holes*, *Petraites* v. *Prudes*, and *Proculus* v. *Cocumbus* (See Figure IV.3). The fight between *Petraites* and *Prudes* is represented with the same snapshot of the figures' stances and the same names above in all of the mold types of this grouping. Regarding the fourth figure from the left in the C5, there is little consensus besides the fact that he has come to a draw with *Calamus*—although even this is disputed by the G1 mold type which declares *Calamus* dead after the match. C1 names this figure *Holhes*, C2 names him *Holhes* with the “H” and the “E” conjoined, and C4 and G1 name him *Ories*. *Spiculus* and *Columbus* are replicated exactly in illustration and inscription on the G/H1 mold type as they are on the C5. Consequently, the C5 mold type is the originator mold with which a variety of over-moldings are fashioned almost entirely (C1, C2, and C4). Parts of the C5 mold type were used for parts of G1 and G/H1 and reformatted onto a different three-dimensional space, an ovoid shape.

The second and less clustered grouping involves the D2, D1, G2(b), C5, and F2. These mold types have less in common but they share many of the figures in the same poses as the figures in the C5 type. *Petraites* faces his opponent, shield and sword at the ready, and *Prudes* appeals to the *editor* after losing to *Petraites*. This scene is common between D2, D1 (though fragmented), C5, and F2. However, in D2 and presumably D1, *Petraites*'s name is written “TETRAITES”. We will discuss this variation shortly in greater depth. D1 and G2(b) both

replicate the fight between *Spiculus* and *Columbus* wherever it appears first whether that be C5 or D2. *Calamus* too is shared between the C5 clustering and D2 with *Hermes* substituted for *Holes/Holhes/Ories*. *Hermes* appears on the F2 mold type, though he appears to bear no resemblance to the figure illustrated in D2. Lastly, the variation in the first figure from the left on the D2 mold type is noticeably labeled differently on the D1 type. As mentioned before, he could be either *Hermes* or *Merops*, but certainly not *Gamus* as in the D2 convention. From all of these accumulated correlations, I hypothesize that the C5 and D2 mold types arose out of agreement with *Calamus*, *Petraites*, *Prudes*, *Spiculus*, and *Columbus*. Out of this tradition, the D2 clustering separated from that of C5 but with many more variants. It is likely that craftsmen combined parts of the D2 (Figure IV.4) and the C5 (Figure IV.3) mold types to form a different tradition centered around a consistency with the order of charioteer racers in the F1, F3, F2 types.

This third group, the F1, F3, F2, D2, C5—mostly separated by two differences—, is held together by the fact that the F types show the same four charioteers in the same order. They disagree on how to present the gladiators in the central part of the cup below. From last place to first place and from left to right are the racers, *Cecas* or *Gegas*, *Hierax*, *Pyramus* and *Cresces*. Whereas the F2 mold type appeals to the tradition of the D2 and C5 types with *Petraites* defeating *Prudes* in the left partition, the F1 and F3 mold types have *Petraites* defeating *Hermes* in the right partition. When one looks at the poses of the figures, we see that the figures on the right partition in all of the F types appear in posture exactly the same as *Petraites* and *Prudes* do in both the C5 and D2 traditions. On the left partition, the first figure on the left takes the stance of *Calamus* from the D2 convention. The figure to his right is unique and does not show up on the cups outside the F class. Whoever made any of the cups of the F class possessed far more knowledge about the charioteer cups and less about the gladiator cups because of the

disagreement and the notable misappropriation of the gladiator names according to the accepted conventions on cups in circulation. This is not to discount the value of the F class cups (Reconstructed in Figure IV.13) as they are the only instances in which gladiators appear alongside charioteers on the same cups. The mismatched pairings are simply out of character with the rest of the corpus.

### Who Is Paired Together and What Was the Result of the Pairing?

Now we must transition away from the scholarship and focus on the content of the cups themselves even further by looking at each gladiator pairing. We have already seen a number of standardized pairings between *Petraites* and *Prudes* and between *Spiculus* and *Columbus* that transcend each mold type and each classification within each mold type. Cataloguing is useful only in so far as it gives us an understanding of the patterns in the data, but hinders when we try to apply rigid inferences over a complex socio-economic setting nearly two thousand years ago. Figure IV.18 establishes not only gladiatorial pairings on the *vascula vitrea*, but also the outcome of each fight. Although the pairings are an inseparable part of the typology, they are far more useful in the study of the cups at the aggregate level.

Named Gladiator	Appears with (Fight Result of the Gladiator in the Left Column: V, M, M/P, A, P, I)
<i>Calamus</i>	<i>Ories</i> (A, A, A, P), <i>Holes</i> (A, A, A), <i>Hermes</i> (A), <i>Holes/Holhes/Ories</i> (A), <i>Holhes</i> (A, A, A), <i>Holhes/Ories</i> (A), <i>Holhes</i> conjoined 'H' and 'E' (A), <i>Holhes/Holhes</i> conj. (A), <i>Hories</i> (V)

<i>Cocumbus</i>	<i>Proculus</i> (M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M)
<i>Columbus</i>	<i>Spiculus</i> (P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P, P)
<i>Gamus</i>	<i>Merops</i> (V)
<i>Hermes</i>	<i>Calamus</i> (A), ? (V, V, V), <i>Petraes</i> (M, M), <i>Petraites</i> (M, M)
<i>Holes/Holhes/Ories/Hories</i>	<i>Calamus</i> (A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, A, M, V)
<i>Merops</i>	<i>Gamus</i> (P)
<i>Petraites/Tetraites/Petraes</i>	<i>Prudes</i> (V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, I, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V), <i>Hermes</i> (V, V, V, V)
<i>Proculus</i>	<i>Cocumbus</i> (V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V)
<i>Prudes</i>	<i>Petraites</i> (M, M, M, M, M, M, M, I, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M, M), <i>Tetraites</i> (M), <i>Spiculus</i> (P, P, P)
<i>Spiculus</i>	<i>Columbus</i> (V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V), <i>Prudes</i> (V, V, V)
<i>Studiosus</i>	Herm-like statue (I)

**Figure IV.18: Gladiator Pairings and Fight Results (P = *Periit* = “killed”, V = *Vicit* = “won”, M = *Missus est* = “discharged”, A = *Aequus* = “equal/draw”, I = *Incertum* = “unknown”)<sup>137</sup>**

When starting with the victors, it is difficult not to notice how *Petraites* holds the largest win streak out of all the named gladiators with 25 verifiable victories and one match result of an indeterminate nature (*Incertum*). Almost exclusively, he fights *Prudes* (22 times) and

<sup>137</sup>PBH 16, 21, 23, 38, 39, 47, 50-56 have been excluded for a variety of reasons. PBH 16, 21, 23, and 38 are contested readings. PBH 39 and 47 are not gladiator names in keeping with the rest of the corpus. PBH 50-56 are only documented in *CIL* with their inscriptions and thus we no longer know what these fragments looked like.

occasionally, *Hermes* (4 times) according to the F mold type alternative tradition. There are a few other trends worthy of being mentioned now. *Proculus* fights and bests only *Cocumbus*. *Spiculus* puts *Columbus*, and occasionally *Prudes* (3 times; C3 mold type), to death in every pairing. Only one other gladiator (*Merops*) repeatedly dies in the arena as indicated by his prostrate position on the cup scenes. *Calamus* consistently challenges a probable *Thraex*—whether we can observe this figure’s curved short-sword in the fragments or not. It is not actually the case, though it seems so, that *Calamus* fights a variety of different gladiators. We will see that there are just inconsistencies in the spelling of the gladiator called *Holes* or *Holhes* or *Ories* or *Hories*. We will also discuss *Hermes*’s variable wins and losses against *Calamus*, *Petraites/Petraes*, and an unknown opponent because his record will have implications on our reading of the *Satyricon*.

### *Petraites/Tetraites*

*Petraites* and *Tetraites* are extremely likely to be the same gladiator for reasons based upon pairings, linguistics, and epigraphic evidence from a painting in Pompeii. Overwhelmingly, *Petraites* is featured on the *vascula vitrea pugnīs gladiatorum ornata* with a ‘P’ at the beginning of his name rather than a ‘T’. Only the D2 mold type (PBH 17; Figure IV.4) marks him clearly with an indisputable ‘T’ as the first letter of his name. As we have just seen, regardless of the spelling of his name *Petraites* faces *Prudes* and defeats him with the pair in same posture in both the C5 and D2 groupings. If this is not sufficient evidence, consider how easily *Petraites*’s name can become corrupted through speech. To pronounce the consonants ‘P’ and ‘T’ by themselves, one does not use his or her voice. The difference between the two letters is that to say ‘P’ requires the lips (labial consonant) whereas to say ‘T’ requires the tongue to touch the teeth

(dental consonant). The conversion between the two letters is even easier in written form such that we can expect several different spellings, as in the case of “(PETR)AES” in the F1 mold type (PBH 39, 42, 43). This spelling makes sense if the craftsman left off the *-ίτης* ending from the original Greek form of *Petraites* (*Πετραίτης*<sup>138</sup>). This literally means, of the city of Petra (*Πέτρα* + *πόλις*<sup>139</sup> + *της*), which is now in modern Jordan. Rowell supports the origins of *Petraites*’s name in Asia Minor, whether the gladiator was actually from Petra or not.<sup>140</sup>

Though *Petraites* or *Tetraites* does not show up in the graffiti at Pompeii, a wall painting on a protruding pilaster outside of a shop near the Forum (VII.5, 14-15) formerly displayed *Tetraites* beating his opponent *Prudes* when it was found in April 1817 and for a few decades thereafter<sup>141</sup>. The accompanying inscription reads:

*sup.* “TETRAITES PRVDES PRVDES L XIIX TETRAITES L X[---]”

*sub* ABEAT VENERE BOMPEIANA IRATVM QVI HOC LAESAERIT” (CIL IV.538)

“May you take on the anger of Pompeian Venus, you who vandalize this here!” warns the owner of the establishment. Again, here is an instance of alternative spelling which nevertheless refers to the gladiator *Petraites*, given the resounding evidence in the *vascula vitrea*.

### **The Fights of *Petraites* and *Hermes* are not Equal in the *Cena Trimalchionis***

<sup>138</sup>Liddell and Scott, 1940, s.v. “πέτρα”.

<sup>139</sup>Liddell and Scott, 1940, s.v. “πολίτης”.

<sup>140</sup>Rowell, 1958, 21-22.

<sup>141</sup>Jacobelli, 2003, 79.

Four fragments (PBH 41, 44, 45, 57) entertain the possibility that *Petraites* fought *Hermes*, as *Trimalchio* says<sup>142</sup> and as we examined in Chapter III. All of these fragments of the F1 and F3 mold types detail *Petraites* winning. But, *Petraites* more frequently battles *Prudes* (Figure IV.19). What is more certain is that *Petraites* generally defeats his opponents, logging 25 wins against his two opponents. On the other hand, *Hermes*'s record is the most variable against a few different opponents. This begs the question that if *Petraites* is so much more of a winner than *Hermes* why would *Trimalchio* have a collection dedicated to each gladiator's matches. The collection of fights that *Hermes* lost, won, and tied is hardly comparable to the collection of fights that *Petraites* mostly won.

*Hermes* does defeat an unknown opponent on three occasions in the F2 type. But this does not mean much because he loses (*missus est*) four times according to the F1 and F3 types and because he ties *Calamus* according to the D2 type. The matches posed by the F mold types do not align with the conventions of the other two mold type groupings. *Hermes* could have been a great gladiator or he could have been a gladiator consistently remembered for his great losses to *Petraites*. We do not know as much as the freedmen guests do about *Hermes* to be able to call *Trimalchio* out for adding false flourishes to his boasts as he did with the mythological references on the cups.<sup>143</sup>

Named Gladiator	Appears with (Fight Result of the Gladiator in the Left Column: V, M, M/P, A, P, I)
<i>Hermes</i>	<i>Calamus</i> (A), ? (V, V, V), <i>Petraes</i> (M, M), <i>Petraites</i> (M, M)

<sup>142</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

<sup>143</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

<i>Petraites/Tetraites/Petraes</i>	<i>Prudes</i> (V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, I, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V, V), <i>Hermes</i> (V, V, V, V)
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**Figure IV.19: Gladiator Pairings and Results for *Hermes*, *Petraites*, and *Prudes* (P = *Periit* = “killed”, V = *Vicit* = “won”, M = *Missus est* = “discharged”, A = *Aequus* = “equal/draw”, I = *Incertum* = “unknown”)<sup>144</sup>**

Admittedly, *Petronius*'s juxtaposition of the fighters is uncommon given *Hermes*'s indecisive representation on the cups. Yet, it is not so uncommon as to suggest that *Trimalchio* does not know his facts when it comes to his favorite gladiators in the way that he makes enumerable errors in his literary allusions. For the semi-literate in the *Cena Trimalchionis*<sup>145</sup>, the idea of getting a gladiator's record wrong seems too far-fetched even for *Petronius*, considering how much *Trimalchio* and his audience seem to know about the games<sup>146</sup>. However, it is curious that such errors come immediately prior to when *Trimalchio* brags about the cups of *Hermes* and *Petraites*.<sup>147</sup> Maybe it is a joke for a reader well-informed in 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman popular culture.

### ***Holhes/Holes, Ories/Hories, and Hermes***

Based on the fact that *Ories*<sup>148</sup> and *Hories*<sup>149</sup> are paired with *Calamus* as victors in the cases which the fight can be determined and that *Ories* is far more common, the two are probably the same gladiator. *Ories* is likely a derivative of *oriens*, meaning “the rising” or “daybreak/sunrise” which is very common across literary sources.<sup>150</sup> This makes it all the more

<sup>144</sup>See Note 137. The same exclusions apply. However, now I am only considering *Hermes* and *Petraites*.

<sup>145</sup>Horsfall, 1989, 203.

<sup>146</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 45-46.

<sup>147</sup>Petron. *Sat.* 52.

<sup>148</sup>PBH 1, 13, 40, 49, 50.

<sup>149</sup>PBH 48.

<sup>150</sup>Lewis, 1890, s.v. “*oriens*”.



likely that *Hories* is just an aspirated version of *Ories*<sup>151</sup> and a matter of inconsistencies in spelling. What then do we make of *Holes* and *Holhes*, which have no known etymological roots? In mold type C5, C1, and C2, *Calamus* comes to a draw against *Holes*, *Holhes*, and *Holhes* (with the ‘H’ and the ‘E’ conjoined), respectively. This suggests the possibility that *Ories/Hories* is another variation of *Holes/Holhes*. In written and spoken dialects alike, the transition between the palatal ‘R’ consonant and the dental ‘L’ consonant is a relatively easily change. This combined with the existence of *Hories* (PBH 48) allows us to think of the aspirated *Holes/Holhes*<sup>152</sup> as the originator on an older prototype mold (i.e. the C5 grouping). It evolved naturally to *Hories/Ories*, perhaps even in an attempt to reconcile the lack of meaning in *Holes/Holhes* with a common literary construction in “*oriens*”.

*Hermes* is not an etymological leap by contrast and yet he appears alongside *Calamus* (D2; PBH 17) just as *Holes*, *Holhes*, *Hories*, *Ories* do. Moreover, in many of these instances (PBH 4, 13, 17, 30), each gladiator extends a curved *sicus*, the weapon of a *Thraex*, against his opponent, *Calamus*. We thus have evidence that *Calamus* overwhelmingly fought a *Thraex* in the fight that brought him the most fame. As we have said in modifying the similarities in the catalogue of Rütli et al. and Sennequier et al., *Hermes* is likely a confusion on the part of the mold-maker or the glassmaker when he is paired with *Petraites* in F1 and F3 (Figure IV.13). When paired with *Calamus*, on the other hand, *Hermes* appears to represent an alternative convention established by the D2 mold type (Figure IV.4). His figure is very different in appearance than the consistently displayed figures of *Holes*, *Holhes*, *Hories*, and *Ories*. Thus, our discussion of the discrepancies between name and illustration on the cups ends. *Hermes* will still remain somewhat of a mystery for scholars.

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<sup>151</sup>Väänänen, 1959, 55-56.

<sup>152</sup>Väänänen, 1959, 55-56.

## Conclusion

As we have discussed previously, the rise of the epigraphic habit and of the popularity of Roman mold-blown spectacle glassware with inscriptions and illustrations is no coincidence. And yet while the number of inscriptions continued to rise throughout the first century because of the socio-political capital gained by dedications, at some point or another, the epigraphic urge became habit across all levels of the socio-economic scale. Consider that funerary epitaphs for the large monuments of the elites and those for collectives which would record the names of those of lowly freedmen and slaves all united for a common purpose: the need to be remembered after death.

The epigraphic habit manifested itself in other ways too. At Pompeii, as we have come to know in Chapter III, individuals of varied backgrounds—slaves, freedmen, patricians, equestrians, plebeians, foreigners—and varied competencies in literacy inscribed on public and private walls all around the city. One of the strongest compulsions to etch a graffiti was the fanaticism that resulted from gladiatorial contests. Inscribers drew gladiator weaponry, fully-armored gladiators with their name and fighting record, and gladiator pairs with names and records and other identifying information. At the most literate level, the graffitist was attempting to create a narrative and to communicate with other matchups he or she had seen in the arena or on other walls. The walls became a forum for the expression of firsthand accounts and the craze of seeing or reading that one's favorite gladiator had won or lost. It was a great equalizing force in a society fettered by normative social strata.

According to the *Satyricon*, as we saw in Chapter II, there were still other ways in which Romans of all backgrounds were expressing the momentum of Roman culture in the legible

world of inscriptions. *Trimalchio's* gladiator cups, a more expensive version of the glass cups pertinent in this study, nonetheless equally reflect on the need to communicate and relate with others about the spectacles seen in the arena or publicized by word-of-mouth or observed through other material objects with epigraphy. *Trimalchio* is a remarkably different fan in that he is not reliably accurate, but rather he goes along with the fads in popular culture of the time. And yet, he does seem to know with a high level of certainty that *Petraites* is a gladiator worthy of remembrance and of association in the afterlife. His distance from the fighting itself is similar to the kind of physical and temporal distance evident in the body of the mold-blown glass cups.

The business of cup manufacturing developed because fans outside of *Italia* wanted to be able to take part in the epigraphic habit in the same way that the inscribers wanted to at Pompeii without ever observing their heroes. At some level, like *Trimalchio*, the cup collectors superficially revered their collectibles and made them the subject of conversation and display within their small spheres of influence. We cannot forget that, like the graffiti at Pompeii, there were various levels of expression in the material culture—however, for the cups, the variation of material objects is largely due to the form that an individual could afford. Even within the glassware types, there were probably a number of poorly copied, molded cups out there that tried to compete with the original molds. The artistry of a cup could have determined price differences too. Demand is not an inconsequential reason for the variation that exists in the corpus and yet it is not the entirety of the picture.

According to the analysis within this Chapter, we can understand three clusters of stylistically consistent types of cups and how they relate to the evolving conventions: 1) The cylindrical, four-foot vessels<sup>153</sup> most likely established the tradition of *Spiculus* v. *Columbus*

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<sup>153</sup>C5, C1, C2, C4, G1, and G/H1.

and *Petraites v. Prudes*. 2) The cylindrical, four-fight and ovoid, two-fight vessels<sup>154</sup> catered to a collector looking for more illustrative details and larger figures in the central area of the cup. 3) The ovoid two-fight vessels<sup>155</sup> tried to target collectors interested in famous chariot races and gladiator contests with notable thematic dissimilarities from the traditions established by gladiator-only cups.

Separated by nearly two thousand years, we may never understand the real reasons for the consistencies and inconsistencies in the *vascula vitrea pugnus gladiatorum ornata*. What we can continue to do is pick out the patterns until the context of the 1<sup>st</sup> century gladiator fan becomes clearer and clearer. Such a study of glassware in the northern provinces and Pompeian graffiti about gladiators is extremely important in light of the missing picture of the masses in the study of Classics. Classicists need to examine the context of life in the early empire from a perspective that takes into consideration the daily struggles and joys of living out ‘Roman’ culture. Rather than focusing on imperial politics as the Roman historians have done, we must turn our attention to the minutia of what mattered to those several socio-economic levels below.

As we return full circle to the gladiator *Spiculus*, we realize that, without the epigraphic evidence from the graffiti at Pompeii and from the *vascula vitrea*, we fail to comprehend the true nature of the juxtapositions posed by *Petronius*. Like Rowell we would otherwise believe that *Petraites* is just some famous gladiator during Nero’s reign. And yet, the reality of Nero, *Petronius*, and *Spiculus* is a caricature of Roman life by itself, even without *Petronius’s Satyricon*. In this work, *Petronius* might have imagined or attended a particular dinner party in which Nero boasts to his guests, members of his inner circle including *Petronius* and perhaps even *Spiculus* himself, about his obsession with *Spiculus*. From this occasion—fictional or not—

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<sup>154</sup>D2, D1, G2(b), C5, and F2.

<sup>155</sup>F1, F3, F2.

*Petronius* fashioned a particular caricature<sup>156</sup>, *Trimalchio*, as a gladiator fanatic, bragging about his decorative memorabilia with his favorite gladiators' images and names. It is not inconsequential that Nero demands the help of *Spiculus* on the eve of his death just as *Trimalchio* demands that *Petraites* appear on his funerary monument. And yet, without what we now know about *Petraites* and *Spiculus* from epigraphic sources, the 1<sup>st</sup> century context about the *Satyricon* would be sorely lacking.

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<sup>156</sup>I say, particular caricature, because there are many more sides of *Trimalchio* such as his socio-political standing as a wealthy freedman that are in stark contrast to Nero's socio-political reality.

**Appendix I: PBHG Catalogue of Graffiti from Pompeii (*gladiator singularis 1-4; gladiatorum paria 5-17*)**

<b>PBHG Entry</b>	<b>Equivalent Catalogue Entry</b>	<b>Inscription</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Fighting Class</b>	<b>Find-spot in Pompeii Insula</b>	<b>Find-spot in Pompeii Room</b>
1	Langner 2001; 780 = CIL IV.1476	<i>Pantacathus XXXII (vicit)</i>		Murmillio	VI.12, 2.5	Peristyle 39
2	Langner 2001; 783 = CIL IV.2451	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Viriota Cl. / Valer(ius) XXV / A M o N</i> <i>LXXV / Servil(ius) C / Marcus L /</i> <i>Sequan(us) LXXV / Sedula XXV /</i> <i>((symbol?)) Viriod(ius) LXXV / ...</i> <i>((invertum T)) / Onarto LXX /</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Sextius C / Viriota Cl. / Valer(ius) IXXV /</i> <i>Valer(us) LXXV</i>		Murmillio	VIII.7, 20	Theater corridor

3	Langner 2001; 785 = CIL IV.2468	<i>M. Valeriu(s) Iul(anus)/Lib(ertus)</i>		Provocator (cuirass)	VIII.7	<i>Porticus</i> of theater
4	Langner 2001; 989	<i>Equillus</i>			VII.3, 12	Workshop
5	Langner 2001; 1003 = CIL IV.1422	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Asteropaeus / Ner CVII / V</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Oceaneanus / L VI / M</i>			VI.11, 9.10	Peristyle 36
6	Langner 2001; 1004 = CIL IV.5115	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Euticus</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Diomedes</i>			IX.8, 6.3a	Atrium 3
7	Langner 2001; 1007 = CIL IV.10237	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Hilarus Ner(onianus) (pugnarum) XIV</i> <i>(coronarum) / XII v(icit) / Pri(nceps)</i> <i>/Ner(onianus) (pugnarum) XII</i> <i>(coronarum) X[II?] /v(icit) / Munus Nolae</i> <i>de / quadridu(o) / M. Comini / Heredi (s)</i> <i>(in honorem quattuor deorum)</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Creunus (pugnarum) VII (coronarum) V</i> <i>m(issus) / T a a v</i>			Grave, Porta Nocera 14	<i>Sepulchrum</i>

8	Langner 2001; 1008 = CIL IV.10238a	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>M. Attilius T(iro) v(icit).</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Hilarus Ner(onianus) (pugnarum XIV</i> <i>(coronarum) XIII / m(issus)</i>			Grave, Porta Nocera 14	<i>Sepulchrum</i>
9	Langner 2001; 1010- 1012 = CIL IV.10238b	<i>M. Attilius T(iro) v(icit).</i>			Grave, Porta Nocera 14	<i>Sepulchrum</i>
10	Langner 2001; 1023 = CIL IV.8055a	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Oceanus l(ib) (victoriarum) xiii v(icit)</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Aracintus (pro Aracynthus) l(ib)</i> <i>(victoriarum) ...iiii (missus/periit?) /</i> <i>Bestiario (datus?)</i>			I.6, 15	Casa dei Ceii
11	Langner 2001; 1024 = CIL IV.8056	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Severus l(ib) (victoriarum) xiii (periit)</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Albanus Sc(auri?) l(ib) (victoriarum) xix</i> <i>v(icit)</i>			I.6, 15	Casa dei Ceii
12	Langner 2001; 1032	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>M. Att(ilius). / M. Attilius (pugnae) I</i> <i>(coronae) I (vicit).</i>			Grave, Porta Nocera 14	<i>Sepulchrum</i>



	= CIL IV.10236a	<i>Ad d.</i> <i>L. Raeius Felix / (pugnarum) XII</i> <i>(coronarum) XII m(issus).</i>				
13	Langner 2001; 1033 = CIL IV.10221	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>... / Iul(ianus) Mirm(illo) / Aure[li?]us(?)</i> <i>Iul(ianus) mirmil(lo) / p(eriit).</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Iu[li]anus Nasi[ca] d / Prim(i)ge(nius) /</i> <i>v(icit).</i>			Grave, Porta Nocera 11	
14	Langner 2001; 1039 = CIL IV.8969g	<i>Myrinus Iuli(anus) (pugnarum) XXXI</i> <i>(vicit); Inacrius( ?) Iu(lianus) (pugnarum)</i> <i>XII / m(issus est).</i>			IX.14, 2.4	House of <i>M.</i> <i>Obellius</i> <i>Firmus</i>
15	Langner 2001; 1040 = CIL IV.1421	<i>sup.</i> <i>Faustus It(h)aci Neronianus; ad</i> <i>amp(h)itheatr[um]; /</i> <i>ad sin.</i> <i>Priscus N(eronianus) / VI (pugnarum)</i> <i>v(icit)</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Herennius l(ibertus) XIIIX (pugnarum)</i> <i>p(eriit). ((infra tertium hominem)) X</i> <i>((infra ultimum hominem)) Q</i>			VI.11,9.10	Casa del Labirinto

16	Langner 2001; 1046 = CIL IV.1474	<i>ad sin.</i> <i>Spiculus Ner(onianus) v(icit) / tiro?</i> <i>ad d.</i> <i>Aptonetus p(eriit) /lib[e]r(tus?) XVI</i>			VI.12, 2.5	Casa del Fauno
17	Langner 2001; 1058 = CIL IV.5275	<i>Nasica Aug(ustianus) (pugnarum) LX</i>			IX.9, 13	<i>Hospitium</i> (inn)

## Appendix II: PBH Catalogue of *Vascula Vitrea Pugnis Gladiatorum*

### *Ornata*

<b>PBH Entry</b>	<b>Equivalent Catalogue Entry</b>	<b>Inscription</b>	<b>Date (Accord. to catalogue)</b>	<b>Rütti Typ.</b>	<b>Rowell Typ.</b>	<b>Find-spot</b>
1	Sennequier et al. 1998; 46a	[---]VSORIES/PETR[---]	Tiberio-Claudian	C4	N/A	Avenches ( <i>Aventicum</i> )
2	Sennequier et al. 1998; 46b	[---]MBVS/CALA[---]	Tiberio-Claudian	C5	N/A	Avenches ( <i>Aventicum</i> )
3	Sennequier et al. 1998; 46c	[---]MBVSCALAM[---]	Tiberio-Claudian	C5	N/A	Lausanne-Vidy ( <i>Lousonna</i> )
4	Sennequier et al. 1998; 56	[---]VSCOLVMBVS[---]	Unknown	C1	N/A	Les Bolards
5	Sennequier et al. 1998; 59	[---]RAITES PRV[---]	late 1st-early 2nd c. CE	C1	N/A	Chamesson

6	Sennequier et al. 1998; 60	<i>[---]MBVS/SPICVLVSCOLV[---]</i>	Unknown	C1	N/A	Limoges
7	Sennequier et al. 1998; 61	<i>[---]ETRAITES PRVDES PROCVLVS [---] ]</i>	1st c. CE	C1	N/A	Lyon <i>(Lugdunum)</i>
8	Sennequier et al. 1998; 62	<i>[---]PICVLVSCO[---]</i>	Unknown	C1	N/A	Toulouse
9	Sennequier et al. 1998; 63	<i>[---]SCOLVM[---]...[---]OCV[---]</i>	2nd half of 1st c. CE	C2	N/A	Alise-Sainte- Reine ( <i>Alesia</i> )
10	Sennequier et al. 1998; 64	<i>[---]AITES[---]</i>	2nd half of 1st c. CE	C2	N/A	Alise-Sainte- Reine ( <i>Alesia</i> )
11	Sennequier et al. 1998; 66	<i>[---]OCV[---]</i>	2nd half of 1st c. CE	C1/C2	N/A	Alise-Sainte- Reine ( <i>Alesia</i> )
12	Sennequier et al. 1998; 71	<i>[---]DES [---]</i>	Unknown	C3	N/A	Lattes <i>(Lattara)</i>

13	Sennequier et al. 1998; 73	<i>[---]AMVSORIES/P[E]TRAITESP[---]</i>	1st c. CE	C4	N/A	Châteaumeilla nt <i>(Mediolanum)</i>
14	Sennequier et al. 1998; 74 = CIL XIII.100 25.178 = CMOG 532	<i>SPICVLVSCOLVMBVSCALAMVSHOLES</i> <i>PETRAITESPRUDESPROCVLVSCOCV</i> <i>MBVS</i>	25-75CE	C5	B	Le Cormier, Chavagnes-en- Paillers <i>(Vendee)</i>
15	Sennequier et al. 1998; 76	<i>[---]XXVM[---]</i> ( <i>Proculus because of C5</i> <i>frond</i> )	25-75CE?	C5	N/A	Vertault <i>(Vertillum)</i>
16	Sennequier et al. 1998; 77	<i>[---]AES/P[---]</i>	1st c. CE	C?	N/A	Saintes <i>(Mediolanum)</i>
17	Sennequier et al. 1998; 78 = CIL XII.5696.32 = Met 81.10.247 = Fontaine and Foy 2015; 26	<i>sup. GAMVS CALAMVS</i> <i>TETRAITES SPICVLVS</i> <i>sub MEROPS HERMES PRVDES</i> <i>COLVMBV(S)</i>	50-80 CE	D2	C	Montagnole

18	Sennequier et al. 1998; 80	<i>[---]IERAXVA / PYRA[---]</i> <i>[---]TES PRVDES / HERM[---]</i>	Tiberio- Claudian	F2	N/A	Villeneuve- sur-Lot, Eysses <i>(Excisum)</i>
19	Sennequier et al. 1998; 85 = Fontaine and Foy 2015; 29	<i>STVDIOSVS</i>	mid 1 <sup>st</sup> c. CE	G2 (a)	N/A	Fréjus ( <i>Forum Iulii</i> )
20	Sennequier et al. 1998; 87 = CIL XIII.10025.1 82	<i>[---] / PETRAITES PRVDE[S---]</i>	Unknown	I1	D	Lillebonne <i>(Juliobona)</i>
21	Sennequier et al. 1998; 92	<i>[---]RM[---]</i>	Unknown	F1, F2, F3, D1, D2?	N/A	Lectoure <i>(Lactora)</i>
22	Sennequier et al. 1998; 95	<i>[---]TRA[---]</i>	Unknown	D1, D2	N/A	L'Hospitalet- du-Larzac
23	Sennequier et al. 1998; 97	<i>[---]M[---]</i>	mid 1 <sup>st</sup> c. CE	G2 (b)	N/A	Hyères ( <i>Olbia</i> )

24	Fontaine and Foy 2015; 14	[---]TRAITES PRVDES PR[---]	Unknown	C1	N/A	Golfe de Fos-sur-Mer
25	Fontaine and Foy 2015; 15	[---]PICVLVSCO[---]	25-75CE?	C1	N/A	Toulouse
26	Fontaine and Foy 2015; 17	[---]DES[---]	Unknown	C3	N/A	Lattes ( <i>Lattara</i> )
27	Fontaine and Foy 2015; 21	[---]OCVL[---]	Unknown	C5	N/A	Golfe de Fos-sur-Mer
28	Fontaine and Foy 2015; 22	[---]OLVMBVSCALAMV[---]	Unknown	C1, C2, C4, C5?	N/A	Marseille
29	Sennequier et al. 1998; 96 = Fontaine and Foy 2015; 30	[---]SPICVLVS COLVMB[---]PETRAIT[---]	25-75CE?	G/H1	N/A	Hyères ( <i>Olbia</i> )
30	Rütti et al. 1988; 33	[---]BVSCALAMVS[---]	Neronian	C1	N/A	Augst ( <i>Augusta Rauricorum</i> )
31	Rütti et al. 1988; 34	[---]VMBVSCALAM[---]	Unknown	C1	N/A	Lausanne-Vidy ( <i>Lousonna</i> )
32	Rütti et al. 1988; 35	[---]CALA[---]	Flavian	C1, C2, C4?	N/A	Windisch ( <i>Vindonissa</i> )

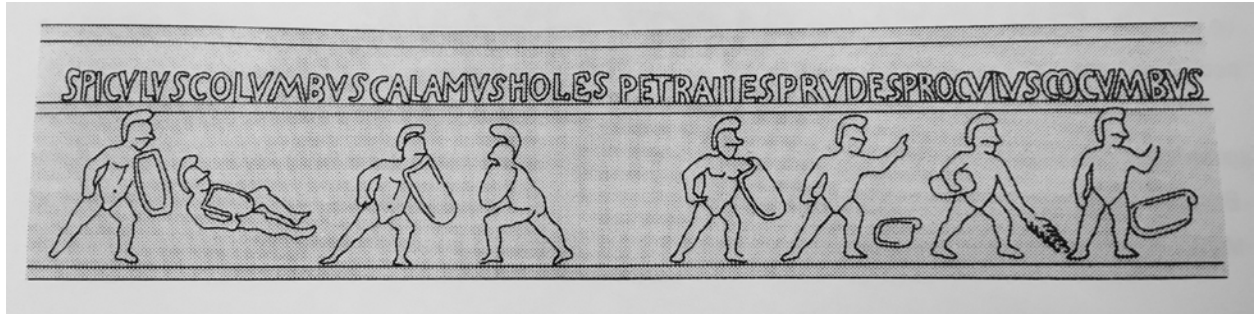
33	Rütti et al. 1988; 36	[---]HESPE[---]	Claud./late Flav./early Trajan	C1	N/A	Avenches (Aventicum)
34	Rütti et al. 1988; 37	[---]HOLHESPE[---] (conjoined 'H' and 'E')	Unknown	C2	N/A	Windisch (Vindonissa)
35	Rütti et al. 1988; 38	[---]SPRVDES PRO[---]VLVSCOC[---]	2nd half of 1st c. CE	C1, C2?	N/A	Bern
36	Rütti et al. 1988; 40	[---]SPETR[---]	~70 CE	C1, C2?	N/A	Oberwinterthur (Vitudurum)
37	Rütti et al. 1988; 41	L(V)S[---]LM(?)[---]RA[---]CRAV[---]A P[---]PRVDES SPICV	Flavian	C3	N/A	Windisch (Vindonissa)
38	Rütti et al. 1988; 42	[---]ERM[---] or [---]ERO[---]	mid to third quarter of 1st c. CE	D1	N/A	Studen (Petinesca)
39	Rütti et al. 1988; 45	[---]ENI[---]	Unknown	C/D	N/A	Lausanne (Lousonna)
40	Rütti et al. 1988; 46	[---]SORIES[---]	Unknown	C4	N/A	Windisch (Vindonissa)
41	Rütti et al. 1988; 60	A[---]ES HER[---]	Flavian	F1	N/A	Windisch (Vindonissa)
42	Rütti et al. 1988; 61	[---]TES[---]PRV[---]DES[---]HERM	Unknown	F2	N/A	Bern



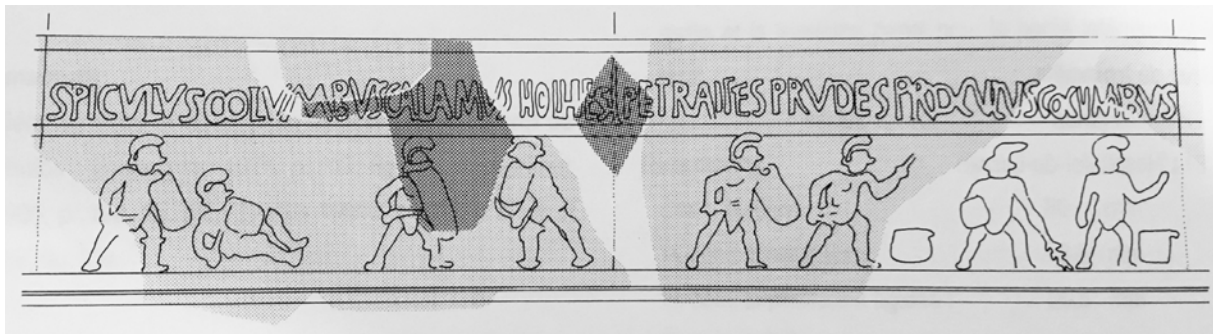
43	Rütti et al. 1988; 62	[---]TES[---]	Unknown	F2	N/A	Windisch (Vindonissa)
44	Rütti et al. 1988; 63	[---]S HE[---]S	pre75/80 CE	F1	N/A	Oberwinterthur (Vitudurum)
45	Rütti et al. 1988; 64	[---]AES HER[---]	Claudian/ Neronian	F1	N/A	Oberwinterthur (Vitudurum)
46	Rütti et al. 1988; 69	[---]M LICINIVS[...] [---]PETR[---]	1st c. CE	G1	N/A	Augst (Augusta Rauricorum)
47	Rütti et al. 1988; 70	[---]IC[---]	1st c. CE	G1?	N/A	Oberwinterthur (Vitudurum)
48	CMOG 533	[---]MVS HORIES[---]P[---]ES[---]	50-100 CE	G1?	N/A	France?
49	CIL XIII.10025.1 84 = CMOG 534	M. LICINIVS DICEVS F[---] PETRAITES PRVDES ORIES CALAMVS	50-100 CE	G1	F	Odenburg (Scarbantia)
50	CIL III.14374	[---]PETRAITES PRVDES ORIES CALAMVS[---]	Unknown	G1?	E	Odenburg (Scarbantia)
51	CIL III.6014.2	[---]AITES PRVDES CALAMVS[---]	Unknown	G1?	A	Vienna (Vindobona)
52	CIL XIII.10025.1 79	[---]SPICVL AEMI\IV[---]VS CALA[---] ]CANB(?) HERM[---]	25-75 CE?	?	N/A	Wiesbaden (Aquae Mattiacorum)

53	CIL XIII.10025.1 80	[---]BVSCALAMVS[---]	Unknown	C1, C2, C4, C5?	N/A	Trier (Augusta Treverorum)
54	CIL XII.3325	COLVMBVS	Unknown	C1, C2, C4, C5 D1, D2, G/H1?	N/A	Nimes
55	CIL XIII.10025.1 81	[---]ERME[---]	Unknown	F1, F2, F3, D1, D2?	N/A	France?
56	CIL XIII.10025.1 83	PRVD[---]	Unknown	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5 D1, D2, F2, G1, G/H1, I1?	N/A	France?
57	Harden 1982, p. 32, fig. 4	[---]MEVA CRESCESAV [---]AITES HERMES	Unknown	F3	N/A	Hartlip, England

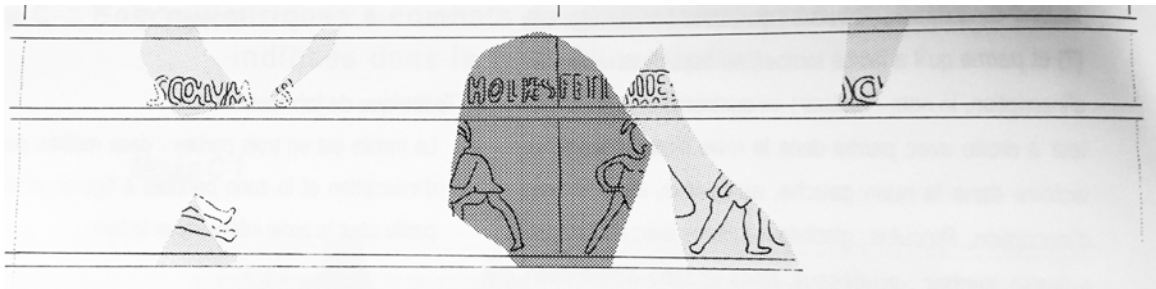
**Appendix III: Mold Types of Rütli et al. and Sennequier et al.**



C5



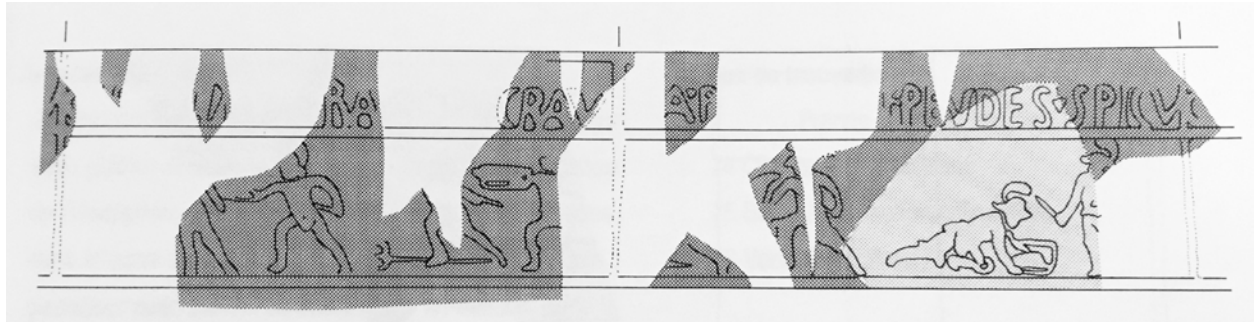
C1



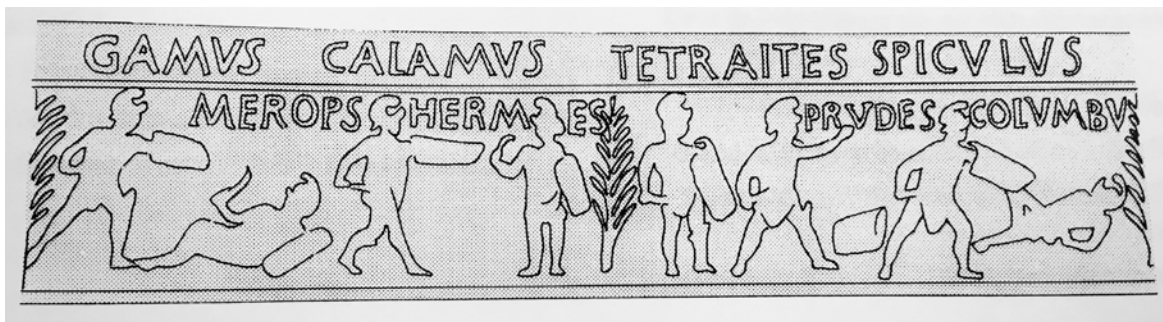
C2



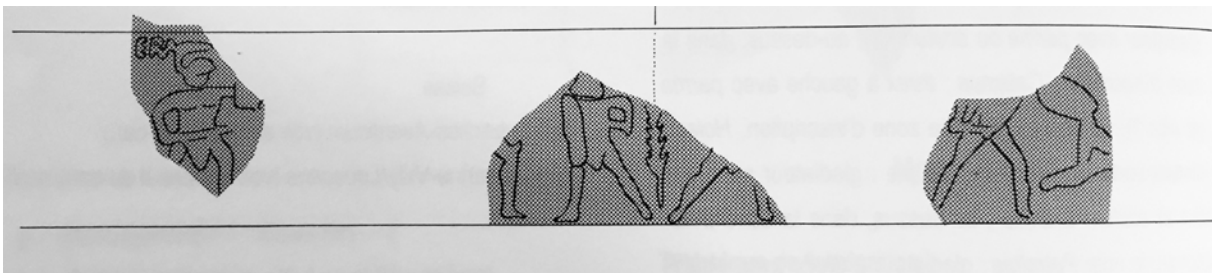
C4



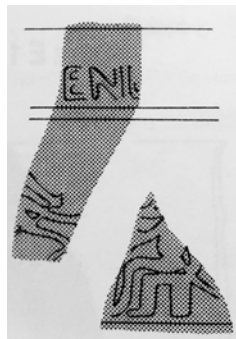
C3



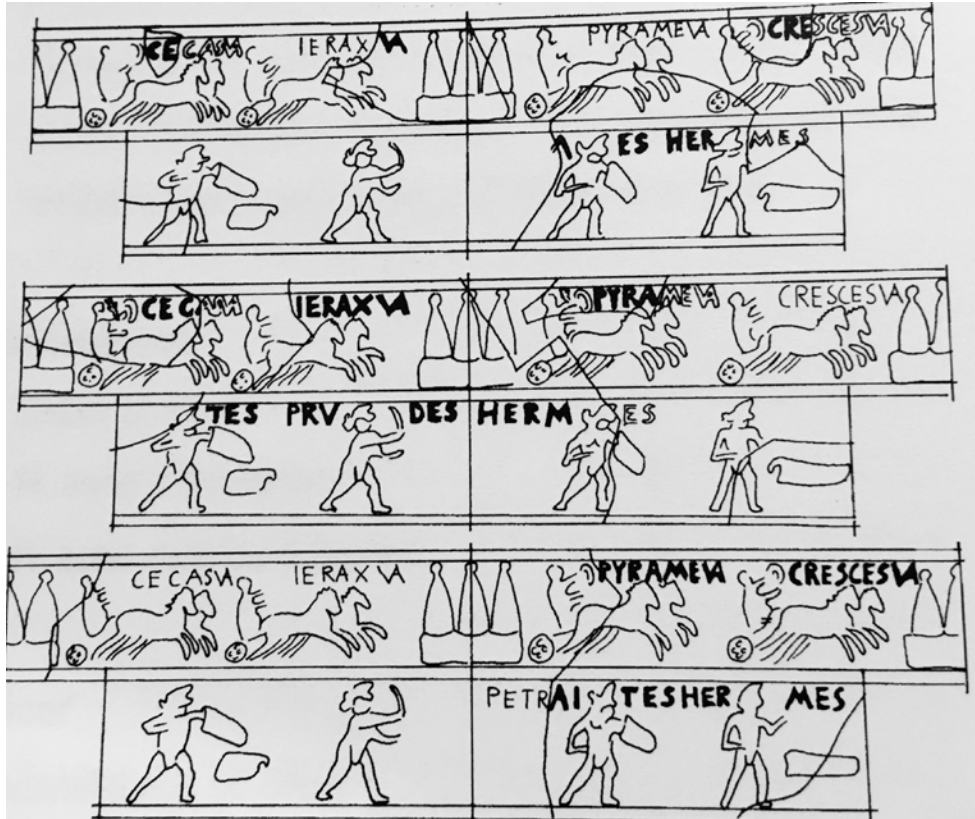
D2



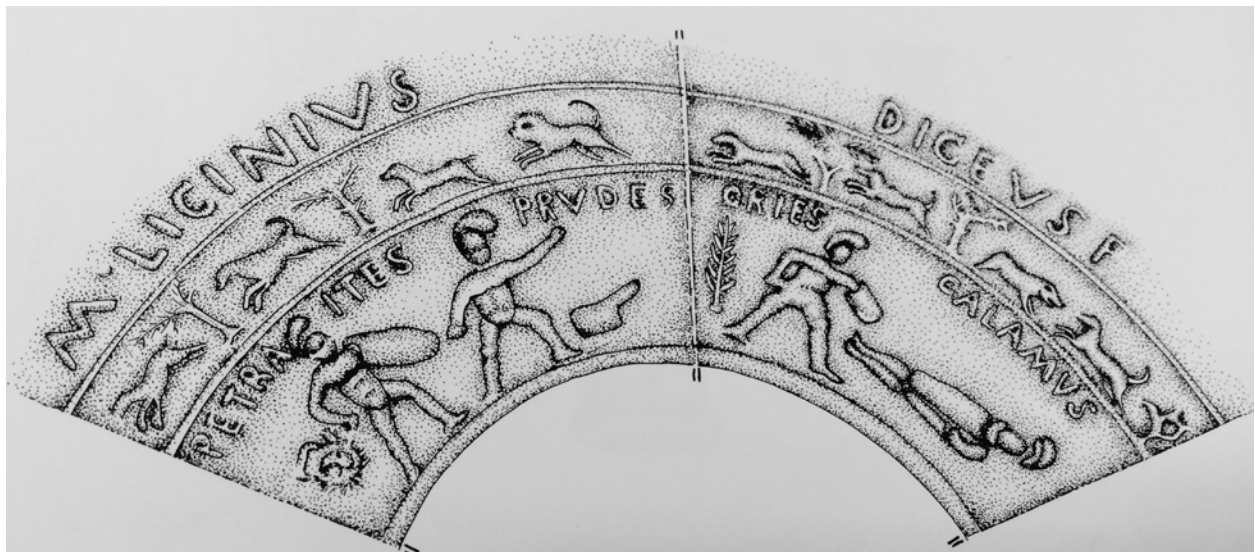
D1



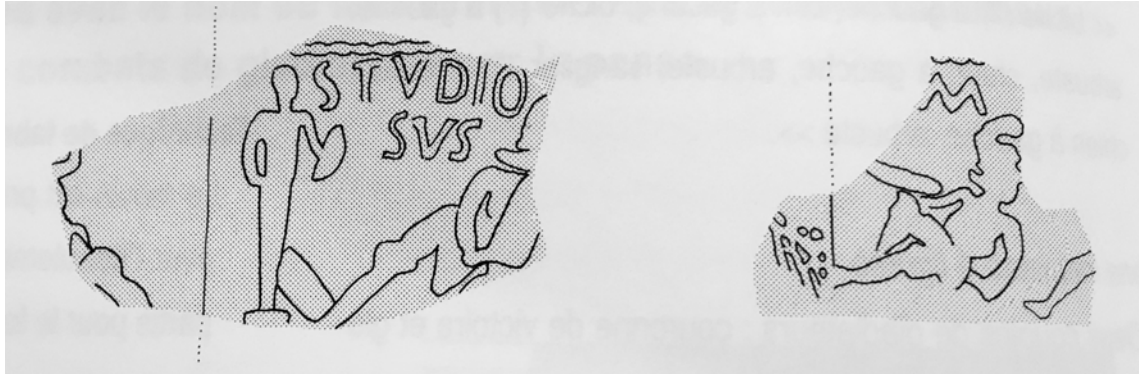
C/D



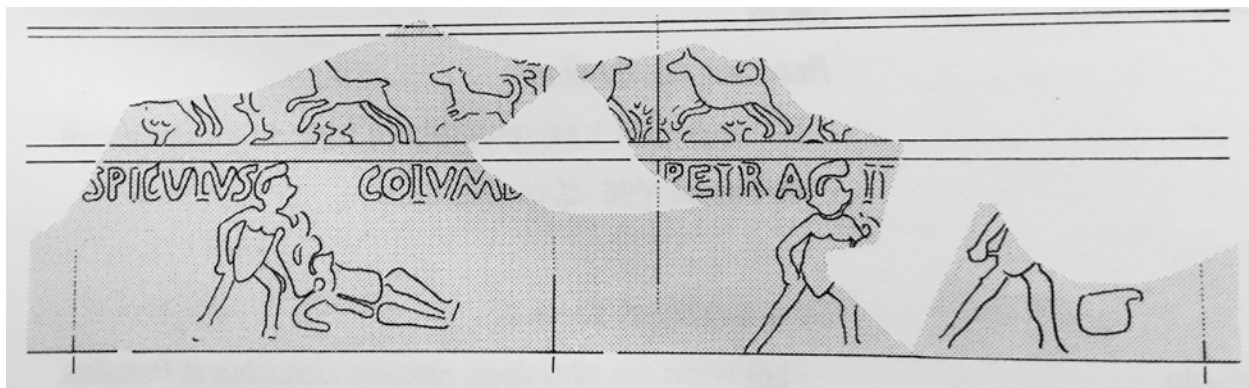
(Top to Bottom) F1; F2; F3



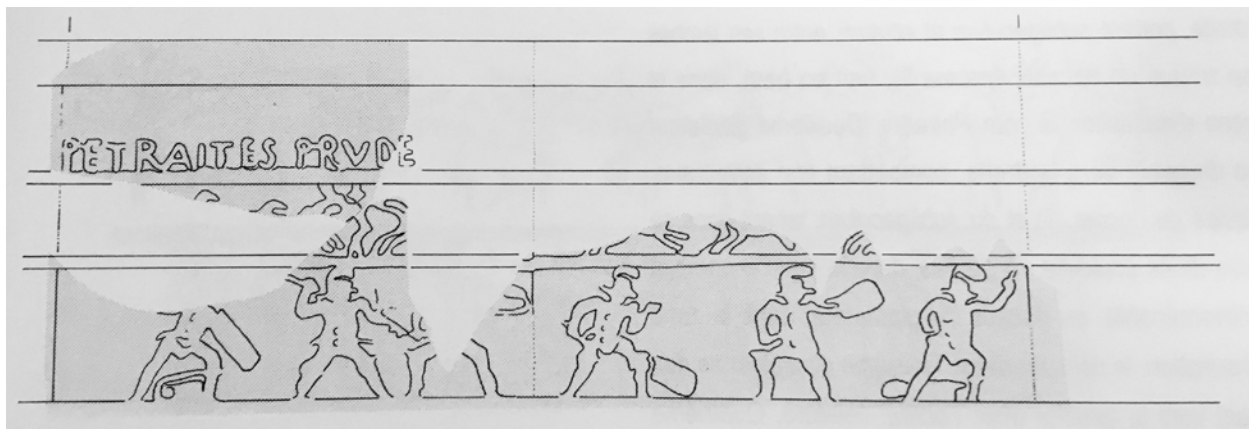
G1



G2(a); G2(b)



G/H1



I1

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