

THE LEISURE IN ANCIENT ROME: CHRONICLES OF AN EMPIRE RISE.

Professor **Maximiliano KORSTANJE**
University of Moron, Argentina

Abstract

The present research is aimed at describing scientifically how the citizenship practiced the leisure in Ancient Rome ranging from I B.C and I D. C centuries. Almost 123 years of history that deserves being uncovered. Readers who wish having clear how leisure conformed in High Empire should refer to classical biographers such as Cornelius Tacitus and Caius Suetonius. In different manners, both have contributed to understand further about how Romans lived. Like in Greece, mythology encouraged the conflict confronting sons against their fathers. The glory, fame and power were values that a child learned from the cradle. For that, in the lapse of few decades Rome transformed in a military and economic power that subdued all known world for more than four centuries. Under such a circumstance, leisure worked as a vehicle towards hegemony and ideology preventing social fragmentation as well as encouraging a rural migration to urban cities.

Key words: Roman Empire, leisure, pleasure, ideology, mythology

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, researchers in tourism fields have been devoting their efforts by studying the history of tourism recurring once and once again to the leisure in Ancient Rome (Norval, 1935; Cordero Ulate, 2006; Munné, 1999; Cioce Sampaio, 2005; Norrild, 2005; Jimenez Guzman, 1986; Puddu Loy, 1983; Mcintosh and Gupta, 1983; Getino, 2002; Beltritti, 2005; Towner, 1985; Fortunato, 2005; Wallingre, 2007; Khatchikian, 2000). Considered for many studies as a platform for modern tourism, roman leisure captivated the admiration of scholars (Yasoshima, Silva-Oliveira, 2002). However, approaches of this nature are argumentatively weak or spurious, because they do not use contemporary bibliographical resources, neither epigraphic nor archeological evidences to describe or explain how Romans lived; furthermore, other methodological inconsistency refers to the omission of the influence of mythology in different parts of social life; a point well-illustrated in classic texts authored by Horace, Suetonius, Tacitus or Virgilio. Of course, this is not for incompetence or laziness by the part of researchers but a limitation that surfaces whenever the analyzed timeframe exceeds the possibilities of researcher.

Broadly speaking, Rome has historically attracted many scholars from Europe and beyond –not only from tourism but also other disciplines- but each one saw in this civilization a projection of its own style of life. Even though, we have to admit there is so much of Rome in our present world, this does not authorize to argue that modern tourism and ancient leisure would be comparable issues. What are the differences between tourism and roman leisure?. To respond this question we are obliged to addressee issues related with religion. A banquet or a feast of other nature was celebrated in honour and evoked the protection of certain divinity. People invited to diner who have rejected to take part in such an event, will be punished by the grace of involving gods. As a result of

this, unlike modern tourism the assistance and practice of leisure had an obligatory character.

For one hand, unlike in Rome, in our secularized world, tourism is considered as a voluntarily activity that people choose to practice regardless the influences of religiosity. For another hand, it is very hard to transcend the boundaries of ancient moral and ethics. Some customs that today we may judge gruesome not only were allowed in Rome but also encouraged. Slavery as one of main form in economic production considered people as part of patrimony. For example, like goods in our modern times, people can be very well consumed sexually without any kind of age-related restrictions (Veyne, 1985).

Under such a circumstance, the present piece is an intention to highlight scientifically the preliminary expressions of leisure in a folk that was immersed in a moment of history favourable for development and expansion as well as explaining the role played by pleasure as a vehicle toward hegemony. A chronological basis for this study comprises 123 years ranging from 27 BC with the coronation of Octavianus to 96 DC once dead Titus Flavius Domicianus, a period well-known by specialists as *the High Roman Empire*.

2. HISTORY AND PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

In the region of Lazio, Latin ethnogenesis was shaped by a diversity of ethnic groups such as Hellenics, Etruscans, Latinos, Volscos, Trojans, Arcadian and Pelages. Passing the time, these ethnicities were converging in a same identity which ranges a geographical extension of 28 miles from Tiber River to Tirreno (Martinez Pinna, 2002, p.174). In VIII B. C century, these settlements take the name of Quadratta Rome. Historically, Ligures had settled in the north of the peninsula living in peace with Greeks southwards and Italiotas located in the middle. For VIII B.C, it emerges a new confederation called “Federation of Seventh Hills” or

“Septimontium”. A century later, Latinos suffered two invasions of a neighbour, Etruscan who modernized Rome constructing around walls for further protection. By the way, not only Etruscan improved the previous roads but also drew a new urbanity line in downtown. At the end of VI B.C, an inner-ward rebellion against Etruscan contributed to create a broader political structure encompassed originally by a Senate, a tribune, and a citizenship (Suetonius, I-X). Their language, Latin can be considered as a part of indo-European family coming from a dialect spoken in the Italy’s zone: *vetus latinum*. However, as the Empire was growing, Elites adopted the Greek as a distinctive tongue imparting education of such a tongue to their sons and taking distance from *Vulgar Latin*. In such a effects, for Roman Aristocracy Greece was considered the cradle of civilization wherein development and progress had acquired their maximums expression in arts, philosophy, architecture, and poesy (Bram, 1967; Grimal, 2002).

Scientifically, we can detach the history of Rome in three parts: The Monarchy, Republic and Empire. At the first stage, the Monarchy was characterized by the regency of a King who was elected by a council of old wises (Senatus). This epoch commenced in 509 B.C until the fall of “Tarquin the Proud”. From I century onwards, it emerges the Republic as a political form organized by consuls who ruled the destiny of their folk. Direct enemies of Senate, the consuls consolidated and expanded their power no later than third Punic War wherein Cartago (the main enemy of Rome in the hegemony for the Mediterranean control) is basically exterminated (Grimal, 2002, p.69). Many decades later, afterwards the defeat of Cleopatra and Mark Anthony in Actium, Octavianus took the throne proclaiming him-self as the first Roman Emperor. With this young aristocrat starts a period that historians knows as The Empire dated precisely in the year 27 B.C. From that on, the Emperors will govern the fate of a people who will transform in the greatest political and military organization the history never knew.

The territorial organization was accomplished in accordance to the Etruscan’s heritage. Each new territory indexed to Empire was considered a Province, and they would be classified in two types: senatorial and imperials. Each governor, depending upon its functions, had financial and military attributes. Among the 53 province for I B.C conformed the Empire, the law (*Lex Imperium*) was administered by means of praetors whose aim to make observance the Roman law in all relationships was imposed directly by the Emperor (Mehesz, 1967). Such an institution was classified in *Millitae* reserved by legionaries, *imperium domi* and *duplex* was exclusive of officials.

Regarding their system of beliefs, Romans adhered to polytheism since they did not adore to an unique god. Based their mythology in a formula “*I give you for receiving*”, the different offerings or sacrifices had specific purposes. Whether a divinity did not respond to the pleas of its servants, Romans opted freely for offering their supplications to other. This form of living their religion contributed to do an unabated net of complex relationships between gods and humans. Furthermore,

adulation and negotiation were values, which not only distinguished this society but also represented a way of conceiving “the other”. People who had scarce resources should be forced to give their daughters in matrimony to a well-accommodated suitor to reinforce the reciprocity and make sure a better position (Mehesz, 2003). An historical anecdote pointed out that Octavianus had given his sister to Mark Anthony as a good-will gesture with the end to prevent a new civil war. The sacred fire situated just at the home symbolized the cult of male ancestors who had the aim to protect their descendants when they crossed the threshold between live and death (Solá, 2004, p.13; Coulanges, 2005). The influence of Greece in Rome was evident but gradual. After conquests Roman had the custom to assimilate some elements of conquered folks transferring syncretically diverse values associated with mythology. As a whole, the religion was the most important instrument that roman used to colonize the unexplored world, and of course, leisure was the second ones in importance (Chamley, 2006).

3. ROMAN AND GREEK MYTHOLOGY

The main problem in researchers who study ancient Rome is trivializing the influence of mythology on daily customs. That way, exegesis, method usually applied for the interpretation of myths, paved the way for a better understanding in how Romans enjoyed in their lapses of leisure. Cosmology of this interesting world (*orbis terrarium*) has been legitimated by gods’s wishes. The conquest was a construal based on two contrasted meaning: legitimacy and force, both inserted at the hearth of ideology. The limits of Empire not only were ordered under a figure of authority but also comprise the civilization. The term *imperium* shows ambivalent meanings; for one hand, it refers to organization, peace, solidarity, order and politic relationship between two or more civilized communities; but for the other, a second interpretation was applied to the fields of territory appropriation linked to conflicts, wars and blood. In other words, the military expansion of Roman Empire has been based on these two afore-mentioned principles in combination with an intention to conform a community of rational human beings (Kaerst, 1929; Grimal, 2002). Therefore, military victories symbolized something else than a demonstration of courage and were celebrated in honor to divinities and their sublime aim: the civilization (*humanitas*). Emperor concentrated *consensum universarum*, a right linked to Roman regency by all known world (Hidalgo de la Vega, 2005; Grimal, 2002).

In regards to this, unlike Norse or Celtic mythology, roman ones emphasized the conflict between father and sons. As J. P Vernant put it, the goddess Gea (earth) and Uranus copulated every nights and days incessantly. The sons who both engendered were unable to birth since Uranus have never moved away over Gea. The legend focuses that all nights and days Uranus lies on Gea preventing her sons allocated in her womb can get out. One of them, Cronos castrated to the obsessive Uranus using a sickle adroitly provided by his mother.

Once liberated his brothers, Cronos ruled the earth and sky with iron arm until his youngest sons, Zeus (Jupiter) defied and defeated him in "the battle of Titans"; as a result Zeus was finally enthroned as supreme authority in the Olympus (Vernant, 2005). What appears to quiet clear in this matter, roman world encouraged a constant conflagration between relatives because of power and glory. At least, history of this Empire show the cases of Romulo and Remo, Caesar and Pompeyus, Antonius and Octavianus, Caracalla and Geta, Claudio and Nero and so forth as a clear example what we have early noted.

The function of myths is aimed at ordering symbolically the humans taxonomic system of reality in indicating ethic issues as well as influencing in their daily practices. For almost all culture in the globe, cosmology is based in a conjunction of legends and tales which narrate the history of human beings beyond the time (Eliade, 1968). Even though, there is no consensus in scholars about the influence of myths in history, numerous studies in anthropological academy demonstrated that cosmology – a system of mythical beliefs- condition the social practices (Eliade, 1968; Morris, 1995; Malinowski, 1998; Mauss, 2006; Geertz, 2005; Vernant, 2005; Peirano, 2000; Pritchard-Evans, 1977; Van Gennep, 1986; Balandier, 2004; Korstanje, 2009; Turner, 1999; Lévi-Strauss, 2002; Leach, 1954) Under this discussion, founding myth in Roman culture refers to Romulus and Remo who constructed Rome at the feet of seven hills (Sola, 2004). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to analyze a second myth whose importance may not be left behind. This is the legend of Prometheus who evaded the Zeus's orders bringing the fire to men, laying foundations of competition in leisure expressions such as Circus, Races or Gladiator games (*ludii gladiatorii*). For other hand, this legend emphasizes as well the tension between the displeasure that is characteristic of working and the hedonism of leisure.

Afterwards being punished by Zeus, Prometheus is condemned for its liver to be eaten by a big eagle while at nights is regenerated to repeat this cycle eternally. Once again, Heracles (or Hercules for Romans) not only confronts Zeus's will (his own father) but also sets free to the Titan murdering to the eagle. At a first instance, Prometheus's liver symbolizes the human need to work on earth every days of its life to rest during nights and reassume on the next dawn. Secondly, fire seems to have certain connection to the technologies advances associated to civilization. In general, the world (not only the Rome but also beyond) comprises productive and unproductive cycles wherein creation is associated to constant moment of destruction. Heracles has broken down such a process giving to humanity the authority to transform environment by means of rational and instrumental logic bringing the eternal happiness to the earth. For that reason, public spectacles replicated the power of humanity over the rest of nature life.

With this background in mind, no need to say during *Ludii Gladiatori games* many wild animals were assassinated; not only people celebrated in such bloody events the technical supremacy over all nature but also their sacred rights upon other civilizations; for their cosmology and point of view, Romans had been called by

Gods to administrate the surrounding natural resources and take possession of the globe. With emphasis on discourses associated to development and civilization, Roman expanded their civilization thinking they were doing the correct thing (Duby y Aries, 1985; Veyne, 1985; Vernant, 2005; Korstanje, 2009).

As previous argument given, mythology explains many things in roman culture but not everything. Leisure and pleasure not only had patrimony of human beings but also Gods. That way, Momus was the figure able to amuse guests in Olympus. The belief still stood present in medieval Europe embodied by the clowns who had the mission to enjoy the kind and accompanying knights (Sola, 2004, p. 80). Even if empirical evidences testimony that roman hospitality (*hospitium*) in the century of I BC, recent findings found that this concept was forged in Ancient Celtic World of V BC. In Ancient times, the term *hospitium* was often utilized to denote hospitality and protection; for example, the Celtic tribes applied two different senses for this: from a religious perspective, involved travelers' should be protected by a mandate of Gods. The belief that stranger had to be lodged under care of hosts was widely present throughout Europe. At the other extreme, the political application of hospitality called the jurisprudence that one of more tribes needed to be at war with others. In this case the term worked as an agreement in which case both parts not only compromised to avoid any type of aggression but also give military assistance in times of war (Ramos y Loscertales, 1948).

For one moment, if we imagine Rome would be a magnificent centre wherein coexisted people from all part of the known world. The religious calendar represented a combination of happiness, fun and hospitality. At a beginning, even if few there were the religious celebrations, inasmuch as Empire grew further were the days of feats and laziness. Prospectively, for I century B.C 45 religious celebration comprised more than 45 days of working days. That way, Saturnalias held from 17 until 23 December in winter solstice. Slaves were temporarily freed from their duties and atmosphere of cooperation emerged characterized by gifts circulation. The Lupercalia feasts (in honor to Luperco) placed in February 15 and took just a few days emulating the founding myth of Romulus and Remo. In February 27, uttermost roman citizenship celebrated the Equirias, a feast in honor of military triumph of Empire and Mars (Sola, 2004, p. 33).

Sports and Arts were usually managed by Febo (a divinity son of Jupiter and Leto and brother of Diana). There is no consensus about the Febo's scope; even though he was originally deemed as the protector of shepherds but in forthcoming decades he will be associated to the music, arts and science. In the line of a new century, Rome positioned in a real power in the region. For that, much of their customs and traditions not only were relaxed but also changed. The passion for the work was replaced by an emulative consumption while moral and rigid ethic issues were substituted by leisure and hedonism (a tradition brought from Minor Asia) (Veblen, 1974). Roman cosmopolitan towns characterized by the ostentation, luxury and pleasure; aristocracy refused the work of earth while emphasized haunting and

fish as a form of social distinction. Elite was accustomed to organize large festivals in order for them to manage the people and reducing their unhappiness. Technological advances in combination with much greater metropolis to feed prompted Rome to expand their limits incorporating new lands and economies. As a result of this, Rome was a world plagued of contradictories and social tension; a slave would have a better position than a citizen depending upon to the owner he or she belonged. Other negative effect was associated to fragmentation, veterans of wars abroad and a rapid social upward. This like many other imbalances were focused and ruled in the political articulation of leisure. Leisure not only was used as a form to prevent fragmentation and conflict but also warranted the military expansion. That way, the legions positioned in lands with predomination of old and oils extracting these resources and expatriating them to their towns. Once transformed in elaborated goods, peripheral communities received them cloths, jewels, baths, instruments for plowing and other merchandises else which characterized the roman style of life (Robert, 1992; Veyne, 1985; Veblen, 1974; Mehesz, 2003; Friedlander, 1982; Cristóbal, 2006; Paoli, 2007). In these lines, J. Carcopino argued “*by means of them, the Empire preserved its existence, guaranteed the good order of an overpopulated capital, kept the peace among more than million men. The zenith of its greatness at the beginning of the second century coincides with the maximum magnificences of its races and its games, the performance in the theatre, the real combats of its arena, the artificial battles, the literary and musical competitions of its agones.*” (Carcopino, 1956, p.213). Anyway, how we scientifically describe the leisure form in this interesting civilization?

4. LEISURE FORM IN ANCIENT ROME

For further understanding the notion of leisure, we must trace how Greek passed it to Romans. One of the points in dispute is that Greece showed a social structure divided only in three classes while Rome has been stratified in much more strata indexed hieratically. Following this, Greek aristocracy was the only strata capable to practice leisure (so called *shkóle*), slaves and women were characterized by a lack of rights regarding patrimony, these actors plays a-*shkóle* even though they maintain their own form of resting (Jiménez Guzmán, 1986, p.24; Munné, 1999; Khatchikian, 2000). However as T. Hobbes argued in his work *Leviathan*, a person can be transformed in a slave only if he or she demonstrated bravery in the battle-fields (Hobbes, 2004).

Unlike Romans who had a more practice sense of leisure, Greeks considered leisure as a form of mind-related emancipation. This would be expressed in sports, philosophy or games. The term given to *shkóle*, in Rome was *otium* and its negation *nec-otium* (Munné, 1999, p.43), but Romans did not dedicate so much time to soul recreation inclining their practices to hedonism and corporal pleasure. Unlike Greece, this Mediterranean society was founded around certain values as negotiation

and adulation; standard roman citizen without wealthy to survive had to had a solid net of relationship and alliances (Mehesz, 2003). In many times, by interchanging some member of family, people assured a much better position. Under such a context, in Rome friendship replaced the aim of romantic love that it is known in modern times. Whether a man opted to demonstrate overtly his love for a woman, he would be ridiculed as an effeminate (Veyne, 1985; Korstanje, 2008). Given these preliminary ideas, it is necessary to examine how leisure worked.

Originally, spaces dedicated to leisure practice were inside the towns, but gradually citizens sought new sites farer. Novelty for riches was the Villa build in Tivoli, Tusculum, and Praeneste wherein they spent their summer vacation in private. Emperor like Hadrian or Trajan (from Antoninus Era) had their own villas in the outskirts of Italy peninsula. Promptly, this fashion was extended to most part of roman society and appeared: *Baias, Cumae, Ostia, Antium, Misenum and Pompeia* as popular destinations (Jiménez Guzmán, 1986, p.26). Afterwards many years of intestine wars, keeping the people in peace and away from conflicts and riots has been a sacred aim of politicians. Anyway, sometimes these kinds of festivals became in a pretext to susciting revolutions. During the regime of Domicianus, reminds Suetonius, a man confronted in public to Emperor in the Circle arguing that a Tracian fighter was stronger than a Mirmillon. In consequence, Domicianus obliged him to fight with two dogs with a poster on his neck saying “Tracian adulator, ungodly because of his words” (Suetonius, Flavius, X).

Albeit, spectacles like these were opened to uttermost part of population, status and hierarchal order were notable honoured. A box usurpation –inadvertently or not- implied an inevitable death. Hard evidence in Suetonius chronicles, points out to demonstrate as to how Antinious recurred in a strategy as if this prior to the public appearance of Octavianus in a game honoured his favour (Suetonius, Augustus, XIV). In other cases, gladiator’s fights were organized because of a military tragedy or natural disaster. After serious defeats of Augustus’s troops in Germany wherein three legions were succinctly assassinated by burgundians, Emperor celebrated games in honor to Jupiter in order for Rome to be protected in the future (Suetonius, Augustus, XXIII).

No need to say that GPS or Addresses does not exist in this time. To find a friend or a family in ancient times would be almost an impossible mission. A stranger arrived at a great urban agglomeration such as Rome or Alexandria will come across with various obstacles to find a family. In general, diffuses references about the region’s number or the name of a family were given but this provoked the foreigner took all day in searching its allocation. As a result, monuments and theatres played an important role in guiding geographically to them (Paoli, 2007:216). This and other issues merit to be investigated in the light of an epoch differently.

Daily life

Hitherto, a major step forward on this front was accomplished by Paul Veyne who in 1985 publishes his book *Histoire de la Vie Privée*. This scholar argues that one of most demanded pleasure was the banquet; initially, the diner was considered a reward because of daily hard work; in such a ritual, status and duties were left behind symbolized by the position of guests. However, in many occasion these kinds of events were accomplished between citizens of a same status. That way, inclined in armchairs aristocrats tasted a diversity of dishes elaborated in basis with fish, pig meat and fruits of all nature. Under this circumstance, table was considered a symbol of low status and honour (Veyne, 1985). On the other hand, by respect to their gastronomy, Veyne explains that bittersweet flavour was served in all dishes and foods. Whereas Romans were not accustomed to talk during first dish, they did in second ones as well as drinking abundant wine in honour of Bacchus, divinity in charge of these kinds of events. Basically, wine would be present in almost all these feasts as a form of hospitality and prestige. After being punished by her father, Emperor Augustus, Julia had been exiled to abroad with a hard restriction over her because of adultery: the lack of wine (Suetonius, Tiberius, XXXIV).

Others of more exciting events in daily life of Roman Empire were the public baths. These sites not only were affordable for all citizens without distinction of status or class, but there had not been inside a physical demarcation between rich and poor. In these splendid sites, people played some sport, enjoying of thermal springs or talking about news and gossips. Professor Veyne conducted a study that demonstrates these baths were not aimed at promoting hygiene but at the encounter with friends; a similar phenomenon we can see in modern beaches today (Veyne, 1985).

For other hand, one of practices of this civilization that modern mind find hard to imagine have been the gladiator's fights. It is notably widespread the belief that Romans were keen of watching bloody festivals wherein people had obliged to killing each others. The fact is that Romans were loath to accept bloodsheds in their colonies. Human sacrifices scattered to Roman's custom and obviously they were restricted. Killing a person no matter than they nationality was not an accepted as a practice. Even foreigners were protected of crimes during their stay in Rome by "Peregrinus Praetor". Notwithstanding, this appears not to be the case of circle wherein many people and wild animals were annually executed in favour of citizenship diversion. How we can understand this?.

The passion for circle and races (spectacles) increased insofar the empire was being extended. Although riots and public dispute were discouraged by political power, in some instances the streets stained in blood whenever fanatical of certain gladiator came across with others on opposing sides (Veyne, 1985). By the way, amphitheatres congregated an uttermost part of population coming from all boroughs. Ethimologically, the word gladiator comes from *gladius*, name assigned initially to the sword which Etruscan gave to prisoners by combating after each victory. There are archeological

evidences that date the first gladiator game in 490 B. C hosted by Valerius Maximus known by *munus gladiatorium*. Promptly, first gladiators gained acceptance and fame as well as high prestige and honour. In spite of their disposition was all health in Rome, these fighters are considered slaves but lacking of rights and inheritance. Trained and commercialized in sites where many ladies and tourists visited by nights, gladiators promptly became in a mass-attraction. However, in some instance and depending on emperor wish, Circle worked as a mechanism of social control where not only criminals or prisoners but also the enemies of Rome were executed (Suetonius, Caligula, XXVII). Public executions functioned as an explicit message to all who decide to defy the authority of Rome. To be exact, circle has been witness of how many minorities -like Christians during the regime of Nero- has been assassinated. Enemies of Empire have been obliged to combat in these arenas until death for the recreation of all Romans. Like box in sporting and public execution in United States, in Ancient Rome the Circle woke up considerable support and devotion.

For other hand, Caius Suetonius explains that during Caligula reign a new spectacle was created intended to enjoying certain privileged groups. It consisted in bringing ships from diverse colonies and ordered forming a bridge over the sea between Puzzola and Baias. This spectacle symbolized the Via Appia one of most known and large ways of the city. First day in inauguration Caligula went from one to the other part of bridge on a majestic horse once and once again (Suetonius, Caligula, XIX). Quite aside from this eccentric behaviour and after a victory, the leader at hand entered in Rome where booties were displayed together the prisoners. The Pomerium, a sacred line that symbolized the barbarian from civilized world led troops towards Capitolium. Once there diverse sacrifices were accomplished in order for survivors to expiate their fault in live (Sola, 2004, p.255). The belief that demon lie in expectance of injuring person when they had success was a belief enrooted at the core of popular wisdom. For that reason, it is not surprising to find after each victory a plenty of rituals intended to purify the commander's grace.

Following this above mentioned point, in 46 BC Caius Julius Caesar conducted a celebration in honour of his troops in memory of victories in Gaul, Egypt and Africa; for long ten days circulated gifts, money and exquisite oils as well as a banquet with 22,000 tables held. Citizens there made fun of Caesar calling him "lover of a King in Minor Asia". Under such a context, Caesar not only smiled but also to be thanked by this form of exorcises (Sola, 2004, p.257). Of course, this will not prevent his future death in hands of Brutus but the point was that humility and power coexisted in the roman customs. The success had an ambiguous nature.

By respecting to their journeys, it is premature to compare modern tourism with the miles of citizens travelling from one to other site of Empire. As Friedlander examined, communication between Rome and its provinces was fluid as well as their ways were in very good conditions. A system of roads from Foro -

splitted in five ways- crossed all Italy outbound Spain, Gaul, Africa and Germany (Friedlander, 1982). A. J. Norval brings this issue into attention since a trip from Antiochia to Constantinople –almost 747 miles) took only 6 days. The faster record was achieved by Tiberius going 320 from Tichinum located in Germany to Italy in only 6 hours (Norval, 1935). The vial infrastructure and road conditions were indeed one of the best. As a result of this, miles citizens departed in summer in search of sophisticated seaside resorts in the coasts such as Baiae, Aedepus and Canopus. Alongside Canopus towards Alexandria there were numerous hostels for trippers to be lodged. Anyway, the attention was principally given to historical ruins and divination destinations wherein aristocrats asked for their fortune; these sites were Alexandria, Efeso, Esmira, Tebas, Menfis and Rodas (Norval, 1935).

However, journeys have not been associated with leisure but professional prestige. In fact, Romans travelled because of illness or educational issues. For gaining acceptance between their patients a doctor had to have knowledge or experience as well as certain number of trips in its curriculum. Besides, people who got sick like Seneca preferred to go coast or mountain for rest in Pyrenees or Alps. Whenever a person got sick, doctors recommended a long trip aside from the urban agglomerations. Needless to say, this custom remained long time until nowadays, normative and physical distance appeared to play a prophylactic role in the Mediterranean realm. In addition, practitioners who had the choice to work in abroad had gained more prestige than others how had not that possibility. This was other pretext to travel for gaining prestige in the profession.

On the other hand, if an aristocrat liked to go shopping Delfi or Corinto were the obligated destinations. Their natural landscapes in combination with a comfortable weather attracted thousands of travellers from urban cities. For the relatives, other reason to get away from home was a funeral. Regarding the death of Germanicus, Cornelius Tacitus, a classical biographer, writes: “*a trip non-stop in a day of winter, found Agrippina in Corcyra Island, allocated in front of Cantabria. Once there, she affords to rest a couple of days to tranquilize their soul, since she was furious and in mourning. Subsumed in a profound unhappiness, she was initially welcomed by her friends and many soldiers who had served under the order of Germanicus*” (Tacitus, III, v. 1).

For this instance, in urban cities commemoration and feasts had a great affluence of public inside and beyond the boundaries of the Empire. In turn, festivals are being celebrated not only in the cities but also in provinces. Pities or Olympic games held in Greece every four years have rapidly taken presence in popular wisdom and attracted many foreigners coming from all Empire (Norval, 1935). These events had their origin in 770 B.C and celebrated under a religious perspective, congregated athletes from all civilized world who were trained in physical abilities. The winner not only had the fame but also acceptance and glory for his town. Symbolically, this ritual worked as a form of peaceful dissuasion for others

in preventing potential conflagrations (Spivey, 2004). Therefore, like in our modern times, in Ancient Rome displacements were done within known territories and seldom travellers moved away from the boundaries of civilization. These frontiers were protected for the god Terminus in whose honour celebrated the Terminalias feasts one day each year (Sola, 2004, p.257).

In a sharp contrast, if citizens had to travel, most likely, they entrusted themselves to the protection of “Lares”. These minor divinities, known as well as “vial gods” were associated to major ones: Mercury, whose function was to bring assistance to travellers by day or night. Particularly, Romans were scared to travel by the nights because they believed in Hecate. This evil spirit might suddenly attack to unprepared travellers. For that, prior to each departure, a prayer for security was arisen in Lararium –an altar prepared in honour of Mercury. Other mechanism to implore protection was the divination. As Cicero treatise shows this ritual foresees the wishes of gods as to what travellers would suffer some injuries during its excursion. (Cicero, I, v. XV, p.32-33). Other divinity who jeopardized against travellers was Pan, son of Ares or Mars well known as the lord of War-. Half human and half goat, Pan symbolized the excessive sexuality assaulting trippers without gender or age distinction in woods and remote places. People thought that Pan used to rape all travellers who dared to go through the jungles. This mythological figure remains in our time camouflaged as the classical symbolization of Lucifer. Following this, his etimological origin is dated back from the modern term Panic; in part this looked to be the sentiment this figure arouse.

The birth of a son was a reason to celebrate as well, but as per rules and procedures father gives the name to newborn baby depending the gender: females were named at eighth day while males on ninth one. An outstanding day like this was known as *lustricus dies* or in English the day of purification. Like in modern times, the father received a lease so that he thanks the gods by means of specific rituals (Suetonius, Nero, VI). Basically, in their private life sex was considered as a form of leisure as well. Anyway, Romans appeared to be not liberal as Hollywood cinema and popular wisdom assume. There were strongest taboos and sexual restriction; as long as the copulation, women are obliged to keep their brassiere as a sign of moral decoration. -at least a prostitute can wear off such a cloth. Lastly, albeit sexual election regarding a same or different gender was not prohibited, the passivity in a sexual relation were taken as a gesture of weakness and also rejected by men (Veyne, 1985).

5. CONCLUSION

Like in Greece, roman mythology encouraged the conflict confronting sons against their fathers. The glory, fame and power were values that a child learned from the cradle. In the lapse of few decades, Rome transformed in a military and economic power. The abundance of resources in combination with a mass of slaves provided a solid basis for expansion. It is estimated that for II century B.C Rome had 53 provinces or colonies under its authority. The boundaries of the Empire, not only marked the limits of approach but also the civilization. By the way, the term imperium has been applied in an ambivalent meaning. For one hand, it referred to the economical bondage between two towns with their own sovereignty. For the other, imperium worked as a formula applied in case of domination with regards to specific territory criterion. In recognition to this, legitimacy was a notion coined with two different component: *trade and civilization* (Kaerst, 1929; Grimal, 2002).

Practices of leisure had shaped a commercial structure whose ends not only were linked to entertainment of citizenship but also the maintenance of

domination and Romanization. The gladiator's fight symbolized the superiority of a folk which boasted to monopolize all technology advances. But sometimes, public games turned in bloody political scenarios wherein demagogy and resistance converged. Among pleasures more practiced -that we have to mention- are the baths, races, military parade, the circles and banquets (Veyne, 1985).

A political tendency in aristocracy to manage festivals or build splendid architectonic constructions to support their own administration. The leisure worked as a mechanism capable to create cohesion and prevent social disruption at the core of roman society. Besides, the idea to situate Rome symbolically not only at the head of an administrative capitol but also as a most popular attraction for uncivilized world was one of the points emulated in leisure spaces. After further examination, it is important to mention that these findings are only circumscribed to a specific time and place as it had been said on our introductory section and cannot be projected in other scenarios or frames.

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