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Mark Antony's *damnatio memoriae* and the Foundation of the Principate

The penalty of condemnation of memory was inherent not only in the Ancient Rome. In the middle of the second millennium BC, Thutmose III removed Hatshepsut's name from the inscriptions and destroyed her pictures. This also happened with the images of the rulers in Ancient Mesopotamia. Traces of deliberate damage are clearly visible on a fragment of a copper sculpture belonging to an unknown Akkadian ruler, which was found in Nineveh. Perhaps, the image was damaged after robbery of Nineveh by the Medes and the Babylonians¹. The idea of condemnation of memory is suggested in the book of Ecclesiastes, presumably dating back to the 3rd century BC. The text of the Vulgate contains the following lines: *frustra enim venit et pergat ad tenebras et oblivione delebitur nomen eius*².

The Latin term *memoria* has much broader repercussions than its English counterparts *cognate* or *memory*, and encompasses the notions of an individual's fame and greater reputation³. The term *damnatio memoriae* is widely used today, although it was not used in the Ancient Rome. The term is valid and convenient, but it should be applied with caution. It is hard to be sure what exactly it means. Abel Greenidge asserted that *the whole question of "damnatio memoriae" is shrouded in great obscurity*⁴. Reference books, trying to provide a clear legit definition, link it to *maiestas* and *perduellio*⁵. Today, under *damnatio memoriae* we usually understand declaration by the Senate, according to which a person becomes an enemy of the state and memory about him is destroyed after his death.

¹ Nylander 1980, 332.

² Ecclesiastes 6, 4.

³ Varner 2004, 2.

⁴ Greenidge 1894, 433.

⁵ Flower 1998, 156.

In modern historiography, there is no consensus towards the nature and the legal basis of *damnatio memoriae*. Abel Greenidge stated that *it must be treated both as a general power of the Senate and as an appendix to its criminal jurisdiction. It was a consequence of 'perduellio'* but it was a *special appendix to each separate condemnation*⁶. Harriet Flower suggested that *destroying a man's memory was also a time-honoured Roman practice, which could be put into effect by families, when circumstances dictated, in order to assure their own survival. In her opinion, post-mortem disgrace contains two distinct tendencies in the individual penalties, namely, the urge to remember the villain so that his fate may be a warning to others and an equal or opposite tendency to forget him, to obliterate his name and career as if he had never existed*⁷. Leszek Mrozewicz points out that in the political reality of the Roman Empire *damnatio memoriae* became a weapon used by the emperor against the Senate as well as it turned out to be used against the opposition⁸. Marzena Dyjakowska believes that the aim of *damnatio memoriae* was to perpetuate the memory of the offender as a perpetrator of a particularly heinous crime, and more precisely, crime against the Roman Empire, detrimental to the welfare of the whole community⁹. Maciej Maciejowski defines *damnatio memoriae* as a constant part of public culture of memory¹⁰. Krzysztof Królczyk, speaking about the time of the Severan dynasty, emphasizes that the procedure of *damnatio memoriae* has become a tool in the hands of the emperors that was used to lead the current political struggle and create warped historical memory¹¹. Daria Janiszewska believes that *damnatio memoriae* is the evidence of authorities' instability. She selects the following procedure of *damnatio memoriae* in the period of Septimius Severus' rule: firstly, the Princeps declares his political opponent a public enemy (*hostis publicus*); then, he obtains the Senate's official confirmation; finally, all the authorities make a low opinion of a condemned person¹². Lechosław Olszewski identifies both, *damnatio memoriae* and *consecration*, as the important instruments of memory's institutionalization. During the reign of Augustus, they were used to describe a new *res publica*, one that was essentially restored. *Damnatio memoriae* and *consecration*, thus, became constitutive elements of the new political system (Principate)¹³.

⁶ Greenidge 1894, 433.

⁷ Flower 1998, 179–180.

⁸ Mrozewicz 2011, 12.

⁹ Dyjakowska 2011, 139.

¹⁰ Maciejowski 2011, 41.

¹¹ Królczyk 2011, 94.

¹² Janiszewska 2011, 75–77.

¹³ Olszewski 2013, 335, 343.

There is an assumption that the basis for condemnation of memory was not the law but *mos maiorum*. Cecil Hilton claims that the decision of the Senate on condemnation of memory was imposed as an additional punishment for someone who had been convicted of a serious crime, particularly under the *Lex Julia*¹⁴. In fact, there is no sufficient evidence to believe that the *Lex Julia* involved condemnation of memory. John Bodet concludes that condemnation of memory based itself on both the public law and *mos maiorum*¹⁵.

Condemnation of memory was repeatedly used already in the epoch of the Republic. Plutarch provides a detailed description of a terrible punishment that awaited the priestess of the goddess Vesta for the loss of virginity¹⁶. The guilty was not just condemned to a horrible death, but was also deprived of a proper funeral ceremony. The name of the punished one had to be removed from the official records. Indeed, in the inscription of AD 364, the Vestal's name was erased; we can understand only the first and last letters – C and E¹⁷.

In the 4th century BC, Marcus Manlius Capitolinus was sentenced to death. Apart from that, measures were taken for condemnation of his memory. Cassius Dio reports that Capitolinus' house was razed, his wealth was confiscated, and his name and his likeness were erased and destroyed. There was a decree that no patrician should dwell upon the citadel, because Capitolinus had his house there and no one of the Manlii should be called Marcus¹⁸. Today it is believed that *Dio is probably indulging in an anachronistic projection here, though his statement does provide evidence for the practice in the third century A.D. The earliest certain examples of the penalty date to the late republic*¹⁹. But Dio Cassio's statements are also confirmed by the testimony of Livy and Plutarch²⁰.

One part of Manlius' condemnation of memory was the prohibition for patricians to settle around the Capitol, the area where Manlius' house was. A home for the Romans was something more than a dwelling means today.

¹⁴ Chilton 1955, 80.

¹⁵ Bodet 1999, 60.

¹⁶ Plut., *Num.*, 10.

¹⁷ ILS 4938.

¹⁸ Dio Cass., 7, 26, 1: ὅτι τοῦ Καπιτωλίνου κατέγνω ὁ δῆμος, καὶ ἢ τε οἰκία αὐτοῦ κατεσκάφη καὶ τὰ χρήματα ἐδημεύθη, τὸ τε ὄνομα, καὶ εἰ δὴ ποῦ εἰκὼν ἦν, ἀπὸ λείφθη καὶ διεφθάρη... ἔκριναν δὲ καὶ μηδένα εὐπατριδὴν ἐν τῇ ἄκρᾳ κατοικεῖν, ὅτι καὶ ἐκεῖνος ἐνταυθοῦ οἰκῶν ἐτύγχανεν. ἢ δὲ δὴ συγγένεια ἢ τῶν Μαλλίων ἀπεῖπε μηδένα σφῶν Μάρκον, ἐπέειπε οὕτως ἀνομάζετο, προσκαλεῖσθαι.

¹⁹ Hedrick 2000, 102.

²⁰ Liv., 6, 20, 13: *ne quis patricius in arce aut Capitolio habitaret... gentis Manliae decreto cautum est, ne quis deinde M. Manlius vocaretur*; Plut., *Quaes. Rom.*, 91 (285f): 'διὰ τί τοῖς πατρικίοις οὐκ ἐξῆν περὶ τὸ Καπετώλιον, κατοικεῖν;' πότερον ὅτι Μάρκος Μάλλιος αὐτόθι κατοικῶν ἐπεχείρησε τυραννίδι, δι' ὃν ἀπάμοτον φασιν εἶναι τῷ οἴκῳ μηδενὶ Μαλλίων ὄνομα Μάρκον γενέσθαι.

There was a fire in the house (*focus*) where ritual libations (*libatio*) were done²¹. According to the Roman beliefs, gods of the hearth and home, *lares* and *penates*, control everyday life's affairs. Therefore, the destruction of the house was a cruel punishment for the whole family of the punished. A house (*domus*) was the center of the family's memory (*memoria*), its destruction was an effective condemnation (*damnatio*) of the memory²². In 509 BC, the house of Tarquinus Superbus, exiled from Rome, was completely destroyed²³. In 58 BC, after Cicero's expulsion from Rome, his country houses were burned to ashes as well as his house (*οἰκία*) in Rome²⁴. By the time of Dio, *damnatio memoriae* did not include the destruction (*κατασκαφή*) of the house of the punished²⁵.

In the third century BC, the guilty of an offense against the residents of Regium were sentenced to death. It was forbidden to bury their bodies or to mourn their death²⁶. It was the decision of the Senate²⁷. After the punishment of Gaius Sempronius Gracchus and his supporters, it was decided to impose *damnatio memoriae* upon them. It was forbidden to hold a traditional funeral ceremony for the deceased. Three thousand dead bodies were thrown into the Tiber, and their property was confiscated. Their wives were not allowed to mourn the husbands²⁸.

After the suppression of the Cataline rebellion, it was forbidden to hold a proper burial ritual for the body of Publius Lentulus, the stepfather of Mark Antony. The future triumvir accused Cicero of this ban²⁹.

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the politically motivated prosecution of person's memory from ordinary steps, taken to improve public welfare or deal with the consequences of a disaster. In 80 BC, *Curia Hostilia*, the meeting place of the Senate, was extended by Sulla's order. Later the fire damaged the building. Julius Caesar began the construction of a new building on this site. In Cassius Dio's opinion, the real motive was a desire to remove Sulla's name and call the newly built curia after Julius³⁰. Same way, Sulla having come to power, took steps to condemn the memory of political opponent, Marius. According to Pliny the Elder, Sulla reminted a large number of Marius' silver and gold coins.

²¹ Serv., *Aen.*, I, 730.

²² Hales 2000, 45.

²³ Plut., *Publ.*, 8, 1.

²⁴ Plut., *Cic.*, 33, 1.

²⁵ Dio Cass., 7, 26, 1.

²⁶ Val. Max., 2, 7, 15.

²⁷ Frontin. *Strateg.*, 4, 1, 38.

²⁸ Plut., *CG*, 17, 5.

²⁹ Cic., *Phil.*, 2, 17.

³⁰ Dio Cass., 44, 5, 2.

The prohibition extended to all images of Marius. Only in 69 BC, the images (εἰκόνας) of Marius were shown by Gaius Julius Caesar, during the funeral of Marius' wife, Julia³¹.

There is no information about the Senate's decision on *damnatio memoriae* of Brutus and Cassius. However, condemnation of memory was applied to them as well. Octavian, seeing a bronze statue of Brutus in Mediolane, in Gallia, criticized the local magistrates for harboring his enemy, although later he turned it into a joke³². Condemnation of memory of Brutus and Cassius found its display in prohibition to use their images at the funeral of Junia, the wife of Gaius Cassius and sister of Brutus in 22 BC.³³

One of the most famous republicans, sentenced to *damnatio memoriae*, was Mark Antony. In the Thirteenth Philippic, Cicero points out that the memory about Antony's consulate was erased out of all records³⁴. Maybe it was only wishful thinking of Cicero, who once tried to take down the tablets with records of his own exile³⁵. But after the battle of Actium, the first, politically motivated decision about *damnatio memoriae* was taken by the Senate about Mark Antony³⁶. Suetonius says that Antony was declared a public enemy of Rome (*hosti iudicato*)³⁷. *Damnatio memoriae* of Antony was part of Octavian's justification of the war against this famous Roman.

Antony's *damnatio memoriae* was some kind of requital for his cruel treatment of Cicero's body in 43 BC. Plutarch points to the fact that Antony urged centurion Herennius to cut off Cicero's head and hands with which he wrote the Philippics³⁸.

There was not an established template on how to impose the penalty in such cases. Regarding Antony's *damnatio memoriae*, a number of measures were envisaged. The date of his birth (January 14) was announced unholy – *dies vitiosus*. Jörg Rüpke notes that only after the reign of Emperor Claudius, 14 January was marked *E(ndoitio Exitio) N(efas)*, and therefore was *fastus*³⁹. It was forbidden for the members of his family to use the *praenomen* "Mark".

³¹ Plut., *Caes.*, 5, 1.

³² Plut., *Comp. Dion. Brut.*, 5.

³³ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 76.

³⁴ Cicero, *Phil.*, 13, 11, 26: *cuius totus consulatus est ex omni monumentorum memoria evulsus*.

³⁵ Dio Cass., 39, 21, 1–2.

³⁶ Lange 2009, 137.

³⁷ Suet., *Aug.*, 17, 2.

³⁸ Plut., *Cic.*, 48, 3–4: τὴν δὲ κεφαλὴν ἀπέκοψεν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς χεῖρας, Ἀντωνίου κελεύσαντος, αἷς τοῦς Φιλιππικῶς ἔγραψεν.

³⁹ Rüpke 2011, 152.

All his images were removed, assigned before honors were canceled⁴⁰. It might have happened before the death of Antony, although Dio and Plutarch do not agree in regard to the timing of the Senate's decree against him⁴¹. Dio says that the Senate's decree in honour of Octavian occurred right after the naval victory⁴². Plutarch dated the decree against Antony incorrectly to the consulship of Cicero's son. As far as Meyer Reinhold's opinion is concerned, Plutarch used the dramatic effect to highlight the ironic justice played out against the great orator's mortal enemy⁴³. Plutarch says that it happened after Octavian had finally defeated Antony, these measures were applied according to the decision of the Senate, when Cicero the Younger was consul together with Octavian⁴⁴. Cicero the Younger began the consulship on 13th September 30 BC⁴⁵. But *damnatio memoriae* of Antony existed before Octavian conquered Egypt. When Octavian entered Alexandria on 1st Augustus 30 BC, the statues of Antony were destroyed (*αἱ μὲν οὖν Ἀντωνίου καθήρηθησαν εἰκόνες*)⁴⁶. Obviously, evidence of Dio is more accurate and more reliable than Plutarch's testimony. We can conjecture that metal sculptures and portraits of Antony could have been remelted for the further use. It is possible that this metal was used to produce some of Octavian's sculptures.

An illustration of Antony's name censure might be *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. It was probably written in 13 AD. In the twenty-fourth paragraph, Augustus says that being a winner, he replaced the ornaments which his antagonist pillaged from the temples in all the cities of the province of Asia⁴⁷. It was Antony who robbed the temples of Asia and handed the loot to Cleopatra⁴⁸. Same way Augustus does not mention the names of Brutus and Cassius, when he speaks about them in the second chapter: *Those who slew my father*⁴⁹. Patricia Southern claims that Nicolaus of Damascus hardly at all mentions Antony in his account of events before and after the assassination of Caesar: *There is no*

⁴⁰ Dio Cass., 51, 19, 3; Plut., *Cic.*, 49, 4.

⁴¹ Babcock 1962, 30–31.

⁴² Dio Cass., 51, 19, 1: *ἐν δὲ τούτῳ καὶ ἔτι πρότερον συχνὰ μὲν καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ τῆς ναυμαχίας νίκῃ οἱ ἐν οἴκῳ Ῥωμαῖοι ἐψηφίσαντο.*

⁴³ Reinhold 1986, 218.

⁴⁴ Plut., *Cic.*, 49, 4: *ἐπεὶ μέντοι τάχιστα κατεπολέμησεν Ἀντώνιον ὑπατεύων αὐτὸς εἶλετο συνάροντα τοῦ Κικέρωνος τὸν υἱόν, ἐφ' οὗ τὰς τ' εἰκόνας ἢ βουλή καθείλεν Ἀντωνίου καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἠκύρωσε τιμὰς καὶ προσεψηφίσαντο μηδενὶ τῶν Ἀντωνίων ὄνομα Μάρκον εἶναι.*

⁴⁵ Klein 1881, 6.

⁴⁶ Plut., *Ant.*, 86, 5.

⁴⁷ RG 24: *In templis omnium civitatum provinciae Asiae victor ornamenta reposui quae spoliatis templis is cum quo bellum gesseram privatim possederat.*

⁴⁸ Dio Cass., 51, 17.

⁴⁹ RG 2: *Qui parentem meum trucidaverunt* (or *Qui parentem meum interfecerunt*).

mention whatever of Antonius' success in calming the situation in Rome and avoiding the potential bloodbath that could have resulted from the action of the Liberators. Augustus could not allow any credit or respect to attach to Antonius, so he ignored him instead⁵⁰.

The *damnatio memoriae* of Antony also took the form of destruction of anonymous poems and epigrams as well as demolition of literary works of some authors who supported Antony. The letters which were found in Antony's boxes were also burned with the exception of some of them⁵¹. There is no doubt that Octavian saved only letters which he could use against Antony's memory. But some documents against Octavian managed to survive and some authors had direct or indirect knowledge of such pamphlets and letters⁵².

However, Antony's memory and reputation did undergo rehabilitation. This process began under the Augustus' rule⁵³. Tacitus says that Antony's name was not removed from the fasts⁵⁴. Carsten Lange points out that Antony's name was not mentioned in sources for some time and this was the result of *damnatio memoriae*. Subsequently, the situation changes and Antony is mentioned in the eighth book of the *Aeneid*. In Carsten Lange's opinion, the change happened after Octavian's arrival in Rome. Despite the decision of the Senate, Antony's name was restored in the *Fasti Consulares*. The Senate did not know what kind of honors Octavian was willing to accept and thus acted wrongly. Octavian rejected Antony's *damnatio memoriae*, who was disgraced, but not forgotten. The goal of *damnatio memoriae* was not to forget, but to remember that the condemned committed unforgiveable crimes⁵⁵. Charles Hedrick is right when he says that *damnatio memoriae* does not negate the evidence of the past, but is used to produce new signs of it⁵⁶.

In modern historiography, there is no consensus as to whether the decision of the Senate had the force of law and whether it was obligatory for the members of the genus of the convicted. Carsten Lange states that there was no formal ban to mention Antony⁵⁷. In John Bodel's opinion, the Senate had no right to give orders on the issues of tribal rituals and probably was reluctant to interfere in these matters⁵⁸. Danuta Okoń says that the Senate was formally a single body,

⁵⁰ Southern 2013, 57.

⁵¹ Dio Cass., 52, 42, 8.

⁵² Freyburger 2009, 18.

⁵³ Varner 2004, 19.

⁵⁴ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 18.

⁵⁵ Huskey 2006, 24.

⁵⁶ Hedrick 2006, xii.

⁵⁷ Lange 2009, 140–156.

⁵⁸ Bodel 1999, 48.

authorized to decide the issue of *damnatio memoriae*. Nevertheless, in the epoch of the Principate the Senate's decision required approbation of the Princeps⁵⁹. Marzena Dyjakowska believes that *discussed sanction that was referred to in the sources as memoria damnata, memoriam accusare defuncti, memoriam abolere [...] required a special decision – of the Senate or the Emperor*⁶⁰. Eric Varner forcefully expresses that in some cases the historical sources are unambiguous about the official senatorial sanctions but in other cases senatorial sanctions can be inferred⁶¹. But Caligula's case shows that condemnation of memory could have been imposed on individuals even without a formal decision of the Senate. Emperor Claudius did not allow the Senate to adopt the decision on *damnatio memoriae* of Caligula. But, without the Senate's decision, at the order of Claudius, all the images (*εἰκόνων*) of Gaius were removed overnight. His name was removed from oaths (*ὄρκος*) and prayers (*εὐχή*), as it was done earlier with the name of the late Emperor Tiberius. As for the Emperor Tiberius there also was no official Senate's decision about the condemnation of his memory⁶².

The rehabilitation of Antony's memory continued under Caligula and Claudius⁶³. Both of them were related by blood to Antony. Suetonius said that Caligula forbade the celebration of victories at Actium and on the coast of Sicily⁶⁴. In relation to attitude of Claudius toward the memory of Antony, Suetonius wrote that Mark Antony was not unhonoured or without grateful mention⁶⁵. Despite rehabilitation of Antony's memory, however, the vast majority of his sculpted likenesses, if not all, were lost. It was a result of his *damnatio memoriae*.

It has been said above that the decision about *damnatio memoriae* of Antony was adopted by the Senate in the time interval between the battle of Actium (02/09/31 BC) and the death of Antony (08/01/30 BC). But Octavian allowed Cleopatra to bury Antony with full honors, knowing about the decision of the Senate but ignoring it. Later, Octavian either canceled Antony's *damnatio memoriae* or adjusted the Senate's decision on the matter. Augustus' policy towards memory of Antony laid not in denying his past actions but rather in the new interpretation of the motives and consequences of his actions.

⁵⁹ Okoń 2011, 59.

⁶⁰ Dyjakowska 2011, 139.

⁶¹ Varner, 2001, 41.

⁶² Dio Cass., 60,4: ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὸ τοῦ Τιβερίου, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἐκ δόγματος ἀτιμίαν οὐδέτερός σφῶν ᾤφλε.

⁶³ Varner 2004, 19.

⁶⁴ Suet., *Cal.*, 23: *Actiacas Sinculasque victorias, ut funestas p. R. et calamitas, vetuit sollemnibus feriis celebrari.*

⁶⁵ Suet., *Cl.*, 11: *ne Marcum quidem Anthonium inhonoratum ac sine grata mentione transmisit, testatus quondam per edictum, tanto impensius petere se ut natalem patris Drusi celebrarent, quod idem esset et avi sui Anthonii.*

Application of *damnatio memoriae* during the epoch of the Principate became an important part of the political propaganda of the regime which promoted ideological grounding of the Empire. In the days of the Empire, condemnation of memory was often used against political opponents. Zsuzsanna Várhelyi notes the fact that the condemnation of the memory of senators *was used by emperors only to put down individual senators, primarily for political offenses, turning the imperial action into just one more example of political control*⁶⁶. Danuta Okoń examined material of the Severan epoch and made the statement that the application of *damnatio memoriae* in relation to ordinary senators was more an exception than the rule⁶⁷.

In 25 BC, Aulus Cremutius Cordus was brought to trial and committed suicide. He praised Brutus and Cassius in his work. His books, according to senators' decision, were burned by aediles (*libros per aedilis cremandos censuere patres*)⁶⁸. It shows that *damnatio memoriae* applied not only to Brutus and Cassio, but to Aulus Cremutius Cordus himself.

In 24 BC, Gaius Silius, consul of 13 BC, was sentenced under the law about the *crimen laesae maiestatis*. He committed suicide, not waiting for the verdict. The punishment, apart from property confiscation, involved condemnation of memory. His images (*effigies*) had to be destroyed at the order of the Senate. Contrary to the Senate's decision, Gaius Silius' image was stored in the lobby (*vestibulum*) of his son's home, who also had the name Gaius Silius and had to take the post of consul in the year 49 as consul *designatus*. Silius the Younger reached the highest magistracy despite the fact that his father was sentenced to *damnatio memoriae*. The statue of Gaius Silius in the house of his son, in defiance of the Senate's decision, was an aggravating circumstance in the eyes of Emperor Claudius, with whose wife, Messalina, Silius the Younger was in an intimate relationship⁶⁹. In 48, Silius and Messalina were executed.

In 16 BC, Marcus Scribonius Libo Drusus was accused of plotting a coup (*res novas clam moliebatur*)⁷⁰. All his kinsfolk dishonorably deserted him as if he was not convicted, but executed (*omnes enim necessarii deseruerant impie iam non reum, sed funus*). Drusus did away with himself (*manus sibi attulit*)⁷¹. The Senate banned the use of his image in burial ceremonies, the *gens Scribonia*

⁶⁶ Várhelyi 2010, 53.

⁶⁷ Okoń 2011, 67.

⁶⁸ Tac., *Ann.*, 4, 35.

⁶⁹ Tac., *Ann.*, 4, 20; 11, 35.

⁷⁰ Suet., *Tib.*, 25, 1.

⁷¹ Sen., *Ep.*, 70, 10.

was forbidden to take cognomen Drusus. Libo Drusus' property was divided between his accusers⁷².

In 20 AD, Emperor Tiberius transferred to the Senate the case of Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso, who was accused of some serious crimes. Piso committed suicide, not waiting for the verdict. The steps taken against Piso were aimed more at his name rather than his property and can be characterized as *damnatio memoriae*⁷³. All six of the penalties imposed by the Senate on Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso after his suicide were actually a part of his *damnatio memoriae*⁷⁴. His eldest son was forced to change the name *Gnaeus* to *Lucius*. Piso's name was not removed from fasts only due to the intervention of the Emperor Tiberius, who significantly mitigated the sentence, made by the Senate after the Piso's death⁷⁵. The text of the Senate's resolution was preserved, known today as the *Senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone patre*, which fully confirms and supplements the information given by Tacitus⁷⁶. The Senate's *consultum* includes a number of actions towards Piso's *damnatio memoriae*. In particular, women were forbidden to mourn the death of the convicted, as the custom would have expected it: *ne quis luctus mortis eius causa a feminis quibus {e} is more maiorum* (SCPP 73–74). Statues and pictures of Piso, regardless of their location, had to be removed: *utiq(ue) statuae et imagines Cn. Pisonis patris, quae ubiq(ue) positae essent, tollerentur* (SCPP 75–76). Piso's images were forbidden during the burial ceremonies of all who belonged to his family by a blood relationship or through a marriage; his death mask could not be placed among the death masks of the *gens Calpurnia*: *imago Cn. Pisonis patris duceretur neve imaginibus familiae Calpurniae imago eius interponeretur* (SCPP 76–82). Piso's name had to be removed from the inscription on the statue of Germanicus, which *sodales Augustales* put for him on the Field of Mars near *aram Providentiae*: *nomen Cn. Pisonis patris tolleretur ex titulo statuae Germanici Caesaris, quam ei sodales Augustales in campo ad aram Providentiae posuissent* (SCPP 82–84). Piso's property was confiscated: *(vacat) utiq(ue) bona Cn. Pisonis patris publicarentur* (SCPP 84). But a large part of his property was given to his sons – Gnaeus and Marcus⁷⁷.

The condemnation of Sejanus' memory was yet another dramatic instance of *damnatio memoriae* in the period of Tiberius' reign. There are no direct

⁷² Tac., *Ann.*, 2, 32: *Bona inter accusatores dividuntur.*

⁷³ Bodel 1999, 44.

⁷⁴ Flower 1999, 99–100.

⁷⁵ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 11–18.

⁷⁶ AE 1996, 885; HE 1996, 881; Potter 1999, 13–42.

⁷⁷ Tac., *Ann.*, 3, 17–18.

proofs of the Senate decision on *damnatio memoriae* of Sejanus. But he was executed and his images were destroyed. In addition, mourning for Sejanus was forbidden⁷⁸.

The practice of using *damnatio memoriae*, established at the beginning of the Principate epoch, allowed emperors to treat the memory of their precursors based on political expediency of the moment. For example, in *Lex de imperio Vespasiani* Tiberius' name is mentioned and the name of Gaius is omitted⁷⁹. Obviously, Emperor Vespasian considered that to justify his power it would be useful to link to Tiberius, but deleterious to remember Gaius' powers. *Lex de imperio Vespasiani* does not mention the name of Nero, the first Roman emperor, who was declared by the Senate the enemy of the Roman people (*hostis*)⁸⁰.

The attitude to the former emperor's memory could change with the appearance of the next ruler. The temple of Emperor Claudius was destroyed by Nero and rebuilt later by Vespasian⁸¹. Otho allowed to restore the images and the statues of Nero⁸² and even added Nero's name to his own⁸³. On the other hand, Otho has taken several measures to condemn Galba's memory. Katarzyna Balbuza pays attention to the statement of modern historians about *damnatio memoriae* of Galba, correctly rating it only as a hypothesis⁸⁴. After Emperor Vitellius' overthrow, on the proposal of Domitian, the son of the new Emperor Vespasian, the Senate decided to restore the honor of Galba⁸⁵. In particular, Galba's statue was to be installed on a rostral column in that part of the forum, where he was killed. But Vespasian abolished the Senate's decision (*sed decretum Vespasianus abolevit*)⁸⁶. Katarzyna Balbuza believes that Vespasian, in the first period of his rule, rejected the Senate resolution about commemoration of the memory of Galba with *columna rostrata* and tried to remove the dead emperor from the Romans' memory. In her opinion, the reason for this was Vespasian's reluctance to share the glory of a new reviver of Rome with Galba, defender of freedom, eulogist of peace in Rome, which was destroyed and wearied by civil wars⁸⁷.

⁷⁸ Dio Cass., 58, 11–16.

⁷⁹ ILS 244.

⁸⁰ Suet., *Nero*, 49, 2; Tac., *Hist.*, 1, 16.

⁸¹ Suet., *Ves.*, 9, 1.

⁸² Suet., *Otho*, 7, 1: *imagines statuasque eius reponi passus est*; Plut., *Oth.*, 3, 1: *καί τινων εἰκόνας Νέρωνος εἰς τοῦμφανές προθεμένων οὐκ ἐκώλυσε*.

⁸³ Dio Cass., 64b, 8, 2, 1: *τὸ γοῦν ὄνομα αὐτοῦ αὐτῶ ἐνθῦς ἐπέθετο*.

⁸⁴ Balbuza 2011, 51.

⁸⁵ Tac., *Hist.*, 4, 40.

⁸⁶ Suet., *Gal.*, 23.

⁸⁷ Balbuza 2011, 57.

This sounds convincing. Two inscriptions⁸⁸ of early Vespasian's reign contain some antithesis: Vespasian's *Roma Resurgens* is opposed to *Roma neglecta et dilapsa* of the earlier era⁸⁹. Of course, Vespasian made an attempt to contrast his own Principate with the reign of Nero.

In 96 AD, there was a successful attempt to murder Emperor Domitian. The Senate received the news about his death gladly and ordered Domitian's condemnation of memory and destruction of the inscriptions, made in his honour⁹⁰. Domitian's images (*εἰκόνας*), a large number of which were made of silver and gold (*πολλὰ μὲν ἀργυρᾷ πολλὰ δὲ καὶ χρυσαῖ οὔσαι*), were remelted (*συνεχωνεύθησαν*). Many arches built in honor of Domitian were destroyed⁹¹. Domitian's direct involvement in many projects in Rome was officially erased and forgotten⁹². The admiring Domitian inscription from AD 95/96 was completely erased. It was carved on the verso with reliefs for an arch of Trajan⁹³.

In spite of Domitian's condemnation of memory, the Flavian family's Temple, which was built by him in Rome, on the site of the house where he was born, was not destroyed⁹⁴. In the third century, Emperor Claudius Gothicus (268–270) expanded (*propagavit*) the Temple⁹⁵. It is difficult to say to what extent such a fate was determined by the fact that it honored not only Domitian, but also Vespasian, Titus and his daughter, Julia. The Flavian Temple in Ephesus, built around 90 AD, also survived the *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian. Perhaps, the statues of Domitian were removed from it, but the worship of Vespasian and Titus continued⁹⁶. Obviously, as Jakob Højte argues, the effectiveness of *damnatio memoriae* varied from one emperor to another and it was not observed with equal enthusiasm in all parts of the Empire. On the other hand, there were not any consistent geographical differences in observation of *damnatio memoriae*⁹⁷.

Public buildings – *thermae*, bridges, food warehouses, etc. – that were built by emperors who were later sentenced to *damnatio memoriae*, with few exceptions, continued to operate until they were destroyed by fire or time. The main factor that protected them – was their practical importance. Martial aptly

⁸⁸ ILS 218; 245.

⁸⁹ Ramage 1983, 213.

⁹⁰ Suet., *Dom.*, 23, 1: *novissime eradendos ubique titulos abolendamque omnem memoriam decerneret.*

⁹¹ Dio Cass., 68, 1, 1; Plin., *Pan.*, 52.

⁹² Anderson 1985, 508.

⁹³ Flower, 2001, 625–648; Kinney 1997, 143–144.

⁹⁴ Suet., *Dom.*, 1.

⁹⁵ HA., *Claud.*, 3, 6.

⁹⁶ Davies 2000, 33–34.

⁹⁷ Højte 2005, 60–62.

described the situation: *What is worse than Nero? What is better than Nero's thermae?*⁹⁸ Those arches that had no practical value were destroyed. They had only propaganda functions. Those arches that were part of aqueducts were protected and maintained in good condition. The only exception is the case with the public buildings of Emperor Commodus. There are written evidence giving reasons to talk about the use of *damnatio memoriae* in architecture⁹⁹. Aelius Lampridius pointed out that there were no public facilities of Commodus, apart from the baths (*lavacrum*) built on his behalf by Cleander, minion of the Emperor. But Commodus ordered to carve his name on the buildings, which he had nothing to do with. The Senate ordered these inscriptions to be rubbed out¹⁰⁰. Condemnation of Commodus' memory was accompanied by the destruction of all his statues. Renamed in his honor, months got back their previous titles¹⁰¹. There exists a debatable opinion that Commodus' *damnatio memoriae* was never reversed¹⁰². Nevertheless, the memory of Commodus was rehabilitated as well as was Antony's memory from the very beginning of the Principate. It was inevitable as soon as Septimius Severus decided to be the son of Emperor Marcus Aurelius and the brother of Commodus. Further to this, Severus bestowed divine honors upon the Commodus and established him a priest (*flamen*), the *Herculaneus Commodianus*¹⁰³. A new set of coins was issued after the deification of Commodus. The obverse legend was *M COMM ANTON AVG PIVS FEL*. There was an eagle standing left on the globe with legend *CONSECRATIO* on the reverse¹⁰⁴.

Commodus' case shows that *damnatio memoriae* was not irreversible. It depended upon the ruling emperor's whim, whether the Senate's decision was final. Abolition of the Senate's decision meant deep humiliation and it also showed its weakness¹⁰⁵.

In the epoch of the Principate the usage of the imperial palimpsest images spread. Dale Kinney notes: *In the first century imperial palimpsest portraits were nearly always made from images of previous emperors whose memory had been damned; hence the many heads of Nero refashioned into Vespasian,*

⁹⁸ Mart., 7, 34: *Quid Nerone peius? Quid thermis melius Neronianis?*

⁹⁹ Davies 2000, 32–35.

¹⁰⁰ HA., Comm., 17, 5–7: *Opera eius praeter lavacrum, quod Cleander nomine ipsius fecerat, nulla exstant, sed nomen eius alienis operibus incisum senatus erasit.*

¹⁰¹ HA., Comm., 20, 4–5.

¹⁰² Várhelyi 2010, 200.

¹⁰³ Dio Cass., 76, 7, 4; HA., Comm., 17, 11.

¹⁰⁴ RIC 72a [Sept].

¹⁰⁵ Mrozewicz 2011, 15.

*Domitian, and Titus, and portraits of Domitian recycled for Nerva*¹⁰⁶. Nero's Colossus changed the head several times and at least once was modified by Nero's successors into a statue of the sun god Sol¹⁰⁷. On the well-known frieze *A of Cancellaria Relief*, the head of Emperor Domitian was probably resculpted to depict the next Emperor Nerva¹⁰⁸. John Pollini argues earnestly that the portraits of the Emperor Vespasian, one in the Cleveland Museum of Art and the other in the Walters Art Gallery, both were reworked from likenesses of Nero¹⁰⁹. Such substitution of the sculpture's head was a cheap way for the efficient Romans' sake to get a statue of the reigning Emperor¹¹⁰. Some portraits had undergone more than one recutting. We must admit that primary motivation for reusing a previously carved piece of marble was an economic reason¹¹¹. Karl Galinsky emphasized that reuse and recycling of portraits in the imperial times were a mass phenomenon but *frequency of recurring portraits of bad emperors into those of good ones drops off sharply after its heyday in the first century AD*¹¹².

Condemnation of memory became an instrument of influence on society. Forming a negative image of a political opponent in the eyes of his contemporaries, also intended to remove the name of the convicted from a historical memory of future generations. Sometimes the introduction of *damnatio memoriae* was effective. For example, in the inscription from the Flavian period on the column from Jerusalem the fifth line is erased so that we can read only the first letter of the name – L. Today, there is no single interpretation of the name¹¹³. Sometimes, however, the desired result was not always achieved and the *damnatio memoriae* confirmed memory even though it aimed to dishonor it¹¹⁴. Tacitus aptly notes: If only it was as easy for our government to forget as to keep silence¹¹⁵. Despite the decision of the Senate to burn the books by Cremutius Cordus, they survived because some copies were secretly stored and then, later, released (*manserunt, occultati et editi*). Tacitus believes that there is reason to laugh at the stupidity of men who suppose that the despotism of the present can actually efface the remembrances of the next generation¹¹⁶. But anyway, it seems true that the effacement of someone's name

¹⁰⁶ Kinney 1997, 135.

¹⁰⁷ Dio Cass., 73, 22; HA., *Hadr.*, 19, 13; *Comm.*, 17, 9–10.

¹⁰⁸ Last 1948, 12.

¹⁰⁹ Pollini 1984, 547–555.

¹¹⁰ Okoń 2011, 60.

¹¹¹ Pollini 1984, 548.

¹¹² Galinsky 2008, 2, 21.

¹¹³ Gichon, Isaac 1974, 117–123; Isaac 1998, 76–78; Smallwood 1981, 547; Syme 1978, 12–13.

¹¹⁴ Hedrick 2000, xii.

¹¹⁵ Tac., *Ag.*, 2: *si tam in nostra potestate esset oblivisci quam tacere*.

¹¹⁶ Tac., *Ann.*, 4, 35.

from inscriptions all over the Roman world had a greater effect on posterity than on contemporaries¹¹⁷.

So the memory of the political opponents often could not be destroyed. Despite numerous destructions of Domitian's images, a large number of his moulded portraits survived, many of them do not contain evidence of intentional damage in the ancient epoch¹¹⁸. Apparently, the images of condemned individuals were removed from public display and stored in safe locations, often underground¹¹⁹.

It is reasonable to suggest that after the battle of Actium, in the new political situation, condemnation of memory (*damnatio memoriae*) and deification (*consecratio*) became key elements of the new political system – the Principate¹²⁰. The development of legal thought in the days of the Empire eventually led to the legal registration of condemnation of memory as punishment. In particular, in Justinian's institutions treason (*perduellio*) was associated with the punishment through condemnation of memory (*memoria eius damnata fuerit*)¹²¹.

To sum up, we emphasize: Antony's *damnatio memoriae* was the test and approbation of this republican institution within a new political reality in Ancient Rome. We have the reason to believe that the decision about *damnatio memoriae* of Antony was adopted by the Senate in the time interval between the battle of Actium (02/09/31 BC) and the death of Antony (08/01/30 BC). Later, Octavian either canceled Antony's *damnatio memoriae* or adjusted the Senate decision on the matter. *Damnatio memoriae* of Antony should approach towards the function of this institute during the Principate epoch. The development of legal thought in the days of the Empire eventually led to the legal registration of condemnation of memory as punishment. The decision on *damnatio memoriae* is approved by the Senate, with insignificant exceptions (e.g. Caligula). But it depended upon the ruling emperor's whim, whether the Senate's decision was final. The *damnatio memoriae* was not irreversible. The memory of Commodus was rehabilitated as well as the Antony's memory. Application of *damnatio memoriae* during the Principate epoch became an important part of the political propaganda of the regime which promoted the ideological grounding of the Empire.

¹¹⁷ Waters 1964, 76.

¹¹⁸ Petersen 2011, 6.

¹¹⁹ Varner 2001, 43.

¹²⁰ Olszewski 2011, 295.

¹²¹ Just., *Inst.*, 3, 1, 5.

Streszczenie

Damnatio memoriae Marka Antoniusza a ustanowienie pryncypatu

Instytucja *damnatio memoriae* jest dużo starsza niż rzymskie próby wymazywania z publicznej pamięci postaci uznawanych na ogół za wrogów państwa. Trudno w sensie strukturalnym odpowiedzieć na pytanie, czym było *damnatio memoriae*. Należy je pewnie umieścić między przepisami prawa a *mos maiorum*. Korzystano z niego w Rzymie już w okresie Republiki, choć trzeba też brać pod uwagę, iż informacje na ten temat mogą być anachronizmami. Nie ma też pewności, czy opinia Cycerona na temat konieczności wymazania z pamięci konsulatu Marka Antoniusza była tylko pobożnym życzeniem Arpinaty, czy faktem dokonany. *Damnatio memoriae* skierowane przeciw triumwirowi potwierdzają jednak inne źródła. Ich analiza pozwala twierdzić, że po bitwie pod Akcjum „skazanie na niepamięć” (wraz z *consecratio*) stały się kluczowymi elementami nowego politycznego systemu – pryncypatu, a kazu Antoniusza – testem dla wprowadzenia i zaaprobowania tej republikańskiej instytucji w ramach zmienionej rzeczywistości ustrojowej. Istnieją podstawy, aby twierdzić, że uderzające w Antoniusza *damnatio memoriae* zostało przyjęte przez senat w okresie między bitwą pod Akcjum a śmiercią Antoniusza w sierpniu 30 roku p.n.e. Jest wielce prawdopodobne, że później Oktawian albo anulował postanowienie, albo zmienił decyzję senatu w tej sprawie.

Kazus Antoniusza miał pewne znaczenie, jeśli chodzi o miejsce i traktowanie tej instytucji w epoce pryncypatu. Rozwój myśli prawniczej w czasach Cesarstwa doprowadził do uznania *damnatio memoriae* za rodzaj kary nakładanej wedle określonych procedur. Decyzja o *damnatio memoriae* była zatwierdzana przez senat, a odstępstwa od tej reguły zdarzały się rzadko (na przykład wyjątkowo stało się tak w przypadku Kaliguli). **Najwięcej w tym względzie zależało jednak od kaprysu rządzącego cesarza, który decydował o tym, czy postanowienie senatu było ostateczne.** Okazuje się bowiem, że „potępienie pamięci” nie było nieodwracalne, czego dowodzą z kolei przykłady „rehabilitacji” Antoniusza i dużo późniejszej – Kommodusa. Nie ulega wątpliwości, iż zastosowanie *damnatio memoriae* w epoce pryncypatu stało się ważnym elementem propagandy politycznej, który stanowił istotne ideologiczne podłoże reżimu.