

## Identifying Gladiator Burials:

### A Comparison of Possible Gladiator Cemeteries in York (England) and Ephesus (Turkey)

This presentation uses published stable isotope analyses of skeletal remains from gladiatorial burials excavated in England and Turkey to compare the diets of gladiators. At the cemetery in Ephesus (Turkey), 68 individuals were excavated in 1993 (Kanz and Großschmidt 2009), 22 of whom were identified as gladiators based on their trauma patterns and tombstone depictions (Lösch et al. 2014). A cemetery also was excavated at Driffeld Terrace in York (England), where 80 burials were found, 46 of whom were decapitated. The isotope analysis involved 18 male individuals, 12 of whom were decapitated. Müldner et al. (2011) hypothesize that this cemetery was also for gladiators, but the research is ongoing.

Researchers have conducted stable isotope analyses on the remains of both cemeteries, which provide information on the individuals' diet. Carbon isotope ratios show plant consumption, while nitrogen largely reflects meat and dairy intake. This paper uses these data to evaluate the hypothesis that gladiators were committed to a vegetarian diet (Curry 2008) and compare remains from York to estimate the occupation of individuals buried there and to see if they can be identified as gladiators based on carbon and nitrogen isotope analyses. Estimating the status of people buried in York as gladiators will not only provide more insight into their lives in a provincial setting but also help to assess the treatment of gladiators before and after death.

## Bibliography

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