

**School: Wyoming High School**  
**Committee: Third Servile Revolt: Rebels**  
**Position: Lanista**



As a citizen of Rome, I've observe that the current state of affairs has been falling for many years. The extension of Rome's land holding has dramatically increased since the end of the Punic Wars a century ago, and the corruption of the Senatorial class has only grown since this development, leading to the ever present existence of *latifundiae*. More and more, slaves have become a fundamental part of the workings of this great Republic, not only putting a heavy burden on those held in such a condition, but decreasing the availability of land to the plebian classes. The first great slave revolt of only a hundred years prior brought great change in the form of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, and the success of this slave revolt holds the potential for similar repercussions. I do not dare believe the institution of slavery could ever disappear, nor that we as a military force could entirely succeed, but with the communication of our ideas across the republic, and a show of great military force could spark change in the republic, and shift popular support from the *Optimates* and towards reform.

However, as it stands the slave revolt is low on numbers and supplies. It is vital we obtain these things at an accelerated rate, and from here I see the only course of action as to head towards the coastal region of Pompeii and Neapolis in the Bay of Naples. This coastal region, heavy on shipping, is surrounded by the great farms around Mt. Vesuvius, giving us the possibility to gain more troops from the farms, while making strategic connections within the city. I suggest we find a place in the region where we can defend for a short time. The city can also offer us supplies, for the trading in the region is so continuous we should easily be able to blend in to purchase or otherwise obtain such items as weapons or food.

While in the region, I believe it fundamental to communicate the justness of our rebellion to the influential citizens of the region. If the important factor of this rebellion is not just our personal wellbeing, but the wellbeing of all of Rome's people, which I believe it is, it is important to effectively share our grievances. The unjust treatment of slaves, gladiators and farmers alike, and the over dependence on slave labor in the peninsula is an offence to our god's and our history. Not only a show of military strength, but a show of our intellect and capabilities is important. It is vital to connect with influential citizens in Neapolis itself, but also citizens that have a say in the workings of the great capital. We must win respect on both fields if we wish to make lasting changes. Several influential philosophers and writers have been known to sympathize with those held in servitude, and it is to our benefit to exploit those sympathies, as well as encourage new ones from others. While military might will win respect, if we do not communicate our purpose for this rebellion the potential for long term change will be greatly weakened.

The education of our troops and supporters is important for this to succeed. I have already made great strides in educating those slaves I have already worked with, but as we gain more support, as we inevitably will, it is important to continue emphasizing literacy. The written Latin language is highly valued by those who sit in the Senate, and by showing a group of literate, militarily strong followers, we will be more successful at our ultimate aims than if we only worked on military strength. Therefore, I urge we spend significant amounts of time daily educating new recruits.

Finally, I urge action and confrontation. To win the respect of the people, we must show our military might. However, I also believe we should avoid direct confrontation with the full might of the Roman legion. Instead, I recommend a strategy of picking our battles, emphasizing strategic retreat. Ideally, the senate will not consider our rebellion an official war, and not send the full force of the legion. If they do, my recommended strategy would be surprise attacks, using the terrain to our environment. In the Punic Wars, the Carthaginians recognized the weakness of the Roman army's dependency on unity in battle. Though some military developments have been made to address this in the Roman fighting style, it remains true Roman soldiers are not trained for one on one battles that gladiators, which our forces largely are, are trained for. Surprise attacks will be important, catching the Roman forces off guard while they remain at rest, and pulling soldiers apart from each other into individual fights. Through this, we shall be able to demonstrate our military strength, and stay alive.

Through winning the respect of the Roman people by our military strength alongside out literary abilities, we may be able to make significant changes in the mindset of the Roman people, and increase the support for the *populares* and implement the land, slave, and citizenship reforms imagined by the Gracchi long ago.