

New Rome

by [Benzies Cha](#) (May 2021)



Capriccio of Classical Ruins, Giovanni Paolo Panini, 1725-30

Simon Caesar tilted his heavy head, eyes raised, scoping the battlefield, weathered and worn body, his blurry eyes surely deceiving him. Romulus had actually spared the last of the Visigoths that hadn't retreated—turning his back and ready to declare the battle over after seeing the pleading in the last of the rebels' eyes. Simon allowed hope to begin to heal his fatigued body. He fixated on the sword attached to the remaining Visigoth. It seemed to plunge through Romulus' middle in slow motion. Simon wrestled it from him and returned

the favour in what also seemed a blur, spurred on by a God-given jolt of energy.

In the days that followed, the amalgamation of the Roman Caesars and the Pro-Roman Visigoths were declared victors over the dissenting Romans and Visigoths; it was a hollow victory given the lives lost. The only way to distinguish between the two factions was the more-hunched pose taken when a losing member of one of the two tribes passed one of the "victors." Simon was declared *de-facto* leader. He had been called back to the homeland three weeks prior, along with many others. The empire had receded due to the struggle here. The purpose he felt to rebuild filled the chasm left from his fallen brothers.

The crumbled remains, once the Colosseum, seemed as fitting a place as any for Simon to make the announcements to his troops.

"At the last battle we ended not just barbarism, as has been rumoured, but we ended The Empire."

He stalked up and down the rows of audience, slaves, Eldermen, troops and nobles, equally aghast. *Ended The Empire?*

"There will be a new doctrine. We no longer dominate and create gods for the inhabitants to obey. Christ proved long ago there is but one God."

Simon had spent the previous sleepless nights creating the new doctrine, envisaging the triumphs and failures of Rome in days gone by. The need to conquer would be replaced by one to recreate the homeland from the wreckage and it would be made to pay homage to its creators today, not an emperor. But he knew this would not suffice, there were other wrongs that needed to be made right.

"We shall bring the masses to us. We will all worship while rebuilding our society. God will unite these societies

where man and war divided us. Each of your tribes—not Roman ancestors—will be represented and paid tribute to by these new monuments.” All but one of the Eldermen flinched at this last part. Simon made a mental note to address this later.

He looked at the head of each of the remaining tribes. “You. You, the leaders of each tribe, you are to travel to each of the conquered lands. From these lands you will each bring an equal number of inhabitants here to be homed here. They will be made welcome in exchange for aiding the rebuilding. The number will total that of the soldiers lost. Bring women and men, for we are to rebuild society in more than stone.”

The Eldermen voiced audible pleasure at his venture. One mentioned the necessity, to the agreement of most others, to pay homage to Julius, Romulus, Augustus, and even Nero. Simon was pleased and astounded.

The weeks passed. Simon absorbed the scene one night after hosting a mass with one of New Rome’s priests. As the sun met the earth, it seemed emblematic of right here—the coin minting house, the returning travellers with goods they had accumulated, the houses dedicated to creation of fabric for attire, for weapon- and armour- making—the way all this grew from the fallout of a war, an unyielding light in the darkest times. The settlements were established and the tasks of rebuilding were aided by all. Nearly all.

There were indistinguishable mergers of the population. Aside from the placards with household names above individual homes, this was not dissimilar from Old Rome. Julius, Augustus, Spartacus statues were erected. Even Nero was rebuilt. Simon was astounded as much by the irony as with the resemblance to Old Rome

Each week Simon Caesar had meetings with the Eldermen. In between supervising the creation of buildings, most were

working and toiling hard to create New Rome.

The leaders of the tribes were all incredibly satisfied from his weekly summaries of the societies' accomplishments and ensuing discussions. Except one. One that Simon had to visit at his home. The Elder of the "Conquered Culture" tribe. The sign above their door was a stark contrast to those of the neighbouring tribes. It was hanging from its pins loosely and was far less pristine.

"Enter," came the dulcet tones from inside.

" . . . Sir," Simon asked, "I hear constant dissatisfaction from your tribe. Why is this?"

The response was inconsolable. The man puffed out his reddened cheeks, "After what you did to my people?!"

Simon rapidly scanned his mind for his personal actions towards them for anything that differed from past treatment of other tribes. Nothing.

The Conquered Culture or "CC" Elder listed the atrocities of the Romans throughout their homelands. Though still nothing atypical, the horror in the Elder's voice suggested pain endured by his peoples.

Simon instinctively bowed his head. "How can I ever rectify this?"

"You can't. However, the allotted coin you dispersed among the tribes weeks ago? Our funds are now running low. You can pay us the coin of the working man for, due to your soldiers' actions, we were not capable of creating such riches."

Simon hesitated. Seeing this, the Elder's eyes widened.

"This is agreeable! This is agreeable!"

Simon did not have time to consider. And society was now running so well.

At the meetings during the following months, troops were sent out to areas that were under siege belonging to the relatives of those the Elders had selected to join the New Rome. It was as if these Elders acted as wardens for the new empire. Simon's Empire. No, The People's Empire.

"We have here before us several men whom are soon to embark on defence missions. I wished to address you by your family, or tribe, name. However, via consensus and the people's choice . . ." he inhaled deeply, to give the gravitas he felt worthy, ". . . the tribe of Julius, the tribe of Tiberius, the tribe of Nero."

There was a thick silence in the air as Simon glanced at the one tribe abstaining from any involvement. Momentarily, confused expressions cast glances in the "Conquered Cultures" direction.

The troops returned safely. A great feast was held celebrating their victory and bravery.

"Have you seen the alterations?"

Simon was taken aback by the host of such an obvious verbalized displeasure. It was not the CC leader. It was the leader of the Nero culture. His features took a second to gauge given the bronze-almost orange-tinge to his skin caused by either the use of war paint or the accumulation of the sun's intensity from travels bargaining with foreign tribes.

"Alterations?" Simon asked.

"The statues we erected in the fall of great soldiers—the great aspects of the Roman Empire preserved."

This was coming from a former Visigoth! Simon could not hide his shock. "Do you know who the perpetrators are?"

"The CCs of course. They've abstained from defence tours and celebratory meetings. They are reluctant to pay homage to anything Roman. The only things they embrace are anti-Roman. They're anti-society."

"Anti-society. Bigly," Simon concurred. "Nero-Elder, you cannot attach these unsavoury actions—especially those by a people's that were wronged— and connect them to actions of vandals."

The wary look on the Elder's face was simple to read, as if one, bronzed—bigly-bronzed—expression was saying "Yes, yes. Peace first, patrol, create, defend. I KNOW the New Rome doctrine."

Simon could not deny the look was as warranted as it was undesired. Before the new Nero-Elder could voice any further evidence, Simon interrupted.

"Allow me to speak with the head of the CC. I will endeavour to resolve this with peace."

An evening later, the head of the Conquered Culture was called out to sit before Simon. "We defaced those who wronged us. This history is not *our* history," he muttered, head bowed.

Simon appreciated the displeasure the CCs felt as a result of seeing such hated images daily. "There is a lot of concern from all the other tribes about this action. I have a suggestion." Simon felt his hand raise in emphasis that his notion be heard, as alarming to himself as to the CC head.

"Your tribe name. It does not root in pride of your people which you should have plenty. It encapsulates the very struggle we are here to rebuild. To redeem."

Suddenly, the CC leader felt his shoulders relax. Though not entirely appeased, he connected this relaxed feeling to the lack of disciplining he had anticipated. This would do. "I will pose this to our tribe, a name change, perhaps. Though we are still not yet ready for any partaking."

Simon smiled at the peaceful agreement arranged and the seeming introspective reflection they both seemed to participate in.

The weeks passed. Every day were accounts of hostilities with the CCs, who never did rename themselves. The war that concerned Simon now was not any new foreign conflicts, but an internal war that was potentially brewing. He didn't know what to do. Then it hit him: a ceremony! The CCs could have their own named ceremony, akin to those for families or armies united, for their tribe's existence alone! The partaking and benefit of doing so would be enjoyed by all. Connections could be made in this jovial setting. After all, defence-preparation, unity meetings, trade and creation endeavours weren't working. Neither were hunting or feasts. The only thing the CC did was to join in was the ceremony at the church—even behaving civilly during this.

"A parade?" asked the CC head, "We march the streets? Yes, yes . . . We march with OUR people's stances. Our ways have been wronged. The actions that caused *us* to suffer—"

"—Yes, or we can celebrate the parts of your and our societies you believe we agree upon . . . " Simon interjected.

The Elderman didn't seem to hear Simon.

The day was a disaster.

The chants.

"Caesar caused deaths, took all our breaths."

"Spartacus was right, the empire we must fight!"

"Soldiers march on, but OUR people were wronged."

On and on. And the look of disdain from the respectful tribes lining the streets was returned with added interest from the CC marchers, only serving to increase the volume of the obnoxious chants. Several times Simon noticed the Elderman's arms stretched out, preventing the Alpha tribesmen from confronting the marchers.

Simon sat alone in his stone-fired room that had seemed so strong and fortress-like until today. Today it felt frail, as if it could collapse at any moment. During the march he felt powerless. And though bloodshed was somehow avoided, he had not been anything like a leader. He had brought tension, not unity, to his ranks.

"Pity will not rebuild," Came a voice from the doorway.

New Nero, as the Elderman now became known in New Rome, told Simon of how he had visited each household that came so close to attacking the members of today's march. He told of how the citizens complained the CC were bringing disunity while receiving pay for no contribution to our society . . . how the CC defaced what had been built. How it was understood that the CC wanted no part of New Rome.

Simon's suggestions—appeasement and gifts to the CC—only made things worse. Simon had served their purposes and New Nero knew it.

"I hear in Britain they have rebuilt what was once left to

decay, when the Roman peoples came home, rebuilt even in Roman style. We, however, have no such potential for continual growth with this current situation," Nero stated.

"You, New Nero. You should take my place. A firmer leader than I is needed now."

"Simon, your doctrine—your addition to the ten commandments—it was more than a scroll outside the church from the moment you placed it there. 'Peaceful actions at homeland, New Rome.' 'Rebuilding in respect.' Creating . . . Mausoleums to our fallen . . . Tribe-wide discussions every seventh day . . . Defence of each tribes' land of origin. It was good. It is good—provided it is adhered to by ALL. Especially the last. The CC's lack of commitment, care even, means we may lose men. Our amendments must remain."

"We must forcibly send the CC to defence zones alone. Punishment is needed."

Simon held a somewhat subdued ceremony. The only distinctive feature was the audible shock from Brianus Blessedus, the Spartacus tribe's alpha. He did not like to even know the names of anything less than tribe leaders. Not for superiority but for fear of favouritism being yet another charge the CC could add to his already-dented conscience. Brianus Blessedus was the size of two men. Though a well-mannered man, Simon noticed a fear from CC members around him. A fear even their arrogance could not disguise. New Nero's ascendance to New Rome leader was not a shocking one. He had a skill with the people. It was this skill that made Simon feel so at ease disclosing the horseman-delivered letter he had received from the Arab empire, informing him if he led them to his city peacefully while their soldiers slept, his life would remain intact. And he would even be named leader.

But appeasement was not the answer. Not with the CCs nor with the Arab army. Arabian collusion is a charge that

would probably stick for an insanely long time. Evidence or not.

Away from the ceremony was the tribe of disunity, the CC. Simon's last act as leader was to send them alone to defend the latest lands being encroached upon by foreign armies.

That night, however, it seemed that New Nero's more forceful plan was also not the remedy. The CCs returned in lesser numbers. They had lost men and declared, through spit and gritted teeth, that they would bury their fallen brothers in their own mausoleum. New Nero's offers of a feast to tribute them were declined. New Nero knew that civil war would weaken the people just as much as appeasement. Easy meat for the Arabs.

New Nero noticed Brianus Blessedus walk back to the Spartacus abode. An idea came to him.

"A display, they say?" The CC tribespeople looked to their leader.

"A far, far finer display would have been before us had you women successfully poisoned their men."

"They saw through our plan," replied the CC women, to their men. ". . . all except that hefty one, Brianus Blessedus. Yet it did not down him."

The CC were in attendance at this newly-built Colosseum, something that disgusted them initially. They saw some hypocrisy in the so-called Spartacus tribe being here, when their namesake fought so hard to escape. The near-exact old Rome-like design, the armour worn by the men before them, this supposed "gift" the tribes had invited them to, via Caesar-styled scroll, no less, brought out near fury in them.

Ready to attack at the next transgression, the CCs listened intently to New Nero.

New Nero had a man from his own tribe on one side of him, a man from the Tiberius tribe on his other side. "You. You Conquered Culture will now witness a man from each of our tribes combat in the only way we know. For we have some dissension in our ranks."

The CC tribes people felt themselves completely immersed. *Of course! Of course* there were dissenting factions. They had been showing these savages the wrong of their ways for a long time now. Now those who had shunned them and who sent them to war to lose men would inflict pain upon one another in the only way their savage minds could muster. Before them there were two men. The New Nero tribesman had his head bowed, barely meeting the eyes of the tribe. The Tiberius man glared back, a scowl adorning his face—a face that brought upon the CC an urge to deliver their heel to strike it until a mutilated skull remained. This Tiberius man was getting the better of the New Nero tribesman, striking him so hard, the New Nero tribesman was sent several feet across the colosseum battleground. In unison, the CC cheered for the New Nero soldier to strike back, for there was a clear opening as the vile Tiberius man turned to them to celebrate the New Nero's destruction. Wait! Life remained in the seemingly-fallen foe. He looked to the savage's turned back, then to them, their audience. "Attack now!" screamed the CC crowd. The New Nero soldier seemed to launch into the air feet first, hitting the unaware Tiberius man in the back so hard that his body turned fully over itself. The New Nero soldier delivered a few strikes then lifted the opponents head, revealing a teary-eyed and pathetic looking face. The Tiberius man pleaded with them. "I am sorry to your people." The cheer that involuntarily emanated from the CC almost made their own ears bleed. It was as if a hunger from within had finally been satiated. The man, the coward, limped from the battlefield. A fate worse than

death! The CCs could not contain their excitement.

It went on. It seemed there were never ending rivalries with these supposed "united peoples;" a man from each tribe with a hatred of another. Their ability to commandeer the lesser-disliked man to beat down another was remarkable. The energy the combatants gained from this resembled the energy the CC absorbed as they watched that fallen savage weep to them, injured and crying. The CC applauded the men who had done their bidding as they walked from the Colosseum.

Every seventh day, following the pointless meetings and feasts, they now graced their presences with culminated in these feud ending arrangements. Anger manifested in a way that gave them a pleasure they could not describe. On days when there were no town meetings and Combat Colosseum (as it now was known) occurred, members of the CC walked about the town with a new purpose, allowing the members of the savage tribes to showcase their building and trading methods. One man though, they were ever wary of.

Brianus Blessedus had thus far evaded the Colosseum. It seemed the most savage-looking scared all of the others too much. Or was it that he had a burning fire of anger towards others that had yet to be satisfied? Several of the CC members congregated outside the church, watching one of their women remark of how she had heard a member of the Romulus tribe talk foul of him. That anger shocked them yet their excitement could not be contained.

The seventh day was only two nights away.

They stood, for they could not sit, as their energy within them would not allow it. All eyes were on Brianus Blessedus as his large figure emerged into the centre of their zone of entertainment. "Why would I allow it?!" Bellowed Brianus at the crowd, all around him, to all who would listen,

“why would I allow a man to glare at my woman whenever my back is turned?!” As if by a summons, the member of the Romulus tribe entered the area glaring at Brianus with a smirk. Sharing this with the CCs returned a cheer. For this man may be wronged, but he dared not perish from their women’s poison! They knew the power their voices could wage in the combatants. To their surprise, Brianus did not appear to feel the force with which he was hit. The CC knew they had to cheer loudly and with more vigour. As they did, the power of arm strikes increased and Brianus began reeling back. He started rolling back, a blur of revolutions, sent hard into the Colosseum walls. The crowd all raised up in a thunderous applause for their man of the Romulus tribe—voices and applause erupting louder still when he raised his arms.

The only non-CC members in the audience were Simon Caesar and New Nero.

“Your force.” Remarked Simon

“And your gift to these people.” New Nero returned.

“They’ll have us in there next.”

“Not if our man can give them what they want.”

A deflated and hunched Brianus swung his arms low, with cheers surrounding his apparent hurt, sinking his despair further to the ground. He looked up to the current and former leader. A knowing wink exchanged quashed any fears they would need to “learn the new ways of combat.”

“We saved society,” remarked New Nero.

“Bigly.” Replied Simon Caesar.

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Benzies Cha is a big fan of Anglo-Saxon history and 90s pro wrestling. He has a catalogue of blogs on the Minds forum with quirky solutions to world issues and predictions into the next moves of the globalists. Please follow his work for more historical tales.

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