

iugera

a measure of land

ius fetiale

sacred rules and regulations to do with declaring war and making treaties

lapilli

small, round fragments of lava ejected from a volcano during an eruption

lararium

a small shrine in a private home where the Lares were worshipped

laticlave

purple stripe on the tunic of a Roman senator

legati legionis

commanders of a legion and auxilia, normally of praetorian rank, in the first centuries AD

legatu propraetore

governor (from the time of Augustus) of a province where there was more than one legion, sometimes appointed to carry out special work special work for the emperor

lex (leges)

law(s)

libertini

freedman (former slaves)

lictor

one of the attendants of magistrates with imperium, carried the fasces (symbols of the magistrates' power)

Ludi Iuvenales

Youth Games,  
sometimes referred to  
as the Juvenalia

magister equitum

master of the horse;  
assistant to the dictator

maiestas

treason

maius imperium

imperium greater than  
all others

maniple

a tactical unit of a  
legion

manus

complete disciplinary  
control

mensa ponderaria

weighing table

mithraea

shrines dedicated to  
the worship of Mithras

mos maiorum

ancestral custom

muli Mariani

Marius' mules - soldiers from  
the time of Marius' military  
reforms who carried all their  
needs (weapons, food,  
entrenching tools)

municipia

communities that had received partial Roman citizenship

natatio

swimming

necropoleis

literally, 'cities of the dead' - cemeteries containing streets lined with tombs

nefastus

literally, 'forbidden' - describing days in the calendar on which certain types of public business could not be carried out

nomen

clan name

novus homo

literally, 'new man' - the first in a family to reach the consulship

optimates

'best man' - a term coming into use after the time of the Gracchi and referring to the majority of the members of the senatorial oligarchy, who wished to maintain the status quo whereby that body controlled the Roman state

optimo iure

full Roman citizenship, with private and public rights

palaestra

an open courtyard surrounded with porticoes and used as a training field

pater patriae

father of the country