

Some people undertake aimless journeys and wander up and down the coast. An unhealthy restlessness always afflicts them wherever they are, traveling by sea or by land. "Let's go to Campania."¹⁴¹ Yet But luxury proves to be a bore. "Let's hurry to Bruttium and the woodlands of Lucania."¹⁴² Yet amidst these wild regions, they look for something refined so that they can relieve their delicate eyes of the unbroken desolation of these uncultivated areas. "Let's go to Tarentum;¹⁴³ it has a famous harbor and mild winters and is certainly opulent enough and charming." "No, let's go back to Rome." It's been much too long since their ears have heard thunderous applause.¹⁴⁴ And human blood would be an enjoyable sight.

SPECTACLES

In Rome's early history, the only occasions for holidays were religious festivals. Since Roman society was in origin agricultural, the purpose of the festivals was to win the support of gods or spirits who controlled the weather, crop growth, animal breeding, and so on.¹⁴⁵ These festivals were days of sacrifice and ritual, but also of holiday merriment, as Easter or Christmas are for us today. In addition to holidays devoted to placating the divine spirits, there were holidays established to thank the gods for helping the Romans win a specific military victory. For example, before a battle, the general would pray on behalf of the Romans to certain gods and vow that if the Romans won they would honor those gods with a day (or days) of holiday entertainment.¹⁴⁶ Although each thanksgiving holiday originally marked the victory of a specific campaign, it became an annual event, and its original significance may have been forgotten. On these days, the state presented various types of entertainment, which were financed with public funds. These entertainments were called *ludi*, which can be translated as "games" or "plays" or "sports."¹⁴⁷ Although the *ludi* were originally presented as part of the religious celebration that brought people together to honor the gods publicly, gradual changes began to occur in the celebration of Roman religious holidays. In urban areas, holidays without *ludi*¹⁴⁸ became less important to most people than holidays with them, particularly as the city-dwelling Romans forgot their agricultural associations. And holidays with *ludi* were extended to occupy more days. The *Ludi Cereales*, for example, which honored Ceres, the goddess of grain, were extended from one to seven days, from April 12 to 19.¹⁴⁹ The *Ludi Romani*, which were dedicated to Juno, Jupiter, and Minerva, lasted

¹⁴¹*Campania*: a region south of Rome where the cities of Naples and Pompeii were situated.

¹⁴²*Bruttium, Lucania*: regions in the southernmost part of the Italian peninsula.

¹⁴³*Tarentum*: city in the southeast coast of Italy. It was founded by the Greeks.

¹⁴⁴*thunderous applause*: probably at the spectacles in the arena such as gladiatorial combats.

¹⁴⁵The Parilia, for example, on April 21, honored Pales, the goddess of shepherds and flocks.

¹⁴⁶Such vows might also be made when asking the gods for relief from a plague or famine.

¹⁴⁷*Ludus* (singular of *ludi*) can also mean "training," and the word *ludus* is used both for children's play and children's school, as well as for training schools for gladiators.

¹⁴⁸The Parilia, for example.

¹⁴⁹*Cereales*, *Ceres*: the origin of the English word *cereal*.

annually scheduled *ludi* financed by the Senate). In the imperial period, the *ludi* produced with senatorial allotments were often eclipsed in size and lavishness by *ludi* produced with funds from the imperial family.

Caesar's Games

Roman politicians of the republican period, always from the upper-class, promoted a system in which the presentation of entertainment became one method of currying favor and winning votes. For their part, the lower-class expected to be entertained and used the games, moreover, as an opportunity to express approval or disapproval of politicians or policy. In fact, the late republican politician Cicero wrote that the Roman people made their will known in three locations—public meetings (*contiones*), popular voting assemblies (*comitia*), and spectacles (*ludi* and gladiatorial shows)—and that they expressed themselves most honestly at the spectacles (*Speech in Defense of Sestius*, 50.106). The upper-class therefore strove for a balance between their need to support the spectacles so essential to their political survival, and their fear of mass gatherings where discontent might fester. For the most part, the political advantages of providing entertainment outweighed the threat of civil disturbance erupting in the emotionally charged atmosphere of the games.

The following passage describes Julius Caesar's presentation of public entertainment in 65 B.C., the year of his aedileship. As a publicly elected magistrate, he was responsible for the production of *ludi* for state holidays. For these, he used the public funds allotted by the Senate, with perhaps an addition of some personal funds, and arranged for the requisite theater events, "hunts," and chariot races. As a private citizen, he also, in the same year, arranged a gladiatorial show at his own expense. The occasion for this display of 320 pairs of gladiators was a memorial event honoring Caesar's dead father. Although this particular event was privately financed, Caesar undoubtedly hoped to gain political popularity for staging it, even as he gained popularity for the successful production of the state-financed *ludi*. The large number of gladiators at his show worried his political enemies, who feared either that the gladiators he had hired to fight in Rome might be emboldened by their numbers to revolt,¹⁵⁷ or that Caesar might be gathering a private army to stage a coup d'état.

During his aedileship, Caesar . . . arranged wild animal "hunts" and theatrical performances, sometimes with the help of his colleague, Marcus Bibulus, sometimes on his own.¹⁵⁸ . . . He also arranged a gladiatorial exhibition, but with somewhat fewer pairs of gladiators than he had originally planned. For since the group he had hired was so large, and their sheer number had terrified his political enemies, these enemies passed legislation restricting the number of gladiators which anyone was allowed to keep in Rome.

¹⁵⁷In 73 B.C., gladiators in Italy, led by Spartacus, revolted and stirred up an ill-fated war in which thousands of slaves participated. See the introduction to selection 219.

¹⁵⁸Caesar and Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus were the two curule aediles in 65 B.C. The two plebeian aediles were Gaius Vergilius Balbus and Quintus Tullius Cicero; on Quintus Cicero, see selections 25, 69, 70, 227, and 318.

Once the emperor Tiberius had transferred the election of magistrates from the popular assemblies to the Senate,¹⁵⁹ aspiring and ambitious politicians no longer had a reason to court the favor of the masses by arranging lavish public spectacles. Although aediles and praetors continued to execute their duties in this area, the task became a burdensome and largely ungratifying one. Moreover the emperors restricted the opportunities that private individuals had to produce spectacles. They did not want any potential rival to win the affections of the people and build support for a coup d'état.¹⁶⁰ Instead they themselves exploited the political advantages of entertaining the masses and sponsored extravagant new games. Nero, who was emperor from A.D. 54 to 68 and who had a personal interest in performances and competitions, was particularly generous with the time and money he devoted to public spectacles.

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Suetonius, *The Lives of the Caesars*: Nero 11, 12

Nero presented a large number of different types of entertainments: youth athletic meets, chariot races, theatrical performances, and gladiatorial shows. At the youth meets he allowed even old men of consular rank and elderly matrons to take part.¹⁶¹ At the chariot races he assigned to the equestrian class¹⁶² special boxes, separate from the ordinary seats. He even arranged for races of four-camel chariots. At the theatrical performances . . . when Afranius's play¹⁶³ *The Fire* was staged, the actors were allowed to keep the furniture which they had snatched from the burning house.¹⁶⁴ And throughout the entire period of the Greatest Games,¹⁶⁵ gifts were distributed among the people; every single day a thousand birds, all different kinds, were given away, as well as numerous food baskets and vouchers for grain, clothing, gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, paintings, slaves, horses, mules, even for tamed wild animals, and, finally, for ships, apartment buildings, and farms. Nero himself watched these plays from the edge of the stage.

At the gladiatorial show, which he had staged in the wooden amphitheater near the Campus Martius (the amphitheater had been built in just twelve months),¹⁶⁶ he allowed no one to be killed, not even convicted criminals.¹⁶⁷ . . . He staged a sea battle on an artificial saltwater lake with sea monsters swimming in it. He also staged some Greek ballets with young Greek dancers to each of

¹⁵⁹ See selection 271.

¹⁶⁰ Similarly, the emperors did not allow military leaders to celebrate triumphs; see the introduction to selection 293.

¹⁶¹ On Nero's encouragement of citizens to perform, see selection 380.

¹⁶² Perhaps because the equestrian class had originally had "horsey" associations; see note 12 of Chapter I.

¹⁶³ *Lucius Afranius*: a playwright who had lived about 200 years earlier.

¹⁶⁴ Apparently a building had actually been set on fire during the performance. The Roman audience demanded realism.

¹⁶⁵ Nero had inaugurated these games and given them the name "Greatest."

¹⁶⁶ On the location of the Campus Martius, see map 1. In Rome's earliest period, gladiatorial events were held in the open area of the Forum, with standing room only for the spectators. An amphitheater was a circular seating structure built around an arena where the events took place. (For the definition of *arena*, see note 46 of this chapter.) Rome's most famous amphitheater is the Colosseum, which was completed in A.D. 80, twelve years after Nero's death. It was called by the Romans not Colosseum but Flavian Amphitheater since the emperors who built it were of the Flavian family.

¹⁶⁷ On the use of convicted criminals in these events, see selections 6, 224, and 398.

provided it. The emperors therefore increased the number of annual holidays with *ludi*, perhaps hoping that these diversions would keep people's minds off problems like unemployment or food shortages. Some emperors arranged special one-time shows. When the Colosseum was opened, for example, in A.D. 80, Titus¹⁷² arranged shows for the occasion that lasted 100 days. And in A.D. 108, Trajan¹⁷³ celebrated his military victories in Dacia with 117 days of spectacles.

In the passage below, Fronto¹⁷⁴ discusses the political importance of public entertainments. His comments are, however, a bit misleading. Very few people, if any, would have attended all 117 days of Trajan's spectacles. Today, for example, a person could attend a movie every day of the year, but no one does (although many people do watch TV every day). And in a large modern city, there are spectator sports events just about every day.¹⁷⁵ Will future historians say our century was interested only in hot dogs and baseball, or in sex and violence (as modern moralists claim)? In ancient Rome, most people worked hard for a living and attended spectacles only occasionally.

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Fronto, *Elements of History* 18

Because of his shrewd understanding of political science, the emperor¹⁷⁶ gave his attention even to actors and other performers on stage or on the race track or in the arena, since he knew that the Roman people are held in control principally by two things—free grain and shows¹⁷⁷—that political support depends as much on the entertainments as on matters of serious import, that neglect of serious problems does the greater harm, but neglect of the entertainments brings damaging unpopularity, that gifts¹⁷⁸ are less eagerly and ardently longed for than shows, and, finally, that gifts placate only the common people on the grain dole,¹⁷⁹ singly and individually, but the shows placate everyone.

The Road to Decadence

In the passage translated here, Tacitus, who lived from about A.D. 55 to 118, inveighs against a public entertainment that the emperor Nero instituted in A.D. 61. Tacitus's main complaint was that Nero encouraged the participation of Roman citizens in

¹⁷²Titus: the second of the Flavian emperors; ruled A.D. 79–81.

¹⁷³Trajan: emperor A.D. 98–117.

¹⁷⁴Fronto: see Appendix I, and also note 23 of Chapter II.

¹⁷⁵And we enjoy 104 weekend "holidays," as well as holidays on Christmas, Labor Day, Fourth of July, and so on.

¹⁷⁶the emperor: Trajan.

¹⁷⁷free grain: the grain dole; see selection 169. Juvenal remarked that the city mob was interested only in *panem et circenses*, "bread and chariot races." He exaggerated the situation, but it is nonetheless true that the people of Rome were in a unique position. Because Rome headed a vast empire, the state treasury was filled with tribute and tax money which could be used to provide inhabitants of the city with free grain and free entertainment. Residents in cities and towns in the rest of Italy and in the Empire enjoyed far fewer gifts.

¹⁷⁸On gifts from the emperor, see selection 378.

¹⁷⁹Evidently gifts were sometimes distributed only to people whose names were on the grain dole list.

In his fourth consulship, with Cornelius Cossus as his colleague,¹⁸⁹ Nero instituted at Rome an entertainment which was to be held every five years and which was patterned after Greek competitive events.¹⁹⁰ Like all new things, this entertainment received mixed reviews. Some people said that even Gnaeus Pompeius¹⁹¹ had been censured by the older men of his day for building a permanent theater. For before the building of Pompey's theater, theatrical performances used to be given on a temporary stage to an audience on makeshift bleachers. And, if you go back farther, the audience stood while watching plays, so that the people would not, by sitting in a theater, become accustomed to spending their time in idleness and sloth. The character of the ancient shows should have been preserved, . . . and no citizen should have felt obligated to compete. But, little by little, our traditional moral values weakened and then were completely subverted by an imported licentiousness, so that we began to see here in our city everything that could corrupt or be corrupted: our young men were ruined by their eagerness for foreign ways, their enthusiasm for gymnasias, for idleness, for perverted sex, and all with the approval of the emperor and the Senate, who not only granted permission for such offensive behaviors but even applied pressure on Roman noblemen to disgrace themselves with stage performances of speeches and poetry. What else was left but for them to strip naked and put on boxing gloves and train for sports matches instead of for war!¹⁹²

CIRCUS EVENTS

Chariot racing¹⁹³ was the oldest and most enduring of the public entertainments. According to Roman legend, the first public entertainment was a day of chariot racing planned by Romulus shortly after he founded Rome in 753 B.C. He and his men had no women for their city, so he invited his neighbors, the Sabines, to come and watch horse races in the valley where the Circus Maximus was later built.¹⁹⁴ While the Sabine men were intently watching the races, Romulus' men seized and carried off the Sabine women.¹⁹⁵ By the third century A.D., there were eight race tracks in the vicinity of Rome, and the largest, the Circus Maximus, held 250,000 spectators. There were race tracks throughout the Empire as well and, even after the fall of Rome in the fifth century A.D., chariot racing remained immensely popular in the eastern Empire during the Byzantine period.¹⁹⁶ Chariot racing was a spectator sport, employing professionals and designed to make a profit for its organizers. As such, Roman chariot racing was more similar to modern pro football than to the chariot racing of the

¹⁸⁹The year was A.D. 61. The emperor would occasionally assume the office of consul; see selection 267.

¹⁹⁰Nero loved Greek competitive events and was eager to participate in them himself. He performed in public as a lyre player, an actor, and a singer. He even traveled to Greece to compete. At the Olympic Games he entered a race for ten-horse chariot teams. Although he fell out of the chariot, had to be helped back in, and still failed to complete the course, he was awarded first prize!

¹⁹¹Gnaeus Pompeius: Pompey.

¹⁹²for sports matches instead of for war: nonfunctional versus functional applications of athletic skills.

¹⁹³Chariot racing: Latin *ludi circenses* (from the Latin *circus* = "race track"). Before the construction of permanent arenas, wild animal "hunts" were also held in the circus.

¹⁹⁴Circus Maximus: literally "the largest race track"; for its location in Rome, see map 1.

¹⁹⁵This famous legendary event is commonly known as "the Rape of the Sabine Women."

¹⁹⁶On the division and fall of the Roman Empire, see note 227 of Chapter X.

[*The four chariot teams enter the starting gates.*]

The four team colors are clearly visible: white and blue, green and red.²⁰² Grooms are holding the heads and the bridles of the horses, . . . calming them with soothing pats and reassuring them with words of encouragement. Still the horses fret in the gates, lean against the starting barrier, and snort loudly. . . . They rear up, prance, and kick impatiently against the wood of the gates. A shrill blast of the trumpet, and the chariots leap out of the gates, onto the track. . . . The wheels fly over the ground, and the air is choked with the dust stirred up on the track. The drivers urge their horses with whips. Standing in the chariots, they lean far forward so that they can whip even the shoulders of the horses. . . . The chariots fly out of sight, quickly covering the long open stretch. . . . When they have come around the far turn, both the rival teams have passed Consentius, but his partner is in the lead. The middle teams concentrate now on taking the lead in the inside lane. If the driver in front pulls his horses too far right toward the spectator stands, he leaves an opening on his left, in the inside lane.²⁰³ Consentius, however, redoubles his efforts to hold back his horses and skillfully reserve their energy for the seventh and last lap. The others race full out, urging their horses with whip and voice. The track is moist with the sweat of both horses and drivers. . . . And thus they race, the first lap, the second, the third, the fourth. In the fifth lap, the leader is no longer able to withstand the pressure of his pursuers. He knows his horses are exhausted, that they can no longer respond to his demand for speed, and he pulls them aside. When the sixth lap had been completed and the crowd was already demanding that the prize be awarded, Consentius's opponents thought they had a very safe lead for the seventh and last lap, and they drove with self-confidence, not a bit worried about a move by Consentius. But suddenly he loosens the reins, plants his feet firmly on the floorboard, leans far over the chariot, . . . and makes his fast horses gallop full out. One of the other drivers tries to make a very sharp turn at the far post, feeling Consentius close on his heels, but he is unable to turn his four wildly excited horses, and they plunge out of control. Consentius passes him carefully. The fourth driver is enthralled by the cheers of the spectators and turns his galloping horses too far right toward the stands. Consentius drives straight and fast, and passes the driver who has angled out and only now, too late, begun to urge his horses with the whip. The latter pursues Consentius recklessly, hoping to overtake him. He cuts in sharply across the track. His horses lose their balance and fall. Their legs become tangled in the spinning chariot wheels and are snapped and broken. The driver is hurled headlong out of the shattered chariot which then falls on top of him in a heap of twisted wreckage. His broken and bloody body is still. . . . And now the emperor presents the palm branch of victory to Consentius.²⁰⁴

A Day at the Races

In *The Art of Love*, Ovid advised men in search of an amorous adventure to visit the race track.²⁰⁵ "Don't neglect the horse races if you're looking for a place to meet your

²⁰² Drivers wore tunics dyed the color of their faction; see Pliny's comments on these faction colors in selection 383.

²⁰³ The chariots raced counterclockwise, and thus all the turns were to the left. The turns were very sharp, basically 180 degrees, quite unlike the gradual turns on a modern race track.

²⁰⁴ Victorious drivers received palm branches. There were also substantial purses in regular races, but most of the money went to the faction owners, not the drivers, as today the purse goes to the owner, not the jockey.

²⁰⁵ See selection 73.

A landowner must be concerned about what responsibility it is best to give each slave and what sort of work to assign to each. I advise that you not appoint a foreman from that type of slave who is physically attractive, and certainly not from the type who has been employed in the city, where all skills are directed toward increasing pleasure. This lazy and sleepy type of slave is accustomed to having a lot of time on his hands, to lounging around the Campus Martius,²⁹ the Circus Maximus,³⁰ the theaters, the gambling dens, the snack bars, and the brothels,³¹ and he is always dreaming of these same foolish pleasures. If a city slave continues to daydream when he has been transferred to a farm, the landowner suffers the loss not just of the slave but actually of his whole estate. You should therefore choose someone who has been hardened to farm work from infancy, and who has been tested by experience. . . .

The foreman should be given a female companion both to keep him in bounds and also to assist him in certain matters. . . . He should not be acquainted with the city or the weekly market, except in regard to matters of buying and selling produce, which is his duty.³² . . .

The foreman should choose the slaves' clothing with an eye to utility rather than fashion, and he should take care to protect them from the wind, cold, and rain with long-sleeved leather tunics, patchwork cloaks, or hooded capes. All of these garments ward off the elements and thus no day is so unbearable that no out-of-doors work can be done. The foreman should not only be skilled in agricultural operations, but also be endowed with such strength and virtue of mind (at least as far as his slave's personality permits) that he may oversee men neither with laxity nor with cruelty. . . . There is no better method of maintaining control over even the most worthless of men than demanding hard labor. . . . After their exhausting toil, they will turn their attention to rest and sleep rather than to fun and games. . . .

It should be an established custom for the landowner to inspect the slaves chained in the prison,³³ to examine whether they are securely chained, whether their quarters are safe and well guarded, whether the foreman has put anyone in chains or released anyone from chains without his master's knowledge.³⁴ . . .

A diligent master investigates the quality of his slaves' food and drink by tasting it himself. He examines their clothing, hand-coverings, and foot-coverings. He should even grant them the opportunity of registering complaints against those who have harmed them either through cruelty or dishonesty. . . . I have given exemption from work and sometimes even freedom to very fertile female slaves when they have borne many children, since bearing a certain number of offspring ought to be rewarded.³⁵ For a woman who has three sons, exemption from work is the reward; for a woman who has more, freedom.³⁶

²⁹ *Campus Martius*: see note 36 of Chapter IV. The slave would wait around while his master exercised.

³⁰ *Circus Maximus*: see note 69 of Chapter III. The slave would wait outside while his master watched the races.

³¹ The slave is waiting for his master.

³² The foreman obviously had some freedom of movement and could travel back and forth to the market, but was not to linger there to enjoy the attractions of the city.

³³ *prison*: housing for unruly or recalcitrant slaves. See selection 97. These slaves worked during the day in chain gangs out in the fields; see note 46 of this chapter. At night they were kept in prisons. However, in selection 185, Pliny states that he never uses chained slaves.

³⁴ Evidently travelers were sometimes kidnapped, put in the slave prison, and forced to work in the chain gangs. Their families would never discover their whereabouts.

³⁵ A female slave's fertility could be very profitable for her owner. A slave's children became the property of her owner, who could sell them at a slave auction, just as he might sell calves or piglets at an auction.

³⁶ Although the mother might be set free, her children remained as slaves. We do not know whether Columella's willingness to free fertile female slaves was unusual among slave-owners.

Marcus Porcius Cato was endowed with virtues highly prized by traditional Romans: austerity, frugality, and thrift.³⁷ He wrote a book, *On Agriculture*, in which he gave advice to wealthy landowners on how to obtain the most profit from their land. In the passages below, it is apparent that he had little compassion for his slaves.

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Cato the Elder, *On Agriculture* 2, 56, 57, 58, 59

When the master has arrived at his villa³⁸ and has paid his respects to the household *lar*,³⁹ he should walk around the whole farm, on the same day if possible; if not, on the next day. When he has learned how the farm is being looked after, what work has been done, and what has not been done, he should summon his foreman⁴⁰ the next day and ask how much of the work has been completed, how much remains, whether the completed work was done pretty much on time, whether the remaining work can be finished, and how much wine, grain, and other products were produced. When he has received this information, he should calculate what was done in how many days, by how many workers. When the figures are not encouraging, the foreman usually claims that he has worked diligently but "the slaves have been ill," "the weather has been bad," "the slaves have run away," etc., etc. When he has given these and many other excuses, call his attention again to your calculation of the work done and the workers used. If the weather has been rainy, remind him of the chores that could have been done on rainy days: washing out wine vats, sealing them with pitch, cleaning the villa, moving grain, hauling out manure, making a manure pit, cleaning seed, mending ropes, and making new ones.⁴¹ The slaves might also have repaired their cloaks and hats. On festival days,⁴² old ditches might have been cleaned out, the road repaired, brambles cut down, gardens dug, the meadow cleared, twigs bundled, thorn bushes uprooted, spelt⁴³ ground, and general cleaning done. When the slaves were sick, he should not have given them so much food.⁴⁴ When these things have been calmly pointed out, give orders for the remaining work to be completed. Look over his account books for ready cash, grain, fodder supplies, wine, oil—what has been sold, what payments have been collected, how much is left, and what remains to be sold. Order him to collect outstanding debts and to sell what remains. Order him to provide whatever is needed for the current year, and to sell off whatever is superfluous. . . . Tell him to scrutinize the herd and hold an auction. Sell your oil, if the price is right, and the surplus wine and grain. Sell off the old oxen, the blemished cattle and sheep, wool, hides, old wagons, old tools, old slaves, sick slaves, and whatever else is superfluous. . . .

Food rations for the slaves: For those who do hard labor, four measures⁴⁵ of wheat in winter, four and one-half in the summer. For the foreman, the foreman's wife, the taskmaster, and the

³⁷ See selection 176.

³⁸ For a definition of *villa*, see the introduction to selection 97.

³⁹ *lar*: the *lar familiaris* (household *lar*) was the spirit or deity which guarded and protected the household and its members. There was a shrine to this deity in the home, and sacrifices were made to it regularly. See selections 373 and 402.

⁴⁰ The foreman is a slave.

⁴¹ Farm animals would have a day off when it rained; slaves, however, were to keep working, seven days a week.

⁴² On religious holidays, when everyone else had a day off, Cato made only one concession to his slaves: they were free of field work for the day and were bidden to do chores around the villa.

⁴³ *spelt*: a type of grain.

⁴⁴ Cato did not want to waste food on nonproductive slaves. For more on Cato's keen eye for profit, see selection 176.

⁴⁵ *measure*: Latin *modius*, perhaps equivalent to one peck.

shepherd, pounds with Wine r the fourth n the fifth, si ninth, tenth month. In a The total a more in pro per person Relish ground. L Distribute eaten, give measure o Cloth other year patchwork year. The follo Varro. 208 The instr articulate i.e., cart, 46 Some sl 185, and 47 Unchain wheat and 48 In the s 49 lora: a 50 sextariri 51 congi: 52 Compit (see note "crossro 53 Relish was the n soldiers; 54 fish sa latter, se 55 Comp slaves." slaves.

shepherd, three measures. For slaves working in chains,⁴⁶ four pounds of bread⁴⁷ in the winter, five pounds when they begin to dig the vineyard, and back to four again when the figs appear.⁴⁸

Wine rations for the slaves: When the vintage is over, let them drink *lorca*⁴⁹ for three months. In the fourth month, allow one-half *sextarius*⁵⁰ of wine a day, or two and one-half *congi*⁵¹ a month. In the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth months, allow a sextarius a day, or five congi a month. In the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth months, allow one and one-half sextarii a day, or one amphora a month. In addition, during the Saturnalia and Compitalia,⁵² give each man three and one-half congi. The total amount of wine per person per year is seven amphorae. For slaves working in chains, add more in proportion to the work they are doing. It is not excessive if they drink ten amphorae of wine per person per year.

Relishes⁵³ for the slaves: Preserve as many as possible of the olives which have fallen to the ground. Later, when the olives are ripe, preserve those from which very little oil can be pressed. Distribute the olives sparingly so that they may last as long as possible. When the olives have been eaten, give the slaves fish sauce⁵⁴ and vinegar. Give each one a sextarius of olive oil per month. A measure of salt per person per year is enough.

Clothing for the slaves: Provide a tunic weighing three and one-half pounds and a cloak every other year. Whenever you give a tunic or cloak to any of the slaves, first get the old one back; from it, patchwork coverings can be made. You ought to give the slaves sturdy wooden shoes every other year.

Managing Your Slaves

The following passage comes from another book *On Agriculture*, this one written by Varro.

*The instruments by which the soil is cultivated.*⁵⁵ Some men divide these into three categories: (1) articulate instruments, i.e., slaves; (2) inarticulate instruments, i.e., oxen; and (3) mute instruments, i.e., carts. . . .

⁴⁶Some slaves obviously worked in chain gangs. For more on the treatment of chained slaves, see selections 97, 185, and 206.

⁴⁷Unchained slaves are given wheat, chained slaves bread. Were the unchained slaves expected to grind their wheat and make their own porridge or bread?

⁴⁸In the summer.

⁴⁹*lorca*: a weak wine made from water mixed with grape skins which remained after pressing.

⁵⁰*sextarius*: a Roman liquid measure equivalent to about one pint.

⁵¹*congi*: singular *congius*, equal to six sextarii, or one-eighth amphora.

⁵²*Compitalia*: a festival held in December, soon after the Saturnalia, honoring the *Lares Compitales*. These *lares* (see note 39 of this chapter) guarded and protected the boundaries of one's property. Latin *comptium* = "crossroads," "intersection of property boundaries." For Saturnalia, see selections 424 and 425.

⁵³*Relishes*: the Latin is *pulmentarium*, which means "anything eaten with porridge or bread." Porridge or bread was the main item on the diet of almost all Romans, not just slaves. It was certainly the main staple for Roman soldiers; see selection 291, where wheat and barley are mentioned as military rations.

⁵⁴*fish sauce*: Latin *halec* or *allec*, the sediment left after the preparation of *garum* and *liquamen*. For these latter, see selection 103.

⁵⁵Compare the words of Cato in the previous passage: "Sell off the old oxen, old wagons, old tools and old slaves." In selection 185, Pliny relates that a landowner had seized the equipment of his tenants, including their slaves.