JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE:

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE,* STATUE ABUSE, AND HUMILIATION IN ANTIQUITY

by

REBECCA KNUDSON

(Under the Direction of Erika Hermanowicz)

ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to answer why statues of disgraced individuals in antiquity were not completely destroyed, given prevalent material reuse and the fact that a multitude of these images harboring clear signs of deliberate mutilation remains extant. Statues not melted down or reused were left with the intention that they would exhibit their humiliation to the public—a transference of behavior established inside the amphitheater where criminals were executed in front of the general populace. This thesis asserts that the arena and public judicial executions in these facilities led to the mistreatment of statues outside of the amphitheater both as it pertained to the *damnatio memoriae* of prominent individuals and later the mutilation of non-Christian statues by Christians in the late antique period.

INDEX WORDS: punishment, *damnatio memoriae*, statue, humiliation

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B.A., University of California Irvine, 2016

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2019

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August 2019

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# INTRODUCTION

## HUMILIATION AND DEGREDATION: ARENA VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC EXECUTIONS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

*"It must mark the victim: it is intended, either by the scar it leaves on the body, or by the spectacle that accompanies it, to brand the victim with infamy."*

Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*

### Section 1: Introduction

This thesis attempts to understand statue abuse in Rome, particularly as the practice pertains to the *damnatio memoriae*[1] of emperors and later, under Christian influence, the image destruction of non-Christian statues.[2] What is fascinating about a large number of extant statues from antiquity is that they exhibit signs of clear and deliberate mutilation. While details of these ruined statues will be discussed later in this thesis, examples of deliberate mutilation include but are not limited to statues which have had their eyes crossed out, have had graffiti etched into them or which have clearly suffered some type of bodily mutilation such as the hacking away of breasts or limbs. The fact that statues of this kind remain and can be identified tells us that they were not intended to be completely destroyed. The total destruction of marble statues was not unheard of in antiquity as these materials were frequently burned for lime or used in other architectural endeavors, and if the materials weren't repurposed in this way, recarved to grant the

[1] This term is to be defined in Chapter 1 (22-24)
[2] This does not exclude "secular" images, as statues of emperors have been ruined with religious insignia (to be discussed in Chapter 2)

skeleton of the statue a new identity. Bronzes, on the other hand, might be melted down or re-cast.

It is my assertion that the prominence of amphitheatrical spectacles, particularly criminal executions, strongly influenced the treatment of these statues remaining on public display. I intend to demonstrate that the type of public executions which relied on societal fears and stigmas to humiliate a condemned person at the moment of their death directly influenced the treatment of these mutilated statues. With their massive and influential presence in cities, arenas were places for seeing—it is here that citizens could see all of their fellow Romans and witness the generosity of the emperor through the size and intricacy of the spectacles he provided. It is here too that the Roman observed the gladiator, as well as what could happen to convicted criminals. While violent spectacles in the arena were certainly intended for entertainment, they also sent messages to the audience—just as ruined statues were intended to exhibit an emperor's failure or a divinity's humiliation.

## Section 1.2: The Roman Amphitheater

Around 230 Roman amphitheaters have been accounted for, their presence spanning the breadth of the Roman Empire into areas such as modern day Spain, Turkey and Libya. The reach of the amphitheater was massive. Though the size and scale of these arenas varied, they often had the capacity to seat thousands, as Roman men, women, and children were expected to attend amphitheatrical events. The Colosseum, for example, sat roughly between 50 and 85,000 people. Futrell has argued that the introduction of public spectacle into the Roman empire contributed to the self-definition of the Roman and was a means of "bringing together the Roman community to commemorate its shared past and to invoke an ideal of a group feature."[3]

[3] Futrell 1997, 4-5

> The potential magnitude for arena spectacles in the empire is important as demonstrated by their size. Though certainly the numbers in some accounts of gladiator and animal events must have been fabricated, the area housed spectacular events. Starting initially with shows involving around twelve pairs of gladiators, as popularity for the fights increased, so did the need to provide contests as extravagant as possible. By 183 BCE, there were reportedly sixty duels per show, and, by 65 BCE Julius Caesar celebrated his election to the aedileship with a show of 320 pairs, "staged in a wooden amphitheater constructed especially for the event."[4] In the time of Augustus, it is reported via his *Res Gestae* (22.1) that 5,000 pairs of gladiators fought in eight *munera*, which is unsurprising considering Augutus' recognition of the importance of entertainment. It need be no surprise that when recording the achievements he wished to be remembered for, he included the shows that he had sponsored—eight gladiatorial games, three athletic games, twenty-six beast hunts, one mock naval battle, the special "Secular Games" of 17 BC symbolically inaugurating a new age (*saeculum*), and twenty-eight other shows. These events could involve the participation of thousands of people.[5]

During the inaugural games of the Colosseum in either 80 or 81 CE, Cassius Dio reports that Titus held a mock battle with upwards of 3,000 gladiators—an event which caused him to weep bitterly after its completion, as, so his source intimates, he performed no other deed of importance.[6] About thirty years later between 108 and 109 CE, Dio reports that upon his return to Rome, Trajan gave spectacles lasting 123 days which involved 10,000 fighting gladiators.[7] According to Guttmann, these spectacles "failed numerically" compared to the naval battle staged by Claudius in 52 CE which involved 19,000 combatants.[8]

I have included gladiatorial numbers here to illustrate the size and reach of amphitheatrical entertainment. As this thesis is primarily concerned with the execution of criminals within the arena, it must be noted that professional gladiator combats were not

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[4] Guttmann 1983, 10
[5] Boatwright 2012, 302
[6] Cassius Dio 65.25-26
[7] *Ibid*, 68.15
[8] Guttmann 1983, 10

> "Tacitus is explicit (*Ann*. 12.56.1) that the spectacles were intended to augment the size of the crowd assembled to appreciate the engineering achievement of draining the [Fucine] Lake; without the spectacles, fewer people would have shown up." (Fagan 2011, 14)

necessarily analogous to criminal executions in their message and presentation. A fair number of scholars assert that the professional gladiator was a symbol of *virtus*, a problematic term in that the gladiator did not, in fact, possess the quality. The idea here is that the gladiator was a representative, especially for the Roman man watching the combat, of what it meant to be a man with *virtus*, which he otherwise would have acquired through experiences such as military endeavors.[9] Though certainly the professional gladiator presenting himself as brave in the face of death may have resonated with audience members as being a quality worthy of praise and emulation, the criminal condemned to die in gladiatorial combat (*noxii ad ludum gladiatorum*) was but one method of execution intended to deter Romans from crime.

## Section 2: Public Execution and Its Purpose

According to Bauman, an execution was a public occasion "to which the populace was summoned by trumpet, there to be regaled with the spectacle of criminals being decapitated, beaten to death, drowned in a sack, hurled from the Tarpeian Rock, burnt alive, or thrown to wild animals."[10] Presumably with all public executions, the intent is that the spectacle act as a crime-deterrent, in that if the punishment is witnessed by the masses, the people will be less inclined to participate in criminal activity. It holds that in smaller groups, those who are dysfunctional within the group are able to be cast out and driven away. However, for larger groups, "such persons are punished in public to demonstrate the power of the state, to reassure the obedient, and to deter the potentially disobedient."[11] Additionally, public execution allows for identification with the state and those watching. It is not only a deterrent to crime, but an

[9] "The struggle of the gladiator embodied an idealized and distilled version of the military ethic of *Romanitas*." (Futrell 1997, 8)
[10] Bauman 1996, 18
[11] Kyle 1998, 40

assurance that those watching are in the right—it is essentially manufactured cohesion. According to Foucault:

> ...the body has produced the truth of the crime—or rather it constitutes the element which, through a whole set of rituals and trials, confesses that the crime took place, admits that the accused did indeed commit it, shows that he bore it inscribed in himself and on himself, supports the operation of punishment and manifests its effects in the most striking way.[12]

## Section 3: Executions in the Arena, Societal Fears and Discomforts

Executions in the arena—namely forced gladiatorial combat (*noxii ad ludum gladiatorum*) and exposure to wild beasts (*ad bestias*), occasionally crucifixion and burning alive—were considered *summa supplicia,* or ultimate punishments. "*Summum supplicium*," Bauman states, "does not mean the death sentence in general. It means modes of execution other than 'standard' decapitation, the purpose being to inflict the maximum suffering in order to achieve maximum deterrence."[13] While I do agree that *summa supplicia* were intended to inflict maximum suffering, it was done primarily to humiliate the individual as much as possible, and done only secondarily as "maximum deterrence."

It is here that I would like to clarify and extrapolate on public execution in the Roman empire, specifically as it pertains to that which took place in the arena. While it is certainly true that public execution was necessary as a crime-deterrent, as mentioned here, it was also necessary as a means to shame and degrade the individual punished. Judicial punishment enacted in public was intended to be severely humiliating for the individual involved, with his experiences of shame understood by an audience. Humiliation was a requirement for the tarnished recollection of an individual, as a degrading execution stripped away good memories (primarily those of the crowd watching), an intact body, and general social respect for the

[12] Translation by Sheridan 1997, 47
[13] Bauman 1996, 18

individual at the time of his death. This torture evolved beyond bodily to that of social torture, with an individual's deepest fears and discomforts used against him during his death. The following is an exploration of various tortures in the arena and what they meant for the individual involved. Understanding the cultural implications of these various humiliating experiences will help to understand the relationship to public mutilation done unto statues in Chapters 1 and 2.

## Section 3.1: Denial of Agency

### What it is:

A significant proportion of those condemned to die in the arena were involved in situations that left them helpless and unable to defend themselves. They would be ill-prepared and ill-equipped, giving them no chance of winning the fight. For criminals ordered to die as gladiators, there would have been no contest between them and for instance, a slave who was sent to a gladiatorial school to learn how to handle weapons properly. The outcome of this contest was intended to be death, and in this way, "it differed only from other forms of execution in being infinitely more cruel, in involving for the condemned man tortures indescribable in their nature and extent."[14] Thus, the criminal sentenced to death in combat without the proper training was forced to assume the role of a man who possessed no semblance of dignity and honor. Like the punishment of criminals condemned to face animals in the arena, a great aspect of the humiliation of the condemned criminal was helplessness. According to Kyle:

> Unlike the flattering, often triumphant poses of usually bloodless gladiators, condemned criminals were depicted in art as helpless, terrified, and bloody. Rather than defiant gladiators, glamorously armored and armed, *noxii* are shown nude or nearly nude, with bound hands or bound to posts, under the control of arena handlers or in the grasp of beasts.[15]

[14] Scott 1940, 50
[15] Kyle 1998, 92

A notable mosaic from Zliten, Libya illustrates a variety of amphitheatrical events which surround a series of maritime images in the middle [Fig. 1]. Figure 2 shows the four sides of this mosaic cropped together to create one image. In Figure 2, well-equipped gladiators are clearly shown in the second panel, an alarming contrast to the bottom two panels which illustrate criminals condemned to die *ad bestias*. Criminals condemned *ad bestias* were often left just as, if not more helpless than those condemned to fight to the death, considering those condemned to the beasts were often robbed of their movement, as they were typically tied up and presented to wild animals. Referencing Figure 2, the third panel from the top shows men condemned *ad bestias* in the arena: the figure farthest to the left shows a man who has been tied to a stake with his arms bound behind his back—his person nearly engulfed by a leopard. The notion of being tied to a stake holds further humiliating properties as an inscription was typically nailed to the top of the column detailing the reason for the condemnation. Usually this column was placed in the middle of the amphitheater where the bound victim faced the public.[16] Next to him is a man about to meet a similar fate: he has been wheeled into the arena, hands also tied behind his back, while being whipped by an attendant. He too is about to be mauled by an animal. Next to them appear to be professional *beastiarii*, men who fought beasts voluntarily for pay or glory. Lastly, the bottom panel shows but one more example of a man condemned *ad bestias*, as he is restrained naked and facing a lion. An attendant behind him yields a whip.

<u>What it means:</u>

Both condemnation as a weaponless gladiator and as a criminal bound to a stake as fodder for wild beasts illustrate denial of agency for the victim. By disallowing the criminal weapons or the use of his limbs, the victim loses the ability to function or protect himself. Those

[16] *Ibid*, 94

condemned with no means to defend themselves were cruelly juxtaposed to trained gladiators who fought in the games where "self-control and style mattered…[and where] the manner of death and the display of bravery counted."[17] Denial of agency does not allow for a dignified death, as one is unable to die fighting back—a response to violence that seems to be inherently human. Given the presumption that criminals will fight back if given a chance, this places them below the animals chained to one another in the Zliten mosaic.

## Section 3.2: Reversal of the Natural World Order

### What it is:

Having just discussed the graphic scene of violence depicted in the Zliten mosaic (Figures 1 and 2), I would like to continue exploring the use of animals in the amphitheater. A typical day at the arena games began with the *venationes* (animal hunts), as they were intended to both rouse and excite the crowd with their spectacular demonstration. Exotic animals were brought into the theater as a display of the emperor's willingness to provide opulent entertainment, the kind described in one of Pliny's letters to Valerius Maximus (*Ep.* 34):

> I am sorry the African panthers you had bought in such quantities did not turn up on the appointed day, but you deserve the credit although the weather prevented their arriving in time; it was not your fault that you could not show them.[18]

Not only was the import of animals from Africa and other "exotic" locations intended to be this grand display of wealth by the emperor, it was meant to demonstrate Roman power and control of the whole human and animal world. Man's command over the animal took place in

[17] Toner 1995, 39

[18] Translation in text by Radice 1969:

> *...Vellem Africanae, quas coemeras plurimas, ad praefinitum diem occurrissent: sed licet cessaverint illae tempestate detentae, tu tamen meruisti ut acceptum tibi fieret, quod quo minus exhiberes, non per te stetit.*

front of an audience during the *venationes* where trained men would slaughter animals and force the creatures to fight one another until their deaths.[19]

During my discussion regarding agency, *damnatio ad bestias* was addressed concerning criminals condemned to die fighting animals, who were given no means of defending themselves. Another aspect of *damnatio ad bestias* that I would like to mention here is the implied consumption of human flesh by animals. Often an individual condemned in this way would have been restrained to a stake or cart, left to be mauled by any number of exotic creatures. Given reservations concerning the consumption of animal meat that had come out of the arena, there is no doubt that the body of the criminal would have, in some way, been consumed by the animal.

<u>What it means:</u>

Man's dominion over the animal kingdom was not limited only to which kinds of creatures they were able to conquer and control. A substantial part of man's authority over animals is the consumption of animal meat—*this* is the natural order of the world. To be consumed by a beast essentially makes one a part of the animal, and the animal shape, as Gilhus suggests, is "*never* an improvement on the human condition."[20]

[19] Referencing the Zliten mosaic [Fig. 2], the bottom panel shows two animals tied together—an element of the *venationes* that would have been particularly entertaining to the audience as they watched each animal attempt to fight the other to its death.
[20] Gilhus 2006, 79

Becoming "one" with an animal reduces the human to that status, and like previous examples, illustrates the removal of personhood for the individual.[21] This aversion towards animal consumption has even been used as a theme for manmade forms of torture such as the Brazen Bull. "If you ever wish to punish some man," Diodorus Siculus writes (9.19), "shut him up [in the bronze] bull and lay a fire beneath it; by his groanings the bull will be thought to bellow and his cries of pain will give you pleasure as they come through the pipes in the nostrils."[22] In literature, representations of humans mating with animals are never positive, and are heavily associated with qualities such as adultery which itself bore social stigma.[23]

## Section 3.3: "Fatal Charades" and the Object of Ridicule

### What it is:

I would at this point like to discuss executions that Barton has referred to as "Roman snuff plays"[24] and Coleman as "fatal charades." These "fatal charades" blended what was real and what was imaginary into an act of spectacular violence, a violation of the theatrical by the actual, which Bartsch claims "seem to have lent their attraction to these displays, adding a certain frisson to the experience of the spectators." [25] These criminals would have taken on mythological roles as actors on the stage would have done. According to Coleman, it is the humiliation of the

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[21] In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (4.20-21), the character Thrasyelon wears the skin of a bear in order to aid in a robbery. As he continues to wear the bear skin, he progressively becomes more animal than human: "...as long as the breath was in his body he kept up the role for which he had volunteered: with various bearlike postures and movements he would now retreat..." (*Scaenam denique quam sponte sumpserat cum anima retinens, nunc fugiens, nunc resistens variis corporis sui schemis ac motibus tandem domo prolapsus est.*) Upon his death a spear was thrust "right into the bear's vitals" (*lanceam mediis iniecit ursae praecordiis*) and "true to his oath he let no human cry or scream escape him, but horribly mauled and grievously wounded as he was he went on bellowing and growling like a beast..." (*...sed iam morsibus laceratus ferroque laniatus obnoxio mugitu et ferino fremitu...*)

English translationions by Kenney, 1998

[22] Εἴ τινα Βούλει...κολάζειν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἔνδον τοῦ ταύρου κατειργνὺς πῦρ ὑποστρώννυ κάτω δόζει δ᾽ ὁ ταῦρος στεναγμοῖς μνκᾶσθαι τοῖς ἐκείνου, σύ δ᾽ ἡδονὴν τοῖς στεναγμοῖς ἕζεις αὐλοῖς μυκτήρων.

[23] Ovid, for example, refers to Pasiphae as an adulteress in his *Ars Amatoria* (1.9): *Pasiphae fieri gaudebat adultera tauri.*

[24] Barton 1993, 61

[25] Bartsch 1994, 51

criminal that validates the process of the law because it distances the spectator from the accused and it reduces the possibility of sympathy towards him on the part of the audience. [26]

"Fatal charades" involved a level of imagination seemingly unattested to elsewhere in other public judicial punishments. Martial attests to several instances of these theatrical executions, detailing instances where a woman was condemned to die as Pasiphae, mated to a bull;[27] another where a man was condemned to die as Prometheus, restrained as his liver was poked out by a spear.[28] Other authors attest to these executions as well, with Suetonius mentioning a condemned man dressed as Icarus who was dropped from a ceiling to his death.[29] A good illustration comes from Strabo (6.2.6):

> ...a certain Selerus, called the "son of Aetna," was sent up to Rome because he had put himself at the head of an army and for a long time had overrun the regions round about Aetna with frequent raids; I saw him torn to pieces by wild beasts at an appointed combat of gladiators in the Forum; for he was placed on a lofty scaffold, as though on Aetna, and the scaffold was made suddenly to break up and collapse, and he himself was carried down with it into cages of wild beasts—fragile cages that had been prepared beneath the scaffold for that purpose.[30]

The theory here is that the cages of wild beasts below the scaffold would have been representative of the stones and lava which were frequently emitted from Aetna, therefore the half-naked Selerus was "humiliated by the expedient of associating the instrument of his execution with the symbol of his power, a trick with obvious visual appeal for the audience."[31]

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[26] Coleman 1990, 47

[27] *de Spectaculis* 6(5): *Iunctam Pasiphaen Dictaeo credite tauro: vidimus, accepit fabula prisca fidem*.
This is also attested to in Suetonius (*Nero* 12): *inter pyrricharum argumenta taurus Pasiphaam ligneo iuvencae simulacro abditam iniit, ut multi spectantium crediderunt*.

[28] *de Spectaculis* 9(7)

[29] *Nero* 12: *Icarus primo statim conatu iuxta cubiculum eius decidit ipsumque cruore respersit.*

[30] Translation in text by Jones 1924:
...τὴν Ῥώμην ἀνεπέμφθη Σέλουρός τις, Αἴτνης υἱὸς λεγόμενος, στρατιᾶς ἀφηγησάμενος καὶ λεηλασίαις πυκναῖς καταδεδραμηκὼς τὰ κύκλῳ τῆς Αἴτης πολὺν χρόνον, ὃν ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ μονομάχων ἀγῶνος συνεστῶτος εἴδομεν διασπασθέντα ὑπὸ θηρίων· ἐπὶ πήγματος γάρ τινος ὑψηλοῦ τεθεὶς ὡς ἂν ἐπὶ τῆς Αἴτνης, διαλυθέντος αἰφνιδίως καὶ συμπεσόντος, κατηνέχθη καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς γαλεάγρας θηρίων εὐδιαλύτους, ἐπίτηδες παρεσκευασμένας ὑπὸ τῷ πήγματι.

[31] Coleman 1990, 54

What it means:

It is with these "fatal charades" that human beings were reduced to nothing more than entertainment, and it was a death that was intended to make the person an object of ridicule. The methods of execution during these plays were clever and intricate, and presumably, it would have been quite humorous to watch a man be dropped from great heights as foolish Icarus, whose hubris and ignorance were the cause of his death that would have been preventable, provided he had been able to follow instructions.

People condemned to die in fantastical ways such as the examples mentioned above were essentially given new identities upon their deaths—they were given new life stories based on the mythological or historical person they were forced to embody, and they were even given new names. The man condemned to die as Prometheus was not just playing Prometheus on the stage, he was literally dying for Prometheus' crimes. The punishment is doubled for the person, as he dies twice—he suffers not only the death of his body, but the death of his identity. "Fatal charades" are the ultimate denial of one's personhood.

## Section 3.4: Social Death

What it is:

Generally, togas were stripped from people about to be executed in public. The toga was an item that served to cover a man, to veil him, and to make him decent in public life. Though types of togas varied, in the courts, at the public games, and wherever social forms were observed, the Roman man appeared and had to appear in the toga—"in the toga he assumed the responsibilities of citizenship [and] all its associations suggested formality." [32] Two instances have been mentioned previously concerning men executed naked or half-naked: those who were

[32] Johnston 1903, 161

condemned *ad bestias*, and specifically, the man made to die as Selerus. Men stripped of their garments at their point of death was a common occurrence, with Suetonius mentioning that even Vitellius was dragged half-naked (*seminudus*) to the forum upon his execution.[33]

What it means:

Not only did it make men decent in public, the toga was a public symbol of identity which differentiated an individual based on class and status. With the toga removed and the victim stripped naked, the individual was therefore robbed of his outward identity. As naked individuals, there is nothing about our bodies that inherently determines whether or not we are of a certain status—outsiders are no longer able to tell how much money we have, what we do for a living, or to what social class we belong. In a society that relied so heavily on social status and citizenship, it is almost as if removing the garments which indicated where a man belonged in the world was symbolic of his expulsion from society.

Section 4: Conclusion—Humiliation is the Key

This introduction has explored several ways in which a condemned criminal might be executed in public, and what it was that these specific types of executions meant. Public executions were intended to be seen and their impact had its force in what people feared losing the most: their agency, their status in the human/animal world, their names. It was necessary that the audience see the punished individual be humiliated, and understand that they were being humiliated. Humiliation is at the heart of public punishment, and without it, the shame and degradation of the condemned would not be nearly as severe. The humiliating properties of these public executions are representative of a denial of what makes us human—their purpose is not only to entertain, but to show that the body that remains after death is no longer what, or who, it

[33] Suetonius *Vitellius* 243

once was: it has been maimed and mutilated to still be recognizable, but it is now animal food that was unable to defend itself, naked and without its own name. What we are looking at is clearly a human, but everything that makes it a *human* is gone.

Statue-mutilation is very much the same, as statues that have been ruined and remain intact or on display are clearly statues, but the defining features are gone and the elements that made the statue who or what it was do not remain. In this way are the deaths of humans and statues alike: it is not enough to annihilate the body—humiliation must occur for the memory of the individual to be ruined.

This thesis focuses on two types of statue abuse: *damnatio memoriae* (to be defined in Chapter 1, pages 22-24), and the mutilation of non-Christian statues by Christians in the late antique period. It is my assertion, then, that the treatment of the images of emperors and notable figures who suffered *damnatio memoriae* was informed by public judicial punishment, a humiliating act considering *summa supplicia* and punishment in public were often reserved for those of lower status. After an explanation concerning the ancient attitude towards statues, Chapter 1 illustrates a variety of portraits, namely those of emperors, that have been intentionally desecrated.

Chapter 2 details the mistreatment of non-Christian statues by Christians in the late antique period. Mutilations enacted by Christians typically include crosses that have been etched into their faces—a varied continuation of secular facial mutilation—and images that have experienced other instances of presumably religiously motivated abuse such as the inclusion of religious insignia or more severely the mutilation of genitalia. The literature attests to the cruel humiliation of these images, as notable Christian figures are often represented as destroyers or conquerors of non-Christian statues. Although scholars assert that Christians who ruined statues

did so for a variety of religious or cultural reasons, it is my assertion that this type of statue abuse is but a continuation of *damnatio memoriae*, given not only the methodologies behind the material abuse but also the element of humiliation surrounding it.

HUMILIATION AND DEGREDATION:
ARENA VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC EXECUTION IN ROME

Figure 1
Zliten Mosaic—2nd c. CE; Zliten, Libya
Archaeological Museum of Tripoli
Image Courtesy of *penelope.uchicago.edu*

HUMILIATION AND DEGREDATION:
ARENA VIOLENCE AND PUBLIC EXECUTION IN ROME

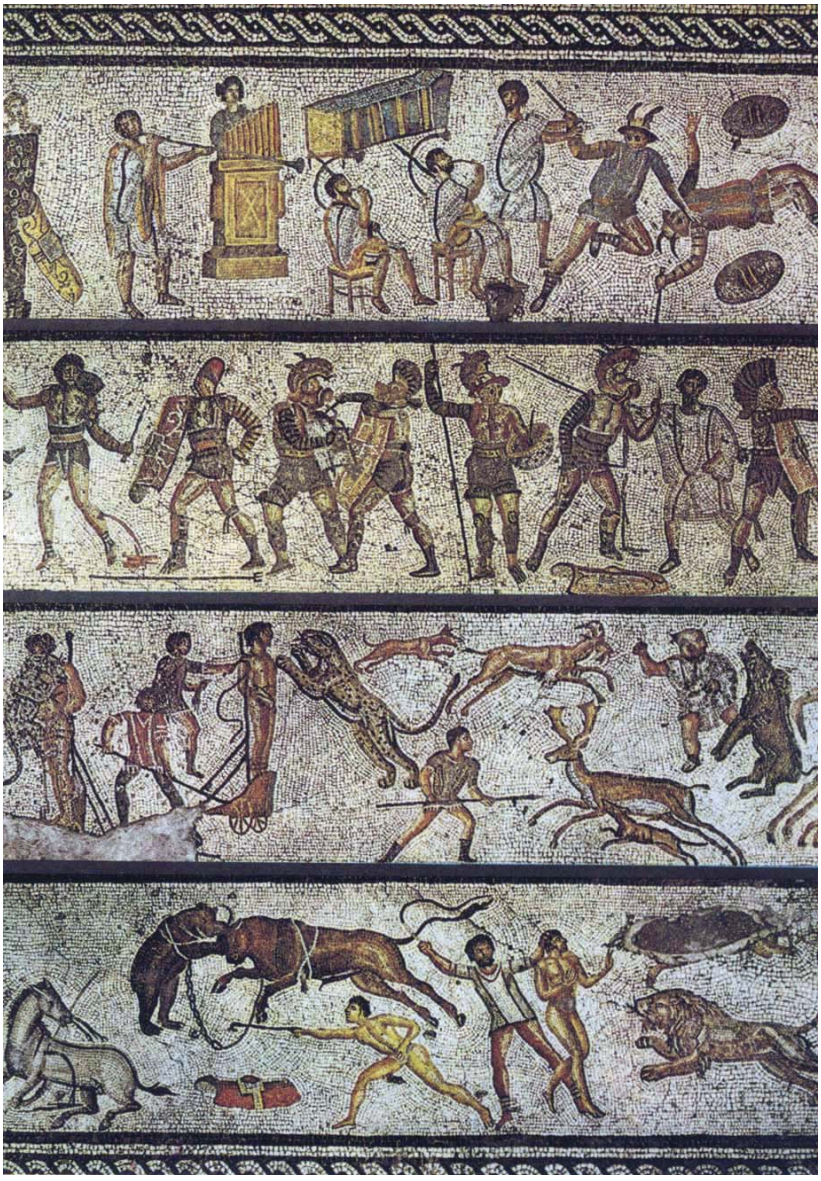

Figure 2
Zliten Mosaic (Four Panel Detail) —2nd c. CE; Zliten, Libya
Archaeological Museum of Tripoli
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

# CHAPTER 1

## *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*
## JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

*Iuvabat illidere solo superbissimos vultus, instare ferro,*
*saevire securibus, ut si singulos ictus sanguis dolorque sequeretur.*

*It was our delight to dash those proud faces to the ground,*
*to smite them with the sword and savage them with the axe,*
*as if blood and agony could follow from every blow.*

Pliny on the *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian
*Panegyricus* 52

### Section 1: Introduction

My intention with this chapter is to assert that the practice of *damnatio memoriae*[34] was influenced by arena-spectacles in Rome, particularly as they related to public judicial execution. In identifying what a statue is, I intend to use examples of statue-mutilation to illustrate that this abuse is a practice adoptive of judicial punishment. Given that a certain humanity was bestowed upon statuary, the objects destroyed were susceptible to the same degree of public scrutiny, with there being an underlying understanding that even marble and bronze likenesses could experience public humiliation just as a living person.

[34] This term to be defined later in this chapter (pages 22-24)

## Section 1.1: What Statues Are

Following the Republican practice of erecting honorary statues to prominent individuals, imperial statues tended to be erected in urban areas. Individual cities, however, could decide to erect a statue of an emperor elsewhere. "The most frequently encountered dedicators of imperial statues [were] communities or their executive bodies," Højte states as, "the local executive bodies had authority over all dedications on public property and also granted individuals permission to erect imperial statues."[35]

Like coinage, statues of the emperor presented a likeness of him to an audience who otherwise may not have ever been in the presence of the real emperor. In a time where literacy was not common among the non-elite, statues of the emperor symbolized who he was and what his expectations were as far as public morale was concerned. Honorary monuments in the heart of Rome, such as Trajan's Column, showed their elite and non-elite viewers "how to achieve success as they preached the virtues of military organization, right handling of the barbarian enemy, and the proper steps to becoming an insider to Roman culture."[36] The column of Marcus Aurelius "isolated and elevated the emperor," as it displayed his power which brought victory—"power over his army which [made] it invincible against the ghastly barbarian enemy and, by extension his power that sustained Rome itself."[37]

## Section 1.2: The Treatment of Statues

In the Roman empire, the emperor's presence was mediated by statues. Though certainly not a substitute for the *real* emperor, they were, to a large extent, the reality of his visible presence in public, and they had the "potential to carry all the connotations of portrait

[35] Højte 2005, 168
[36] Clarke 2003, 42-43
[37] *Ibid,* 43

statuary…prestige, endurance, immortality, semi-divinity, and aesthetic perfection."[38] As such, imperial statues deserved respectful treatment. Any wrong-doing towards or in the presence of the statue had the probability of resulting in punishment:

> Both officials and private citizens had to be extremely careful how they interacted with statues of the emperor. Even actions that fell far short of actual damage, destruction, or recarving might nevertheless be considered *maiestas*, a violation of the dignity of the statue, and, as such a form of treason. Such action might include manifestly disrespectful severe sanctions, even capital punishment. They might include manifestly disrespectful treatment, like urinating near or on imperial portraits, but also less obviously insulting actions, like removing the garlands from an imperial portrait or placing the new emperor's portrait head on a statue of the previous emperor.[39]

Perry seems to allude to a certain man who, under the reign of Tiberius, was condemned for removing the portrait head from a statue of Augustus and replacing it with another likeness. Suetonius describes this event and its preceding consequences (*Tib.* 58):

> One man had removed the head from a statue of Augustus, to substitute that of another; the case was tried in the senate, and since the evidence was conflicting, the witnesses were examined by torture. After the defendant had been condemned, this kind of accusation gradually went so far that even such acts as these were regarded as capital crimes: to beat a slave near a statue of Augustus, or to change one's clothes there; to carry a ring or coin stamped with his image into a privy or brothel, or to criticize any word or act of his.[40]

Libanius recounts a particular event that took place in Antioch: an angry mob threw ropes around the necks of imperial statues and began to drag them around the city. Some were hacked to

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[38] *Ibid,* 112

It is worth noting that all public buildings contained portraits of the emperor.

[39] Perry 2015, 663

[40] Translation in text by Rolfe 1914

*Statuae quidam Augusti caput dempserat, ut alterius imponeret; acta res in senatu et, quia ambigebatur, per tormenta quaesita est. Damnato reo paulatim genus calumniae eo processit, ut haec quoque capitalia essent; circa Augusti simulacrum servum cecidisse, vestimenta mutasse, nummo vel anulo effigiem impressam latrinae aut lupanari intulisse, dictum ullum factumve eius existimatione aliqua laesisse.*

In Dio Crysostom's 31st oration (105-106, 123), he mentions the practice of inscription/statue-switching of private citizens being common amongst Romans living in Rhodes. Considering it was a crime when the same was done to emperors further emphasizes the significance of the imperial statue.

pieces, others remained intact. Once the hysteria had ceased, the people of Antioch, whether they had participated in the vandalism or not, found themselves fearful for the punishments they would receive (*Or.* 22.11):

> I thought that some account of our punishments would come from the capital, but various people told various stories of what it would be—all of them gruesome—, and most of us began to concern ourselves about our funerals. Some, however, even despaired of that, for they believed that both our persons and the lifeless fabric of the city would be consumed in flames.[41]

It is evident, therefore, that statues of emperors deserved the same treatment that human beings received. "In the framework of ritual people touched revered images in ways appropriate to human beings," Stewart writes, "they kissed them, crowned them, garlanded them and sprinkled them with flowers. They clothed and anointed them."[42] Although an exercise in satire and fantasy and an exhibition in absolute control, Pygmalion gives his marble love interest gifts, adorns her with makeup and jewelry, and speaks to her as though she were a real person.[43] Propertius, in a poem from the point of view of Cornelia, illustrates the notion of speaking to a statue as if it would respond (4.11.83-83): *atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulacra loquerius/ut responsurae singular verba iace* ("and when in secret you speak to my image, utter every word as though I would reply.").

Imperial statues were frequently displayed in triumphs and public processions. The emperor Tiberius is said to have had himself cast as a *simulacrum* to be carried in a triumphal procession for a defeat over Germany—"an appropriate commemoration for a victory that was

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[41] Translation in text by Norman 1977:
> οἰομένων δὲ ἡμῶν ἥξειν ἐκεῖθεν λόγον ἔχοντα τὴν τιμωρίαν, τὴν δὲ ἄλλην ἄλλος ἔφασκε, δειναὶ δὲ πᾶσαι, καὶ περὶ τάφους τοῖς πολλοῖς ἡ φροντίς, εἰσὶ δὲ οἳ καὶ τοῦτ᾽ ἀπέγνωσαν ὡς ἐμπρησμοῦ τά τε ἄψυχα καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀναλώσοντος.

[42] Stewart 2003, 263

[43] Ovid *Metamorphoses* 10.238-297

itself only a pretense."[44] Likewise, Trajan celebrated a posthumous triumph which Beard claims may be portrayed on a relief from Praeneste [Fig. 3]:

> If, as has been argued, the triumph in question on that sculpture is Trajan's posthumous celebration of 117-118 CE, then (on a literal reading) we are being asked to imagine the slave uttering his warnings of mortality to the dummy of an emperor who is already dead—and about to become, *pace* Tertullian, a god.[45]

The representation of an emperor or a god was carried in Roman processions, such as that which took place in the *pompa circensis*. After the death of Caesar, his likeness was carried in a procession during which spectators wore wreathes and removed them as a sign of mourning.[46] This is analogous to the procession of godlike images:

> In the *pompa circensis,* a seemingly conscientiously chosen selection of deities…appeared as *simulacra* (anthropomorphic statues) borne on *fercula* (litters) and as *exuviae* (symbols, attributes, or relics) conveyed in *tensae* (processional chariots).[47]

While not representations of the emperor, *imagines* (wax masks) were made during the lifetime of prominent individuals, [48] and were worn to be a physical presence of these individuals at occasions where certain emotions or sentiments were expected. The intention with these *imagines* is that whoever worse the masks "became" these people:

> Their use by actors to impersonate the ancestors at family funerals served to politicize such occasions. They proceeded before the corpse to the Forum where they formed part of the audience for the funeral eulogy delivered from the speaker's platform (*rostra*). The presence of the ancestors in full magisterial costume and seated on ivory curule chairs provided the context for the speaker's words.[49]

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[44] Beard 2007, 185
[45] *Ibid,* 91
[46] Latham, 148
[47] *Ibid*

> Latham adds (46): "…from this ritual procession one can extract two different modes of divine representation: naturalistic (or anthropomorphic) statues and abstract (or symbolic) tokens, each of which seemingly corresponded to a particular species of divine-human relationship, in which the gods appeared as familiar in human guise or as foreign represented by emblems of their power."

[48] This is juxtaposed to Roman death masks which are a wax or plaster cast made of a deceased person's face, usually directly from the corpse.
[49] Flower 1996, 2

## Section 2: *Damnatio Memoriae*

While statues of emperors were worthy of reverence, they were also susceptible to abuse which came about by officially declared *damnatio memoriae*. Statues were also attacked by crowds in acts of spontaneous violence.

### Section 2.1: Defining *Damnatio Memoriae*

The term *damnatio memoriae* (literally, the condemnation of memory) is a modern term which is used to describe the treatment of disgraced emperors or the erasure of a person's name or other defining attributes—it is a term that, as Vittinghoff initially stated in his 1936 dissertation, the Romans themselves would not have used.[50] Flower raises concern with the problematic term stating that modern dictionaries or reference aids tend to try to connect *damnatio* with either *maiestas* or *perduellio* to try to give the term a strictly legal definition.[51] Ancient authors who wrote about the acts of *damnatio* (that is the assault on an emperor's effigy with the intent to destroy or permanently maim) used no common term, though the rhetoric of these events share similarities which support their relation to one another. The term *damnatio memoriae* assumes that the abuse of material objects in antiquity, especially as they pertain to emperors and imperial figures, occurred for similar reasons under similar circumstances. *Damnatio memoriae* is defined (as here in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*) as an occurrence where the intent of the action was to erase the offender from history:

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[50] Flower 1998, 156
See also: Varner 2000, 10
See also: Vittinghoff, *der Staatsfeind in der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (1936)

[51] *Ibid*

> After the deaths of persons deemed by the senate enemies of the state, measures to erase their memory might follow. Originally there was no set package, as the phrase implies…but a repertoire: images might be destroyed, and their display penalized, the name erased from inscriptions, and a man's *praenomen* banned in his family. With emperors their acts were abolished.[52]

While certainly this may have been the case with inscriptions, there are problems that arise given particular material evidence. If the intention has been to erase the malefactor from history, we must then ask why it is that some statues which have clearly suffered this particular type of condemnation still exist. A great majority of these extant objects are identifiable in that the harm which was done to them did not erase the defining attributes of the image. This interferes with Carroll and Rempel's claim that "the destruction of the images of prominent and public individuals…was intended to render it impossible to remember the original after whom the likeness was fashioned."[53] Figures left identifiable are interesting considering the common practice of reuse, where statues and other architectural objects would have been destroyed for repurposing. If the intent has been to eradicate the figure from history, as the given definition of *damnatio memoriae* suggests, then statues of emperors or other notable figures that remain, ruined, from antiquity should either not be covered by this blanketed term or the definition of *damnatio memoriae* must be redefined. With the Latin noun *damnatio* meaning "condemnation," adjective *damnatorius* meaning "relating to condemnation," and verb *damnare* meaning "to condemn" the English synonyms "revile," "chastise," "berate," "reprimand," and "denounce" should be applied to the meaning of *damnatio memoriae*; thus it becomes an action or series of actions done unto material objects with the intent to *humiliate* in addition to or rather than *eradicate.* Having now redefined *damnatio memoriae,* I will continue to use the term throughout the course of this examination.

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[52] *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Fourth Edition 2012
[53] Carroll and Rempel 2011, 72

The practice of *damnatio* is therefore juxtaposed to the erection of commemorative monuments such as arches, temples, columns, and portraits after the death of a "good" emperor. The construction of a monument upon one's death was crucial for the preservation of one's memory. Pliny illustrates this in one of his letters (9.19.3):

> Everyone who has done some great and memorable deed, should, I think, not only be excused but even praised if he wishes to ensure the immortality he has earned, and by the very words of his epitaph seeks to perpetuate the undying glory of his name.[54]

## Section 2.2: The Practice of *Damnatio Memoriae*

There are various ways to perform *damnatio*, such as the erasure of inscriptions, the removal of the likeness from paintings, and in extreme cases the refusal of burial for the body. *Damnatio* was a practice that occurred in public and in private (in fact, it was *encouraged* in private).[55] Something as small as a coin could have an emperor's likeness scratched out or altered to be the likeness of that of another emperor. The *damnatio* of coins is interesting considering the image being defaced or destroyed is an object of common currency. The decreed *damnatio* of coinage occurred during the condemnation of Caligula, where his *aes* was made invalid by Claudius. According to Barrett, in 43 CE "the senate so hated the memory of Caligula that they decreed that all the bronze coinage bearing his image should be melted down."[56] Barrett argues that surviving coins of Caligula that have been disfigured (i.e. have suffered *damnatio memoriae*) "are a possible way of complying with a demonetization order where the melting

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[54] Translation by Radice 1969

[55] Stewart 2003, 271

> Vittinghoff mentions this practice as it pertains to text: "The effects of sanctions on the imagination of Roman citizens in the imperial period can also be gauged by the fact that erasures can sometimes be found in private funerary texts." (1936, 10)

[56] Barrett 1995, 84

> Cassius Dio 60.22.3: Ἐκείνους μὲν δὴ τούτοις ἐτίμησαν, τῇ δὲ δὴ τοῦ Γαΐου μνήμῃ ἀχθόμενοι τὸ νόμισμα τὸ χαλκοῦν πᾶν, ὅσον τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ ἐντετυπωμένην εἶχε, συγχωνευθῆναι ἔγνωσαν.

down and restriking was not practical."[57] All of this is not to say, however, that so called "good" emperors did not have their images repurposed as well. For example, although the monument was carved specifically for the emperor, The Arch of Constantine, dedicated in 315 to commemorate his victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, is adorned with sculptures and reliefs that can be traced back to Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius. There are two *tondi* on the arch which appear to have initially depicted Hadrian: one likeness has been recurved to resemble a young Constantine [Fig. 4 Left], the other either Licinius or Constantius Chlorus [Fig. 4 Right]. The recarving of images was not limited only to emperors as there are a myriad of statues of (presumably) notable figures that remain from antiquity that have been recarved. A particularly interesting example is a certain portrait of a woman [Fig. 5] that has been refashioned from a pre-existing head. On the back of her neck, the previous image still remains, as its mouth, nose, and a portion of its right eye remain intact. Thus reuse was a common occurrence in antiquity and by no means was every reuse of an image intended to be disrespectful. Therefore, given its prevalence in antiquity, the repurposing of a condemned emperor's statue or inscription was perhaps the most common method of enacting *damnatio memoriae*. For the purposes of this examination, I am concerned specifically with *damnatio memoriae* as it happened to statuary.

## Section 3: *Damnatio*—A Function of Judicial Punishment

Recalling the introduction of this thesis, a reminder that the "point" of public punishment is not necessarily the death of the individual punished, but the humiliation they suffer prior to expiration. Humiliation is necessary to erase the respectibility of an individual in favor of immortilizing their humiliation and degredation. Given the following examples of statue

[57] *Ibid*, 85

mutilation, complete removal is ineffective for reviling one's character—humiliation must exist to truly damn the individual represented with the statue.

## Section 3.1: Statue Mutilation

While statues were thought to deserve the same treatment as a real body, they were also susceptible to the same mistreatment, that is, they were vulnerable to violence in attempts to humiliate them. As mentioned previously, if the figure is completely destroyed, it is not able to remain on display conveying a message to its audience. When the statue is left on display, disfigured, an audience is able to discern the humiliation associated with the figure. Therefore, an image must be carved, or if altered, semblances of the previous image must remain as to be a public reminder to the audience of the condemned's wrongdoing. In some cases, damaged objects were kept in view to display the damage itself. If the object was totally destroyed or attacked to the point of being unrecognizable, it would be less useful in the construction of a "profanophany," which Rambelli and Reinders define as "a revelation of the profanity, temporality, and corruption inherent to someone or something."[58]

Based on the living's interaction with statues, there is the well-attested assumption that certain human characteristics were interpreted from these images. The face, for example, was thought to be a person's most valuable physical asset. Suetonius tells us that Caligula used to stand in front of a mirror and practice making his face uglier (*Calig.* 50.1): *vultum vero natura horridum ac taetrum etiam ex industria efferabat componens ad speculum in omnem terrorem ac formidinem* ("while his face was naturally forbidding and ugly, he purposely made it even more savage, practicing all kinds of terrible and fearsome expressions before a mirror.") The thought here, perhaps, was that in having the ugliest, most savage face possible, Caligula would be

[58] Rambelli and Reinders 2007, 2001

perceived to be savage himself. Suetonius will claim other eccentricities for Caligula, but contorting his face to appear a certain way is admittedly not so bizarre given the commonality of posing and projecting one's face. The head represented one's identity to the Roman people, and parts of the face were often stressed to convey a certain message or personality type, as is the case with Nero potentially trying to appear more Hellenized by wearing a beard. Naturally, after Cicero was murdered, his hands and face were displayed on the Roman Rostra—an act that was intended as a "direct assault on the orator's defining attributes."[59]

The loss of one's head signified the loss of life—as life beyond decapitation is inconceivable—and loss of identity as well. This is why capital punishment can be death or exile as one experiences the loss of the community that can identify them. When Priam is beheaded in the second book of the *Aeneid,* he is described *sine nomine corpus* (2.557-8): *iacet ingens litore truncus,avulsumque umeris caput et sine nomine corpus.* ("A huge trunk lies on the shore, and the head having been torn away from its shoulders, and a body without a name."). Vergil uses this same motif later on in book five in his description of the death of Palinurus (5.871): *nudus in ignota, Palinure, iacebis harena* ("naked you will lie, Palinurus, on an unknown shore.") Some years later Lucan echoes these scenes of the *Aeneid* in his *Bellum Civile* when he describes the death of Pompey the Great (8.674): *postquam trunco cervix abscisa recessit* ("afterwards the severed neck was separated from the trunk.") The body of Pompey later arrives to the shore to receive a proper funeral (8.774-5): *inveniat trunci cineres et norit harenas/ad quas, Magne, tuum referat caput*[60] ("let him find the ashes of your trunk and let him recognize the sands to which he must restore your head, Magnus.") As a part of his funeral rites, he will receive a placard which

[59] Stewart 2003, 55

[60] The use of the word *caput* was also common when referring to a person's life, thus insinuating a double meaning here. A proper burial with his head gives Pompey his name/identity back, but a proper burial with a placard denoting *hic situs est Magnus* gives Pompey his life back (as he will live on perpetually via his grave marker).

names him (8.793)—*hic situs est Magnus*. Though several coins bearing his image remain extant, the head of Geta has been completely removed from the Severan *tondo* [Fig. 6], where his now headless body remains positioned next to his brother Caracalla, who decreed his *damnatio*.[61]

Thus, the importance of the head is not lost in the construction of Roman statuary. Roman statues of people were often constructed with very general bodies, as the head was attached later.[62] "It is through the distinctive features of the face, regardless of whether they form an accurate likeness," Stewart states, "that Roman art expresses personal identity. The body is then used to convey further information about the individual's social persona."[63] It is with facial mutilation that *damnatio memoriae* is intended to be humiliating. The figures who have had their faces ruined have not had their bodies desecrated and they have not been drug around a public sphere with the intent of being a spectacle. The portrait of Nero Cagliari [Figure 7] is an example of typical portraiture defacement in antiquity: it exhibits the common T-shaped formation of carving across the forehead and down the nose, while its eyes and nose have been hacked away by a sharp instrument. This method of removing the sensory organs was common. This T-shaped method of defacement is also evidenced on a bust of Macrinus from Rome [Fig. 8], where "the contrasting surfaces between damaged and untouched areas highlight the intentional nature of the portrait's defacement."[64]

One example of a portrait having suffered *damnatio memoriae* is that of Caligula. Figure 9 shows a mutilated bust of Caligula which was "violently assaulted with a small hammer before

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[61] Certain scholars, as is the case with Warnke, assert that the figure removed from the painting is actually Caracalla, due to his mass execution of young Alexandrian men in 215. If this is so, the remaining figure on the *tondo* would be Geta. (Warnke 1973, 17-18)
[62] This is not to say that there weren't statues constructed in antiquity that had any defining attributes on their bodies as remarkable images like the Augustus Prima Porta certainly existed.
[63] Stewart 2003, 53
[64] *Ibid*, 192

being thrown into the Tiber, and the eyes of the portrait were gouged out."[65] The nose, mouth, and ears have been hacked away as well. Disposal into the Tiber recalls the practice of *poena post mortem*, which occurred when the bodies of capital offenders, victims killed in the arena, and others were denied proper burial.[66] For the Romans, water was also a traditional place for the disposal of threatening or polluted objects. "It is well attested," Kyle states, "that executions in the arena of the Forum, riots, and proscriptions, and imperial treason trials often led to denials of burial and the dumping of corpses into the Tiber."[67] As Varner has stated, "throwing Caligula's images in the Tiber effectively cancelled any devotional aspects which the portraits may have held and served as a proclamation of loyalty to the new emperor Claudius and his regime."[68] What is interesting is the power in this: if an image is thrown into the water, it cannot be seen any longer. However, this is not the primary goal of water disposal, that is the act of violence upon the body of the statue and its ritualized humiliation. This still "exists" even when the statue is thrown into a body of water. As far as disposal into the Tiber is concerned, Cassius Dio describes this phenomenon as it pertains to the emperor Elagabalus (80.20.1-2):

> …so he made an attempt to flee, and would have got away somewhere by being placed in a chest, had he not been discovered and slain, at the age of eighteen. His mother, who embraced him and clung tightly to him, perished with him; their heads were cut off and their bodies, after being stripped naked, were first dragged all over the city, and then the mother's body was cast aside somewhere or other, while he was thrown into the river.[69]

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[65] *Ibid,* 14
[66] Varner 2005, 69
[67] Kyle 1998, 218
[68] Varner 2000, 103
[69] Translation in text by Foster 1927:

> ...φεύγειν πως ἐπεχείρησε. καὶ ἔμελλεν ἐς τύλλον ἐμβληθεὶς ἐκδρᾶναί ποι, φωραθεὶς δὲ ἀπεσφάγη, ὀκτωκαίδεκα ἔτη γεγονώς. καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ ἡ μήτηρ (περιπλακεῖσα γὰρ ἀπρὶξ εἶχετο) συναπώλετο. καὶ αἵ τε κεφαλαὶ αὐτῶν ἀπεκόπησαν, καὶ τὰ σώματα γυμνωθέντα τὸ μὲν πρῶτον διὰ πάσης τῆς πόλεως ἐσύρη, ἔπειτα τὸ μὲν τῆς γυναικὸς ἄλλως πως ἐρρίφη, τὸ δὲ ἐκείνου ἐς τὸν ποταμὸν ἐνεβλήθη.

Section 4: Attitudes Towards Statuary and the Practice of Public Mutilation

When statues were abused in public, they were typically done so in tripartite fashion: the statue was pulled down from its pedestal (usually with a noose), the statue was then dragged through the public with a crowd rejoicing or hurling insults, and finally the statue was disposed of as if by improper burial. Suetonius describes this type of death as it happened not to statuary but to the emperor Vitellius (*Vit.* 17.1-2):

> But they bound his arms behind his back, put a noose about his neck, and dragged him with rent garments and half-naked to the Forum. All along the Sacred Way he was greeted with mockery and abuse, his head held back by the hair, as is common with criminals, and even the point of a sword placed under his chin, so that he could not look down but must let his face be seen. Some pelted him with dung and filth, others called him incendiary and glutton, and some of the mob even taunted him with his bodily defects...At last on the Stairs of Wailing he was tortured by many small stabbings and then dispatched and dragged off with a hook to the Tiber.[70]

"Exposure on the Stairs functioned as a clear advertisement of the crime, the identity of the criminal, and the punishment;" Barry writes, "[it] became a useful, if heavy-handed, means for the emperor or the senate to broadcast to the public changes in political order and personnel."[71]

The *Scalae Gemoniae* were particularly horrific, as the body of Sejanus, prefect of the Praetorian Guard under Tiberius, was thrown down the stairs after his strangulation. What happened to Sejanus shows both the punishment of the body as well as the punishment of his images. Once cast down the stairs, the body of Sejanus was ripped apart by the crowd. Rioting

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[70] Translation in text by Rolfe 1914:

> *...donec religatis post terga manibus, iniecto cervicibus laqueo, veste discissa seminudus in Forum tractus est inter magna rerum verborumque ludibria per totum viae Sacrae spatium, reducto coma capite, ceu noxii solent, atque etiam mento mucrone gladii subrecto, ut visendam praeberet faciem neve summitteret; 2quibusdam stercore et caeno incessentibus, aliis incendiarium et patinarium vociferantibus, parte vulgi etiam corporis vitia exprobrante; erat enim in eo enormis proceritas, facies rubida plerumque ex vinulentia, venter obesus, alterum femur subdebile impulsu olim quadrigae, cum auriganti Gaio ministratorem exhiberet. Tandem apud Gemonias minutissimis ictibus excarnificatus atque confectus est et inde unco tractus in Tiberim*

[71] Barry 2008, 231-232

followed in which the crowd sought to murder anyone possibly linked to Sejanus. Accordingly, after his death, an issue of *damnatio memoriae* was decreed by the Senate, and the images of Sejanus were attacked in public, just as his body had been. Cassius Dio recounts the public act of Sejanus' *damnatio* (58.11.3):

> The populace also assailed him, shouting many reproaches at home for the lives he had taken and many jeers for the hopes he had cherished. They hurled down, beat down, and dragged down all his images, as though they were thereby treating the man himself with contumely, and he thus became a spectator of what he was destined to suffer.[72]

Cassius Dio asserts that those destroying the statues of Sejanus treated the images as if they were assaulting the man. This trope is found once more in Cassius Dio's histories, when he discusses the *damnatio* of Commodus (74.2.1):

> In this way was Pertinax declared emperor and Commodus a public enemy, after both the senate and the populace had joined in shouting many bitter words against the latter. They wanted to drag off his body and tear it limb from limb, as they did do, in fact, with his statues...[73]

Additionally this is seen as Pliny the Younger writes on the *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian (*Pan.* 52.4-6):

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[72] Translation in text by Foster 1924:
> καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ ὁ δῆμος προσπίπτων πολλὰ μὲν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀπολωλόσιν ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ ἐπεβόα, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐλπισθεῖσιν ἐπέσκωπτε. τάς τε εἰκόνας αὐτοῦ πάσας κατέβαλλον καὶ κατέκοπτον καὶ κατέσυρον ὡς καὶ αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνον αἰκιζόμενοι· καὶ οὕτω θεατὴς ὧν πείσεσθαι ἔμελλεν ἐγίγνετο.

[73] Translation in text by Foster 1927:
> Καὶ οὕτως ὅ τε Περτίναξ αὐτοκράτωρ καὶ ὁ Κόμμοδος πολέμιος ἀπεδείχθη, πολλά γε ἐς αὐτὸν καὶ δεινὰ καὶ τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου συμβοησάντων. ἠθέλησαν μὲν γὰρ καὶ τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ σῦραι καὶ διασπάσαι ὥσπερ καὶ τὰς εἰκόνας...

> And so your few statues of bronze stand and will stand as long as the temple itself, whereas those innumerable golden images, as a sacrifice to public rejoicing, lie broken and destroyed. It was our delight to dash those proud faces to the ground, to smite them with the sword and savage them with the axe, as if blood and agony could follow every blow. Our transports of joy—so long deferred—were unrestrained; all sought a form of vengeance in beholding those bodies mutilated, limbs backed in pieces, and finally that baleful, fearsome visage cast into the fire, to be melted down, so that from such menacing terror something for man's use and enjoyment should rise out of the flames.[74]

And too as Cicero describes the *damnatio* of Piso (*In Pis.* 93):

> The troops then proceeded to overthrow, smash, grind to powder, and scatter to the winds a statue—an excellent likeness of the original—which Piso had desired to be erected in a busy spot, in order that the memory of so sweet a gentleman might not perish. Thus the hatred which they had hoped to wreak upon the man himself was vented by them upon his likeness and effigy.[75]
> Kyle has referred to the damage done to statues as "surrogate corpse abuse,"[76]

and while I do not necessarily assert that these actions are the same as corpse abuse, they are certainly similar. This tendency to harm the statue "as if blood and agony could follow every blow" does not necessarily mean that the people destroying these statues believed that the image *was* the actual person. What it does mean is that they found the statue worthy of judicial punishment. The instances of statue abuse mentioned above—the *damnatio* of Sejanus, Commodus, Domitian, and Piso's images—closely recall the public punishments of Vitellius and Elagabalus who were humiliated and violently assailed in public.

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[74] Translation in text by Radice 1969:
> *Ergo istae quidem aereae et paucae manent manebuntque quam diu templum ipsum, illae autem ⟨ aureae⟩ et innumerabiles strage ac ruina publico gaudio litaverunt. Iuvabat illidere solo superbissimos vultus, instare ferro, saevire securibus, ut si singulos ictus sanguis dolorque sequeretur. Nemo tam temperans gaudii seraeque laetitiae, quin instar ultionis videretur cernere laceros artus truncata membra, postremo truces horrendasque imagines obiectas excoctasque flammis, ut ex illo terrore et minis in usum hominum ac voluptates ignibus mutarentur.*

[75] Translation in text by Watts 1931:
> *... illi autem statuam istius persimilem, quam stare celeberrimo in loco voluerat, ne suavissimi hominis memoria moreretur, deturbant, adfligunt, comminuunt, dissipant. Sic odium, quod in ipsum attulerant, id in eius imaginem ac simulacrum profuderunt.*

[76] Kyle 1998, 183

A statue's public destruction, whether decreed by the senate or perhaps as an act of spontaneity, was accompanied by loud, spectacular and often ritualized abuse. While there is generally little indication as to whether the mutilation of statues mentioned in literary sources is spontaneous or the result of a decree, it is clear that acts such as chanting "lent uniformity and purpose to the dissatisfaction of the crowd."[77] Cassius Dio provides more information regarding the *damnatio* of Commodus. Here, the crowd lends further insult to the images by verbally abusing them (74.1-2):

> …they spared his remains, but glutted their rage against him in other ways, calling him all sorts of names. For no one called him Commodus or emperor; instead they referred to him as an accursed wretch and a tyrant, adding in jest such terms as "the gladiator," "the charioteer," "the left-handed," "the ruptured." To those senators on whom the fear of Commodus had rested most heavily, the crowd called out: "Huzza! Huzza! You are saved; you have won." Indeed all the shouts that they had been accustomed to utter with a kind of rhythmic swing in the amphitheaters, by way of paying court to Commodus, they now chanted with certain changes that made them utterly ridiculous.[78]

Yelling insults at an image has no power to destroy it, but instead serves to humiliate it. In a similar vein, Stewart mentions the fact that statues were occasionally stoned—a practice that "served no practical purpose and does not seem to have been a sufficiently spectacular form of abuse to merit mention in the sources."[79]

The previously mentioned motif of pulling down a statue from its pedestal was quite common and notable examples include the *damnatio* of Caligula (Dio *RH* 30.1.1): "his statues and his images were dragged from their pedestals…" and the *damnatio* of Nero (Plutarch *Galba*

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[77] Stewart 2003, 272

[78] Translation in text by Foster 1927:

> ...τοῦ μὲν σώματος ἀπέσχοντο, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἐνεφοροῦντο, οὐδὲν ὅ τι οὐκ ἐπιλέγοντες· Κόμμοδον μὲν γὰρ οὐδεὶς οὐδ' αὐτοκράτορα αὐτὸν ὠνόμαζεν, ἀλιτήριον δέ τινα καὶ τύραννον ἀποκαλοῦντες προσετίθεσαν ἐπισκώπτοντες τὸν μονομάχον, τὸν ἁρματηλάτην, τὸν ἀριστερόν, τὸν κηλήτην. τοῖς τε βουλευταῖς, ὅσοις καὶ μάλιστα1 ἐκ τοῦ Κομμόδου φόβος ἐπήρτητο, ὁ ὄχλος ἐπέλεγεν "εὖγε εὖγε, ἐσώθης, ἐνίκησας." ὅσα τε εἰώθεσαν ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ Κομμόδου θεραπείᾳ εὐρύθμως πως ἐκβοᾶν, ταῦτα τότε μετασχηματίζοντες ἐς τὸ γελοιότατον ἐξῇδον.

[79] Stewart 2003, 274

8.5): “accordingly, they cast Spiculus the gladiator under statues of Nero that were being dragged about in the forum, and killed him.” In a way, this practice recalls the Roman triumph, in which the defeated enemy would be chained or bound by rope and made to walk in procession in front of the Roman populous—a parade displaying their own defeat. Dragging the defeated in public is found as far back as the *Iliad*, where Achilles binds Hector's feet and drags him behind his chariot for the crowd to be horrified at (22.3395-409):

> He spoke, and now thought of shameful treatment for glorious Hektor. In both his feet at the back he made holes by the tendons in the space between ankle and heel, and drew thongs of ox-hide through them, and fastened them to the chariot so as to let the head drag...A cloud of dust rose where Hektor was dragged, his dark hair was falling about him, and all that head that was once so handsome was tumbled in the dust...So all his head was dragged in the dust; and now his mother tore out her hair, and threw the shining veil far from her and raised a great wail as she looked upon her son; and his father beloved groaned pitifully, and all his people about him were taken with wailing and lamentation through the city.[80]

## Section 5: Conclusion—A One-to-One Correlation

This chapter has explored the humanity bestowed upon and attributed to secular statues, namely those of emperors or other notable individuals. As these statues were, for all intents and purposes, considered to be viable representations of actual human beings, what we are seeing here is the one-to-one correlation between humiliation experienced in the public arena as it

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[80] Translation in text by Lattimore 2011:

> Ἦ ῥα, καὶ Ἕκτορα δῖον ἀεικέα μήδετο ἔργα.
> ἀμφοτέρων μετόπισθε ποδῶν τέτρηνε τένοντε
> ἐς σφυρὸν ἐκ πτέρνης, βοέους δ᾽ ἐξῆπτεν ἱμάντας,
> ἐκ δίφροιο δ᾽ ἔδησε, κάρη δ᾽ ἕλκεσθαι ἔασεν· ἐς δίφρον δ᾽ ἀναβὰς ἀνά τε κλυτὰ τεύχε᾽ ἀείρας
> μάστιξέν ῥ᾽ ἐλάαν, τὼ δ᾽ οὐκ ἀέκοντε πετέσθην. 400
> τοῦ δ᾽ ἦν ἑλκομένοιο κονίσαλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται
> κυάνεαι πίτναντο, κάρη δ᾽ ἅπαν ἐν κονίῃσι
> κεῖτο πάρος χαρίεν· τότε δὲ Ζεὺς δυσμενέεσσι
> δῶκεν ἀεικίσσασθαι ἐῇ ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ.
> Ὣς τοῦ μὲν κεκόνιτο κάρη ἅπαν· ἡ δέ νυ μήτηρ 405
> τίλλε κόμην, ἀπὸ δὲ λιπαρὴν ἔρριψε καλύπτρην
> τηλόσε, κώκυσεν δὲ μάλα μέγα παῖδ᾽ ἐσιδοῦσα.
> ᾤμωξεν δ᾽ ἐλεεινὰ πατὴρ φίλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
> κωκυτῷ τ᾽ εἴχοντο καὶ οἰμωγῇ κατὰ ἄστυ.

pertains to condemned criminals and the humiliation inflicted upon these more or less human statues. Like condemned criminals, the statues of individuals that experienced the forms of mutilation discussed here, were worthy of a punishment where an audience could witness them be stripped of their honor and the attributes that defined them as "human." This phenomenon is not only influenced by the public punishment of criminals, but it is a direct continuation of the practice given the attitude towards images during a time when they may have been the only connection the public would have had with the emperor.

The following chapter will explore this continuity as it pertains to the practice of statue abuse in the late antique period, namely that of the Christian destruction of non-Christian statues.

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 3
Relief Depicting Emperor Trajan's Triumph Over the Parthians—117 CE; Palestrina, Italy
Hall VI of the National Museum of Archaeology in Palestrina
Image Courtesy of Palestrina's National Museum of Archaeology

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 4
Tondi on the Arch of Constantine—312 CE; Rome, Italy
Left: Hadrian Recut as Constantine; Right: Emperor Recarved as Licinius or Constantius Chlorus
Image Courtesy of *followinghadrian.com*

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*: JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

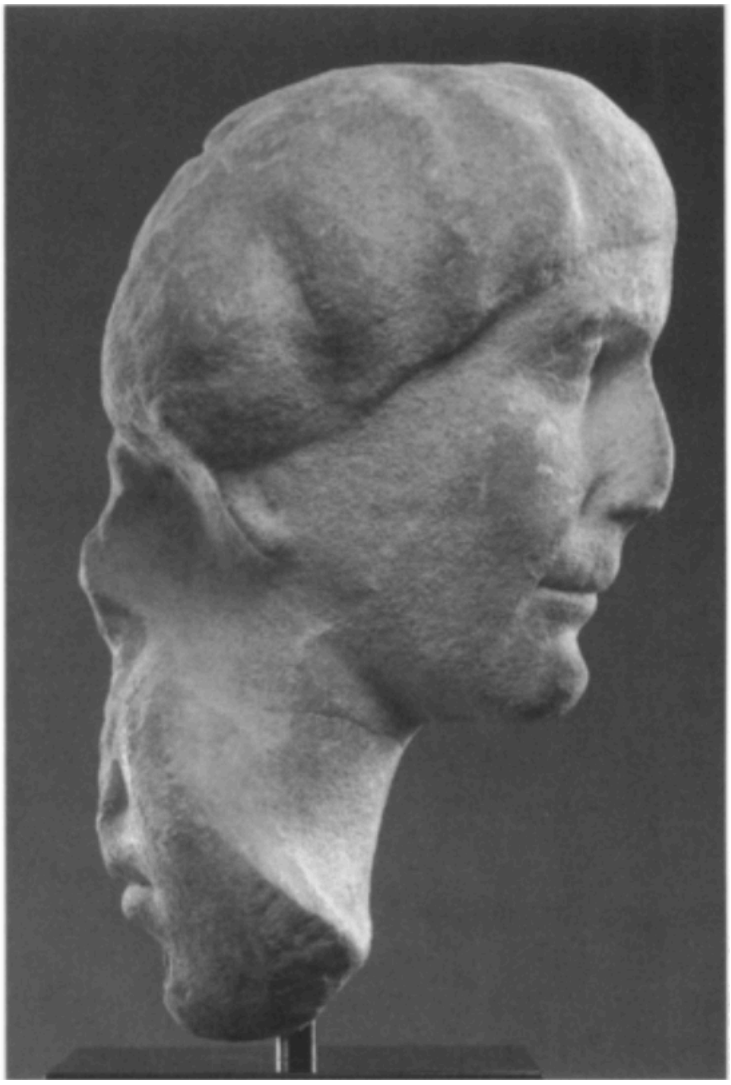

Figure 5
Recut Portrait of a Woman—14-37 CE
The Art Museum, Princeton University 1989.55
Image Courtesy of Karl Galinksy 2008

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 6
The Severan Tondo—200 CE
Antikensammlung der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin Inv. No. 31329
Image Courtesy of Johannes Laurentius and Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 7
Defaced Bust of Nero—Cagliari, Italy
Museo Archeologico Nazionale. Inv. No. 6122
Image Courtesty of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 8
Defaced Head of Macrinus—3rd c. CE; Rome, Italy
Arthur M. Sackler Museum Inv. No. 1949.47.138
Image Courtesy of Harvard Art Museums

*DAMNATIO MEMORIAE:* JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT FOR MARBLE AND BRONZE

Figure 9
Defaced Bust of Caligula—37-41 CE
Switzerland Private Collection
Image Courtesy of Eric Varner 2000

# CHAPTER 2

# LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE AND THE CONTINUATION Of *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

*Iam et Aegyptius Serapis factus est Christianus…*
*Now even the Egyptian Serapis has been made a Christian…*
Jerome *Epistle* 107

## Section 1: Introduction

My intention with this chapter is to assert that Christians, especially in late antiquity, continued public statue abuse. When I speak about Christian destruction of statues I am referencing damaged statues where it is evident some religious or moral motivation was behind the destruction. These statues have had their faces mutilated by crosses, or their damage in literature has been linked to religious motivations—making their abuse similar to that discussed in the previous chapter. Statues with crosses etched onto their bodies have become a source of several scholarly theories surrounding why exactly these crosses exist, for while some crosses have been hastily carved into statues, there are just as many that appear to have been chiseled with great care. It is my assertion that these crosses exist on (particularly) the faces of statues because they represent the continuation of public statue abuse and *damnatio memoriae*. As statue-abuse, notably of emperors, exists as a gesture to display a bad emperor's shame, degradation, and defeat, so too do religious markings (which are not limited to crosses, as scripture and other symbols can be etched into statues) indicate the same.

This continuation is not only limited to crosses carved into statues. Echoing certain instances of *damnatio* from earlier times, there is evidence of statues that have been mutilated in particularly gruesome ways which go far beyond what would constitute "sufficient" damnation. For this chapter, I will first discuss theories explaining reasons for crosses and other religious insignia carved into statues. It is at this point that I will compare *damnatio* and late antique statue abuse. Having established the two phenomena as analogous, I will then review the extant material evidence followed by literary evidence and notable Christian attitudes towards statuary which support my claim that these statues were ruined with the intention to humiliate them.

## Section 1.1: Scholarship and the Issue of "Inclusion"

Given that classical objects "could be physically excerpted from their original context, reused, and inserted into a new artistic framework so that they might fulfill other religious, aesthetic, and material needs,"[81] the theory that Christian insignia were etched into statuary as a means of inclusion (typically through a sort of baptism) is perhaps the most common one. This particular theory arises from the fact that many of these crosses have been meticulously carved, as on a basanite bust of Germanicus from the Augustan Age [Fig. 10]. Marinescu groups statues who have had crosses carved onto them into five categories, the second of which is where statues of this kind would be placed—"heads bearing an ornate cross, carefully incised."[82] Both Marinescu and Jacobs assert that these carefully incised crosses are indicative of a representational baptism meant to include the non-Christian icon into the Christian sphere.[83] "For an early Christian audience," Marinescu states, "the cross on the forehead must have made an unmistakable allusion to baptismal anointing [as it] proved that these individuals have been

[81] Marinescu 1996, 285
[82] *Ibid,* 288
[83] Jacobs 2010, 114

exorcised and baptized; it remained an indelible sign of conversion."[84] The idea of religious inclusion is not limited solely to the cross symbol, as a Dionysus statuette found by the River Don [Fig. 11], which was seemingly reused as a container for holy water, is etched with what appears to be two chi-rho symbols on his torso, as well as with words from psalm 28 encircling his waist: "the voice of the Lord is heard over waters." Sauer argues that perhaps the owner of this flask might have felt it necessary to Christianize the image because of its prominent nudity.[85]

Similar to the cross as baptism idea is the theory that the cross was meant to be a tool for exorcism. The belief that non-Christian statues housed demons, or *daimones* (demigods) is prevalent in ancient literature, as referenced by Plutarch, for example, who commented on the potential of the Delphic shrine being haunted by deceptive *daimones*.[86] The Christian writer Athenagoras wrote that these demons occupying statues had the ability to take on both the names and images of the gods, making them active and powerful.[87] The fact that demons were thought to dwell in statues, "is probably the main reason why images of deities were attacked more often and more thoroughly than religious architecture[88] or inscriptions."[89] Caseau claims that "to achieve a total and complete reversal of the idea that the gods protected the city and the family," Christian writers created a rhetoric of intolerance towards non-Christian statues which allowed the writers to alter opinions about the icons.[90] This rhetoric argued that statues harbored demons and received sacrifices, making them active participants in evil. Smith argues that these crosses

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[84] Marinescu 1996, 291-292
[85] Sauer 2014, 21
[86] Plutarch *de Defectu Oraculorum* 14-16
[87] Athenagoras *Legatio pro Christianis* 26
See also: Nasrallah 2010, 210
[88] This is not to say that religious architecture was not subject to etchings of the cross, as Sauer goes on to state that non-Christian temples were occasionally adorned with crosses and Christian imagery to rid the structure of demons and make it suitable for Christians to occupy. (Sauer 2014, 23)
[89] Sauer 2014, 23
[90] Caseau 2012, 480

were a precautionary measure used before any harm was done to a non-Christian statue. By carving a cross onto the statue, the *daimones* could not come from the icon and harm the person ruining the iconography.[91] Thus, the crosses were not meant for any sort of display purposes.[92]

Section 1.2: It Matters Not the Symbol

Insofar as crosses are concerned, while I do not doubt that non-Christian images were mutilated for baptizing, including, or exorcising them, I am convinced that these conditions are but a symptom of a larger reason for statue abuse. Non-Christian statues mutilated by Christian symbols as well as other kinds of abuse such as the removal of limbs, constitutes the continuing practice of *damnatio memoriae* as seen in the desecration of imperial iconography. The purpose of *damnatio*, once carried out, was to be a display to the public as images of warning, humiliation, and change. Frankfurter has argued:

> ...in late antiquity, iconoclastic acts against temples and images would have signified attempts to *reorder* space, time and the locus of the holy in dramatic revolutionary gestures, in many ways continuing—in both more intimate and more cosmic dimensions—the civic attacks on imperial statues of earlier Roman times.[93]

It is entirely possible that some Christians felt this way regarding image/architecture destruction. It seems to me, however, that Frankfurter's claim that these acts were "dramatic revolutionary gestures" is hyperbolic. Christians probably carved the image of the cross onto these figures almost subconsciously, as it was an image which was prevalent. "St. John Chrysostom wrote at the end of the fourth century of the power of the victory sign, the cross, and how it was present everywhere;" Sande writes, "people hung it around their necks, and painted not only themselves,

[91] See [Fig. 12]: Mosaics in San Marco at Venice show a winged demon who appears when Saint Simon destroys the image of the sun god (left), and the image of the moon goddess (right).
[92] Smith 2012, 298
[93] Frankfurter 2012, 139

but also their animals, with crosses."[94] What is happening with statues in the late antique period is not the beginning of a new era of statue abuse and it is not one intended to serve as an eradicator of a particular religion or culture: it is the continuation of the long-standing practice of showing the public who or what has been degraded and humiliated.

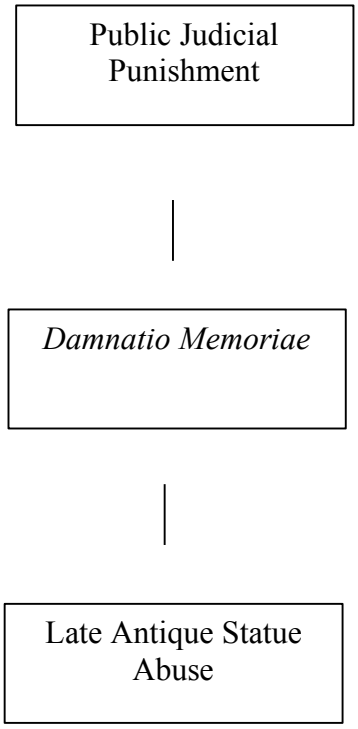
And so it is necessary to establish that it matters not the symbol with which a statue was mutilated, but the meaning behind it. There was no grand religious war which these crosses symbolized and the incision of the cross was meant to denigrate and humiliate its statuesque victim in the same way as hacking away the eyes, nose, and mouth of an imperial statue. These methods of facial mutilation were meant to shame the figure as its body was left on display—in this way, regardless of how the face was damaged or the statue tortured, secular *damnatio memoriae* and the Christian abuse of non-Christian images are analogous.

It is worth considering, also, that the incision of crosses onto the faces of statues is itself a continuation of the practice of the trifold facial mutilation seen in the previous chapter. In destroying the eyes, nose, and mouth, a cross-pattern naturally forms (see Figure 7 of Nero and Figure 8 of Macrinus). Seeing as the cross was not necessarily a popular image in churches until the sixth century, given the importance bestowed upon facial features, it is entirely possible that the symbol of the cross was another way of blinding and silencing the victim.

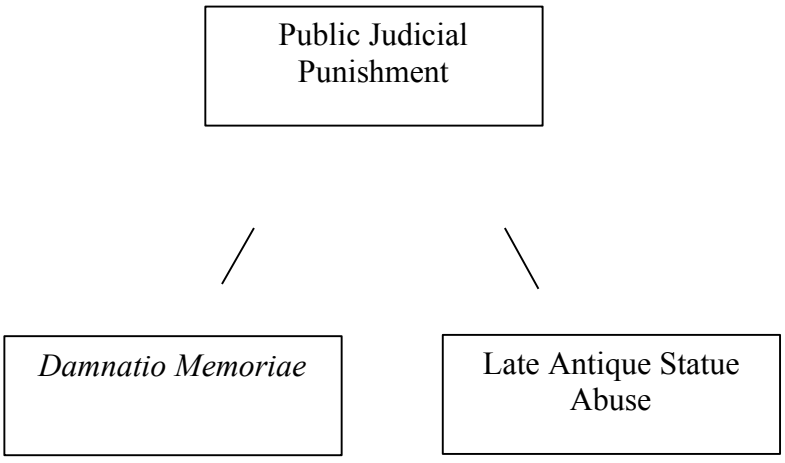
With *damnatio memoriae* and Christian statue abuse considered analogous, it must be stated that *damnatio* was not the cause of statue mutilation that occurred in late antiquity. Both "events" were directly influenced by judicial punishments in the arena, and the two must be seen as equals rather than one as the product of the other. To illustrate my point, instead of the following, where judicial punishment is the cause of *damnatio memoriae* which in turn is the

[94] Sande 2014, 176

cause of late antique statue abuse:




public judicial punishment remains the factor, by which both *damnatio* and late antique abuse are influenced:



## Section 2.1: Mutilation of the Face

Special attention towards the face continues to occur when a religious image receives abuse, such as depriving the statue of its sensory organs (eyes, mouth, nose, ears). Again, it was a belief that the eyes were the window of the soul, and one could discern from them the innermost thoughts of an individual or statue. Facial mutilation occurs frequently but a few notable statues are presented here. In addition to the inclusion of a large cross on her forehead and a smaller one on her chin, the head of what is believed to be Aphrodite [Fig. 17] has had her eyes scratched out, her nose removed, and her mouth picked at. The head of what is thought to be Hera from Sparta [Fig. 18] is similarly disfigured: a cross adorns her forehead while her eyes, nose, and mouth have been ruined. What makes the head of Hera interesting is that her eyes have been marked with crosses as well. It is difficult to determine if her mouth and chin were recarved rather than simply smashed, but the lower half of her face seems to be adorned with two crosses side-by-side. It is quite interesting that eyes begin to be marked with cross symbols rather than indiscriminate hack marks given the discussions certain Christian authors had concerning the Christianization of the eyes. Eyes were often referred to as a means to accept one's faith. Theophilus states that because one is able to discern good or bad with his eyes, he is able to welcome good things into his soul.[95] Athenagoras writes that the eyes should be used as they were intended by God: to look towards good things which lead to an eternal afterlife.[96] Another instance of eye removal is seen in the mithraeum of Hawarte in Syria, as the eyes of the guardians presiding over excavator Michal Gawlikowski's aptly named 'city of darkness' have had their eyes scratched out. "That Christians were to blame is in little doubt," Sauer asserts, as "coin disposition suggests that the mithraeum was still in use under Arcadius...and one cross was

[95] Theophilus *ad Autolycum* 1.2
[96] Athenagoras *A Plea Regarding Christians* 32

engraved in a painting, before the mithraeum in an artificial cave was filled up and a church was erected over the ruins in the early fifth century."[97]

Reliefs received the same treatment, as figures are often found with their entire faces picked away. The temple of Isis at Philae in South Egypt features a relief depicting from left to right Horus, Isis, Osiris, and Hesat, [Fig. 19] who have had their faces scratched away. In addition to the removal of their sensory organs, the gods have had their feet desecrated, "thus making them unable to see, hear, move, and act."[98] A more extreme example of figures being rendered motionless is found in another Egyptian relief—the temple of Hathor in Dendera, where entire figures have been removed [Fig. 20].[99] This phenomenon likewise appears on the metopes of the Parthenon. The east metope of the temple illustrated a gigantomachy, in which the "heads of the Olympian gods and their mortal ministrants...were intentionally mutilated."[100] One can see the faces of the gods reveal diagonal hacking across their faces [Fig. 22], which was probably intentional when the metope was removed from the building in order to put in the apse of what was the be the Christian church.[101] The north, east, and west metopes of the Parthenon were chiseled away, but one was left at the north-west angle, which Jenkins argues may have been due to its subject of a goddess in flowing robes standing before a seated woman having been taken for a representation of the Annunciation.[102] Robin Cormack likewise addresses this theory,

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[97] Sauer 2014, 17
[98] *Ibid*, 18
[99] One of the figures that has been removed from the reliefs at Dendera is that of the Roman emperor Nero who is represented as a pharaoh (1st c. CE) [Fig. 21]. In the relief, he holds a mirror, with the handle being a representation of the god Hathor.
[100] Pollini 2013, 14
[101] *Ibid,* 15
The Parthenon was converted into a church of the Mother of Christ—the Virgin Mary—during the Middle Ages. (Cormack 2012, 475)
See also: Anthony Kaldellis, *The Christian Parthenon: Classicism and Pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens* (Cambridge, 2009)
[102] Jenkins 2007, 23

claiming that the women represented in the metope are the goddesses Hebe and Hera who are left with their bodies untouched. This "does fit with the suggestion that the iconoclasts involved were Christians who (mistakenly) thought the scene was that of the Annunciation."[103]

The examples given thus far of facial mutilation have been religious images of gods from various non-Christian pantheons. Non-religious images[104] were also susceptible to violence, such as on three particular busts from Ephesus. The city of Ephesus, which after his rise to power in Rome Augustus named as the capital of proconsular Asia in place of Pergamum, was home to one of the ancient seven wonders: the temple of Artemis. In addition to sculpture dedicated to its patron goddess, the city came to house several Augustan statues, notably of the emperor and his wife, Livia. Figure 23 is the head of Augustus from Ephesus. His forehead bears a cross while the rest of his face shows the signs of facial mutilation. A more complete figure of Augustus from Ephesus is Figure 24, showing the head of the emperor mutilated just as Figure 23, a cross adorning his forehead as well. The torso of this Augustus is largely fragmentary. Like this statue of the emperor, one of what is thought to be his wife Livia [Fig. 25], has been hacked in a similar fashion. She too bears a cross on her forehead.

## Section 2.2: Mutilation of the Body

Though it was uncommon for represented bodies, as opposed to faces, of imperial figures to be mutilated when they suffered *damnatio memoriae*, a great number of often non-Christian figures have suffered bodily harm.

[103] Cormack 2012, 475

[104] When I speak of non-religious images here I am referring to statues as being either gods or non-gods and do not intend to delve into issues of human divinity such as that of the deified Augustus.

A notable amount of these statues have had their genitals mutilated, which, although the genital mutilation of statues was not unheard of before the advent of Christianity, Sauer would argue was due to a negative attitude towards nudity and sexuality.[105] Regardless of the reason for this type of mutilation, the damage was to be understood in the same way facial mutilation was. The Satyr statue from the Nymphaeum of Miletus [Fig. 26] has had two crosses carved into his torso, and his genitalia have been chiseled off. According to Sauer, traces of weathering on the statue suggest that the Satyr was left on display for a long time. This assertion finds support that the Nymphaeum continued to be used, even after the collapse of its roof.[106] In the Baths of Faustina, also located in Miletus, was a statue of Aphrodite [Fig. 27] whose breasts and genitalia appear to have been damaged by a sharp object.

## Section 2.3: Mutilation of the Entire Object

In addition to figures who have had limbs mutilated, a certain number of figures have suffered even worse abuse. The statuary is fragmentary, but the pieces are extant, meaning none of it was burned/melted down or repurposed. The statue of Apollo at Cyrene [Fig. 28] was discovered in 1861 by excavators Smith and Porcher, who wrote the following detailed account about their discovery:

> A few days afterwards we discovered a colossal statue of Apollo himself, lying on the floor of the temple, about ten feet below the surface of the ground. The head was broken off, and the body in three pieces…the trunk of the tree, the lyre, the serpent, the bow and quiver, and some of the fold of the drapery, were found piecemeal, in a great many fragments, which we collected carefully. The statue, as it now stands, without the slightest restoration…is built up of no less than 121 separate pieces.[107]

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[105] Sauer 2014, 21
Instances of statue genital mutilation in the Graeco-Roman world extend as far back as the 400s BCE when a series of Herms were desecrated in Athens.

[106] *Ibid*

[107] Smith and Porcher 1864, 51

It seems as though the fragmentary remains of Apollo were smashed to pieces and thrown about. No part of the statue was used for other purposes as it was reconstructed almost completely. This also occurred with the statue of Mithras from the Baths of Mithras in Ostia [Fig. 29]:

> Behind the podia a statue of Mithras about to kill the bull was found in situ…the head of the bull and the head and an arm of Mithras were found in a channel in the mithraeum, together with small fragments of the statue, that are ancient restorations…Obviously a damaged statue had been acquired. The fragments must have been thrown in the channel by Christians, who erected a small edifice above the mithraeum.[108]

In similar fashion, the base of the cult statue of Nemesis at Rhamnous [Fig. 30], which represents either Helen returning after the Trojan War or Helen at her marriage to Menelaus, was broken into 293 fragments, the underside of its cavetto finely picked at.[109]

A particularly severe example of deliberate statue abuse is that of the cult statue of Aphrodite from Aphrodisias. During the excavation of Aphrodisias in 1962, three fragments of a colossal marble statue of Aphrodite were found immediately south of the *temenos*, incorporated into foundations of a later Byzantine wall. The statue, as suggested by Erim, had almost certainly been dragged from the temple area by Byzantines; her face and arms mutilated.[110] Upon close examination of the statue [Fig. 31], Aphrodite remains cloaked in her *ependytes*, but her breasts are fragmentary, supporting the theme of negative attitudes towards nudity, sex and fertility inspired violence against polytheistic sculptural representations.[111] At Aphrodisias, the Sabasteion, which contained a multitude of sculptural reliefs portraying non-Christian divinities "has been mercilessly and systematically hammered...in or after the fourth century, particularly where the goddess of the city was represented.[112] Aphrodite's temple was thus converted into a

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[108] Ostia-Antica.org (https://www.ostia-antica.org/regio1/17/17-2.htm)
[109] Perseus Digital Library
[110] Erim 1986, 30-31
[111] Pollini 2013, 14
[112] Erim 1986, 117-118

cathedral and her statue had "literally been trampled into the earth and hidden." Later, people in the sixth or seventh century tried to rename Aphrodisias 'Stavropolis' or 'City of the Cross' thus eradicating any trace of the goddess.[113]

This statue of Aphrodite, who came to be used as the fill for a Christian church, suffered public humiliation and public imprisonment. Tertullian and other Christian writers asserted that non-Christian images were powerful, living gods of the past, so this act of violence is a degrading method of eternal imprisonment, one where immovable Aphrodite is forced to exist within the walls of a religious building that has replaced her own. One can argue a temple of Venus met the same fate, filled in between its columns to construct the Cathedral of Syracuse in the 7th century. The Doric columns of the temple [Fig. 32] are still quite visible among the architecture of the interior of the cathedral. I am less inclined to assert that this instance is one of humiliation due to the consistent reuse of building materials in antiquity, as the inclusion of the figure of Aphrodite into church walls at Aphrodisias seems to have been entirely unnecessary from a structural or architectural standpoint.

## Section 3: Christian Attitudes Towards Statuary

To support my claims, the following is an extrapolation of a small sample of Christian writings which attest to the contempt for non-Christian statues, a great number of which denounce the religious authority the statues once held (or continued to hold) by emphasizing the idols as materials rather than gods. Tertullian discusses this at length in Book 12 of his Apologeticus:

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[113] *Ibid*, 34

> So, as to your gods, I see merely the names of certain dead men of the past; I heard their stores; from their stories I understand their rituals. As to their actual images, I find nothing beyond material akin to what is in ordinary pots and tools.[114]

Before he continues, Tertullian relates a series of horrible things non-Christians attribute to their gods which Christians were subject to under extreme religious persecution: for example, the beasts that are attached to Liber, Ceres, and to the Celestial Mother are the same beasts to which Christians were driven to in the amphitheater. He then states:

> We are condemned to the mines; and that is where your gods come from.[115]

He continues his discussion on the material nature of the non-Christian gods:

> ...your gods do not feel these injuries and insults involved in their fabrication—nor your adoration either!...What is non-existent suffers no bodily injury from anybody, because it does not exist.[116]

There are also a great number of narratives which present certain figures as destroyers of non-Christian idols. In the third book of his *Liber Peristephanon*, Prudentius writes a hymn in honor of the martyr Eulalia, who speaks out against the emperor Maximian at the point of her death (3.72-80):

> Here I am, a foe to the worship of evil spirits; I trample idols under foot, and with heart and lips I confess God. Isis, Apollo, Venus—they are naught; Maximian himself too is naught; they because they are works of men's hands, he because he worships the works of men's hands, both worthless, both naught.[117]

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[114] *Quantum igitur de deis vestris, nomina solummodo video quorundam veterum mortuorum et 2fabulas audio et sacra de fabulis recognosco: quantum autem de simulacris ipsis, nihil aliud reprehendo quam materias sorores esse vasculorum instrumentorumque communium...* (12.2)

[115] *In metalla damnamur. Inde censentur dei vestri.* (12.5)

[116] *... non sentiunt has iniurias et contumelias fabricationis suae dei vestri, sicut nec obsequia... Quod non est, nihil ab ullo patitur, quia non est.* (12.6-7)

[117] *...en ego sum*
*daemonicis inimica sacris,*
*idola protero sub pedibus,*
*pectore et ore Deum fateor.* 75
*Isis, Apollo, Venus nihil est,*
*Maximianus et ipse nihil:*
*illa nihil, quia facta manu,*
*hic manuum quia facta colit,*
*frivola utraque et utraque nihil.* 80

Constantine is repeatedly described overcoming idols or destroying sites of non-Christian worship. Both Sozomen and Eusebius mention the destruction of the temple of Venus in Heliopolis under Constantine, with Eusebius distinguishing the abolition of the cult with the construction of a church and the establishment of a "powerful ecclesiastical-civil administrative hierarchy." Furthermore, sections of Books 2 and 4 of Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* describe Constantine as a "destroyer of idols," as he suppresses the erection of idols and prohibits sacrifices to those still in existence. Though a much later piece of artwork, the fresco of Saint George from Decani [Fig. 13] shows what is believed to be the toppling of non-Christian idols. Saint George exercises his power, which causes the non-Christian idols to fall from their pedestal. Much like spectacular narrative, this painting displays the idols falling around a watching crowd.

Found throughout Eusebius' description of Constantine as the "destroyer of idols" is the shame directed at the image. Although the following is a description of Constantine de-sacralizing famous statues for them to be brought to Constantinople and is slightly different from the destruction of images, it is important to note the inclusion of the aspect of humiliation associated with this act. Eusebius writes (3.54):

> ...the venerable statues of brass, of which the superstition of antiquity had boasted for a long series of years, were exposed to view in all the public places of the imperial city: so that here a Pythian, there a Sminthian Apollo, excited the contempt of the beholder: while the Delphic tripods were deposited in the hippodrome and the Muses of Helicon in the palace itself. In short, the city which bore his name was everywhere filled with brazen statues of the most exquisite workmanship, which had been dedicated in every province, and which the deluded victims of superstition had long vainly honored as gods with numberless victims and burnt sacrifices, though now at length they learned to renounce their error, when the emperor held up the very objects of their worship to be the ridicule and sport of all beholders.

Section 4: Conclusion—The Continuation of Public Judicial Punishment

Eusebius describes non-Christian statues in a kind of display intended to damn them and humiliate them, subjected to the ridicule of viewers. Eusebius continues the association between humiliation and idol-destruction in his Oration in Praise of Constantine, as statues are ordered to be brought into public (3):

> They ordered the priests themselves, in the midst of general laughter and scorn, to bring their gods from their dark recess to the light of day. They then stripped them of their ornaments, and exhibited to the gaze of all the unsightly reality which had been hidden beneath a painted exterior: and lastly, whatever part of the material appeared to be of value they scraped off and melted in the fire to prove its worth, after which they secured and set apart whatever they judged needful for their purposes, leaving to the superstitious worshipers what was altogether useless, as a memorial of their shame.

This is a clear and direct correlation with the public judicial punishment seen in the Introduction and its continued effect on statues in Chapter 1. The ridicule of these statues happens in public and they are robbed of their essential selves, just as criminals in the arena were stripped of everything that made them human, and just as statues of emperors were stripped of everything that identified them as prominent individuals. This removal of identity happens in the public sphere, and is at its core intended to be degrading. Eusebius is adequately describing an act of public judicial punishment which, if we recall Foucault, is intended to mark the victim so that he might be an exhibitor of shame. This act of public humiliation is again, not only influenced by judicial punishment, it is entirely analogous.

This theme of humiliation and mockery associated with the destruction of statues persists several centuries after Eusebius with the Syriac theologian Jacob of Sarug, who, in his *Fall of the Idols*, states that the fragmentary remains of statues were "made to arouse laughter and scorn," and while they lie on the ground with everyone laughing, "the crucified man defeats the giants, humiliates them and turns them into an object of mockery."

Thus, while Christians did have religious motivations behind mutilating statuary, I do not believe they acted with the "dramatic revolutionary gestures" with which Frankfurter claims. It is evident that statues were either harmed and then displayed in public or destroyed publically by means of a spectacle with the intent to denigrate the image. A crucial component of this type of public humiliation in the sources is pulling the statue down from its pedestal and dragging it in public—a practice prevalent in *damnatio* as seen in the previous chapter. Eusebius describes this event in the *Vita Constantini* with familiar rhetoric (3.54):

> [Constantine] attacked those composed of brass; causing those to be dragged from their places with ropes and as it were carried away captive, whom the dotage of mythology esteemed as gods.

Stewart agrees that this depiction is familiar to previous means of abuse and states that Eusebius presents the mutilation of the statues as a "practical measure, designed to expose the cult images for what they are—mere stone and metal." However, these statues *are not* mere stone and metal, they are "alive" in that they must be stripped, dehumanized, and humiliated as in the arena.

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 10
Basanite Bust of Germanicus—14-20 CE; Egypt, Africa
British Museum Inv. No. 1872,0605.1
Image Courtesy of the British Museum

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

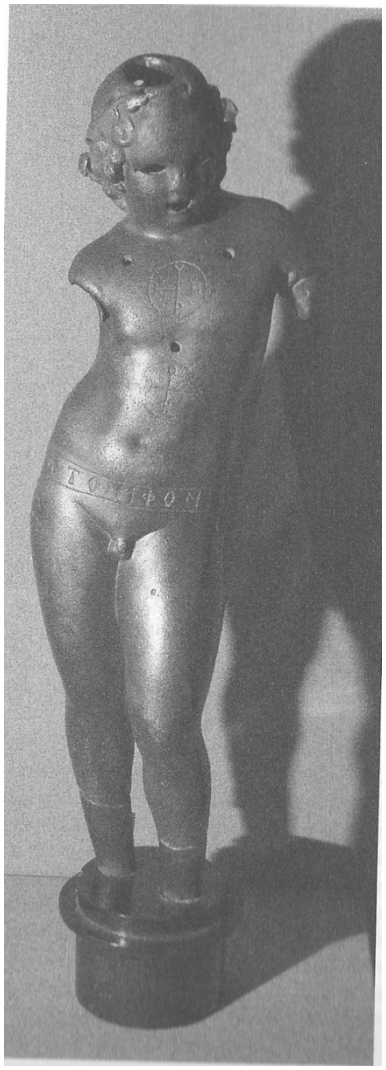

Figure 11
Dionysus Statuette—Found Near the River Don
Private Collection
Image Courtesy of Eberhard W. Sauer 2014

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*


Figure 12
San Marco Mosaics—11-13th c. CE; Venice, Italy
Left: Winged Demon and the Sun God; Right: Winged Demon and the Moon Goddess
Images Courtesy of Ekkehard Ritter 1975-79

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 13
Fresco of St. George Toppling Pagan Idols—14th c.; Decani, Kosovo
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

LATE ANTQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

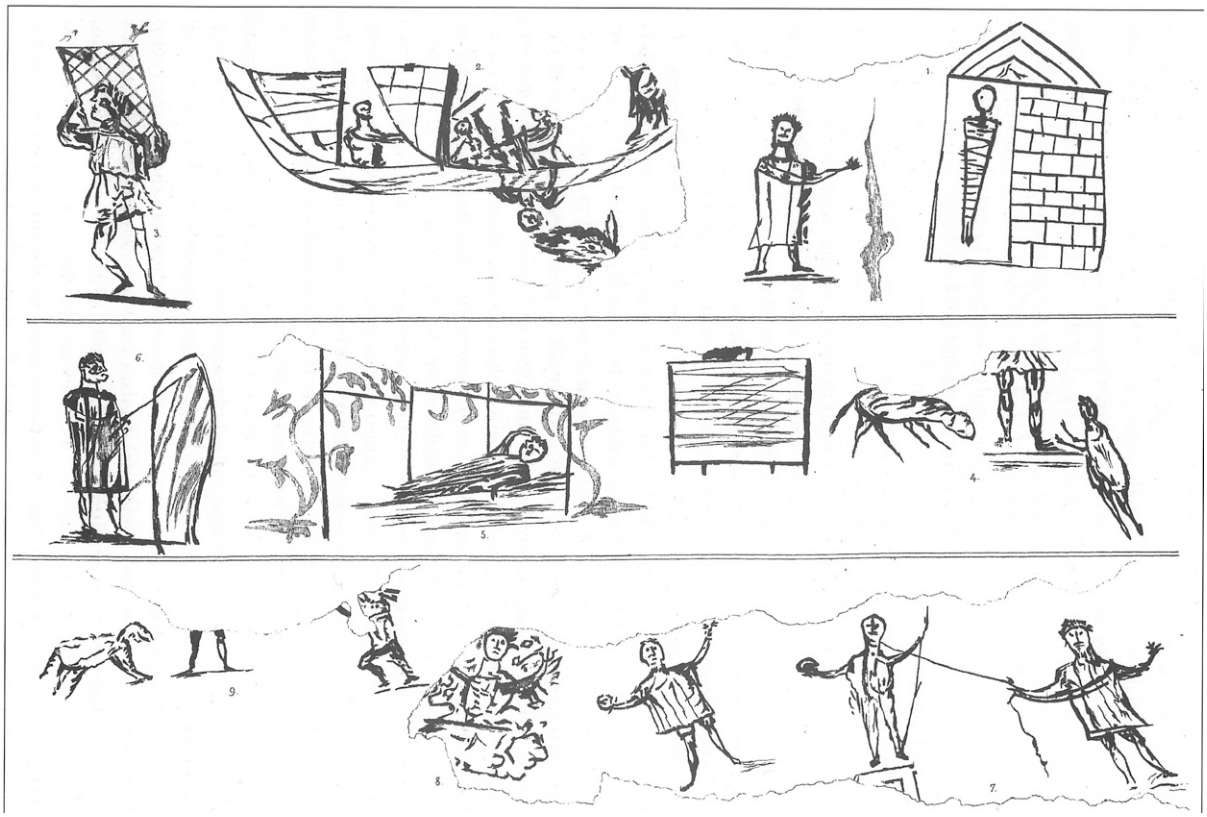

Figure 14
Painting from the Hypogeum of the Via Paisiello (Recreation)—Rome, Italy
Image Courtesy of Eberhard W. Sauer 2003

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

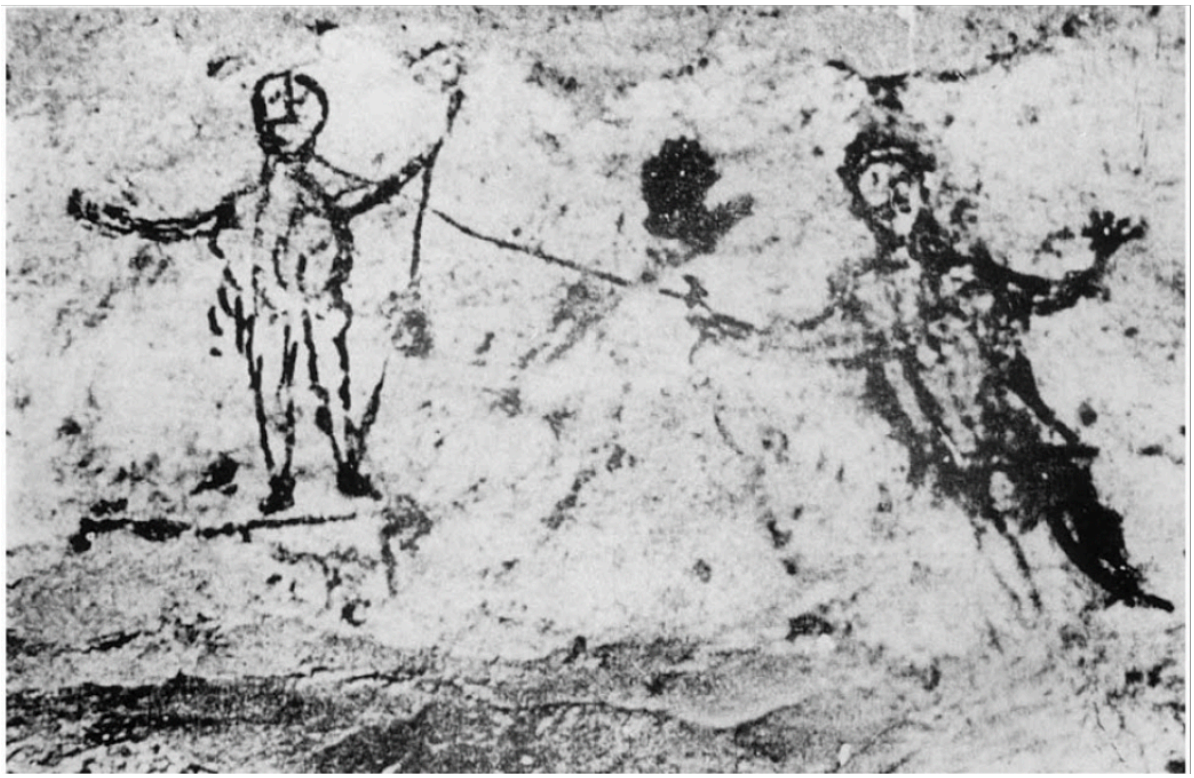

Figure 15
Detail of Painting from the Hypogeum of the Via Paisiello—Rome, Italy
Image Courtesy of Peter Stewart 1999

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 16
St. Philip and the Idol of Mars—Venice, Italy
Cathedral of St. Mark
Image Courtesy of Ekkehard Ritter 1975-79 and Dumbarton Oaks

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 17
Head of Aphrodite—1-100 CE; Athens, Greece
National Archeological Museum, Athens
Image Courtesy of the National Archeological Museum, Athens

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 18
Head of Woman (Possibly Hera)—Sparta, Greece
Archaeological Museum of Sparta
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.com*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

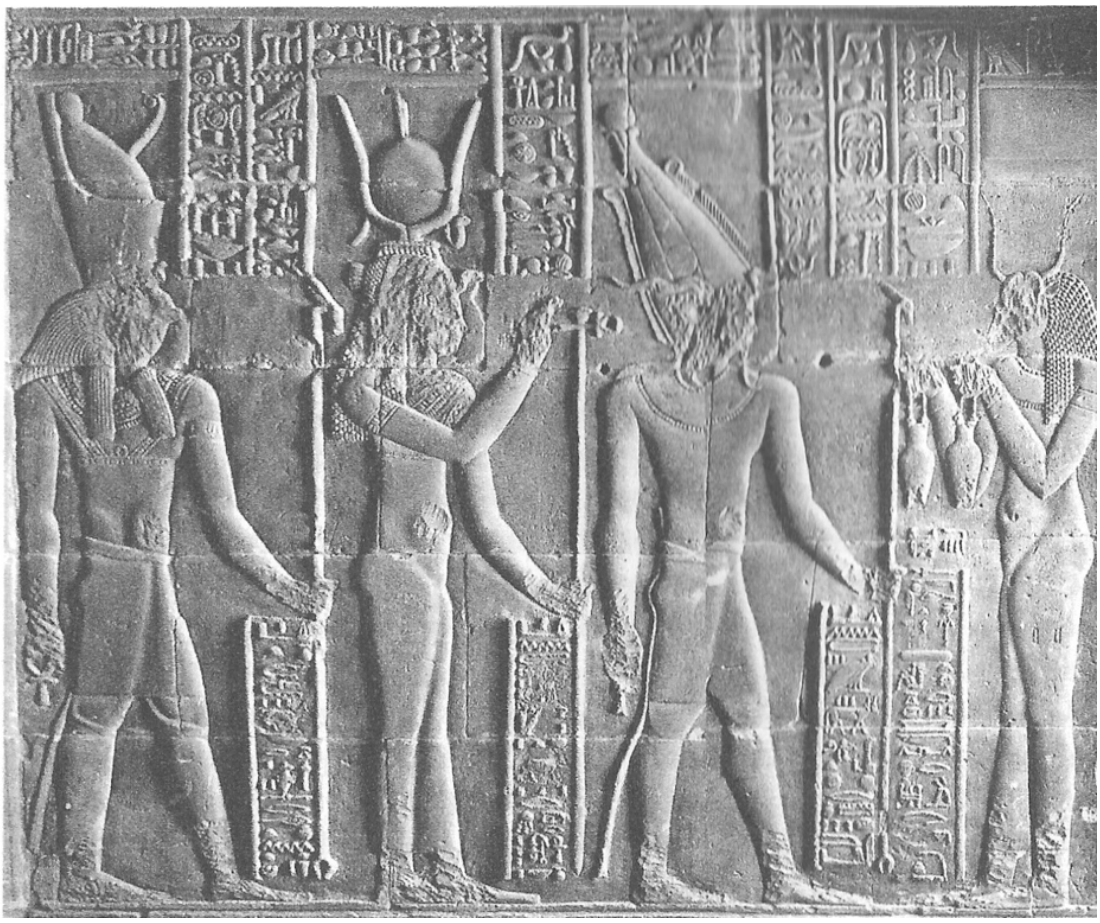

Figure 19
Relief from Temple of Isis—380-362 BCE; Philae, Egypt
From left to right: Horace, Isis, Osiris, Hesat
Image Courtesy of Eberhard W. Sauer 2014

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*


Figure 20
Relief from the Temple of Hathor—1st c. CE; Dendera, Egypt
Image Courtesy of Mick Palarczyk

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 21
Defaced Depiction of Nero as Pharaoh—1st c. CE; Dendera, Egypt
Image Courtesy of Mick Palarczyk

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 22
Parthenon Metopes—447-432 BCE; Athens, Greece
Left: Head of Zeus; Right: Head of Hera
Image Courtesy of John Pollini 2007

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*


Figure 23
Head of Augustus—27-14 BCE; Ephesus, Turkey
Ephesus Archaeological Museum
Image Courtesy of *privatetour.net*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 24
Head and Torso of Augustus—27-14 BCE; Ephesus, Turkey
Ephesus Archaeological Museum
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*


Figure 25
Statue of Livia—1st c.; Ephesus, Turkey
Ephesus Archaeological Museum
Image Courtesy of *privatetour.net*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

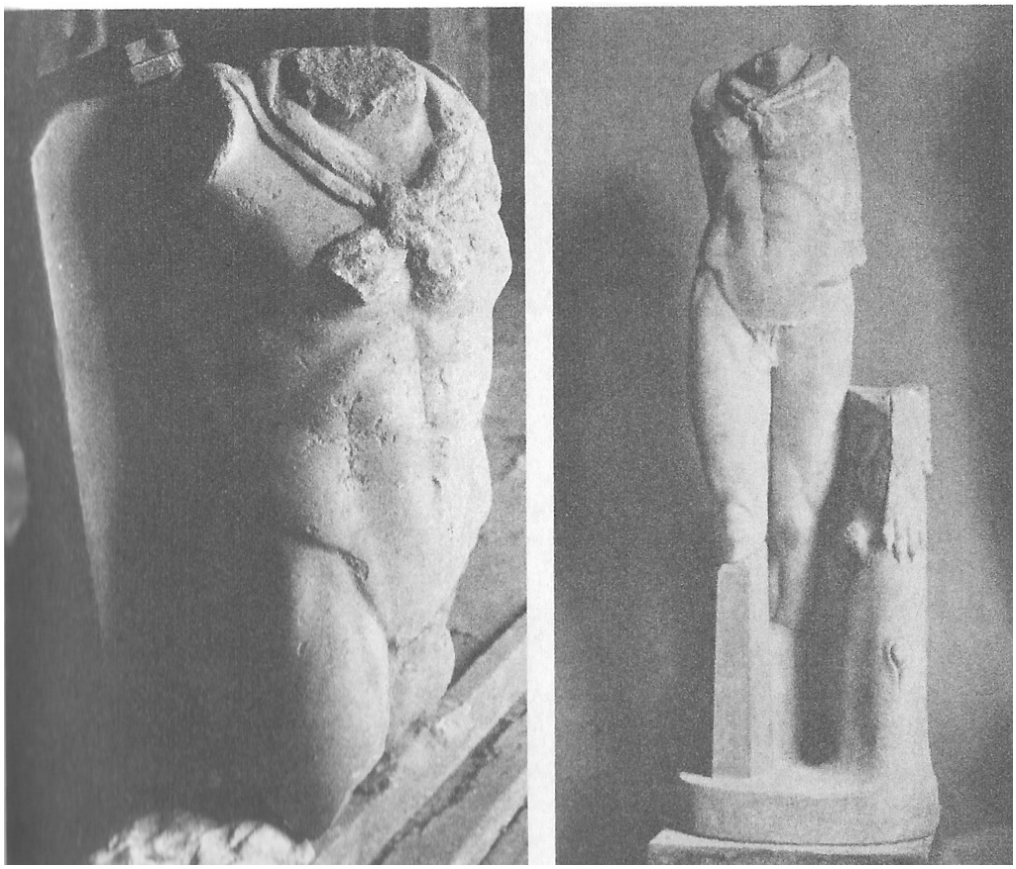

Figure 26
Statue of Satyr—2nd c. CE; Miletus, Turkey
In the Baths of Faustina
Miletus Museum
Image Courtesy of Eberhard W. Sauer 2014

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

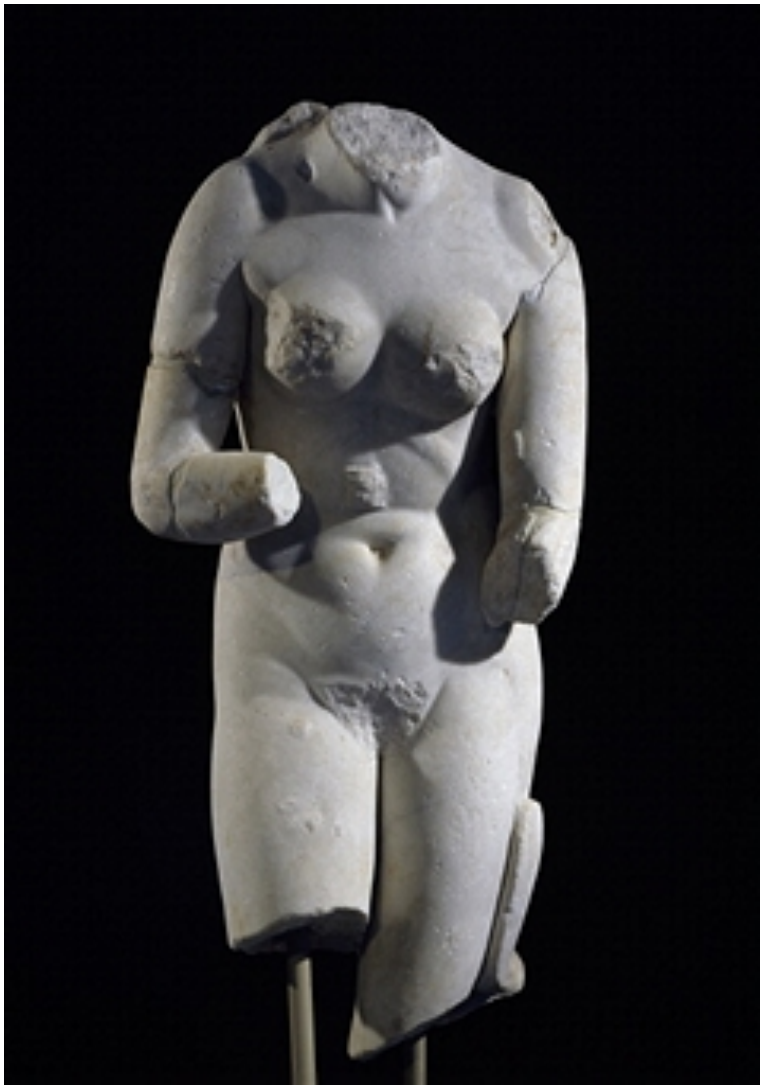

Figure 27
Statue of Aphrodite—2nd c. CE; Miletus, Turkey
In the Baths of Faustina
Miletus Museum
Image Courtesy of John Pollini 2012

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 28
Statue of Apollo—2nd c. CE; Cyrene, Libya
British Museum Inv. No. 1861,0725.1
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 29
Statue of Mithras and the Bull—2nd c. CE; Ostia Antica, Rome
Left: Statue as it was found upon its first excavation
Right: Statue as it was restored
Museo Ostiense Inv. No. 1399
Left Image Courtesy of Eberhard W. Sauer 2003
Right Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 30
Base for the Cult Statue of Nemesis—430-420 BCE; Rhamnous, Greece
Image Courtesy of John Pollini 2013

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 31
Statue of Aphrodite—2nd c. CE; Aphrodisias (Modern Geyre, Turkey)
Aphrodisias Museum
Image Courtesy of *wikipedia.org*

LATE ANTIQUE STATUE ABUSE
AND THE CONTINUATION OF *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE*

Figure 32
Interior of the Cathedral of Syracuse—Syracuse, Italy
Temple of Athena (5th c. BCE)
Image Courtesy of Giovanni Dall'Orto 2008

# CONCLUSION

## *DAMNATIO MEMORIAE,* STATUE ABUSE, AND HUMILIATION IN ANTIQUITY

*illi autem statuam istius persimilem, quam stare celeberrimo in loco voluerat,*
*ne suavissimi hominis memoria moreretur, deturbant, adfligunt, comminuunt, dissipant.*

*The troops then proceeded to overthrow, smash, grind to powder,*
*and scatter to the winds a statue—an excellent likeness of the original—which*
*Piso had desired to be erected in a busy spot, in order that the memory*
*of so sweet a gentleman might not perish.*

Cicero *In Pisonem* 93

There are a number of statues that remain extant from antiquity that have clearly been reused or recycled from their original form. These objects often illustrate successful attempts to transform the image. However, there are statues that exist with deliberate damage. As chapter 1 illustrated, the heads of these figures typically have their sensory organs mutilated with distinct hack marks. In the late antique period, discussed in chapter 2, statues are found with crosses etched onto their faces, leaving no doubt that this type of mutilation was intentional.

Evidence indicates that these objects were meant to be displayed. Given the frequent reuse of materials in antiquity, it is notable that these figures still exist. Literary evidence describes events where statues of important figures who fell out of favor with the state and citizen body were mutilated as though they were real bodies. It is not surprising that damage done to the face is seen most often, considering the head was representative of an individual's personality in a way that the body was not. Thus, it is clear that these statues were damaged

violently for display. During a time when literacy was not common among the non-elite, statuary and public monuments were integral for conveying messages to the citizen body. A relationship with an emperor or god could be mediated through a statue. Therefore, to ruin it and leave it on display conveyed a negative message concerning the figure to viewers.

There are some damaged statues that survive with more than hack marks on their faces. The introduction mentions a statue of Nero [Fig. 7] that has a graffito making fun of him on the bust and chapter 1 discusses a figure of Caligula [Fig. 9] found in the Tiber River, a place of disposal for only the lowest of criminals. The term *damnatio memoriae* is a modern term often describing violence against elite statuary where the eradication of the figure's memory is expected. *Damnatio memoriae*, however, must be redefined as an instance of abuse against statuary where humiliation, and thus preservation, is the primary goal. My conclusion is that the display associated with damage done to statues is influenced by the viewership of public executions in the Roman Empire.

Citizens from every class attended public executions that took place in amphitheaters. While criminals were executed outside of the arena, the majority were killed within as a form of entertainment that took place as an event along with professional animal and gladiator fights. Citizens watched as these executions exploited their own collective fears: concerns about nudity, helplessness, sexuality, and shame played out before their eyes as criminals were subjected to humiliating tortures moments before their deaths. The humiliation designed for a criminal execution in the arena was not felt by the condemned, as much as by the audience. An audience must be present, of course, in order for shame to exist. As statues cannot feel or think, the damage done to them was perceived as humiliating by those who would see it.

Further research on this topic could focus on my redefinition of the term *damnatio memoriae* and what that means for instances not examined in this thesis, such as the recarving of inscriptions or *damnatio* in private. With the knowledge that public executions affected the treatment of statuary, it would be interesting to explore other aspects of material culture directly influenced by the presence of the arena in the Roman Empire.

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