SUMMARY

Title of Doctoral Dissertation:

Edicta unerum, libelli gladiatorum and the Popularity of spectacula gladiatorii muneris. Advertising and Promotion of Gladiatorial Spectacles in the Period of Early Empire

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The main purpose of doctoral dissertation of the abovementioned title are studies on the phenomenon, nature and functioning of advertising and promotion of the ancient gladiatorial spectacles, *munera*, on the territories of the Early Roman Empire. The assumption, generally accepted by scholars working on antiquity, that gladiatorial fights were in an evident manner so popular and widespread in all the larger centres of the Empire that there was no need to announce and advertise them, is called into question. Re-examination of ancient written sources and archaeological material on gladiators, amphitheatres and the shows from the site of Pompeii, proves that the organisation of *ludi* –including the researched *munera* as part of *ludi* – required not only an extensive financial means of *editores* but also a far-reaching involvement of specialists at every step of the logistic planning of gladiatorial combats. The doctoral dissertation confirms that the process of implementation and economically efficient organisation of the games, as part of the official state celebrations or as privately and individually offered *munera*, required constant advertising and promoting of gladiatorial contests throughout the entire period of their preparations but also at the time of an already ongoing rivalry at the arena. Advertising and promotion – manifested, amongst other things, by announcements written on the building walls (*edicta munerum*), informative handouts (*libelli*), or stalls at the markets placed next to amphitheatres where one could purchase ceramics with the images of fighting gladiators – were aimed at persuading to partake in the spectacles, announcing their originality and intensifying the sense of the games' popularity. Promises given to the potential viewers of gladiatorial games were unambiguously directed at gaining their approval and at bonding them emotionally with gladiators from a given *ludus*. Both intentionality as well as consistency in presenting the upcoming *munera gladiatoria* as a type of a brand, a product guaranteeing a high quality and a lot of entertainment, emotions and satisfaction, suggests that the organisers of gladiatorial shows were oriented to create a

conviction about the necessity to come to the announced spectacle. The purpose of this work is by no means to state that the popularity of fighting at the area resulted solely from the intensity of advertising and promotion, but that these phenomena were rather inseparable and undoubtedly decisive elements in the organisation of *munera*. They were especially important as they provided a continuous transmission of information on the upcoming games for those of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire who – coming from smaller centres – had to travel considerable distances in order to participate in the spectacles as audience. Epigraphic evidence examined in the dissertation (*edicta*, *acclamationes* and *libelli*) suggests that apart from the largest and the most obvious *munera* (obvious through the associations with religious holidays taking place annually or the funding of games by the emperor), the vast majority of combats at the arena had to occur locally, on a smaller scale and without participation of the most influential Roman politicians or the best gladiators. The niche and regional shows used the elements of advertising and promotion most frequently, if only to earn a permanent audience owing to which they gained at least a partial reimbursement for putting up gladiators to fight at the arena. Therefore, the dissertation focuses primarily on the examples from gladiatorial shows from centres smaller than Rome and on marketing and persuasive mechanisms which were conductive to an effective activation of the spectacles' supporters, as well as on shaping *munera gladiatoria* as a brand that represented private individuals who organised the game at the arena.

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