

Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*: Foucauldian Power Dynamics, the Clash of Discourses, and the Unattainability of a Dream

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Abstract: *Drawing upon the Foucauldian paradigms of power, gaze, discourse, and identity delineated in Discipline and Punish (Foucault 1975), this article analyzes Gladiator (Dir. Scott 2000). It probes the interplay of dominion and dialectics within the Roman Empire's narrative framework, alongside an examination of the protagonist's identity as a reflection of the prevailing power dynamics. This aim is achieved through the dissection of cinematographic elements such as gaze, spatiality, and mise-en-scène. In addition to traditional Foucauldian perspectives, the study integrates insights from Maniglier and Zabunyan (2018), Cárdenas (2017), Hamenstädt (2019), and Gibson (2021), offering a contemporary lens for examining Scott's portrayal of complex power structures. The innovation of this research lies in analyzing Scott's portrayal of a historically nebulous epoch, which deftly unveils the contention of Imperial and Republican discourses, whilst simultaneously muting the more sordid aspects of Rome's colonial exploits. The denouement posits the film not merely as a tale of vengeance but as an allegorical chronicle of contemporary American society. Maximus emerges as the standard-bearer for the Roman/American dream's resurgence, yet the film's tragic resolution signifies the elusive nature of this ideal; a unified Rome materializes only when it is bereft of its great heroes.*

Keywords: *discourse; gaze; identity; power; Scott's Gladiator (2000);*