

# The RAG

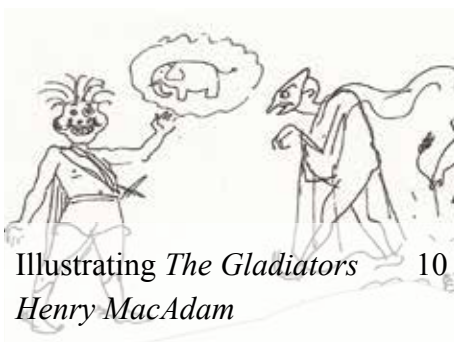
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## The Batavia's Roman Cameo Returns *Guy de la Bédoyère*



The Gemma Constantina on display in Fremantle in 2017.

If you visited the ‘Travellers and Traders’ exhibition at the WA Maritime Museum, Fremantle, you would have had the pleasure of seeing a most remarkable Roman artefact.

There’s nothing more interesting than when entirely separate strands of history unexpectedly combine. The Gemma Constantina is a case in point. A huge Roman cameo, dated to about AD 312, has managed to find its way down to modern times virtually undamaged. The gem depicts Constantine I (307–337) with his family in a chariot and underneath a flying Victory, apparently at the time he defeated his rival Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312. That was when, incidentally, Constantine dissolved the Praetorian Guard permanently.

No-one knows who commissioned the cameo, but at 180 x 265 mm it is such a showcase item it was surely intended for the imperial court. Ostentatious though it is, the cameo is not actually of the highest quality in an artistic sense. One only has to look closely at the awkward execution of the centaurs’ arms to see that. How it found its way to northwestern Europe by the early 1600s one can only guess but in 1628 it was in the possession of an Amsterdam-based jeweler called Gaspar Boudaen.

Boudaen gave the cameo to Francisco Pelsaert, VOC (Dutch East India Company) commander of the ill-fated Batavia, to take on to India to sell at the Mogul court. He had added a gold border encrusted with



Beacon Island in the Abrolhos Group. The cameo was stored here during the mutiny. The island saw the majority of the most barbaric murders ordered by Cornelisz. Photographed by the author during a visit to the islands in 2013. The crayfishing village has been documented and removed.

jewels to make it even more appealing. So it was packed into the ship along with other valuables and coins. That was how it ended up on what is now known as Beacon Island in the Abrolhos Group off the coast near where Geraldton is now: during the ghastly massacres of the *Batavia* shipwreck mutiny in 1629. Pelsaert had gone to Batavia for help, returning a few months later to discover that his under-merchant Jeronimus Cornelisz had instituted an extraordinary regime of systematic brutality and murder to wipe out most of the survivors. His intention, it seems, was to reduce the living to a suitable number of cutthroats who would help him seize a rescue ship and sail the high seas as pirates.

The mutiny collapsed when Pelsaert and the rescue ship, *Sardam* (Zaandam), arrived. Trials and executions followed, as did recovery of as much of the *Batavia*'s treasure as possible. That included the *Gemma Constantina*. It never was sold in India, despite the efforts made to find a buyer. By the mid-1650s it was back in Holland and after passing through other owners in 1823 the cameo ended up in the 'Penningkabinet', the Numismatics Museum, in Leiden where it remained until being transferred to the National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden).

Until 2017 that is. The cameo returned to Australia for the first time since the *Batavia* mutiny and was displayed at the Fremantle Maritime Museum until April 23 where I saw it for the first time. It was a remarkable moment to see the Roman world meet the *Batavia*, two strands of history that fascinate me. On one hand they have nothing to do with each other. On the other they are inextricably linked through this single, and remarkable, survival from antiquity, an inanimate witness to one of the most horrific and remarkable maritime stories of all time. I'm personally delighted to think that the one and only time I've seen it was in Western Australia, not far from the remains of that remarkable ship which once brought it here. I must admit I didn't know it was in Fremantle, and had Norah Cooper not told me and taken me down there in late March 2017 I'd have missed it. For me it takes the *Batavia* story round a full circle.

You can read more about the *Gemma Constantina* on the WAMuseum website: <http://museum.wa.gov.au/explore/articles/tale-gemma-constantiniana>. Those of you who missed the exhibition may be interested in the 56 page souvenir guide *Travellers & Traders in the Indian Ocean World* available through the WAMuseum shop.

## 217 The Ignominious End of a Tyrant

*Guy de la Bédoyère*



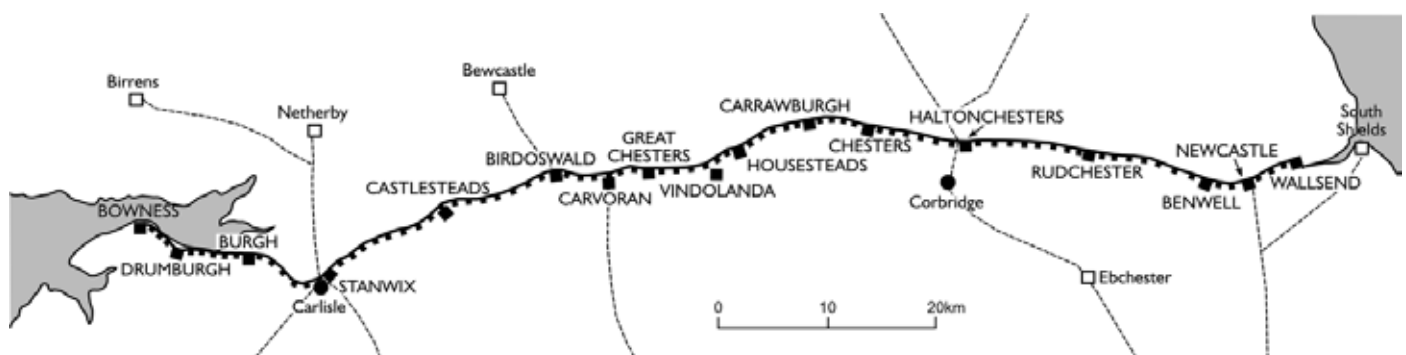
Bust of Caracalla. Farnese Collection, Archaeological Museum of Naples.  
Photo: Norah Cooper.

2017 is a date from which you can remove the '0' and the result is 217. In that year the emperor Caracalla, nicknamed after a Gallic tunic he preferred wearing, was murdered. It was little more than he deserved. His reign, which had only lasted six years, had begun when his father, Septimius Severus, expired at York in northern Britain while on campaign. Severus had been accompanied there by his wife Julia Domna and his sons Caracalla and Geta. The intention had been to toughen up the young men and get them away from the fleshpots in Rome. The campaign, which began in 208 forced its way into Caledonia (Scotland) and was an enormous logistical operation. The fort of Arbeia (South Shields),

an outpost of Hadrian's Wall (it wasn't actually on the Wall), lies on the south side of the Tyne Estuary. It was substantially expanded to accommodate numerous extra granaries to provide stores for Severus's army. Stamped lead seals from supply bags prove that they were there for the Severan campaign.

The war in northern Britain was something of a fiasco. The Caledonian and other tribes lurked in swamps and woods, ambushing the hapless Roman troops who had marched their way into a nightmare. In 211 Severus died, worn out by the wars that had brought him the Empire in 193 and the wars he had fought to keep him there. For much of the British campaign he had been carried round in a litter. Severus had already made Caracalla and Geta joint rulers with him so there was no question about the accession, except that Caracalla had no intention of ruling with his brother and had been planning to kill him for years. He had also been planning to kill his father and in 210 had even been about to strike him with his sword when his companions held him back.

On his deathbed Severus exhorted his sons to 'be harmonious, enrich the soldiers and scorn everyone else'.



Hadrian's Wall. Note the location of South Shields to the east of the easternmost extent of the wall (the aptly named Wallsend). Image: Mike Bishop, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/thearmaturapress>.





West Gate (reconstructed) of the fort at South Shields, supply base for the Severan campaign in Britain.

It was an optimistic way to exit. Caracalla, whose official name was actually Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, immediately abandoned the conquests in the north and then embarked on a purge of anyone on the imperial staff whose loyalty he suspected. It's possible this massacre even took place in York because in 2004 thirty decapitated burials of males of the right age and date were found there.

For the moment Caracalla contented himself with continual rows with his brother, Geta being all too aware of his intentions, but before long Caracalla did what he had planned all along. Both men had been maneuvering around each other for some time. Caracalla came up with a plan: he persuaded his mother to summon them both but made sure he had his stooges in position. Caracalla's centurions rushed Geta when he arrived. He flung himself onto his mother where he was cut to pieces on her lap. Julia Domna had no choice but to accept what had happened.



Silver denarius of Caracalla, showing his brutal features.

Caracalla was triumphant, telling his soldiers he was the one who could now do them favours. He freed criminals, made all free inhabitants of the Empire into citizens (in fact so he could raise more taxes), and gave money to people who flattered him, but had anyone associated with Geta murdered. One claimed figure for the purge was twenty thousand. Just to make sure, he banned Geta's birthday being observed, had any inscriptions with Geta's name defaced, and had Geta's coins melted down.

He had already turned into that remarkable phenomenon: the ruler who killed because he could. Caracalla, like Caligula and Nero, was entirely unable to cope with the absolute power he had. It was just the same in the arena where vast numbers of animals and gladiators died to sate his bloodlust. 'No-one in the world', he announced one day, 'should have money except me, and I want to give it to the soldiers'.



Arch of the Moneylenders in Rome. Relief showing Septimius Severus and Julia Domna. The blank space to the right is where a carving of Geta was hacked off on Caracalla's orders. Julia Domna's arm has had to be (badly) recarved.



Caracalla on the Arch of the Moneylenders, Rome. He is on his own because the figures beside him were later deemed undesirable and were removed.

Caracalla also believed he had a monopoly on being right but in the general context of his life that is hardly surprising. Consequently he ignored advisers. He fought various wars, touring provinces as he did, killing and indulging himself as he went. His behaviour was entirely arbitrary. He arrived in the province of Gallia Narbonensis and promptly had the governor killed. Everyone was terrified but he carried on brutalizing everyone, including those who nursed him when he fell ill. He seems to have murdered the governor of northern Britain, Gaius Julius Marcus, because the governor's name was scrubbed out of almost every inscription erected to record a military building program. One of his orders was that any man who urinated in a place where there were statues or busts of the emperors should be executed. That was strangely prescient for Caracalla (see below). He was especially abusive to the people of Alexandria.

Unfortunately for Caracalla the prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Macrinus, had heard of a prophecy that he was destined to become emperor. Macrinus heard about this before the story reached Caracalla. That bought him valuable time. Knowing he would certainly be killed the moment Caracalla got to hear about it, Macrinus realized he would have to act first and fast. He persuaded two Praetorian tribunes and a veteran to join him. In early April 217 Caracalla made an enormous mistake. He dismounted and raised his tunic to relieve himself. While distracted thus he was off his guard. It was the moment Nemesianus, Apollinaris and Martialis had been waiting for. It nearly went hideously wrong. Martialis lost his nerve and was killed by one of Caracalla's Scythian bodyguards, but then the other two dived in and murdered Caracalla.

There's an old Latin saying *de mortuis nihil nisi bonum*, 'of the dead nothing unless good [is to be said]',



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i.e. say nothing of the dead unless it's good. In Caracalla's case there is nothing you could say about him that was or is good. His disastrous five years as emperor was the beginning of a chaotic century in which one emperor after another was murdered in a plot of some sort. Mostly thugs or hapless youths their reigns flitted in and out of one another, leaving the Empire ever more unstable.

That was eighteen centuries ago. For us in 2017 we face a different type of world too. But just as it was for the Romans it will be a century or more before anyone will know just what the next decades had in store for us.

### Where can you see anything to do with Caracalla?

The fort at South Shields is open to the public (free). It's in the outskirts of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and makes a welcome diversion from the forts of Hadrian's Wall. The foundations of the granaries are visible, but the most impressive parts are the reconstructed west gate of the fort, a barrack block, and a late Roman commandant's house (long after Caracalla).

*All images unless otherwise stated are those of Guy de la Bédoyère.*

*Editor's note: You can read about the Baths of Caracalla in RAG Volume 5 Issue 2 in an article by Sandra Ottley, and the sculptures from that complex in the next article of this volume (Norah Cooper, Magnificent Marble Sculptures from the Baths of Caracalla, RAG Volume 12 Issue 1).*



The Baths of Caracalla in Rome. AD 211-16. Now a vast ruin with almost all its marble veneers removed. The walls and vaults required 210,000 cubic metres of concrete and millions of bricks. There were 252 columns, sixteen of which weighed over 50 tons each. Photograph: Guy de la Bédoyère.

## Magnificent Marble Sculptures from the Baths of Caracalla

### Norah Cooper

In 2012, Roger and I and our two (RAG) friends, Yvonne and Peter Broome, visited Rome and Naples. It was a serendipitous trip, because having just seen the Baths of Caracalla, we then saw, in the Archaeological Museum in Naples, two of the wonderful sculptures which had ornamented the Baths. And, not long before the trip I had attended Professor John Melville-Jones's lectures on the Art and Architecture of Ancient Greece and Rome in which he described these marvels of the ancient world.

The Archaeological Museum in Naples is most famous for the collection of mosaics, frescoes, bronzes and marble statues from nearby Herculaneum and Pompeii. But it is a treasure trove of other beautiful objects, among them are two magnificent sculptures which were originally in the Baths of Caracalla and became known as the *Farnese Marbles* (so called because they were collected by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (later Pope Paul III)).

The imposing remains of the Baths of Caracalla (see *RAG Newsletter Vol 5 Issue 2*) lie 500 m SE of the eastern end of the Circus Maximus. The *thermae* were built during the reigns of both Septimius Severus and his son Caracalla and after about 6 years of construction were opened before Caracalla's death in AD 217. They covered 13 hectares with buildings 228 m long, 116 m wide and 38.5 m high. The *thermae* were ornamented in magnificent style with the walls lined with marble and stucco and the floors covered in mosaics, with tesserae of glass, coloured marbles, porphyry and granites from around the empire. There were enormous sculptures in the baths and among these were those now known as the Farnese Bull and the Farnese Hercules.

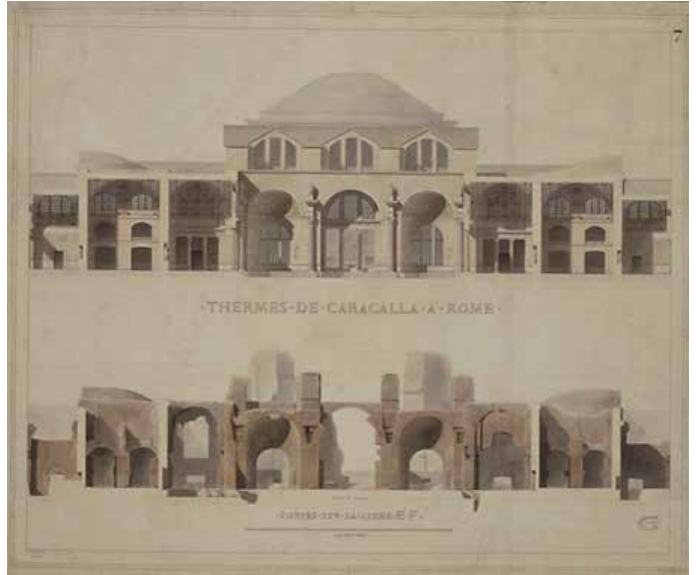
In Renaissance Rome, Pope Paul III Farnese issued an edict which allowed his family to excavate sculptures to decorate his Palace (Palazzo Farnese, today the French Embassy), and in 1546 the Farnese Bull was discovered in the Gymnasium at the Baths of Caracalla. In the following year, the Hercules was found in the Frigidarium. In 1731, Elizabeth



The Farnese Bull marble group at the Naples Archaeological Museum.







Left: Diagram showing the reconstructed elements of the Farnese Bull group. Source: Archaeological Museum of Naples.

Above: Elevation of the Baths of Caracalla. Source: Guillaume-Abel Blouet 1825 Dessin scolaire d'architecture.

Farnese married Philip V of Spain and her son became Charles of Bourbon, King of Naples in 1734. The collection was transferred to Naples in 1788. Since 1826 it has been in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples.

The Farnese Bull is one of the most celebrated colossal marble sculptural groups of the Classical era and the largest to survive from Antiquity. The original was the work of the 2nd Century BC artists Apollonius of Tralles and his brother Tauriscus of Rhodes and said by Pliny to have been created from one block of marble:

*...with Dirce, the Bull, and the halter, all sculptured from a single block of marble, the work of Apollonius and Tauriscus, and brought to Rome from Rhodes.* (Plin. Nat. Hist.: 36.5) (trans. John Bostock, London. Taylor and Francis, 1855. Source: perseus.tufts.edu).

It is not agreed whether the sculpture from the Baths of Caracalla is the original Greek or a later Roman copy. Pliny states the statue was brought to Rome from Rhodes by Asinius Pollio, a politician who lived between the Roman Republic and the Principate of Augustus. However, the Farnese Bull may be a 3rd century Roman copy of the original made specifically for the *thermae*.

The sculptural group represents the Greek myth of the punishment of Dirce, wife of Lykos, King of Thebes. The beautiful Antiope was a prisoner of Lykos and enslaved by Dirce who was jealous of Antiope's beauty. Antiope had twin sons with Zeus, Amphion and Zethus and immediately after their birth they were abandoned on the mountain-side by their uncle Lykos. One day, the shackles which held Antiope prisoner miraculously fell off and Antiope took revenge. She found her twin sons and persuaded them to kill Lykos and then they tied Dirce to the horns of a wild bull which dragged her over rocks, tearing her body apart. The twins then reigned in Thebes.



Left: the Antalya Müzesi Hercules, photo by Ingo Mehling, source Wikimediacommons.



This sculpture was badly damaged when rediscovered at the *thermae* and has undergone reconstruction and repair since the 16th century (see diagram). The child and the dog in the forefront may have been later additions.

The marble statue of Hercules is a copy by the Athenian sculptor Glykôn (3rd century) reproduced from the original 4th century BC 'Weary Hercules', a colossal bronze by Lysippos. This enlarged copy (there are smaller, similar versions throughout the Roman world such as the pictured Antalya Turkey Hercules), was made for the Baths of Caracalla in AD 216. The sculpture has been restored over many centuries. It portrays Hercules resting, with the pelt of the Nemean Lion draped over his club (the first Labour of Hercules was slaying the Nemean Lion). Behind his back, he holds the stolen apple of the Hesperides (the eleventh Labour of Hercules).

Today the Baths of Caracalla appear as immense, bare, almost ugly brick vaults and walls, but after seeing these two beautiful sculptures at the Naples Archaeological Museum, the beauty of the original Baths of Caracalla can be envisioned.

*Many thanks to the good samaritans who wish to remain unnamed for their corrections and improvements to this article. Images unless otherwise stated are those of Norah Cooper.*



Above and right: The Weary Hercules at the Naples Archaeological Museum.

## Illustrating *The Gladiators* Edith Simon's Lost Sketches for Arthur Koestler's Spartacus Novel *Henry MacAdam*

*Prof. Henry MacAdam – an old friend with whom I conducted fieldwork in Jordan in the 1980s, has for many years been researching the various novels about the Spartacus Revolt (see RAG Volume 10, Issue 2), their authors, and the subsequent film with Kirk Douglas (based on the Howard Fast novel). He has recently found the sole copy of the screenplay of the version intended to be made in Hollywood of the alternative version based on Arthur Koestler's novel, The Gladiators. Given the current revived interest in 'Sword and Sandal' movies, perhaps it may finally be made.*

*Here – in the first publication of the rediscovery, and the first of two papers for RAG – he shares news of the original German text of The Gladiators, and a sheaf of sketches done at the time by the artist (and translator of the book). - DLK.*

During the years (1936-38) that she translated Arthur Koestler's *The Gladiators* from the original German into English, artist and writer Edith Simon created a collection of sketches based on the characters in that novel. They were among Koestler's personal papers (lost during WWII) found in a Moscow archive in 2016. A selection of these is published here for the first time. Koestler made no mention of sketches in any of his published comments on this novel, nor did Simon in any of her publications. But in a letter to her dated 29 August 1939 (now in an archive of Simon's personal papers at the National Library of Scotland) Koestler thanked her for sending "the lovely drawings" (*die schönen Bilderschen*), which must refer to those discussed below. From that small cache of correspondence we learn a bit about their collaboration during the translation process.

By the time that Simon began (1917-2003), she was already an artist of great promise at only age 21. Her German-Jewish family had left Berlin in 1932, just prior to the elections that gave the Nazi Party a plurality in the Reichstag. A year after meeting Koestler (1905-1983), a Hungarian-Austrian journalist, she published an illustrated children's book in London (*Somersaults and Strange Company*, 1937). Her agreement with Koestler was to translate into English his novel about the Spartacus Revolt entitled *Der Sklavenkrieg* (*The Slave War*). He had begun researching and writing it shortly after joining the German Communist Party, but did not complete it until after he resigned in 1938. Since it's unlikely that Koestler or his publisher, Jonathan Cape Ltd., *commissioned* drawings, we may infer that Simon created them just to take breaks during the task of translating the 503 page typescript.

Presumably she gave them to Koestler as a "gift" when she returned the German typescript to him in the summer of 1939, as the letter to her from him seems to indicate. Either she didn't mention them to anyone in her family, or they did not remember that she had done so. Edith's younger sister Inge Simon Goodwin (1923-2014), who was in daily contact with Simon during the translation, never alluded to them in correspondence with me (between 2006 and 2012). A month after WWII began Koestler's Paris flat was raided by the Deuxième Bureau and his private papers were confiscated, including the German typescript of *Der Sklavenkrieg* and Simon's sketches. They were later transferred to Berlin by the Gestapo, and then on to Moscow at the end of the war by the Soviet KGB. Koestler believed until his death they were irretrievably lost. A Russian catalogue of those papers was seen by his biographer Michael Scammell during a research trip to Moscow in 1994, and he later reported on that discovery in the Koestler biography published in 2009.

Enter German graduate student Matthias Wessel, at work on his doctoral dissertation at Kassel University six years later. His research centered on the three novels Koestler published during his years of exile from Germany, the earliest of which was *The Gladiators*. After contacting Scammell in 2015, Wessel scheduled a visit to the Koestler Archive in Moscow during March 2016. He discovered six pages of sketches inserted directly under the top cover of the German manuscript; all but the first page (three individuals in modern dress) depict characters in *The Gladiators*. There are 25 individuals and two animals represented on those five pages, only one of which is female. Most are identifiable. There is no doubt that all were rendered by Simon, whose trade-mark first initial "E" appears in the lower right-hand corner of sketches on all but one of those five pages. Only one sketch is *certainly* a representation of the main character, Spartacus, as Koestler depicted him in the novel (figure 1).



Of great interest is the fact that Spartacus as drawn by Simon is *facing away*, the only individual among the 25 figures to be shown that way. It is not a flattering depiction of the novel’s main character, but perhaps speaks to Koestler’s portrayal of a man who never fully steps into full view of the reader. Indeed, Koestler offers only a cursory physical description of Spartacus beyond the trademark *fur-skin*, in contrast to (e.g.) the Gallic gladiator and co-leader Crixus, whose “sad eyes and seal’s head” are continually-invoked distinguishing features of his physical appearance, or Marcus Crassus the “fat banker” and military commander who had to cope with a pronounced hearing impairment (used to great advantage in negotiations). A decade later (1946) George Orwell criticized Koestler’s novel for presenting a revolutionary leader who was less than three-dimensional and not compelling, a man unsure of his central role in the slave insurrection (reprinted in Murray Sperber [ed], *Critical Essays* [1977] 15-16):

*[Spartacus] is driven onwards by some obscure force which he does not understand ... If [he] is the prototype of the modern revolutionary — and obviously he is intended as that — he should have gone astray because of the impossibility of combining power with righteousness. As it is, he is an almost passive figure, acted upon rather than acting, and at times not convincing.*

It would seem that Orwell never consulted the ancient sources on which Koestler based his shadowy portrait. Simon’s sketch simply mirrors Koestler’s word portrait in *The Gladiators*: an ambiguous revolutionary figure, a mature male who perpetually wears a “shaggy fur-skin” as a visible symbol of his rustic, tribal



Figure 1. Mann mit dem Fell (Man with a Fur-Skin) is how Koestler visualized the Thracian gladiator/ slave leader Spartacus.

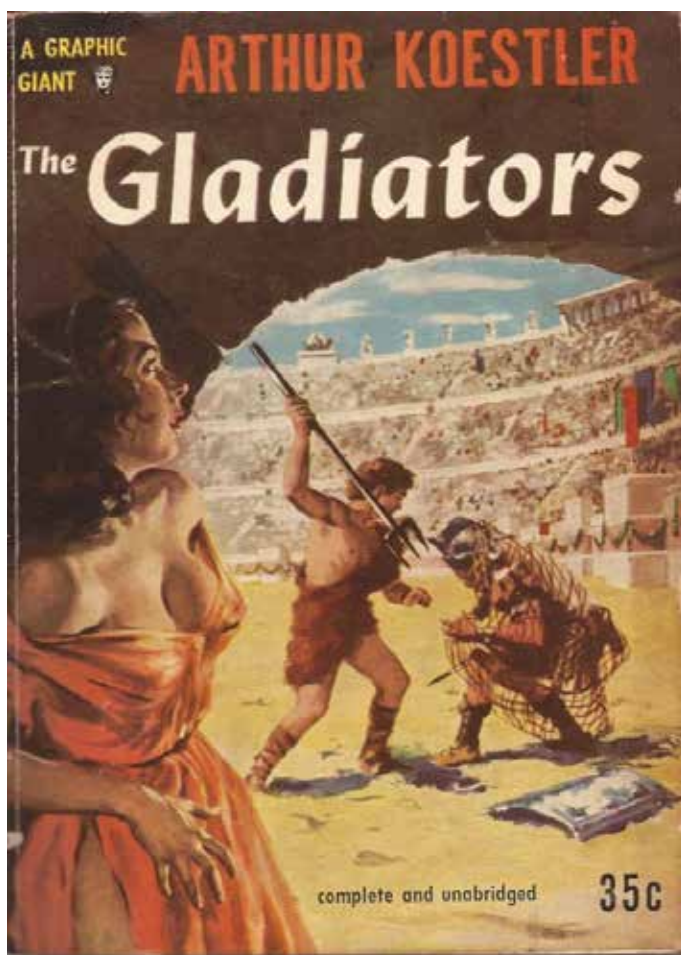


Figure 2. Staff Artist Saul Levine’s Covers for the Bantam Giant Edition of *The Gladiators* (1954 & 1956)



Figure 3. The Essene instructs Spartacus? about primitive communism. (Edith Simon's first initial "E" is in the lower right corner.)

(i.e. *proletarian*) roots in Thrace. That is *exactly* the Spartacus portrayed on the front and back cover of a paperback edition of *The Gladiators* published in the USA in the mid-1950s (fig. 2).

Another Simon sketch that *may* depict Spartacus is a forward-facing, semi-nude figure conversing with an older person on the banks of a river (or at the edge of a lake). If it is Spartacus, we can identify him only by his proximity to the bald, unnamed Essene philosopher from whom he learns the doctrine of primitive communism ("what is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine") favored by his Judaeian religious sect. Koestler completed the novel almost a decade before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at

the remote site of Qumran, then (1947) in Trans-Jordan. It would be another eight years before Qumran and the Scrolls were brought to the attention of the general public (Edmund Wilson's *The Scrolls from the Dead Sea* [NY, OUP, 1955; London, W.H. Allen, 1955]). Edith Simon's sketch is perhaps the first representation of an Essene based on a fictional account (fig. 3).

By contrast there is no doubt which of the sketches depict the gloomy Gallic co-leader Crixus, and Spartacus' ultimate nemesis, the fat banker/general Crassus (figs 4-5).

Simon appears to have enjoyed sketching groups of figures (two or three in an identifiable scene) as well as individuals. One of the more striking groups of three is the trio of major stock characters in an *atellana*-type farce that Koestler's creative mind made the central feature of Book 2 Chapter 2 of *The Gladiators*. We are invited (as readers) to attend a stage performance of a play he concocted as a vehicle for highlighting the social and economic disparities of the Late Republic: the expansion of Roman dominions, the effect of mass slavery on the peasantry, and the uncertainty of the protracted Slave War within the Italian peninsula. It is entitled *Bucco the Peasant* and runs to a half-dozen pages in the novel, complete with stage directions and dialogue.

*Bucco* is the hapless, helpless, rustic buffoon, a farmer who served his *patria* in the Mithradatic Wars and returned to find his land confiscated and his family sold into serfdom by the ruthless local landowner *Dossena*. Bucco's friend *Maccus*, a turnip-nibbling dimwit and gluttonous drunk, who was once a free farm laborer, is now reduced to slavery on Bucco's former property. The tale unfolds as Bucco travels to Rome, hoping at least to become a beneficiary of the grain dole. Even that attempt at survival fails, and in despair he opts "to join the bandits on Vesuvius" as a response to his failed fortunes and the indifference of his fractured society (fig. 6).



Figure 4. Simon's rendering of Crixus, whose break with Spartacus' weakens the slave revolt.



Figure 5. Marcus Licinius Crassus (seated, and hard of hearing) and an *aide de camp*? in attendance.



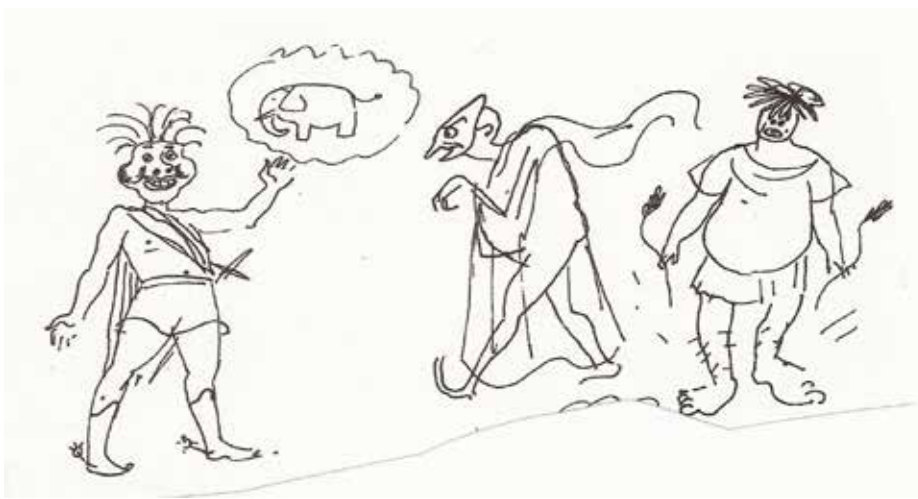


Figure 6. *Bucco* the Peasant (left) remembers the elephants he slayed in battle for Rome; *Dossena* the Avaricious Land-owner (center) who foreclosed on Bucco's farm; and *Maccus* the Gluttonous Buffoon, now a field slave. All wear the standard masks associated with these stock characters. Edith Simon must have researched Roman stage plays for representations of *atellana* artwork.



Figure 7. Simon's sketch of an unnamed and unidentified female. She may represent a blending of the half-dozen female characters (named and unnamed) in the novel. Simon's decision to include her, but to ignore some of the major figures (e.g. Spartacus' wife, or the "matron of Nola") is far from clear.

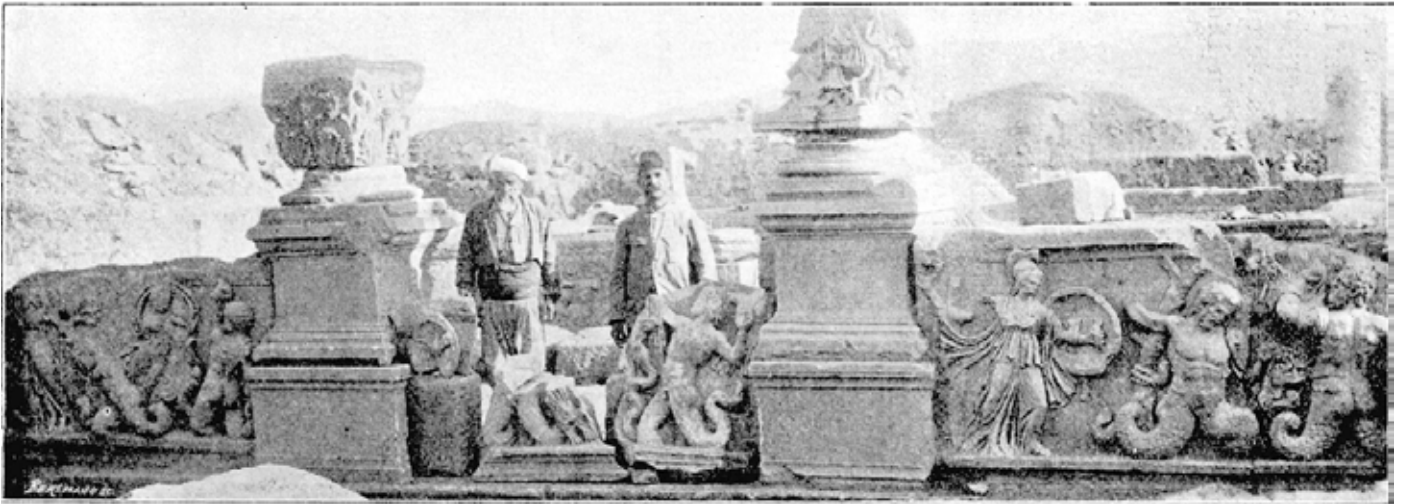
Among the 25 sketches rendered by Simon only one is female, a robust and (perhaps) middle-aged woman wearing nondescript clothing, right hand on her hip, and left hand gripping an indeterminate object. She is drawn within the same wavy-line "imagination bubble" device that surrounds the only two animal figures (an elephant and a lion) among the human figures. She may be connected in some fashion to the aged Essene, but that is far from certain and such a relationship is nowhere mentioned in the novel. She certainly does not represent Simon, who was a slight lass of just 22 when she completed the sketches and sent them to Koestler (fig. 7).

As bizarre as it now seems to consider it, given the vicissitudes they underwent during WWII, the manuscript as well as the sketches would no doubt have been discarded had they remained in the UK. In the event, with the apparent loss of the sole original German typescript, all subsequent translations into other languages have had to be made from the English translation; a very unsatisfactory method. The Jonathan Cape Archives, now on file at Reading University, contain almost nothing earlier than the 1960s because of ill-considered and arbitrary discarding. Simon did not save a carbon copy of her own typescript translation, so we may guess that the German original, and her sketches, might have been thrown away when she married and moved to Edinburgh in 1947. From the 1950s through the early 1970s Simon's career centered on the writing of historical fiction, and from the mid-1970s until her death it shifted back to art and sculpture. Apparently she forgot the sketches she created for Koestler, and he was certain that they, and the only typescript copy of *Der Sklavenkrieg*, had become the victims of WWII.

Thanks to their preservation in the former KGB archive, and the efforts of Wessel and Scammell, they survived. Koestler's legacy has been twice lucky within a single year: Wessel accidentally found the German original manuscript of *Darkness at Noon*, Koestler's most famous novel, in the Zurich Central Library in the summer of 2015. That is now to be published in German and, as the original translation can now be seen as of poor quality, there will also be a new English translation, in 2018. Koestler's status as a writer of *German* fiction can now be appropriately evaluated.

*NB: My thanks to Matthias Wessel and Michael Scammell, who together brought to light (through scanning) not only Edith Simon's sketches but the entire German typescript of Koestler's Der Sklavenkrieg (which will be published, with a new English translation, in 2018). The sketches, and the cache of Koestler/Simon correspondence at the National Library of Scotland, are the intellectual property of Simon's daughter Antonia Reeve (Edinburgh) via the Edith Simon Trust. Antonia Reeve has kindly granted permission for their publication by me.*

## Aphrodisias: an Ancient Roman City in Turkey. Part I. *Michael Birrell*



The 1904 investigations at Aphrodisias. Photo: Berthaud, Paris. Source: Collignon 1904 'Note sur les fouilles exécutées à Aphrodisias par M. Paul Gaudin'.

The ancient city of Aphrodisias, in modern day Turkey, as the name suggests was dedicated to the cult of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, nature and fertility. Aphrodisias was the site of one of the most famous sanctuaries associated with the goddess. It also contains some remarkable urban remains from the first two centuries AD, the height of the Roman Empire.

Aphrodisias is located 230 km southeast of the Aegean seaport of Izmir (ancient Smyrna) and was built on a high plateau about 600 m above sea level. It is one of a number of cities located in the upper reaches of the Meander River with a number of tributaries flowing down from the nearby Baba Dag mountains. The city lies on the border of the ancient regions of Caria, Lydia and Phrygia (see map).

The site received very little attention from early travellers and scholars and only came to European notice in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It was at this time the ruins were sketched by a group of English architects who were members of the Society of Dilettanti. A French engineer and amateur archaeologist, Paul Gaudin, undertook investigations in 1904, clearing the Temple of Aphrodite and the Baths of Hadrian. A major mission began in 1937 and was led by the Italian Giulio Jacopi who cleared much of the Agora. The village of Geyre was located in the middle of the ruins until an earthquake in 1956 facilitated the movement of the settlement away from the antiquities to another site 2 km to the west. In 1961, major excavations were commenced by New York University under the direction of Kenan Erim. The project has been going on every since (see <https://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/fineart/academics/aphrodisias/aphrodisias.htm>) – Professor Erim subsequently worked here for 28 seasons before he died in 1990. He is buried on the site which became his life's work.

The proximity of the Meander River and the well watered plain made the area favourable for human settlement from earliest times and the city was able to take advantage of long distance trade up the Meander Valley from the Aegean coast into the interior. The area of the ancient city is generally flat, the only irregularities are two occupation mounds which appear in the plain - the so-called 'Acropolis' and Pekmez mounds. The Acropolis mound was occupied in the Bronze Age and Iron Age while the Pekmez mound is even earlier, with finds going back to the Late Neolithic, the Chalcolithic (4500–3200 BC) and Early Bronze Age.

Finds identified in excavation trenches on the west side of the Acropolis mound include mudbrick walls and stone foundations, hearths, storage pits, *pithoi* for holding grain and other food. Artefacts found at the site indicate trade with other Neolithic sites. The most significant artefacts from the Bronze Age at the Acropolis, in view of the subsequent development of the fertility cult of Aphrodite, is the presence of small stone idols including the so-called 'fat lady'

Although the city was inhabited throughout the Archaic and Classical periods, there is so far very little archaeological evidence recovered from the site for this period. The town appears to have been a minor settlement throughout the Hellenistic period (330–30 BC). The name Aphrodisias appears for the first time



in texts of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC, around about the same time that the Romans begin to make their presence felt in the east. The name of any settlement before this remains unknown.

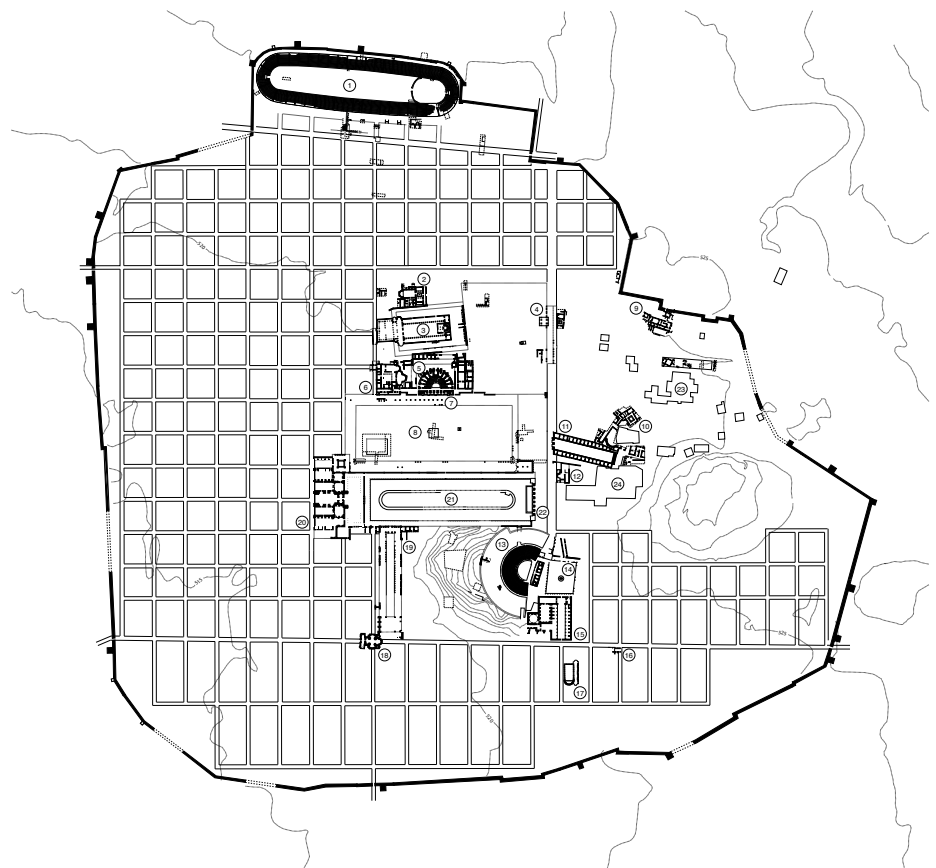
The early Greek settlement was centred around the two prehistoric mounds, but a formalised pattern of streets developed in the Hellenistic period, indicated by the east-west orientation of the agora complex and the neighbouring buildings. The streets appear to have been roughly laid out in a N-S and E-W arrangement, but it is not clear whether there was a master plan for the development of the city - some areas appear to have grown somewhat more organically. A number of sacred areas do not appear to conform to the grid plan of the Hellenistic period, such as the centrally located temple of Aphrodite, and it is likely that they belong to an early phase like the temple.

The city of Aphrodisias rapidly expanded in the period from the late 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC. Appian, writing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD, tells us that the Roman Dictator Sulla sent Aphrodite a golden crown during the Mithridatic Wars in 82 BC. An inscription at the site refers to further benefactions made by Julius Caesar who donated a golden statue of Eros for the cult of Aphrodite. It is likely that Caesar paid homage to the goddess personally, particularly considering his own links with Aphrodite/Venus: the Julio-Claudian Dynasty claimed descent from the goddess Aphrodite through the Trojan hero Aeneas.

The city received special privileges when Octavian, the great nephew of Caesar, came to power. The special status included non-taxation as well as increased rights of asylum in the sanctuary of the goddess which was thus given higher status. These decisions were undoubtedly made personally by Octavian. A number of interesting inscriptions which were put up in the town theatre in which Augustus refers warmly to the people of the city.

From this period onwards Aphrodisias enjoyed a long era of prosperity. The Julio-Claudian Dynasty was always partial to the city and was duly commemorated. In AD 22, the Emperor Tiberius reconfirmed the earlier privileges which had been granted by the Senate under Augustus. The cult of Aphrodite became increasingly important and brought visitors and pilgrims from all over the Empire.

*Part II of this article will appear in the next issue of RAG.*



## KEY

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. STADIUM                         | 13. THEATER                        |
| 2. NORTH TEMENOS HOUSE             | 14. TETRASTOON                     |
| 3. TEMPLE OF APHRODITE / CATHEDRAL | 15. THEATER BATHS                  |
| 4. TETRAPYLON                      | 16. "GAUDIN'S FOUNTAIN"            |
| 5. SCULPTORS' WORKSHOP             | 17. "GAUDIN'S GYMNASIUM"           |
| 6. "BISHOP'S PALACE"               | 18. TETRAKIONION / TRICONCH CHURCH |
| 7. BOULEUTERION                    | 19. BASILICA                       |
| 8. NORTH AGORA                     | 20. HADRIANIC BATHS                |
| 9. WATER CHANNEL AREA              | 21. SOUTH AGORA                    |
| 10. ATRIUM HOUSE                   | 22. AGORA GATE                     |
| 11. SEBASTEION                     | 23. MUSEUM                         |
| 12. CRYPTOPORTICUS HOUSE           | 24. EXCAVATION HOUSE               |

## APHRODISIAS

STATE PLAN WITH CITY GRID

0 150 300m

DRAWN 1:7500



Plan of Aphrodisias by IFA New York University.



Map showing location of Aphrodisias. Adapted from a map sourced from Bible History Online.

## RAG News from DLK

### Where in the world is DLK? Princeton

After a conference in Leiden on the Badia (desert areas) of Jordan, I am now once more in Princeton. As always, this place is a reminder of the Roman Near East. The Institute Dining Hall has mosaics mounted on the walls, a gift from nearby Princeton University which excavated at Antioch in Syria a century ago.

Princeton University has mounted successive seasons of exploration in 'Syria'. They published multiple volumes on the great trove of sites, buildings, inscriptions and the roads and routes of Roman Syria, and these remain the bedrock of research there. The full archive of their material is housed in the university.

Archival material includes that for an even earlier 'German' expedition to Jordan and southern Syria which resulted in the three huge volumes called *Die Provincia Arabia*. The 'German' directors were an odd couple. Alfred von Domaszewski and Rudolf Brünnow, the latter, after the death of his own American wife, moved his family to Princeton and took the records of the expedition to 'Arabia' with him.

Much of the material can be viewed online at the Princeton University web site including hundreds of unpublished photographs. <http://www.princeton.edu/researchphotographs/archaeological-archives/brunnow-and-domaszewski/>

### End of an Era at Princeton

Throughout the more than 30 years since I first came to the Institute for Advanced Study, I have been able to spend time with several of the most prominent stars of Roman history.

Glen Bowersock at the Institute is long-retired but still publishes profusely and remains in demand for major international conferences. His book on *Roman Arabia* remains a classic and the spur for much of the subsequent fieldwork and research in

Jordan.

Ted Champlin has been a prolific and influential researcher on Roman imperial history. We hope to publish a piece by him in the next *RAG* about his book on Tiberius.

Brent Shaw, is also about to retire but just as likely to continue to publish prolifically on his major and wide-ranging research interests from farming through demography to Roman North Africa.

Finally there is my old friend, Henry MacAdam who has another article in this issue of *RAG*. He has been teaching in the Princeton area for 30+ years now and still publishing, not least on his life-long interest in the fictional presentation of the Roman world.

### RAG Travel Scholarships

Applications tend to go in cycles and this year I have already heard from at least three probable applicants. The closing date was the end of April.

### Thank-Yous

As always, RAG has benefitted throughout the summer lecture season from the volunteers both those on the committee and their regular helpers: Don & Ann Boyer, Natalie Cullity, Norah & Roger Cooper, Rebecca Norman, Veronica Edwards, Yvonne & Peter Broome, Shirley Green, Marlene & Iain Carmichael, Joy Morrison, and Hugh McGhee. Especially to be thanked is Travis Hearn who (almost literally) carries the burden of setting up tables and shifting all the items needed for lectures and arranging their recording.

Finally, welcome back, Rebecca – now Mrs Repper. Energised by two years in Oxford on the superb EAMENA project and armed with all sorts of new skills, we can hope to exploit her mercilessly in the coming years, not least as Editor of this august publication.

DLK

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