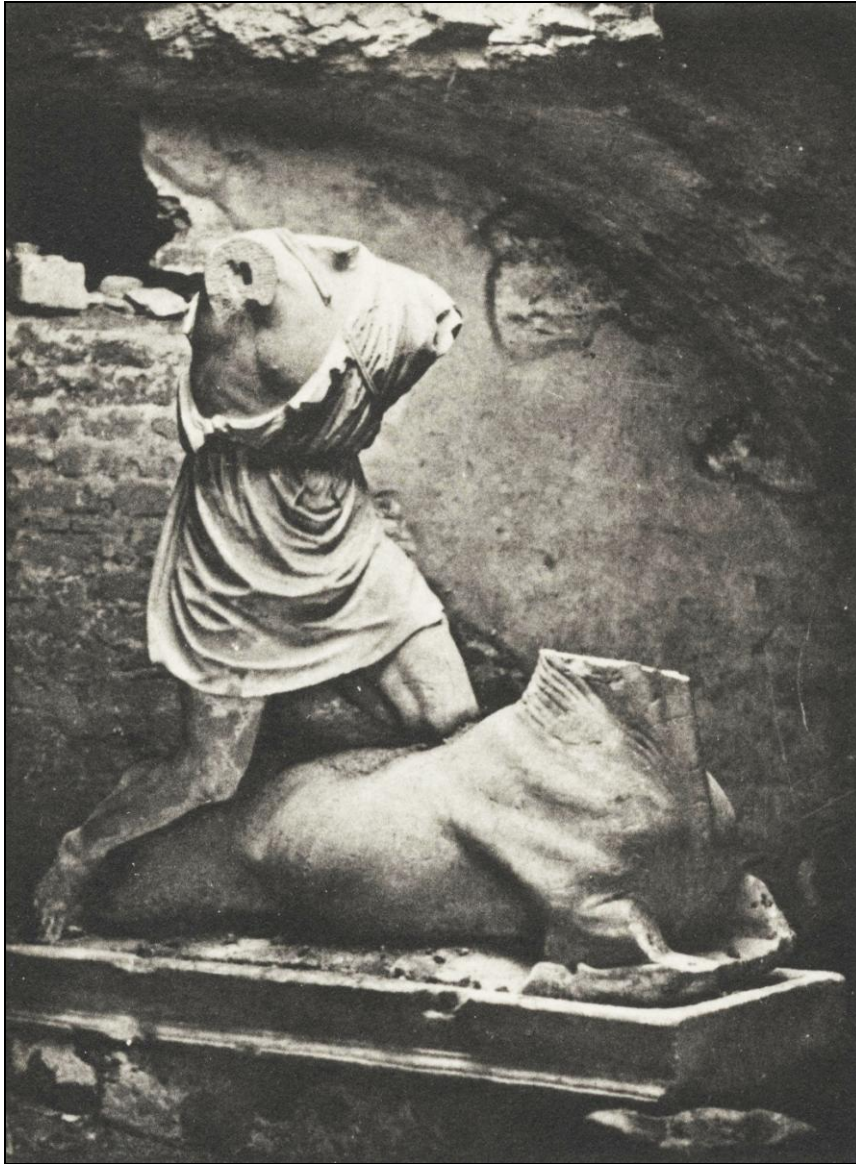


Remember the fallen

**A comparative study of memory sanctions in political and religious contexts
in the Roman Empire**



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Front page illustration:

The damaged cult statue group depicting the *tauroctony*, from Mitreo delle terme del Mitra in Ostia. From Becatti 1954:tav.IVb.

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PART I: BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

1 Introduction

In recent years, an interest for investigating the archaeological evidence for Christian destruction of images in the eve of the rise of Christianity as the solitary religion in the Roman Empire has been developed. This interest is partly led by a hope of gaining knowledge of the reasons for the fragmentary state of many images that survive to this day. There are many causes of fragmentation, and they are often too complicated to establish firmly. (Myrup Kristensen:161). Many fragmented and damaged images have been found in contexts related to Mithraism, a mystery cult often described as having a problematic relationship with Christianity. Find contexts in Mithraic sites and methods used when excavating them have often given few answers regarding the causes of damage to the Mithraic cult images. This raises the question of the motives behind such destructive behavior. Although attempts have been made by archaeologists and other scholars studying Mithraism to interpret the material found in the mithraea in order to find answers to these questions, it is my opinion that much work remains to be done before the picture is complete.

A debate concerning the damage to Mithraic images and mithraea has evolved around the question of the identity of the culprits, especially whether they were Christian or not, and if damage was afflicted in rage and driven by a passionate hatred towards an “enemy of Christ”. This has led to a debate that in my opinion has become black and white, dividing the scholarly milieu in two: one side ascribing damage to Christian iconoclastic rage (e.g. Sauer 2003), and the other almost entirely rejecting their involvement in the destruction (e.g. Gordon 1999). In my opinion, the focus must be led back to the material to be able to identify the culprits. By comparing damaged Mithraic images to a better documented tradition of damaging images, namely that of *damnatio memoriae* - memory sanctions in a political context, my hope has been to be able to find the mechanisms behind the destruction and thus widen our understanding of *how* and *why* the mithraea and their contents were destroyed.

As a science, archaeology will always be incomplete, due to the fact that the archaeological evidence delivered to us represents only a glimpse of what has been in the past. When dealing with the Greek and Roman periods, we are lucky to have the support of a rich corpus of written sources supporting the hard archaeological source material. In addition, excavations and fieldwork in the Greek and Roman core areas produce a rich surplus of material. This has made cataloguing and development of methods for studying these vast quantities of material

important fields of focus for the Classical archaeologists. Consequently, Classical archaeologists have not considered it as necessary to stretch towards social theories and sociological models as archaeologists studying prehistory in order to understand the societies they study. So, what do Classical archaeologists do when the material available for study is scarce and there is little or no written evidence to supplement the archaeological material?

Until recently, the scholars researching the cult of Mithras have relied on often unclear archaeological evidence and a very meager corpus of written sources supporting it. The secret and concealed nature of the cult has restricted first hand written sources. The outside commentators are mostly Christian writers who are writing from a “winner’s perspective”, not being fit as neutral sources to the defeated Mithras cult. Finally, there are some sources briefly mentioning Mithras in passing. Two known histories of the cult have existed, by Euboulos and Pallas, but these only survive in part through the quotations of Porphyrius’ *De abstinentia ab esu animalium* (Porph.*Abst.*4.16). There are epigraphic texts in the mithraea, however mostly dedicatory. They will thus provide information on issues concerning for example membership rather than cultic content. The other categories of archaeological material available to us are mainly architectural: the mithraea themselves and their internal components, as well as art: wall paintings and sculpture.

The present study is focusing on the latter two categories of material, mainly on the cult images, but architectural material will be used where possible, comparing them to similar material in the political image tradition. All materials have previously been interpreted as being deliberately damaged. This has however not necessarily been firmly established in research tradition. The lack of written sources to Mithraism makes the Mithraic material unique in a Classical Archaeological context and the appliance of methods and theoretical approaches, such as social theory, not widely used by Classical Archaeologists may help in filling out the missing pieces of the puzzle that is Mithraism.

The study is conducted as a comparative analysis of two traditions of image destruction, namely those of imperial portraits and religious images originating from the Mithras cult. In the comparative analysis, I am applying a theoretical framework based on Pierre Bourdieu’s *habitus* theory and social theoretical approaches to the Roman art and society. These are elaborated further in Chapter 4. By conducting this study I have hoped to shed new light on the evidence for destruction of Mithraic cult images, and to offer new perspectives on the motives and mechanisms behind it. The method used is further elaborated below, in Chapter 6.

1.1 Setting the stage: some remarks on the Late Roman period

Central to this study is the transition from paganism to Christianity. This happened in a period of turmoil and change in the Roman Empire. The state religion changed from that of the polytheistic Greek-Roman pantheon to monotheistic Christianity. The Empire was split in two and the seat of the Emperor moved to Constantinople in the east, and the Empire lost several provinces. A chronological limitation of the Late Roman period is problematic. Here, I have chosen to follow the chronology defined by Peter Brown, roughly defining it as the period spanning from ca. 200 to ca. 700 AD (Brown 1971:11), the former being around the time of the Crisis of the third century, and the latter around the time of the Muslim invasions when the Eastern provinces were lost.

As Brown points out, there was no defining moment where a man one day was a full-fledged pagan, and the day after a pious Christian in all aspects of life (Brown 1978:2). There were Christians that renounced all relations to the pagan culture, as demonstrated by the example of Sanctus by Eusebius (Euseb.*Hist.Ecc.* 5.1.20-21): “I am Christian”: ‘this he said in place of name and city and race and everything’”. This cannot however be considered the norm. Studies show that Roman classical culture was preserved through the Christianization in the Western Empire. Even though the emperors had long been Christian, the Senate was still dominated by pagan senators in the late fourth century AD, and marriage between Christians and pagans still occurred amongst the families of the aristocracy (Brown 1961). Brown (1961:9-10) states that the common ground found in the Classical culture of the age was a prerequisite for pagans and Christians to live side by side in these families. His conclusion can be taken further, outside the sphere of the aristocratic families. The transition from a society of pagan values to one based solely on Christian values was slow and indistinct, and was not by far completed at the time of the barbarian invasion in AD 410. This is also seen in Christian writing. The Christian Apologists implied multiple social identities, and appealed to shared values in ethics and the common history of the Romans (Lieu 2009:52). The goal of Athenagoras was for instance “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life and at the same time willingly to do all that is commanded” (Athenagoras.*Leg.*37.3). Relating to art specifically, nothing suggests a change in the attitude towards it. Writers in the period do not mention any particular discontinuity in the uses of art; it continues to perform the same roles as before. It has been argued that there has been a drop in the production of portrait statues in the period, indicating a falling interest in portraits and art. There is however continuity as

portrait statues are still being produced for emperors and governors throughout the period and into the Byzantine period, albeit in smaller numbers (Stewart 2008:166).

1.2 Chronology and geography

Memory sanctions against images are detected throughout the Roman period in the form of the so-called *damnatio memoriae*. Various forms of sanctions performed against portraits are visible also earlier, in the Greek and Hellenistic periods, although not in the same scale. Memory sanctions against images are also known in later periods, all the way up to modern times, recent examples being famous tearing down of Saddam Hussein's images in the Battle of Baghdad in 2003 and the very recent tearing down of Gaddafi's buildings and images in 2011. Regarding destruction of imperial portraiture specifically, there are also cases all throughout the period (for a detailed overview, see Varner (2004)). Destruction of religious images is also part of a well known phenomenon spanning a long period of time, and is still seen, a recent example being the attack of the Al Qaida on the Buddha statues at Bamiyan in 2001. This form of image destruction is however best known from the different Christian iconoclastic movements, concentrating on destroying the Christians' own religious art. In the Roman period, Christian destruction of pagan images is mostly restricted to the time after the Christianization of the Roman Empire, beginning with the reign of Constantine (AD 306-337), and escalating after the anti-pagan legislations of Theodosius I (AD 347-395). Cases of Christian destruction of pagan images before this cannot however be completely ruled out. Geographically, the evidence for both traditions is just as diverse. Destruction of both imperial portraits and religious images is found in all parts of the Roman Empire, from the Far East to the western provinces, in Africa and the Rhine areas. This is also the case concerning the Mithraic evidence, but a slight concentration of cases in the Rhine area can be observed. This is however an area where high cult activity has been observed in general.

Taking into consideration both the consistency of destructive behavior against images over time, and the wide geographical distribution of material, I have not limited the study to any area or period of time other than the geographical and temporal limitations of the Roman Empire itself. Of Mithraic images there will however be an overweight of material from the late Roman period, which can be explained by the turbulence in both religious and political spheres in the period, and geographically a slight overweight of material from the Northern provinces. This is in part due to generally higher cult activity in the area, and also partly due to the higher availability of publications. The tradition of *damnatio memoriae* has produced a larger amount of material, and this will be reflected in the chronological distribution of this

material group. There is however a general decrease in the number of new portraits in the late Roman period, and a rise in the use of re-carving of portraits both inside and outside the tradition of *damnatio memoriae*. Due to this, the latest examples of sanctioned imperial portraits are relatively early, although we know from written sources that memory sanctions against portraits continued into the Late Roman period. The earliest examples originate from the reign of Caligula (AD 37 - 41), and the latest from the reign of Macrinus/Diadumenianus (AD 217 – 218).

1.3 Problem statement

Deliberate damage to religious images (for example cult images) and secular images (for example portraits and inscriptions) have traditionally been discussed separately by scholars, and have thus received different term: religious destructions have been described as *iconoclasm*, a charged expression indicating religious hatred as motive behind the actions; secular/political destructions have been given the term *damnatio memoriae*, a word associated with memory sanctions against fallen emperors and regimes. Some scholars go as far as denying any relation between the two types of image destruction (Sauer 2003:46). In the case of damaged political images, several types of damage have been identified as signs of memory sanctions against the image (Stewart 1999). What happens if these tools of recognition are applied to material from a religious context?

The main research hypothesis will be as follows: *The destruction of Mithraic monuments are memory sanctions, and thus share the motives and social mechanisms behind the so-called damnatio memoriae phenomenon.* Central research questions will be: *What similarities are there between the destroyed material from the mithraea and the material destroyed in the process of imperial memory sanctions? What can these similarities tell us about the motives and mechanisms behind the destructions in the mithraea? Is it possible to speak of a common cultural vocabulary of memory sanctions, a shared habitus between the secular and religious destructive traditions?*

1.4 Structure of the text

This study consists of two main parts. Part I provides a background for the analysis and discussion that make up part II.

Part I consists of, in addition to the introduction (Chapter 1), the chapters 2 through 6. Chapter 2 two is an introduction to the cult of Mithras, the Roman mystery cult from which the analyzed material originates. It includes an overview of the origins of the cult, its

geographical and chronological distribution, the architecture and iconography of the cult space, membership and cultic content. Chapter 3 is a presentation of earlier research on the topics relevant to this study; Mithraism in general, and more specifically its relationship with Christianity, memory sanctions and *damnatio memoriae*, and connections between secular and religiously motivated destruction of art. The theoretical framework of the analysis can be found in Chapter 4. It is divided into three parts, one describing the universal theoretical framework, and the other two describing specific theoretical approaches originated from research conducted on Roman material. Chapter 5 is a presentation of the material and their context, and the criteria for selection of the material. Chapter 6 describes the methodological approach chosen in this project, namely a comparative study.

Part II consists of the analysis (Chapter 7) and a following discussion of the results in a wider context (Chapter 8). In addition there are 3 appendices. Appendix I and II are catalogues of the material used in the analysis; Appendix I, with catalogue numbers starting with D (*damnatio memoriae*), represents the comparative material consisting of imperial portraits and structures. Appendix II, with catalogue numbers starting with M (Mithraic), consists of the Mithraic images and structures used in the analysis. Appendix III is a list of Roman emperors in the Western Empire, provided for a chronological overview.

Illustrations of all the objects of analysis are provided in the appendices. More detailed illustrations are also provided in the text for some of the objects.

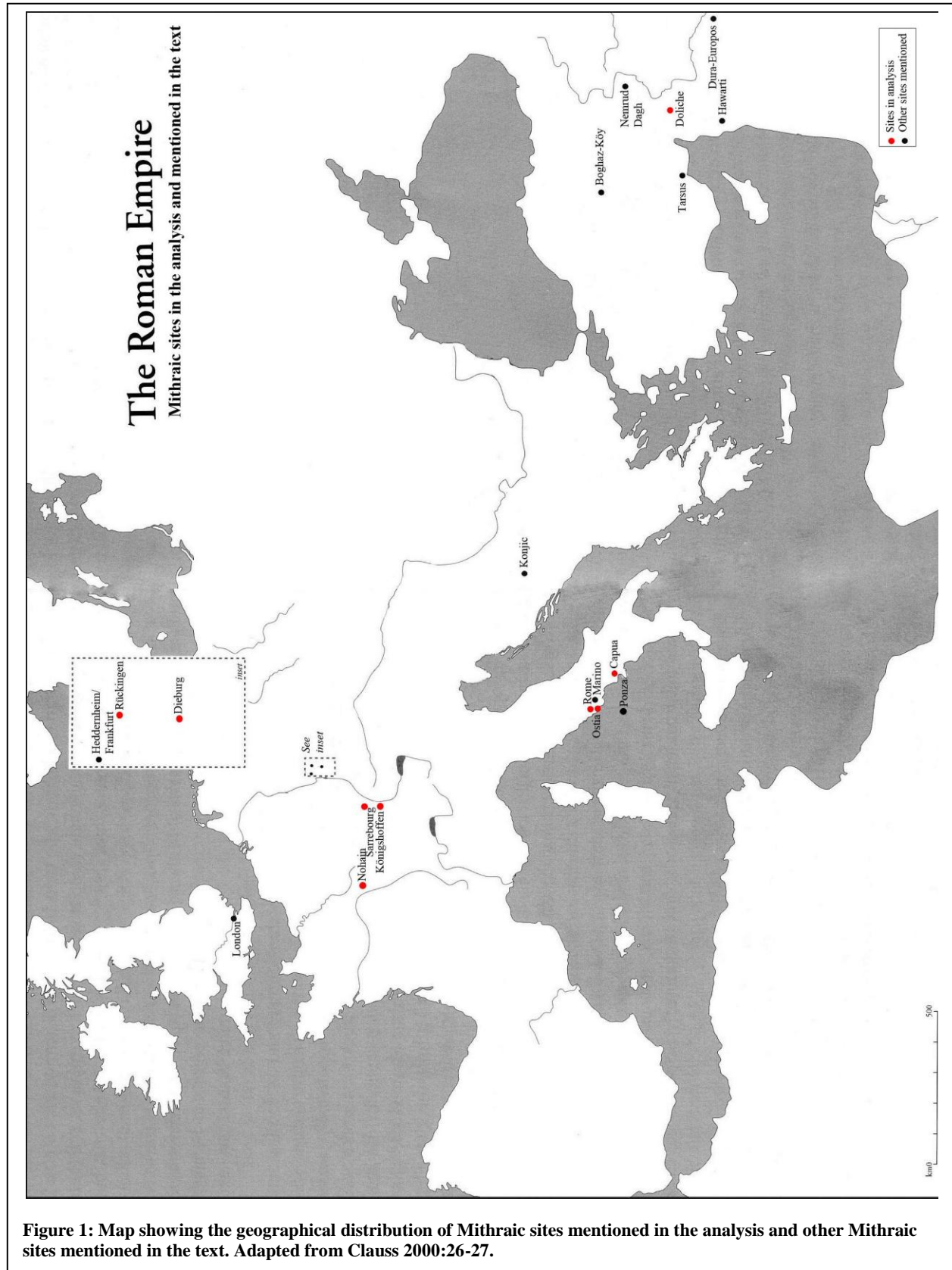


Figure 1: Map showing the geographical distribution of Mithraic sites mentioned in the analysis and other Mithraic sites mentioned in the text. Adapted from Claus 2000:26-27.

2. The secret god – an introduction to Roman Mithraism

Mithraic studies is a narrow field of research within the sphere of Roman studies, and the general knowledge of the cult is relatively restricted. In light of this I will include an introduction to the cult and its contents before presenting the material. The introduction will cover the background and supposed origins of the cult, the architecture and function of the cult temple and the iconography, cultic content, members and priestly grades, and the geographical and chronological distribution of cult activity. The intention is not to give a complete picture of all aspects of Mithraism, but to give a general introduction to a rather narrow material group.

Mithraism is one of several *mystery cults* found in the diverse Roman religious landscape. Mystery cults were more personal alternatives to the official religion. They had in common that performing and witnessing the rites and rituals, and often also the cult's liturgical content, was reserved for initiated members. Some cults were exclusive - reserved for members of a certain social status, sex or ethnic background. Others were open for all who wished to be initiated. Only the initiated knew how the desired personal salvation was acquired, and one could only attain the salvation once initiated (Clauss 2000:14-15). Cults like that of Isis were visible in the cityscape with their lavish temples, partly open to the public, and the characteristic and easily recognizable appearance of the Isiac priests. In contrast to the relative openness of the Isis cult stood the Mithraic communities. Mithras was worshipped in small underground spaces, often in private houses, by small congregations which had no public rituals. The cult remained secret and surrounded by myths throughout its history.

2.1 Origins

The name *Mithras* (*Mithra/Mitra*) can be found in one form or another in pantheons of the Indo-European religions of northern India and Iran - in Hittite texts from as long back as 1400 BC. The first archaeological and epigraphic evidence for Mithras is found on clay tablets from the Hittite capital of Boghaz-köy. On these tablets Mithras and the Lord of Heaven stand as guarantors in a treaty between the Hittites and a neighboring people (Vermaseren 1963:13). Mithras is also found in the Indian Veda texts, but usually joint with the god Varuna as *Mitravaruna*. One Vedic text is however dedicated to Mitra alone. Already here is the slaying of the sacred bull emphasized (Harsberg 1983:9; Vermaseren 1963:17-18). In the Iranian dualistic religion, *Mithra* is presented as the helper of Ahura Mazda in the fight against the

evil Ahriman. In the Avesta, he is described as a god of light and the heavens, and again as a guardian of pacts. Here, Mithras has two helpers, Aryaman and Bhaga, which Vermaseren (1963:15) compares to Cautes and Cautopates, the companions of the Roman Mithras. The killing of the cosmic bull by Mithra, and thereby his bringing of life to the Earth, is described in several of the Eastern texts (Lease 1980:1310).

The evolution from the Mithra we find in Persian religion to the Roman mystery cult is a point of obscurity. The Mithra known from the Persian religion was still at work in Persia in the fourth century AD. The sun-god Mithra was still being invoked to witness oaths; for instance on an occasion in AD 383 when a treaty between the Persians and Theodosius I was completed (Clauss 2000:4). In Roman culture, the handshake was a common gesture for sealing agreements, including contracts and oaths. A continued importance of oaths and contracts into the Roman version of the cult is probable: Mithras and the king are shaking hands on King Antiochus I of Commagene's monument at Nemrud Dagh. The handshake was also a common image on Roman Mithraic monuments, where Mithras shook hands with Sol (Griffith 2000:16). The connections between Mithras and the sun, and Mithras and the tauroctony (From Greek ταυροκτόνος – "killing bulls"), are also commonly found. Although many properties of the Eastern Mithras can be found in the western cult, one cannot assume a direct continuity between the Perso-Hellenic worship of Mithra and the Roman mysteries of Mithras. Amongst other things, it is problematic that there is no evidence of the cult in the Greek-speaking world (Clauss 2000:7). Theories on how the Roman mysteries of Mithras came to be are many, and vary from it being the deeds of Persian *magi* brought to Rome by Cilician pirates (Vermaseren 1963:19-22, 27-29), to it being a conglomerate of the old Persian religion, Greek religion, philosophy and astrology (Harsberg 1983:17), and it being a completely western invention originated in Rome or Ostia; the last is an assertion of Clauss (2000:7-8), who unfortunately does not elaborate this view further.

2.2 Place of worship: the mithraeum and its iconography

Mithras was worshipped in the temples of Mithras – *mithraea*. The term was not used in antiquity; Roman sources tend to use the term *spelaeum* (cave), alternatively *fanum*, *crypta* or simply *templum*. This derived from the traditional worshipping of Mithras in natural caves, on the background of the legendary killing of the bull in a Persian cave, and also the cave as a symbol of cosmos (Bjørnebye 2007:16; Clauss 2000:47), as mentioned in Porphyrius' *De antro nympharum* (Porph. *De antr. nymph.* 6). While that tradition was upheld some places, for example in the cave mithraeum at Doliche (Vermaseren 1963:37), this was not possible in

densely populated towns and cities. Here, the mithraea were constructed to more or less *assimilate* natural caverns. They were usually constructed below ground level, often integrated in houses, and sometimes also dedicated by the owner of the building, but the mithraea are also found in connection with warehouses, shops, *thermae* and *insulae*. Mithraea were rarely constructed at ground level, but exceptions include the Walbrook mithraeum in London and several mithraea in Ostia. They were however sited near water and low-lying, making it hazardous to construct them underground (Clauss 2000:42-44; Vermaseren 1963:53).

The main cult room was built to symbolize cosmos. The ceiling was vaulted and often clad in stucco to simulate the natural cave. Many mithraea had painted vaults simulating the heavens, and some had ceilings furnished with lamps for the same purpose (Clauss 2000:51). The cult space was constructed after a set traditional layout, which was (with small deviations) the same in mithraea from England to the Black Sea: a central aisle with flanking benches for the initiates to recline on, leading up to a niche in the back of the mithraeum where the cult image was situated. A water source or a basin was often included in the mithraeum, preferably in the back near the cult image. If the ceiling of the mithraeum was not made as to look like a natural cave, the *apsis* of the cult niche usually was. The cult image was usually a relief or a sculpture, but a small number of Italian mithraea have painted cult images. In front of the cult image there was space for one or more altars.

Dedications and other decoration did not follow a pattern, but were distributed around the temple space as seen fit. However, it appears as if it was preferred to place sculptures of the torchbearers *Cautes* and *Cautopates* flanking the entrances. Many mithraea also had other rooms connected to the cult room itself; often a portico, and sometimes also an anteroom, where amongst other things utensils for the ritual cult meal were stored. The size of the mithraeum itself varied, depending on the financial situation of the congregation and also the availability of space in the area (Bjørnebye 2007:93-94; Clauss 2000:48-51; Vermaseren 1963:39-40).

Like the layout of the mithraeum, the Mithraic iconography also followed a set traditional format. The tauroctony was an obligatory element in all mithraea. Although the style and execution of the cult image varied, some elements were almost always present in the image: Mithras and the bull, the only two elements that always occur, were central in the image.



Figure 2: The ritual meal shared between Mithras and Sol Invictus. Relief from the mithraeum at Konjic. From Vermaseren 1960:fig. 491.



Figure 3: Bronze coin from Tarsus, Cilicia (AD 238-244): Mithras killing the bull . From Claus 2000:5 fig. 1.

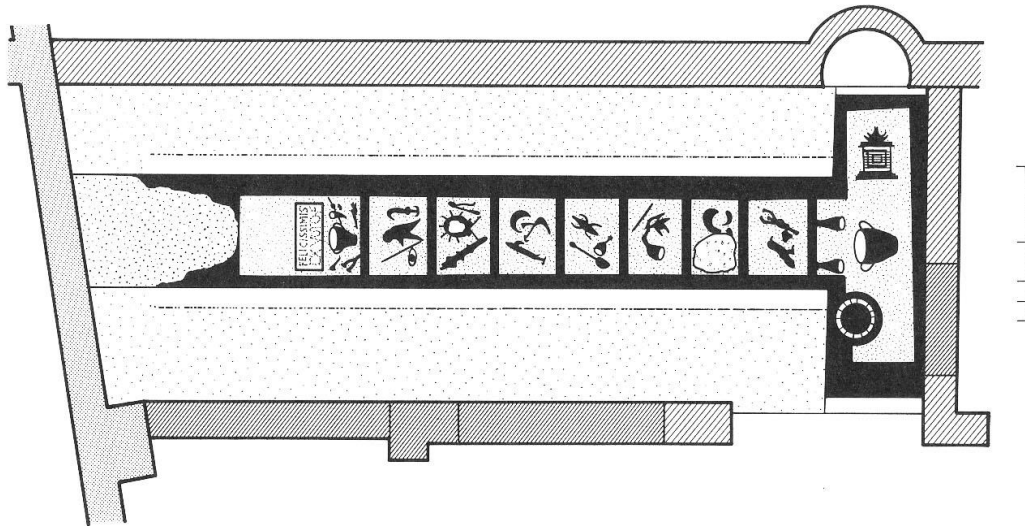


Figure 4: Insignia of the priestly grades. From the Mithraeum of Felicissimus in Ostia. From Becatti 1954:107 fig. 27.

Mithras, usually in Persian attire and wearing the characteristic Phrygian hat, is kneeling with one leg on each side of the bull while he gazes across his shoulder and at the same time thrusts his dagger into its neck. Secondary elements are a dog and a snake licking up the blood of the dying bull, a scorpion pinching its testicles and a raven, either perching or flying towards Mithras. Sometimes panels with scenes from Mithras' life surround the main image, such as Mithras' birth from a rock, the water miracle and the meal shared between Mithras and Sol, and the hunting and capture of the bull. Scenes like these are especially seen in the large cult reliefs found in the Rhine area, but also some of the painted cult images from Italy. The torchbearers are also often depicted in the cult image or elsewhere in the mithraea (Bjørnebye 2007:102-103).

2.3 Rituals and membership

The rituals and rites of Mithraism have to be reconstructed from the archaeological material; there are no written accounts from Mithraists describing anything concerning the rituals of the cult. There are some reports of the initiation rites, but these are all from outsiders, and mainly of Christian origin. The accounts were quite exaggerated, more so as time went by: supposedly the initiation process endured for months, and the initiates were tortured and abraded. An example of this is the commentaries of 'Nonnus' in the sixth century, who speak of eighty tests consisting of amongst other things being hurled onto a bonfire and swimming for many days (Nonnus.*Comm.in Greg.Nazian.Or.*4.70). The little we do know about the initiation rites has been reconstructed from a series of frescos from the mithraeum at Santa Maria Capua Vetere, where an initiate apparently goes through a test, maybe a test of courage. The meaning behind the event and whether it is an initiation into the cult or one of the seven grades is not known, but from what we know of other contemporary initiatory cults, the initiations were understood as a form of rebirth (Clauss 2000:102-104).

The best documented Mithraic ritual is the ritual meal, which is documented through imagery and osteological finds. This was a re-enactment of the liturgical meal shared between Mithras and Sol before their joint ascent into the Heavens. The liturgical meal is often recurring in the Mithraic iconography; representations of the sharing of the meal by the initiates themselves have also been found, for example the reverse of the cult-relief from Konjic (CIMRM 1896). Evidence for the cult meals in the mithraea themselves have also been found, such as in the recent excavations of the mithraea of Crypta Balbi (De Grossi Mazzorin 2004) and Tienen (Ervynck et al. 2004; Martens 2004). In the latter, there is evidence for a large-scale feast, judging from faunal remains and ceramics in the mithraea.

There were seven initiatory grades within the Mithraic congregations, which we know very little about except their names. The seven grades are: Raven (*corax*), Bridegroom (*nymphus*), Soldier (*miles*), Lion (*leo*), Persian (*perses*), Sun-runner (*heliodromus*) and Father (*pater*). There are also mentions of a *pater patrum*. This is probably not a separate grade, but a distinguishing title for one of several *patres* in a congregation. It is not known with certainty whether all initiates had one grade or another, or whether they were forms of priesthoods. Certainly, of the 1050 Mithraists distinguished from Mithraic inscriptions, only 14 percent are mentioned with a form of title or function within the cult, and even fewer are mentioned as having one of the seven grades. Clauss suggests that we can conclude from the epigraphic material that most members were initiated only once, leaving a small group of holders of the different grades (Clauss 2000:131, 137-138). We do not know much about the functions of each grade within the congregation either. Judging from the frescoes from the Santa Prisca mithraeum, there seems to be a relation between the seven grades and the seven planets, and in the mithraeum of Felicissimus in Ostia, mosaics in the central aisle depict what probably are the insignia of each grade (Clauss 2000:133). The highest grade is believed to be *pater* - the grade is certainly the one most frequently mentioned in the epigraphic material. This suggests that the *pater* supervised the setting up of votive-offerings in the mithraeum. Formulae such as *mermittente . . . patre/permisso patris* (translation: “with the Father’s permission”) do appear on votives (Clauss 2000:137-138).

2.4 Chronology and the end of cult activity

Chronologically, the cult in its Roman form lasted for about 300 years - the earliest known securely dated evidence for the cult is an inscription from Nida in Germany, dated to around AD 90, and a passage from the poet Statius written around the same time mentioning a mithraeum in Rome (*Stat. Theb.* 1.719-20). It is thus reasonable to presume that the cult was established in the *caput mundi* at the time. The first datable Mithraic monument from Rome is however a sculpture of Mithras and the bull (CIMRM 594), dated to the first quarter of the second century AD. The inscription, which reads *Alcimus Ti(beri) Cl(audi) Livani ser(vus) vil(i)c(us) Sol(i) M(ithrae) v(otum) s(olvit) d(omum) d(edit)*, proves the connection between Mithras and Sol from the earliest stage of the cult. As the inscription shows, slaves were allowed to enter the cult. Freedmen and soldiers seem to also be amongst the social groups often initiated into the cult at this early stage. From the geographical distribution of the mithraea in the Roman Empire, it is evident that areas with a large presence of soldiers also

have a higher density of mithraea, especially in areas otherwise sparsely populated by Romans like the borderlands near the Rhine and Hadrian's Wall (Clauss 2000:21-23).

In the second century AD it is possible to see an expansion in the cult geographically, both in the number of members and with regard to the social status of the members. By the middle of the century the cult had penetrated virtually the whole extent of its later territory; the number of mithraea had increased constantly and had found members from a wider social spectrum. Clauss explains this partly with slaves becoming freedmen and soldiers becoming prosperous civilians after their retirement, and ascribing their social advancement to their god (Clauss 2000:23). Although the Mithras cult never was supported by the state and no emperors are reported to be initiated, one can see inscriptions from the reign of Marcus Aurelius (AD 160-181) and onwards that are dedicated *pro salute imperatoris Caesaris*. Even if the Emperor and his circle did not enter the cult, they would tolerate, and maybe also encourage, their subjects' adherence. There is certainly evidence for imperial slaves and freedmen being active in the cult, and also initiates that simultaneously had the seats of high priest or city *flamines*. As the cult grew, the relationship between Mithras and Sol Invictus also grew tighter. At the same time, Sol Invictus' status amongst the Romans increased. Surely the connection between Sol and Mithras drew adherents to the cult. It would also explain the before mentioned dedications to the Emperor's health. The Emperor on the other hand recognized Sol Invictus, a god which the Mithraists always had seen as identical to their god, as a protector of the imperial house (Clauss 2000:23-25, 28).

The fourth century AD was the last century in which the cult was active. In the provinces, the decline of the cult seems to have been earlier than in Rome. This was probably partly due to the earlier retreat of the Roman army from the Rhine area (for a thorough analysis of the end of Mithraism in the North-Western provinces, see Sauer (1996)). In Rome, however, the cult seems to have been prosperous in the fourth century. The social composition has again changed; while the senatorial class has been rather absent in earlier epigraphic material, we now see a significant increase of senatorial dedications in mithraea. We must nevertheless presume that common Romans constituted the majority of the members. The organization of the cult, with the hierarchical grades and the intimate nature of the congregation, placed a high value on conformity according to Griffith (2000:26) a high value on conformity of social status. The high degree of concord between the social codex within the cult and values and customs of the traditional Roman society sustained and invigorated the cult through the fourth century AD. Several of the mithraea in Rome have been refurbished and expanded in the late

third and early fourth century AD, at a time where the cult was in decline in the rest of the Empire. It appears as though the mithraea of Rome have been subject to violence in lesser degree than those in other regions. The reason for this remains uncertain (Bjørnebye 2007:52-54). The definitive end of Roman Mithraism came with the gothic invasion in AD 410. This made an abrupt end to many of the social and religious institutions of Rome, and Mithraism with it (Bjørnebye 2007:2).

3. Earlier research

This section will give an overview of earlier research related to the problem statements of this study. In the first part is an overview of the general archaeological research on Mithraism and research problems relating to Mithraic studies given, and after this an overview of relevant studies of memory sanctions and imperial *damnationes*. The last part focus on research concerning the relationship between Mithraism and Christianity, and how earlier research has related to secular and religious motivated image-destruction.

3.1 The Mithras cult

The earliest research on Mithraism concentrated, as often, on cataloguing the archaeological material. As the present study is an archaeological study of Mithraism, the summary of the earlier research on the Mithras cult will consequently focus on archaeological research.

The first scholar to publish all (then) available evidence for the Mithras cult was Franz Cumont in his catalogue *Textes et monuments figurés relatifs aux mystères de Mithra* (1886-1889). He also published a concluding monologue, *Les mystères de Mithra* (1902), which was translated into English and German. Cumont's works served as the background for Mithraic studies for half a century, both due to the lack of other studies and the coherence of his account of the evidence for the cult. Cumont argued strongly for the origins of the cult in the Iranian dualistic religion and the importance of astrology and interpretations of the Zodiac in the cult (Cumont 1902). The other extensive publications on Mithraism were Maarten J. Vermaseren's collection of epigraphic and monumental evidence, *Corpus inscriptionum et monumentorum religionis Mithriacae* (CIMRM) (1956-1960), and his general account of Mithraism, *Mithras, the secret god* (1963), which in general opinion has become outdated. CIMRM still constitutes the standard work on the subject, and it is invaluable to students and scholars of Mithraism. In addition, he excavated and published reports on a series of Italian and Roman mithraea, including the mithraeum under the church of Santa Prisca (Vermaseren and van Essen 1965), the mithraeum at Santa Maria Capua Vetere (Vermaseren 1971), Ponza (Vermaseren 1974) and Marino (Vermaseren 1982). Vermaseren followed Cumont's ideas of an Eastern origin of the cult, but not quite as dogmatically (Clauss 2000:xix). However, much has however happened since the last overview of Mithraic material; all the standard works

gathering Mithraic material are now fairly outdated. This is partly true also for general accounts of the cult, although with Clauss (2000) as a noteworthy exception.

Vermaseren's publications generated an increased interest in Mithraic studies, including a journal, *Journal of Mithraic Studies* (printed in three volumes between 1976 and 1980, now issued electronically) and three international conferences with following conference proceedings: Manchester in 1971 (Hinnells 1975), Teheran in 1975 (Duchesne-Guillemin 1978) and Rome in 1978 (Bianchi 1979). Both the journal and the conferences were dominated by two topics, namely the topics of Eastern ancestry and astrology; the latter often based on wall paintings and ordering of space within the mithraea. Amongst the contributing scholars are Roger Beck (2006) and David Ulansey (1989), both of whom have published elaborate theories of the Mithraic initiate's spiritual journey through the realm of the fixed stars, and on the images of Mithras and the bull as star-maps. According to Manfred Clauss (2000:xx), the focus on vague and rather indemonstrable issues were the reason for the shutting down of both the conferences and the journal.

In the past couple of decades, trends in the studies of Mithraism have moved in another direction. There are still scholars dealing with the vague and spiritual sides of Mithraism, including the before mentioned Beck and Ulansey, but also including Robert Turcan (1975) and Reinhold Merkelbach (1984), who have both presented a view of the cult as influenced by Hellenistic philosophical thinking. There has also been a renewed focus on archaeological evidence of the cult. The early excavations were preoccupied with ascertaining the appearance of mithraea when they were in use, and thus failed to record stratigraphy and evidence for destruction or abandonment of the temples, as well as small finds and animal remains (Nicholson 1995:359). Newer excavations have been conducted and published from mithraea in all parts of the Roman Empire. Most of them are from border areas; most notably Gaul and Germania (Martens 2004; Walters 1974), but also in the Roman core areas in Italy (Ricci 2004) and in the East (Bulgan et al. 2001; Gawlikowski 1999, 2000; Schütte-Maischatz and Winter 2000, 2001). In step with the development in archaeology in general, new methods and approaches have been used when excavating mithraea, allowing for new conclusions to old problem statements, and ways of answering questions which simply were not possible before. A good example of innovativeness in Mithraic archaeology is Martens, Marleen and Guy De Boe (eds) (2004), that offers insight into aspects of the cult which have not been much considered and discussed before. There are unfortunately some problems with applying new methods on old Mithraic material: several mithraea and Mithraic contexts are lost to

urban development, accidents and the general wear and tear of time, and a large amount of Mithraic material suffers from ambiguous provenience (Bjørnebye 2007:10).

More recent studies have in general focused more on the archaeological material. Subjects include cult practice (De Grossi Mazzorin 2004; Eryvynck et al. 2004), membership (Clauss 1992; David 2002; Griffith 2006; Volken 2004) and the last phase and endgame of the cult (Bjørnebye 2007; Griffith 2000; Sauer 1996). The focus on such problems is in my opinion a step in the right direction, and archaeological evidence is better suited to answer them than written sources and symbolic interpretations of the images (Clauss 2000:xix-xxi).

Mithraism and Christianity

The relationship between the cult of Mithras and Christianity is a topic of discussion amongst scholars. In 1923, Ernest Renan sparked this discussion with the words “Si le christianisme eût été arrêté dans sa croissance par quelque maladie mortelle, le monde eût été Mithriaste (1923:579)”. At first glance, the two cults have many parallels. Some of the parallels were the water miracles of Moses and Mithras, the ritual meal and ascension to the heavens and Christ and Mithras as divinities of light and the Sun. Clauss (2000:169) states that parallels like these caused Christians to distance themselves from the pagan ideas for example by focusing more on the righteous aspect of Christ, or by effecting take-overs like the observance of Sunday and the festival of December 25th. It is worth noting that most of the emphasized parallels between the two are part of the common currency of all Graeco-Roman mystery cults, thus making the conflict less unique than it has previously described as.

The circumstances in the relationship between Mithraism and Christianity changed with the victory of Constantine over his fellow emperor Licinius in the Battle of Adrianopolis in AD 324, which also became the victory of one sun-god over another. At the time Mithras was according to Clauss (2000:170) virtually indistinguishable from Sol Invictus, the main antagonist of the Christians at the time. Our sources to the relationship between Mithraism and Christianity are all Christian, and they were indeed colored by this. The description of Mithraism by the Christian writer Firmicus Maternus is a good example of this, written around AD 350, about 25 years after the Battle of Adrianopolis:

Another pagan sacrament has the key word *theos ek petras*. Why do you adulterate the faith and transfer this holy and worshipful mystery to pagan doings? Different is the stone which God promised He would lay in making strong the foundations of the promised Jerusalem. What the symbol of the worshipful stone means to us is Christ. Why do you with the knavery of a thief transfer to foul superstitions the dignity of a worshipful name? (Firm.Mat.Err.prof.rel.20.1)

The general view on the relationship between Christianity and Mithraism in research tradition is in my opinion still colored by Christianity's victory over the pagan religions. Good example of this are the different interpretations of the material found in the mithraeum at Dieburg. Most agree that the destruction of the mithraeum was deliberate, but the agreement stops there. The original excavator, Friedrich Behn (1926:45-47) was of the opinion that the mithraeum was destroyed by Christians in the middle of the third century AD, around the time when the Romans lost control over the territory east of the Rhine, a view supported by Ingeborg Huld-Zetsche (1986:46). Künzl (1989:203) does not conclude on the issue of the culprits being Christians or the Allemanni, while Schallmayer (1989), in the same publication, believes in destruction by the Allemanni. Gordon (1999:686) also concludes with the destruction being a result of the Allemanic invasion, as he links destroyed mithraea in the area to the most probable invasion route of the Allemanni. He also claims that it is obvious that defaced object themselves cannot provide relevant evidence (Gordon 1999:685). Sauer (2003:33-34), on the other hand, points to the other Roman sites nearby left untouched by the invading Germans, for example the first mithraeum in Frankfurt am Main-Heddernheim. He also points out that the same type of damage to images is interpreted differently in different parts of the Empire. Fragmented images in the Northern provinces are often attributed to invading enemies, while the same damage is attributed to iconoclasts in Southern Spain. (Sauer 2003:39). As we can see, the material from one mithraeum can be interpreted towards both religious and political motivations as background for the damage. The interpretations are in my opinion influenced by the rather heated debate around the end of Mithraism that has been going on these past years. Gordon (1999) and Sauer (2003:165-173) are good examples.

3.2 Memory sanctions and *damnatio memoriae*

Memory sanctions in a political context are well attested for in Roman literature and the archaeological evidence is abundant; a state of evidence much in contrast to that of deliberate damage in Mithraic contexts. “The vast quantities of damaged or transformed imperial likenesses from the first century BC to the fourth century AD”, Varner writes, “attest to the widespread and long-lived nature of the practice” (2001:46). There are however few exhaustive studies of the subject of memory sanctions/*damnatio memoriae* against portraits. The standard publication on imperial memory sanctions is Friedrich Vittinghoff’s *Der Staatsfeind in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (1936). Much research has, however, been done on both portraits and theoretical issues surrounding them since 1936, which unfortunately makes the publication rather outdated. Eric Varner is by far the one scholar who has made the largest contribution to the subject, cataloguing and analyzing especially mutilated Roman imperial portraits (Varner 1993, 2000, 2004). There are however several studies on individual victims of memory sanctions worth mentioning; Hedrick (2000) mainly concentrated on the evidence of *damnatio* in inscriptions, and the *damnatio* and rehabilitation of Virius Nicomachus Flavianus the elder under and after the reign of Theodosius I to be exact, but he also included a section discussing memory sanctions in general. He concludes that memory sanctions are mainly acts for an audience of the senatorial elite (Hedrick 2000:110-111), something that clearly can be, and has been, disputed (Varner 2004:8 n. 53).

Common for all these studies on memory sanctions is the tendency to use the term one-sidedly as a system of set penalties treated to disgraced emperors (Kienast 1996), or simply to refer to erasure of names in inscriptions. It is also often connected to the expressions of *maiestas* (treason) and *perduellio* (high treason), and thus given a strictly legal definition. The Roman sources, on the other hand, do not give general definitions to post mortem penalties, but treat them as isolated in each case. Lately, those who study memory sanctions have become more aware of the organic character of memory sanctions, as I will elaborate below, but unfortunately, most still treat memory sanctions as a phenomenon exclusive to the political sphere (Flower 1998:xix; 2006:156).

3.3 Traditions of destruction: religious and secular

Religious and secular art have largely been treated separately in research tradition. This is especially evident when dealing with deliberately damaged art. Sauer goes as far as to reject any relation between politically motivated destruction and religiously motivated destruction with the argument that there is little overlap in the types of images affected: “damnation would normally result in a neat erasure of the imperial name only while Christian iconoclasm would involve in the destruction of the whole object” (Sauer 2003:46). This view can clearly be disputed; there is nothing indicating that memory sanctions against an Emperor resulted in neat erasure of the imperial name only, and nothing indicates that religious sanctions involved only the destruction of the whole object.

Stewart (1999:173) takes a step in the right direction when he points out a connection between secular memory sanctions and religious iconoclasm, asserting that an academic division of labor has separated the culture of Christians and Pagans in Late Antiquity and consequently generated ignorance about the common cultural vocabulary of the late Roman society. He points out (2008:142) that both religious and political imagery are tools to make absent gods and distant emperors materially present and to establish their place in society. Romans themselves did not however consider religion and politics different spheres in society. A distinction between political and religious art and the attitudes towards them would therefore in my opinion be an artificial one.

4. Theoretical Framework

The way material culture is perceived and used will always depend on the context, whether this context is archaeological, historical or social. The objects and structures discussed in this study are remains of social processes in the Roman society, either with regard to their creation, use, re-use or eventually their destruction or discarding. In order to describe and explain the mentality behind, and mechanisms of, social practice around portraits and cult statues in the Roman society, I am applying theories of social practice on a universal level as well as more specific approaches on the use of and perception of portraits in the Roman society, the relationship between the portrait, the portrayed and memory sanctions. The former is based on Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* theory, and the latter on different theoretical models based on Roman evidence.

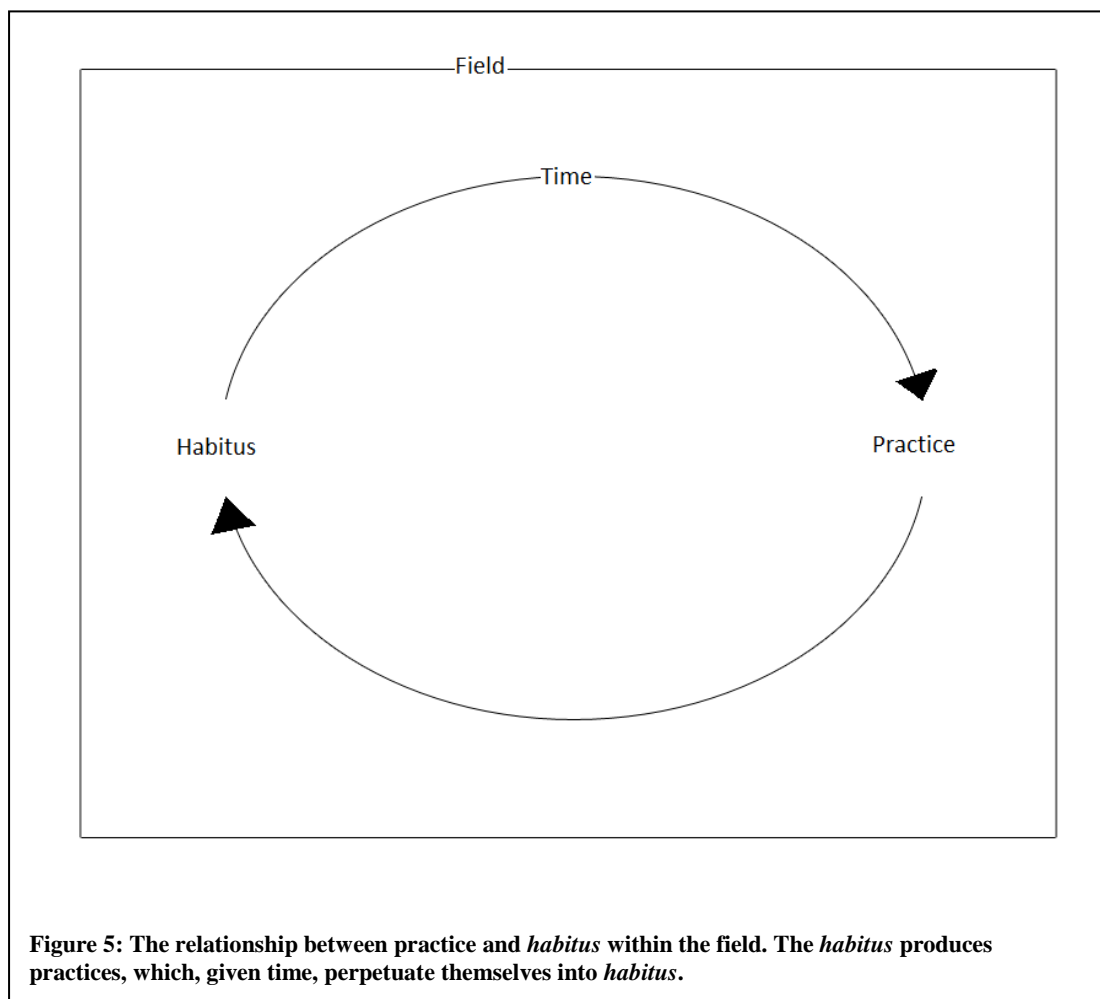
4.1 Bourdieu & habitus – material culture and social practice in the past

A tool often used by archaeologists to better understand social practice in the past is Pierre Bourdieu's *theory of practice*. His theories on the relationship between the *individual* and the *system/society* have greatly influenced archaeologists over the last decades. His work provides a starting point for studies of behavior and *actions/practice* in past societies. Of special interest for this study is the *habitus* theory. It is intended to provide a means of analyzing the workings of the social world through empirical investigations (Maton 2008:49). The *habitus* theory is especially useful when investigating the way material culture is used and perceived during social changes in the past. Theoretical frameworks based on Bourdieu's *habitus* theory have been used successfully in many studies of pre-historic societies. Although the Roman society is not a silent one like those of pre-history, there are aspects of it where applying a theoretical framework based on sociological models is more likely to give sufficient answers than written sources. Because of the often difficult archaeological contexts they have been found in, and the lack of satisfactory documentation, a study of damaged Mithraic images will in my opinion benefit from such an analysis.

Bourdieu (1990b) proposes that individuals produce and reproduce their society through social practice. This is done through the means of *field*, *capital*, *habitus* and *practice*. The individual is the *agent* creating the society. In the same way society is structuring the agents' life and it will thus have a similar structuring effect on the individual. In other words, the

habitus will compose the *norms, mindsets, values, habits* and *world view* acquired by someone through socialization. The social structures an agent is raised within will come to show in the *habitus*. It is important to notice that Bourdieu by no means views the *habitus* as static nor completely formative of an agent's actions. There is room for, and it is necessary to, use creativity and choose between various strategies to be capable of acting according to the values and predispositions one has acquired (Bourdieu 1977:72-73, 81).

Our actions (*practice*) result from the relationship between the *habitus, capital* and the *field*: Practice results from relations between one's dispositions (*habitus*) and one's position in a field (*capital*), within the current state of play of that social arena (*field*). The physical and social spaces we occupy are, like *habitus*, structured. It is the relationship between these two structures that give rise to practices (Maton 2008:51-52). It is important to notice, however, that while *capital* is an important term in studies of societies as a whole and classification within the fields (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:7), these issues are not highly significant to the present study. *Capital* is accordingly left out of the analysis.



In this study, it is given that the *field* of question is that of the *Roman society*, with all aspects of society included. Beard et al. (1998:313) state that there is no doubt about the impact of Roman imperialism on the identity of the whole imperial territory, although re-interpreted to some extent. Thus an image, whether religious or political, would be perceived and understood in more or less the same way: art provided a common language for the Empire (Stewart 2008:162). The material in the present study is made by and for Romans, and it is also ultimately destroyed by Romans. In analytical terms, a *field* may be defined as a network or configurations of objective relations between positions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:97), a structured system of social positions occupied by individuals or institutions; the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants. The boundaries of fields are imprecise and shifting, determinable only by empirical research (Jenkins 1992:85). The *field* structures the *habitus*, and the *field* is on the other hand constituted as a meaningful world by the *habitus* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:126-127).

Bourdieu himself defines *habitus* as “a set of dispositions, durable and transposable systems of schemata of perception, appreciation and actions that result from the institution of the social in the body, and fields”. They are principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu 1990b:53). *Habitus* focuses on our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being. It is important to emphasize that Bourdieu does not suggest that *habitus* is an automatic process; that we simply act out the implications of our upbringing. On the contrary, he states that human action is not an instantaneous reaction to immediate stimuli (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:124). It captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then choose to act in certain ways and not others. Which choices we make will depend on the range of options available at the moment, the range of options visible to us and our dispositions (*habitus*) (Bourdieu 1990b:52-65; Maton 2008:52).

According to Bourdieu (1990a:61), practice is not consciously – or not *wholly* consciously, organized and orchestrated. Nothing is random or purely accidental, but, as one thing follows the other, practice happens. Practice is a product of processes which are rooted in an ongoing process of learning through which actors know – without knowing, the right thing to do. It is a second nature – the actors’ understanding, albeit somewhere at the back of their minds, of the usual pattern of how things are done or happen (Bourdieu 1990a:61-63,65). The human

practice binds *habitus* to the social world. It is through practice that *habitus* is created – and at the same time, the social world is a product of practice (Nygaard 1995:129-130). *Habitus* is central to the problem statement in this study. I am trying to demonstrate that a common *habitus* for destruction of images exists, which will come to show in the results of the practice: the visible damage on the images. Within the *field* of the Roman society, the impact of a given *habitus* would come to show in the material as likenesses and patterns (see figure 5).

Limitations

Bourdieu's theory of practice has been criticized for having an unresolved contradiction between determinism and voluntarism, with the balance of his argument favoring the former (e.g. Jenkins 1992:21). I agree with the criticism to a certain degree, but taking it into consideration I still render the theory applicable in this context. While *habitus* within the *field* shapes the practice of an agent, the determinism will not be total in any case. A choice will be made by the agent to take part in destruction of images, but the *habitus* will shape his practice within the given *field*, and this will again be visible as patterns in the archaeological material.

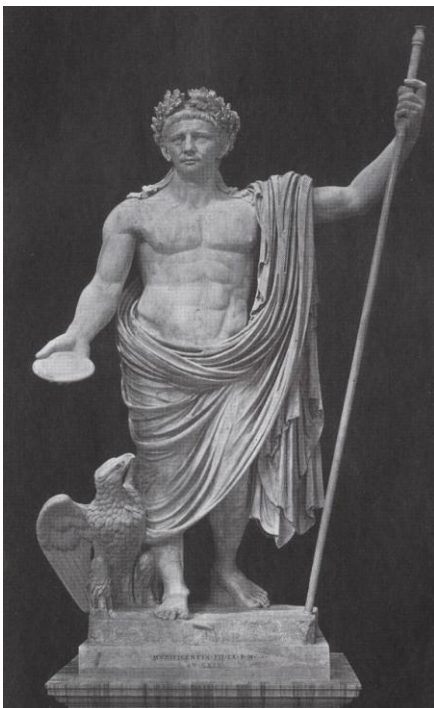


Figure 7: Example of statue with idealized body and portrait head. Claudius as Jupiter, Vatican Museums. From Stewart 2003:50 fig. 7.



Figure 6: Example of portrait with t-shaped damage to sensory organs (modern restoration). Geta, Palazzo Pitti, Florence. From Varner 2004:fig. 167.

4.2 The portrait and the portrayed in the Roman society

One has to investigate how images were perceived in the society that made and destroyed them and the reasons for their making in order to understand the mechanisms behind the destruction of images. The best way to investigate this is in my opinion to investigate how portraits and the portrayed were perceived in the Roman society.

In modern terms, *likeness* is the defining feature for portraiture. This seems to be the case also for the Romans. This was also conveyed by linguistics: the most common words for portraits in Greek and Latin are *eikon* and *imago* (Daut 1975; Stewart 2003:25). Yet, portraits were more than just the likenesses of appearance they claimed to be linguistically. The portrait also sent a message about the portrayed person's virtues, qualities, social position, public persona and personality. According to Stewart (2008:89-90), the very *idea* of a portrait with all its connotations could take precedence over the function of presenting a likeness. This trend seems to have evolved through the course of the Empire. In the late Roman Empire many images of emperors have become stereotyped to an extent where they no longer are distinguishable (Stewart 2003:80).

Nomen et caput

In general there seems to have been a special focus on destruction of the condemned's face and facial traits. This could be due to the fact that portraits often were busts or separately worked statue heads whose focus point naturally was the face, but the reason may also be the focus on the relationship between *nomen* (name) and *caput* (face) in Roman thought (Stewart 1999:165). The Romans believed portraits to be the vehicles of the depicted person's *archetype*, a part of the represented individual, or *animus/anima*, the soul/spirit. They were thus ways of conveying information about the subject, and further his or her place in the social context (Prusac 2011:2, 24).

The connection between *nomen* and *caput* may have originated in the relatively prevailing ideas of physiognomics – to assess one's character or personality from the traits of his body, and particularly his face. Following physiognomics, the principal area to reveal one's personality was principally that around the eyes, nose, mouth, cheeks and forehead, but it could also include the rest of the head and face. Following were the areas around the shoulders and chest. The eyes were especially important; they were windows into the soul or character of a person (Evans 1969:9,16; Varner 2001:51). The interest in physiognomics endured throughout the Roman period. It was especially widespread in the second century

AD, and had a revival in the fourth century AD. It was favored by both pagan and Christian writers (Evans 1969:5,15). The influence of physiognomics is easily spotted in the descriptions of the emperors in Suetonius' *De Vita Caesarum*. "Bad" emperors such as Nero and Caligula were described as being "naturally forbidding" and with an "uncouth face" (Suet.*Cal.*50), and eyes that were "blue and rather weak" and a "pustular and malodorous" body (Suet.*Ner.*51). He also mentions an episode where a specialist in physiognomy was actively used by the imperial family: "At that time, so they say, a physiognomist was brought in (...), to examine Britannicus and declared most positively that he would never become emperor; but that Titus, who was standing by at the same time, would surely rule" (Suet.*Tit.*2)

The vast quantity of portrait heads and busts surviving from Roman antiquity alone suggests that the head was an important part of identity. In comparison, there is a relatively small range of body-types. However, even if the portrait head survives with the statue body, it often looks like an autonomous part adjunct to the body. This can be explained in pure practical terms - as the head and body often were produced separately and assembled later - but there is usually nothing about the body or pose that specifies the identity of the portrait subject. The whole identity rests so to speak on the shoulders (Stewart 2003:47). This is valid when the body or pose was identifiable as well, such as the case Varro mentions: "Is it not the case that just as if you place Philip's head on the statue of Alexander, and the limbs conform to ratio, likewise if you put the head that belongs to it on the image of Alexander's limbs it is just the same?" (Varr.*Ling.*9.79). Varro assumes in the passage that changing the heads of statues was common, and that the identity of the statue is established by the head, even if the headless body is associated with an individual - in this case even a close relative (Stewart 2003:58-59). The statue body provided the head with a 'podium' to be displayed on in public contexts. It was integrated in a system of symbolism separate from that of the heads. An example is the Venus-portraits of Roman women, where the realistic and individual features of the head clash with the idealized and smooth features of the naked bodies (Stewart 2008:49).

In the case of imperial portraiture, the ubiquitous imperial portraits substituted the Emperor in the lives of almost all his subjects. In many ways they were more present to the Romans than the Emperor, and they were regarded as manifestations of the ruler himself. It was seen as sufficient that the Emperor's portrait was present at legal proceedings to guarantee a just trial. In the same way, it was expected of his subject to show the same reverence towards the portrait as towards the Emperor himself; one could receive a death penalty for hitting one's slave, urinating or changing one's clothes in front of an imperial portrait. His portrait could

not be surrounded by *inhonesti* (e.g. singers and charioteers), in the same way that the Emperor did not surround himself with them (Prusac 2011:24-25). The imperial images were often recipients of sacrifices, also outside the sphere of the imperial cult. They were treated with utmost decency and decorum, and honored and venerated much in the same way as icons are by Orthodox Christians today (Sande 1993:77). In the Eastern provinces, the imperial cult was in many respects similar to the cult of the traditional deities (Jacobs 2010:288; Stewart 2008:89).

The images of gods

Even if Seneca (*Const.*4.2) stressed that the deity was not injured, even by those destroying his image, this point of view was not generally accepted by the Romans. In the words of M.J. Vermaseren (1965:241): “the representation of the god was magically identified with the god himself”. The cult image, the *simulacrum/simulacra*, was elevated as a privileged image and recipient of active cult – a substitute for the absent deity in the same way as the Emperor’s *signum*¹ (Stewart 2003:186). Like the imperial portraits, one revered the cult images and was careful not to offend them (Prusac 2011:2). When it came to reworking of images of gods, they were according to Prusac (2011:109-112, 124) not re-cut into images of mortals, in the same way as imperial images were not re-carved into images of private citizens. There are however a handful of isolated examples of the practice, but these must be regarded as exceptions to the prohibitions against converting divine images into images of mortals (Prusac 2011:110).

4.3 Memory and memory sanctions in the Roman world

In Roman society, memory was not taken for granted as a natural state or product. Oblivion was considered the normal condition, as the past receded from the present and was simply no longer connected to it. According to Flower (2006:2-3), the Roman society was a culture of commemoration, and to them *memoria* was designed in opposition to the vast oblivion into which most of the past was conceived as having already receded. Roman memory and commemoration were designed to ward off the constant threat of loss of identity and status within the community, whether through the death of an individual, a dynasty or a generation. Production of memory was the aim and reward for effort and achievement for example

¹ While *simulacrum* seldom is used for describing unconsecrated representations of deities, *signum* could refer to unconsecrated religious images like votives, but normally secular images like honorific statues (Stewart 2003:22-23).

through battles, history writing, inscriptions and erection of honorary portraits. As a consequence of the lack of belief in corporal afterlife in Roman society, the only way to live on after death would be through remembrance. They believed in an afterlife, but in general as a part of a colorless and undifferentiated collective of ancestors (Toynbee 1971:35). Condemnation, damnation or abolition of one's memory posthumously would consequently destroy one's very essence and obliterate any hope of being remembered in a satisfactory way in afterlife (Varner 2001:46).

It was a delight to smash those arrogant faces to pieces in the dust, to threaten them with the sword, and savagely attack them with axes, as if blood and pain would follow every single blow. (...) vengeance was taken in beholding his likenesses hacked into mutilated limbs and pieces (...) (Plin.*Pan.*52.4-5)

What Pliny describes here is the smashing of Domitian's likenesses after his downfall. He vividly describes the attack of the statues as if they were Domitian himself - a vengeance on the dead Emperor's memory through destruction of his portraits. This is therefore a description of a memory sanction *in actio*. Memory sanctions are defined by Varner (2001:46) as deliberately designed strategies that aimed to change the picture of the past, whether through erasure or redefinition, or by means of both. They exist in most, perhaps all, human societies that place a distinct value on accounts of their past (Flower 2006:2). Every society has its own memory world, in which the sanctions have their own characteristic meanings and connotations. Here, the memory is not only personal, but also cultural. The memories of an individual mark the person as a member of the particular community. Memory has a shape, a space and a cultural meaning: there is a specific what, where and how to memory.

Memory sanctions take place within the context of the specific society's culture of writing, images and monuments. An erasure of memory or lack of commemoration is defined by the expectations of what could happen if memory had been cultivated. Memory sanctions are designed to preserve and protect the memory space of the community, and to label potential threats. The fact that internal threats can be removed, not only in person, but in memory, serve to assert the power of the community over its own narrative and, therefore, over its present and future direction. Sanctions helped to defeat challenges to the community's integrity, and make them a part of an acceptable narrative of continuity and integrity. Either oblivion or shame could serve the community, depending on the perceived needs at the moment (Flower 2006:6-8). Sanctions are always based on a denial of the political rhetoric or landscape of the

immediate past, despite of, or because of, the fact that at the moment of imposition many people are in a position to have personal knowledge about that recent past. The new narrative of the past, constructed by the sanctions, reflects the aims and attitudes of those in power at that moment in a greater extent than it reveals a historical reconstruction of previous events or the character of the victims (Flower 2006:10-11).

Deliberately mutilated portraits physically expressed the abstract concepts of *infamia*, disrepute/disgrace, and *iniuria*, insult/affront/revenge (Stewart 1999:162-163; Varner 2001:46-47). Deliberate mutilations of portraits were staged displays of social oblivion rather than true obliterations of identity. According to Stewart (2008:128), it was clear that everybody knew very well who had been ‘forgotten’: “The point is not that the population should forget, but that the victim should be obviously unworthy of social existence; not that violence should be done, but that violence should be seen to be done” (Stewart 2003:279). In the words of Cicero: “(...) they thought it would be more serious for [Verres] if people knew that his statue had been thrown down by the Tauromenians than if they thought that none had ever been set up” (Cic.Verr.2.2.160). In practice, memory sanctions were accomplished visually through *physical disfigurement of (public) images*. The attacks were centered on the eyes, nose, mouth and ears - the parts of the body most strongly connected to identity - as if to negate the power of the images to see, hear or speak to the Roman populace. Enough of the facial features were however left intact to leave the likeness recognizable. The attack of a portrait can thus be interpreted as mutilation in effigy (Freedberg 1989:259; Varner 2001:47).

Mutilation of portraits can be interpreted as proxies for the practice of posthumous corpse mutilation of capital offenders, *poena post mortem* (“punishment after death”). The rather extreme form of posthumous punishment was usually not the fate of condemned emperors and imperial family members, which again could add to the widespread mutilations of their images. The corpses of Nero Cæsar, Drusus Cæsar, Sejanus, Lollia Paulina, Claudia Octavia, Galba, Vitellius, Pertinax, Pescennius Niger, Clodius Albinus, Plautianus, Macrinus, Diadumenianus, Elagabalus, Julia Soemias, Maximinius Thrax, Maximus, Pupenus, Balbinus, Gallienus and Maxenius are however all said to be violated (Varner 2004:3-4). Sejanus, the first person to receive *poena post mortem* in the imperial period, Vitellius and Gallienus were all thrown into the Tiber after corpse abuse, a practice normally reserved for traitors, capital offenders and dead gladiators. Elagabalus and his mother Julia Soemias were thrown in the sewers which emptied in the Tiber, after having their heads cut off (Varner 2001:47, 57-58). In the case of Sejanus, Dio describes his downfall quite dramatically:

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 spectator of what he was destined to suffer. (...) he was executed and his body cast down the Stairway, where the rabble abused it for three whole days and afterwards threw it in the river (*Cass.Dio:58.11.3-5*).

Kyle (1998:215-216) suggests that the practice had connections to the annual purification ritual of *Sacra Argeorum*, performed every May, where human effigies were thrown into the Tiber from the *Pons Sublicius*. The treatment of the dead in the cases of *poena post mortem* shows many similarities to the treatment of portraits and images in a *damnatio memoriae*, and the latter was surely either a supplement to the *poena post mortem* or an alternative in the cases where the actual body was not available for punishment. The sanctions were either conducted against bodies or effigies. The near connection between the two traditions demonstrates that memory sanctions were powerful tools that purified the (here) political sphere. The memory of the preceding Emperor was stained, partly by the memory sanctions, and the new regime was at the same time accentuated as the better alternative and thus lifted into a favorable position. Official sanctions consenting the destruction or mutilation of imperial images communicated the victory of the new Emperor, and the public response and partaking in the mutilation of images (and corpses) proclaimed at the same time dissatisfaction with the policies and personality of the condemned regime, and thus loyalty to the successor (Varner 2001:60).

Summary

As seen above, the theoretical framework of this study consists of a *higher level* sociological theory that aims to be able to describe the basic mechanisms of society in general, as well as *lower level* theories aiming at describing the mechanism of the Roman society, and more specifically how the Romans perceived memory and art. The theoretical framework will be related to the material below in Chapter 8.

5. Presentation of material

This Chapter contains a presentation of the material used in the analysis. It consists of the following two parts: a selection of damaged Mithraic images and buildings for analysis, and a selection of imperial images and buildings for comparison. The material has been chosen on the background of the set of criteria for memory producing artifacts defined below, as well as the background of damage to the images, as further elaborated in Chapter 6. Detailed information and pictures related to each item are presented in full in appendices I and II at the end of the text. In this chapter I have chosen to focus on the material groups as a whole, and for the Mithraic material I have also chosen to present its contexts, the mithraea, from which they in my opinion are inseparable.

5.1 Selection criteria

The selection of material is as previously mentioned restricted to a representative selection of damaged Mithraic images and damaged images of imperial origin. Most are sculpture, both examples are reliefs or sculptures in the round, but I have also chosen to include some painted images and in the case of category C material (see Chapter 6 below for category descriptions), buildings will also be taken into consideration. Each object has been chosen on the background of available documentation and the existence of earlier interpretation of its damage. This is especially important for the Mithraic objects, which are the objects of analysis. All Mithraic objects are described by M.J. Vermaseren in his comprehensive *Corpus inscriptionum et monumentorum religionis mithriacae* (1956-1960), with the exception of the recently discovered Doliche finds and the three heads from Entrains, which are not depicting Mithras. The CIMRM numbering is given in Appendix II for each item, where available. There are many imperial portraits which have been victim of *damnatio memoriae*. The ones represented in the present study have been chosen because they are well documented and clearly established as deliberately damaged and thus serve as clear examples for the comparative analysis.

Flower (2006:53) accentuates the following types of cultural artifacts as producers of memory in the Roman world:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| ▪ Texts of inscription | ▪ Family tombs |
| ▪ Public buildings including temples and basilicas | ▪ Historical paintings |
| ▪ Victory monuments including arches | ▪ Honorific statues |
| | ▪ Ancestral wax masks |

Naturally, all these categories of secular producers of memory cannot be a part of this project, both concerning the range of the study and the use of the different types of objects in the Mithraic and imperial contexts. Family tombs and ancestral wax masks are not material groups known from Mithraic contexts, and they are not common in religious contexts in general. Epigraphic evidence is common in the evidence for memory sanctions against emperors and members of the imperial family. It is also found in Mithraic contexts, but must be considered as a producer of *personal memory* in this context, and will not be suitable evidence for this comparison; most inscriptions found in mithraea are dedicatory inscriptions, thus not connected to Mithras himself. Victory monuments and public buildings are not directly comparable either. However, the victory monuments, and especially the victory arches, often had relief panels depicting the individual(s) whom the monument honored. Although mithraea cannot be considered public, they are also buildings associated with Mithras in the same way that a public building or private house was associated with the person erecting them, dedicating them or living in them. Thus, historical paintings and honorific statues can both be compared to the Mithraic cult images.

Excluding the three groups of tombs, inscriptions and wax masks, I have chosen material from the remaining groups of *memory producing artifacts* presented by Flower. Taking into account the mere amount of images available in these categories, sculpture in the round and reliefs will dominate the material.

5.2 Portraits and Emperors

Stewart (2008:77) defines portraits as more or less individualised representations of particular people. He traces the origins of portraits back to fifth century BC Greece. The use of portraits flourished in the Hellenistic and the Roman republican periods, but continued to be popular throughout the Roman period. He further defines four main functions for the portraits in both the Greek and Roman cultures:

- Commemorating the dead or notable people of the past
- Honoring the living for their achievements and benefactions
- Providing permanent votive memorials in sanctuaries
- Communicating authority and power

The remembrance of ordinary citizens was in most cases of very little concern to those in power. Seldom would lower-class Romans have portraits erected in public places, and they would equally seldom be victims of memory sanctions (Flower 2006:9). The tradition of erecting honorary statues would particularly be upheld by the institutional authority of the senate, but was also utilized as a means of promoting oneself or one's allies on a personal level. The most prestigious portraits were those set up in public or *in celeberrimo loco* (busy places), above all in the forum or agora. This custom accelerated virulently in the late republic as a way of celebrating and promoting the virtues of the competing dynasts and triumvirs, but in the imperial period only members of the imperial family would receive public honorary portraits. These portraits became objects of devotion, and consequently objects of worship of the deified dead and living rulers through the imperial cult (Stewart 2008:77-78,101).

In the present study I have chosen a selection of representative imperial portraits as background material for the comparative analysis of the Mithraic material. Even if the central period in question is that of the late Roman, the wider selection of portraits originates from earlier period. The main reason for this is what is considered a general downwards trend in the production of portraits and sculpture in general in the late Roman period, related to the general decline in economy as well as a lack of skilled artisans (Prusac 2011:47). Fewer imperial portraits would in turn lead to fewer examples of memory sanctions against images

of the emperors of the period. There is however no reason to believe that the practice of memory sanctions against imperial portraits halted. The following description by St. Jerome reveals a full understanding of the practice in the late fourth century and the methods described seem to be much in concordance with the evidence for memory sanctions originating from the Julio-Claudian dynasty 400 years before:

It is as if, when a tyrant is slain, his statues and images are also toppled, and the head is removed and changed only in respect of the face: the victor's features are placed upon it, so that the body remains and the head is cut off at the front, and another head is put in its place (Jer.*In Abacuc*:2.3.14-16).

Details on the specific portraits examined in this study are presented in full in Appendix I. I have however chosen to elaborate on, to some extent, two of the imperial material categories, namely buildings and reliefs.

Buildings as sources to memory sanctions

Buildings are not images, and we cannot look for the same characteristics when investigating signs of deliberate destruction. What is useful, however, is to look for *appropriation of physical space*. The example used here is that of Nero's *Domus Aurea*. After the fall of Nero, his vast golden house, *Domus Aurea*, was partly expropriated, partly demolished by Vespasian. The structure was enormous, stretching from the Palatine to the Esquiline, with a hundred and forty-two known rooms (Claridge 2010:326). After Nero's fall, the artificial lake was drained, and the *Aphitheatrum Flavium* erected on its site. The Esquiline wing was filled and served as substructures for the baths of Trajan. It is now running at an angle of about 30° through the substructures of the semicircular terrace and the southern corner of the complex (Claridge 2010:324). The Neronian private baths occupying the slopes of the Oppian hill were probably also converted into the Baths of Titus (Coarelli 2007:160) (see figure 21). According to Varner (2004:77-78), the combination of Neronian ruin with new Antonine and Flavian architecture was extremely effective visual propaganda for the new regime. The demolition and filling of the *Domus* represented the fall of Nero, and the incorporation of the remaining parts into Antonine buildings represented the victory of the new dynasty.

Reliefs and painted images

Relief art is a category of sculpture which has proved to be especially suitable for this comparison. According to Bonanno (1976:163-164), historical relief is a genre of art that had no forerunner in Greek art, and it was a realistic and narrating fusion of portraiture and

commemorative relief. He further states that relief sculpture had a combination of portrait and representation of real episodes from history that made the portraits more real and recognizable. Taking this in consideration, it points, in my opinion, towards a stronger presence of memory in historical reliefs than other types of imperial portraits. Wall paintings are also of interest here. There are however few painted images preserved, so the sample for analysis is not large. Wall paintings are in addition fragile, and damages to them are more likely to be unintentional. As elaborated below in Chapter 7.5, damaged Mithraic wall paintings are more likely to be intentionally damaged if there are more signs of memory sanctions present in the mithraeum.

There are few public reliefs preserved (Prusac 2011:16), but the damages on reliefs are surprisingly consistent, and it is easy to see which parts have been targeted. There are also fewer sources of error when it comes to reliefs compared to sculpture in the round. They are in most cases still in their original context, like that of the victory arches. It is also less likely that specific parts of reliefs, for example heads have been accidentally lost; statue heads are overall more prone to accidental decapitations. Although there are some exceptions, as we shall see below, it was also difficult to replace the heads of persons depicted on reliefs. The reliefs often illustrate a set situation, often a historical event. It would thus be problematic to replace a person commonly known to have taken part in the event. This would also be the case regarding the Mithraic reliefs. One would thus expect somewhat similar treatment of these two groups of images. Some of the chosen reliefs are poorly preserved, taking the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum as an example. Heads other than that of the sanctioned individual are missing, but this is interpreted as a result of wear and tear, as opposed to the removed head in the *submission scene* (see figure 17), where more of the head is missing than is the case with the others, and where the head has been worked for replacement (Varner 1993:355-356).

Domitian's reliefs (D16, D19)

Domitian's reliefs distinguish themselves from the Severan reliefs in that they are not historic reliefs. Certainly, the scene on the cuirass commemorating Domitian's victory over the Chatti (catalogue number D16), but *symbolically* rather than historically. This would make it relevant in comparison with religious reliefs. The two Victories depicted while crowning a trophy with a bound German captive are missing their heads, as well as some of the figures on the lappets. In addition, the cuirassed torso misses its head, arms and lower body. (Varner 2004:114) The other Domitianic relief (D19) is a preserved upper section of a cuirassed torso,

including the head. It has been severely mutilated, but is identified as Domitian from the coiffure on the side of the head. In addition to obliterating the facial features of Domitian completely, the treatment has also been served to the cuirass. It has indications of wings, leaving it sensible to believe the cuirass has been commemorating Domitian's victories in the same way as D16 (Varner 2004:113).

The Severan reliefs (D9, D20-D22)

During the Severan Dynasty (AD 193 – 235) there was a growth in the use of reliefs as imperial embellishments, and especially as ornaments on victory arches. Those included in this analysis are: the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum Romanum (D20), the Arch of the Argentarii in the Forum Boarium (D21) and the The Arch of Septimius Severus in Lepcis Magna (D22) as well as the Palazzo Sachetti relief (D9). Details for each of the reliefs are provided in Appendix I.

The relief mutilations are by all probability performed by the order of Caracalla, and are of a highly personal character; they bear the scars of his personal hatred against the people who once stood him near. As Prusac (2011:25) points out, he is however also the Emperor and a public persona, and his treatment of public reliefs and other portraits would thus represent the bearings of the Roman state. The main subject of Caracalla's mutilations was his brother Geta, whom he had murdered and subsequently declared *hostis* in AD 211. A *damnatio* followed (Varner 2004:168). His exiled wife Plautilla and her father Plautianus were also victims of Caracalla's *damnationes* in AD 205. The erasing of Geta, Plautilla and Plautianus from the imperial reliefs serve as good examples for the comparative analysis; they are well documented from a contemporary source (*Cass.Dio:77-78*), and are unusually thorough.

In the case of the *Arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum Romanum* (D20), the best known erasing is that of Geta's name from the attic of the arch. There is however reason to believe that he also has been erased from other relief panels as well. The marble surfaces of the arch are weathered, which renders it difficult to establish deliberate removals on most of them (Bonanno 1976:144). According to Varner (2004:175-176), all epigraphic and visual references to Geta are removed. Although the imagery on the arch is badly weathered, he considers it clear that Geta's heads have been cut off the visual representations. One representation which is defined by Bonanno as a deliberate removal of Geta is the figure on the right-hand side of Septimius Severus in the so-called *submission scene* (D20) (1976:144). There is certainly damage to other figures' heads in the scene, but this figure is the only one

missing the whole head: the neck has been carved out, the surface roughened and an iron dowel inserted for replacement of the head in antiquity (Varner 1993:355). Both Brilliant (1967:207, 254) and Varner (1993:355-356) identify the figure not as Geta but Plautianus, Caracalla's resented father-in-law, the latter on the background of the figure's height and subsidiary placement, indicating him as being older but less important than Caracalla. Plautianus is however also a victim of *damnatio*, and would thus be qualified to the same treatment as Geta.

On the *Arch of the Argentarii* (D21), there are several possible erasures, and Geta is not the only victim. On two opposing panels Geta, Plautianus and Plautilla are removed from the reliefs, and the panels are reworked as to hide the erasures (Bonanno 1976:148). On the western panel Caracalla is the only surviving figure; two figures seem to have been removed, judging by the raised and roughened surface. Varner suggests that the missing figures are Plautianus and Plautilla. The *damnatio* of Plautianus was a thorough one; according to Varner (1993:353), there are no surviving likenesses of him identified. On the eastern panel, the rest of the imperial family would be depicted. However, only Septimius Severus and his wife Julia Domnia are still visible on the panel. Geta, originally standing slightly in front of his mother, has been removed, and the space has been re-carved to hide the removal. Geta has in addition been removed from the series of *signa* on the interiors of the pilasters, and the motif was similarly re-carved as to better hide the removal (Varner 1993:374; 2004:177-178). In contrast, the other portraits of Geta on the arch have not been re-carved, only removed.

On the *Arch of Septimius Severus in Lepcis Magna* (D22), Geta is again victim of erasure from the reliefs. He was originally depicted in all four panels on the arch, but his presence has been removed from all four principal relief panels, and from at least two of the internal vertical panels as well. In two cases, his head is found broken off, separate from the rest of the relief (Bonanno 1976:152-153). His portrait head from the *dextrarum iunctio* scene has been sawn off and deposited near the arch (Varner 2004:178-181). Here, there is no sign of his head being replaced with another. In the northwestern scene, his head seems to have received similar treatment. The last two panels of the arch are not well preserved, but judging from the fate of the two other portraits of him on the arch it is likely that his likenesses on these panels are deliberately removed (Varner 1993:378-379).

One relief of which the original context is *not* known is the Palazzo Sachetti relief (D9). Varner derives from the scale and quality of it that it originates from an imperially sponsored

monument, probably a monument celebrating the shared consulship of Caracalla and Geta in AD 205 (1993:375). The relief depicts the Emperor Septimius Severus sitting, and Caracalla and Geta standing behind him. Unlike the erasures on the arches of the Argentarii and in the Forum Romanum, it seems like no attempts at hiding the removal of Geta's head in this relief have been made. Varner proposes accurately (1993:376) that his head has not been replaced because it would be unnatural considering his central role in the depicted event. His missing head would thus be a reminder of the disgrace following his *damnatio*.

5.3 Mithraic material

Mithraic images are in most cases quite standardized in their form. As shown in Chapter 2.2, the cult images were more often reliefs or sculpture, and a few were wall paintings. The motif was also in a traditional format, with the tauroctony as an obligatory element. The effect of this stereotypy was that a worshipper (and likewise intruders) could meet a symbolically charged icon of the *same* god in any mithraeum anywhere in the Roman world (Elsner 1995:216). This standard repertoire of motifs on Mithraic images makes them easily recognizable, and it is also relatively easy to recognize which parts of a Mithraic image are missing or damaged, making them suitable for this analysis. This also means that lengthy descriptions of the style and motif of the selected Mithraic images are not required for the purpose of the present study. For the Mithraic material I have therefore chosen to give descriptions of the find contexts, which will give useful information in addition to the damage on the objects in question. The locations of the mithraea and other Mithraic sites mentioned in the text are given on the map in figure 1.

Sarrebourg/Pons Saravi

The mithraeum at Sarrebourg (Pons Saravi) was discovered in 1895 at the south bank of the river Sarre in eastern France. It is oriented North-Northeast, and has a schematic rectangular shape, measuring 6.20 x 5.48 meters. The mithraeum is constructed 2 meters into the rock in the back, and probably had an elevated anteroom in front. The main cult image (catalogue number M5) is a large stone relief, measuring 2.60 x 2.20 meters, and 3.27 x 2.20 m counting the bust of Sol on top of it. The relief was attached to the back-wall by iron clips, standing on top of the base of the cult-niche (Vermaseren 1956:323). A large number of coins dating from AD 254 to AD 395 suggest that the mithraeum was in use throughout the whole fourth century before being destroyed some time after AD 395, three years after the last of Theodosius' anti-pagan edicts of AD 391 and 392. Walters alternatively suggests that the mithraeum was destroyed earlier, but used as a refuse dump in the late fourth century

(1974:22). Vermaseren dates the foundation of mithraeum to the Severan dynasty (1956:327). The pottery found in the mithraeum gives a late second century dating, and coin evidence confirms use in the third century AD (Walters 1974:21). Vermaseren believes the mithraeum to be deliberately destroyed, based on the damage to the mithraeum, namely the toppling and mutilation of the main cult relief, the fragmentary state of sculpture and altars in the mithraeum and traces of fire, and also based on an unusual find in the mithraeum: the skeleton of a man tied in chains with the hands behind his back. Vermaseren argues that the man was not placed there by Mithraists, but rather by those who damaged and destroyed the mithraeum, as a means of polluting it (1956:327).

Entrains-sur-Nohain

The items M1 to M4 were all found at the bed of the river Nohain in Entrains-sur-Nohain in France. The items originate from the nearby Roman sanctuary at *Interanum*, which generally is translated “between marshes”. This was an important sanctuary of healing springs located, as the Latin name indicates, in the marshland. The sanctuary housed several deities, including Hercules, Jupiter, Asclepius and Apollo. The latter god was here assimilated with the Celtic god Borvo, and probably the main focus of worship in the sanctuary. No structural remains of a mithraeum are found here, but the large amount of Mithraic objects found nearby suggest at least one mithraeum associated with the sanctuary (Walters 1974:45-46). The items are all found near each other on the river bed, and were recovered in a broken state. The find context and lack of structural remains of a mithraeum nearby makes dating the objects difficult.

Dieburg

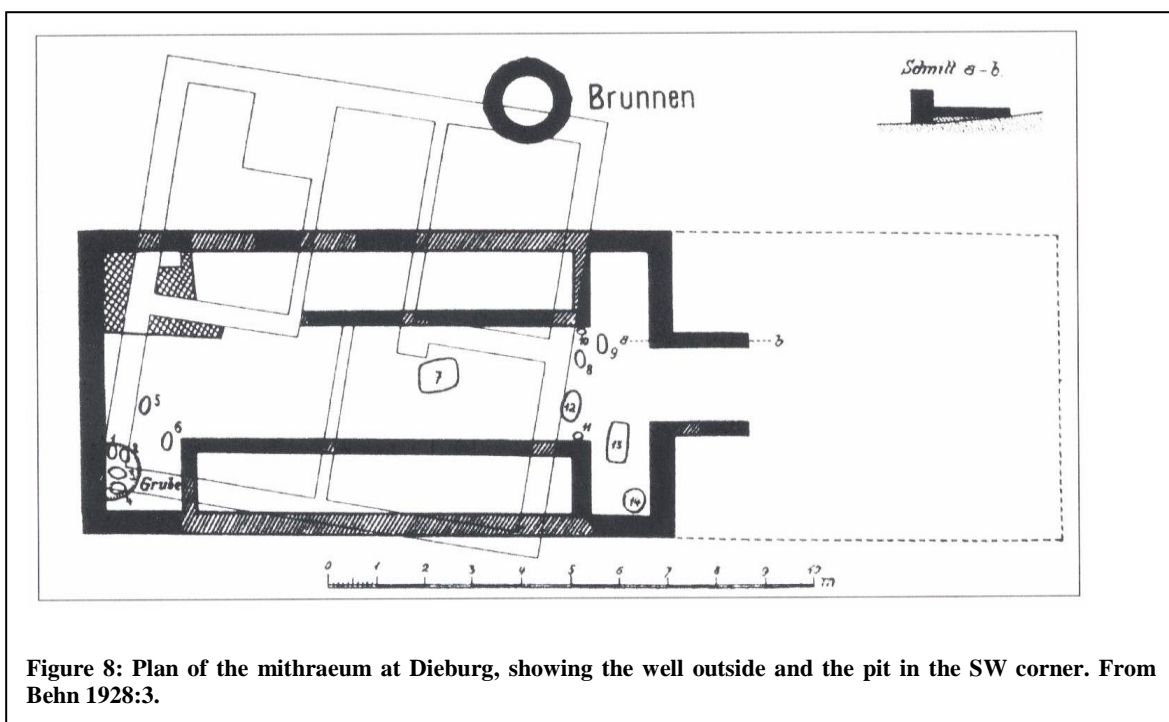


Figure 8: Plan of the mithraeum at Dieburg, showing the well outside and the pit in the SW corner. From Behn 1928:3.

The mithraeum at Dieburg in modern Germany was found and excavated in 1926. It measures 11.20 x 5.60 m, with the standard layout of a central aisle with flanking benches. The cult relief (M8), measuring 0.90 x 0.85 x 0.09 m, was made to revolve on a pivot, and it is thus decorated on both sides. The relief was found at some distance from its original placement approximately 1.5 m from the back wall, in the central aisle. According to the excavation report, the cult relief has been toppled from its base in the back of the mithraeum and thrown into the aisle (Behn 1928:46). The items M9 and M10 were found together, deposited in a pit in the Southwest corner of the temple. As was the case with all statues found inside the temple, they were found without heads (two heads were found, but both separated from their bodies). The items M12 and M13 were found in a well outside the mithraeum, which in addition contained faunal remains. The Juno relief (M13) misses its body, and the Mithras as bull-carrier (M12) was found fragmented and without its head, following the pattern of the statues found inside the temple, amongst them a Hercules-relief (M11) (Behn 1928:8,46). Vermaseren believes the mithraeum to be destroyed when the Germans invaded the area around AD 260 (1960:104), a view shared by the excavators based on dating of pottery (Behn 1928:44-45).

Rückingen

A revolving cult relief from Rückingen in modern Germany (M7) was found in a pit enforced by wood planks, together with fragments of pottery and sculpture. The pit was found approximately 200 m from the Northwest corner of the nearby Roman camp, beside a well. Sauer (1996:46) believes that the location of the relief reflects an intention of depositing it in the well. Like the Dieburg relief (see figure 15), this relief is decorated on both sides. In addition to damage to the heads of the main motifs, it has damage to the pivot anchorage. No signs of a mithraeum are found near the excavated pit, and dates for the activity of the cult at the site or the destruction of the relief are not known. Vermaseren suggests a dating around the end of the second or the beginning of the third century AD (Vermaseren 1960:80).

Königshoffen

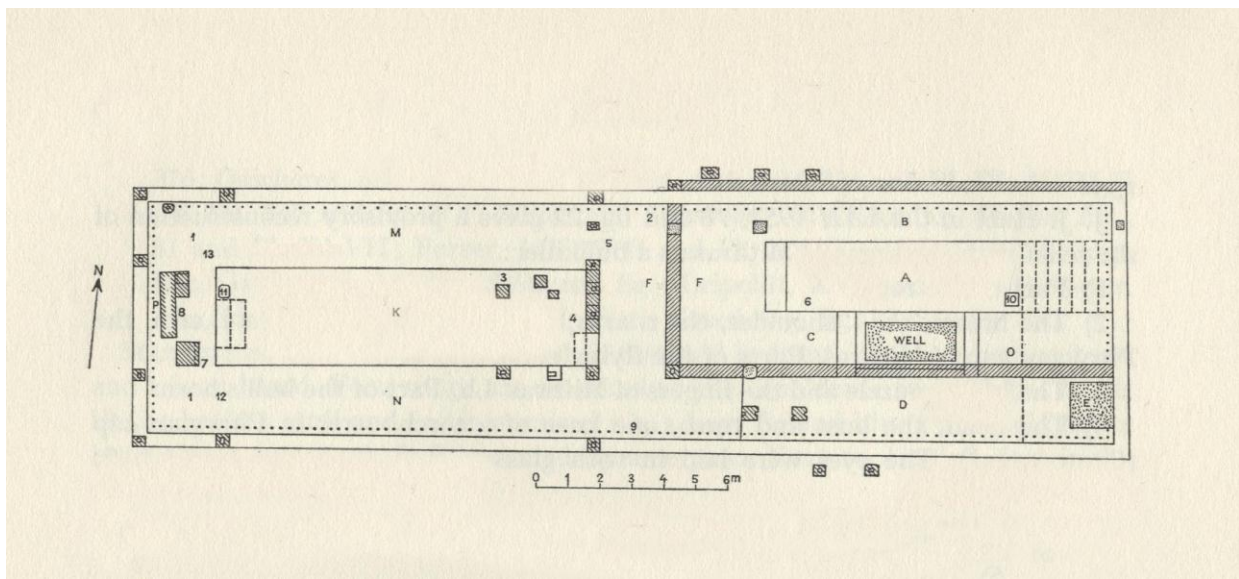


Figure 9: Plan of the mithraeum at Königshoffen. From Vermaseren 1960:130 fig. 352.

The mithraeum at Königshoffen in Germany was found near the river Mühlback, and was excavated in 1911-1912. It was first built around AD 145, measuring 14.0 x 6.0 m. In a second phase beginning around 225 AD, the mithraeum was extended, using the first mithraeum as *pronaos*. In this last phase the mithraeum measured 31.0 x 8.60 m, the *spelaeum* proper 16.50 x 8.60 m² (Forrer 1915:20; Vermaseren 1960:130). The latest mithraeum included a waste pit, in which faunal remains were found. Forrer concludes that these come from sacrificial animals consumed in the ritual meals. (1915:21). Human remains were also found in the mithraeum: a skull missing the jaw bone and two *femora* in a circular pit. Forrer believes these to originate from a human offering or a Mithraic martyr. This is however unlikely, as no other finds in mithraea point to use of human sacrifice in Mithraic rituals. Vermaseren believes the mithraeum to have been destroyed at some time around the end of the fourth century AD. Sauer, taking numismatic material into consideration, believes it to have happened sometime between AD 394 and the fifth century AD, and both he (2003:86) and Forrer (1915:13) believe that the destruction post-dated the abandonment of the temple. Certainly the nearby village of Königshoffen was principally abandoned by the end of the third century AD, again reflecting the general withdrawal of the Romans army from the area.

² Vermaseren uses the measurements 31 x 8.75 m/16.50 x 8.75 m. I use the measurements from Forrer (1915) here.

The main cult image of the mithraeum (M18) was found smashed into 360 recognizable fragments. The head of the main figure was not found. The relief, measuring 2.30 x 1.80 x 0.36 m, was probably standing in the back of the mithraeum, but was scattered throughout the mithraeum, with the heaviest concentration in the western half (see figure 22) (Forrer 1915:59; Vermaseren 1960:134-135). The items M14 and M15 were also found in the temple.

Ostia/Terme del Mitra

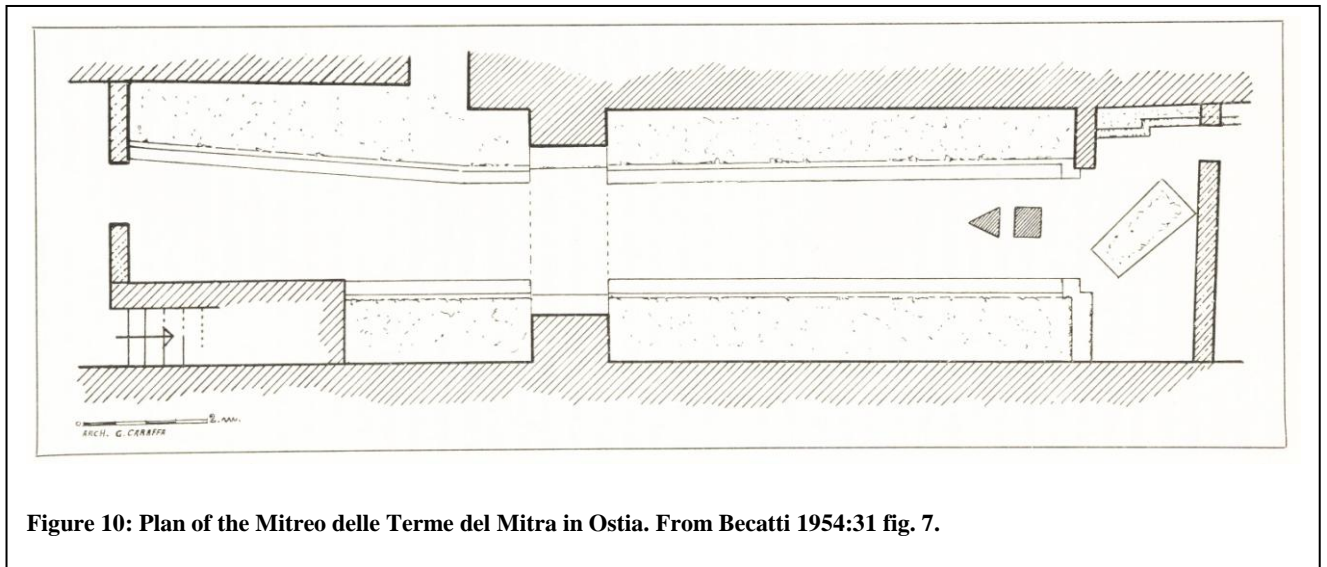
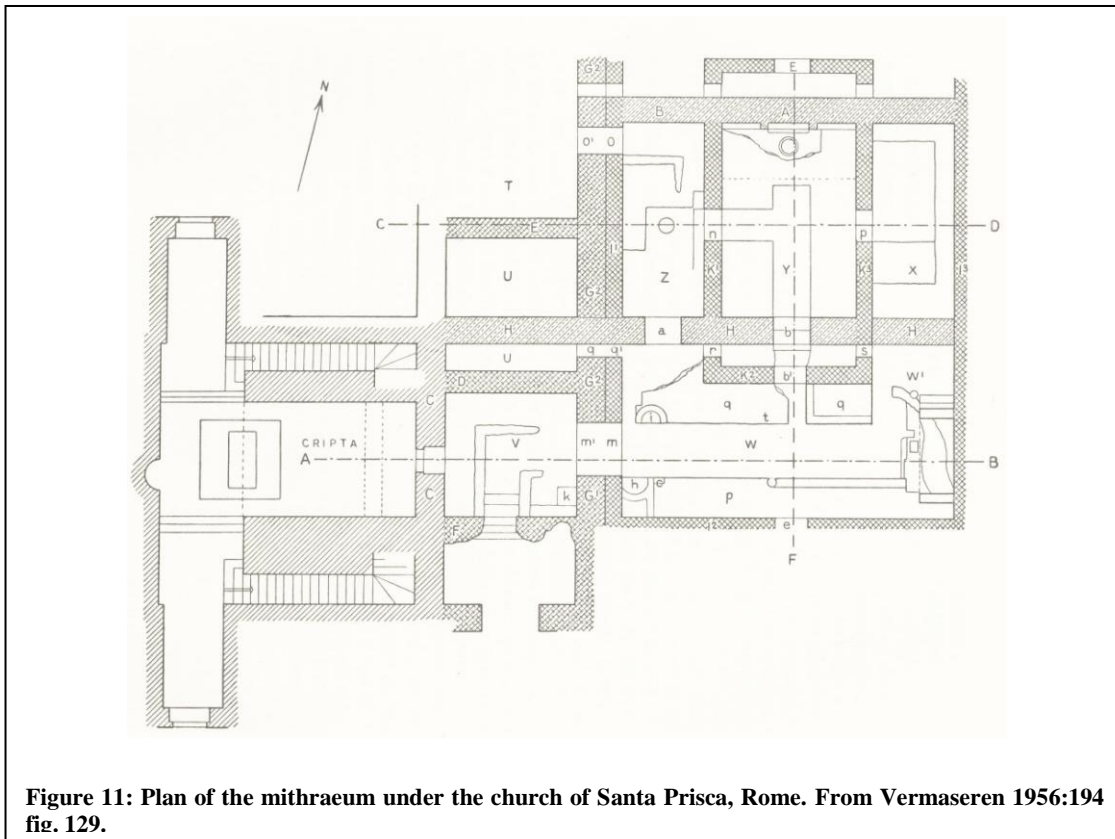


Figure 10: Plan of the Mitreo delle Terme del Mitra in Ostia. From Becatti 1954:31 fig. 7.

The mithraeum was found in the basement of the so-called Terme del Mitra in Ostia, the baths originally erected by Trajan. The mithraeum measures 15.37 x 4.55 m, and has a large arch at 6.55 m from the entrance, dividing the mithraeum into two parts (Becatti 1954:29). The main cult image (M16) is a large marble statue, measuring approximately 1.70 x 1.93 x 0.58 m, depicting Mithras killing the bull. On the chest of the bull is the inscription KRITON ATHENAIOS EPOIEI. The heads of Mithras and the bull, as well as Mithras' arms, were found separate from the rest in a nearby drain running along the western wall of the mithraeum (Becatti 1954:32; Vermaseren 1956:118-119). The damages to the sculpture are hardly visible now, due to modern restorations. On the background of the inscription, Becatti dates the sculpture to sometime between 163 and 180 AD, and a stamp found in the mithraeum dates it to around 160-170 AD (Becatti 1954:30, 37).

Santa Prisca



The mithraeum under the church of Santa Prisca was discovered in 1934 and excavated in the years 1953 to 1956 under the leadership of M.J. Vermaseren and C.C. van Essen, resulting in an extensive publication on the finds (Vermaseren and van Essen 1965). The foundations are dated to some time before AD 202, based on a graffiti found in the mithraeum. The excavators further date the destruction to about AD 400 (Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:117-118). The mithraeum consisted of a cult room and an ante-room; the latter was incorporated in the cult room around AD 220, making the total size of the mithraeum 17.5 x 4.2 m. The cult image showing Mithras slaying the bull is made of stucco, and was found fragmented at several spots around the mithraeum. The excavators name the Christian congregation of Santa Prisca as culprits. The cult image has been partly restored (Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:126, 129-130). Wall paintings showing figures depicting the priestly grades and of Mithras and Sol sharing the sacred mea were also found in the mithraeum. Several of the figures have damage to their heads. There were also found three heads of other gods in the mithraeum, possibly those of Serapis, Luna and Sol. Their backs were not worked, making it probable that they were originally fastened to the wall. None of the heads were

found *in situ*, like the parts of the stucco cult image, but rather hurled into a corner (Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:134-136, 148-173).

Doliche

The first mithraeum at Doliche (Dülük) in modern Turkey is a fairly new discovery, found in an archaeological survey in 1990 and excavated through four seasons around 2000. The mithraeum has presumably been in use up to the middle of the third century, when the town was sacked by the Persian king Shapur I. It appears however that the mithraea were left untouched by the Persians, but disturbed at a later date (Sauer 2003:63). The mithraeum is constructed in a cave probably made for extracting quarried stone (Gordon 2007:607), thus not a natural cave *per se* as asserted by Sauer (2003:63). The dating of the mithraeum has been problematic because of difficult conditions during excavation and stratigraphical issues. The excavators provide very early dates, claiming it to be one of the earliest-known mithraea (Schütte-Maischatz and Winter 2001), a notion picked up by Sauer (2003:138), the latter dating it to the first century AD or even earlier. These dates have however been disputed: Gordon (2007:610) points out several problems concerning the dating of the mithraeum, suggesting a date as late as the early third century AD. It seems like the mithraeum was somberly furnished. Only small sections of the mithraeum were thoroughly studied, due to the mentioned problematic conditions in the cave during excavations. A small area around the cult niche and an area near the entrance were examined (Schütte-Maischatz and Winter 2004:85-92). The most striking feature in the mithraeum is a rock-cut relief (M17), which has been severely damaged with what appears to have been a chisel, and a Christian cross has been carved into it.

Santa Maria Capua Vetere

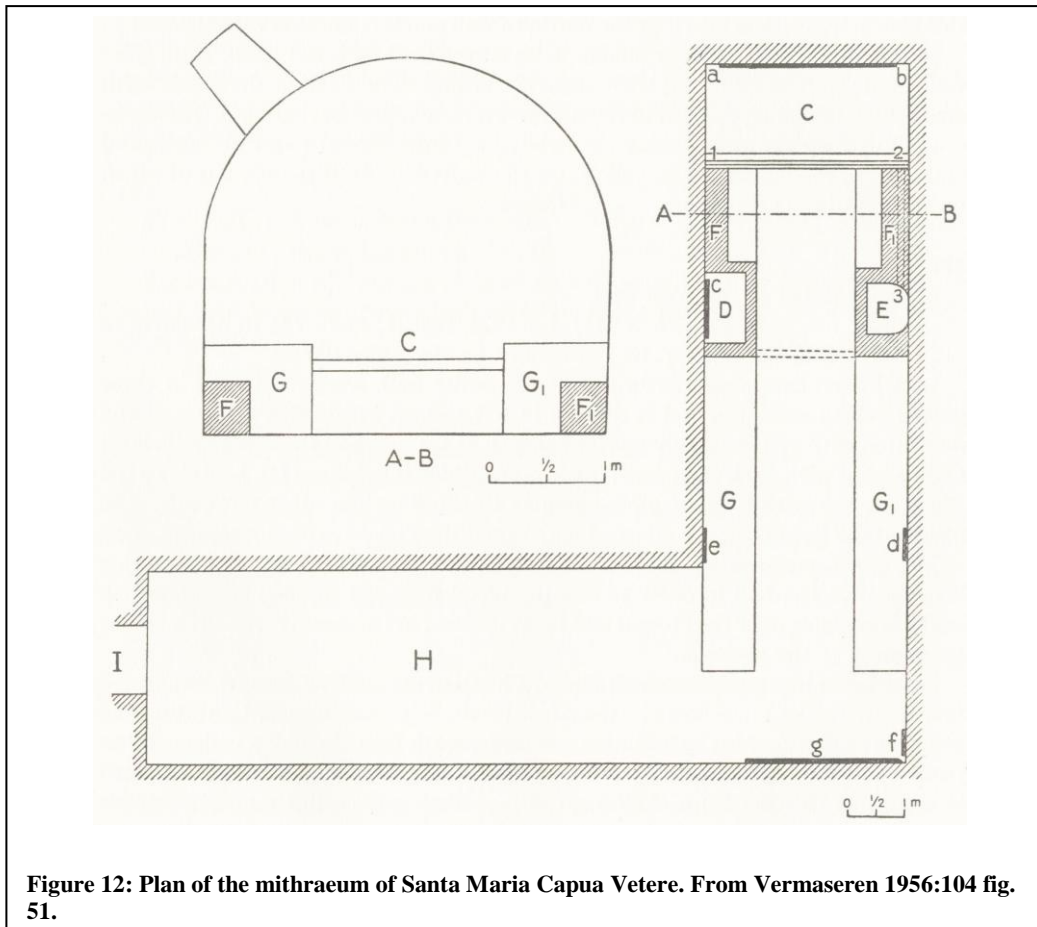


Figure 12: Plan of the mithraeum of Santa Maria Capua Vetere. From Vermaseren 1956:104 fig. 51.

The mithraeum at Santa Maria Capua Vetere in Italy was excavated under the leadership of A. Minto in 1922 (Minto 1924). The mithraeum was re-investigated by M.J. Vermaseren, resulting in a separate publication in 1971 (Vermaseren 1971). The publications by Minto and Vermaseren both focused on the iconographic elements in the mithraeum, barely mentioning small finds, methods of excavation and stratigraphy, which could help establish answers to some of the questions surrounding the nature of the filling of the mithraeum and damage to the cult image. Vermaseren mentions finds of animal bones, probably originating from the ritual meals, and also three coins of Marcus Aurelius, Constantius Chlorus and Constantine (1956:109-110), providing a date of the use of the mithraeum to at least AD 330/335 (Sauer 2003:53).

The mithraeum was L-shaped, with a *vestibulum* and a cult space. The latter measures 12.18 x 3.50 m, and the *vestibulum* has about the same proportions. The mithraeum is renowned for its painted fresco of the *taurobolium* (M19), which is one of only few preserved painted

Mithraic cult images, and for the frescos showing the initiatory rites (Vermaseren 1956:105-109; 1971). The mithraeum was filled with a mix of debris and earth some time after AD 330 and a church was constructed on top of it, in the same manner as the Santa Prisca mithraeum (Vermaseren 1971:1). The mithraeum is well preserved – certainly because it has been filled up with debris to hinder access to it. There are few damaged sculptures and images found here, but the damage to Mithras' face on the otherwise extremely well preserved painted cult image is striking with its t-shaped damage to the sensory organs. As elaborated below in Chapter 6, Vermaseren himself believes that this damage is modern, but he has deviating explanations for it. This, together with the striking placement and shape of the damage suggests to me that it can be interpreted as deliberate.



Figure 14: Detail of the wall painting depicting Sol and Mithras from the mithraeum under the church of Santa Prisca, Rome. From Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:fig. LV-LVIII.



Figure 13: Detail of the cult image from the mithraeum at Doliche. From Sauer 2003:color plate 9.

6. Method: comparative analysis

This study is performed as a comparison of a limited range of empiric material, using a theoretical framework as a main tool of analysis. The empirical evidence comes from two groups of damaged images: the posthumous destruction of imperial images, and damaged religious images originating from the Roman cult of Mithras. The evidence for damage to imperial images is as we have seen by far greater, and they are also better documented as individual monuments. They will thus provide suitable reference points to the analysis of the Mithraic images. Evidence for both image categories is vast, and the limits of this project do not allow me to study all the evidence in detail. This is especially the case concerning the imperial images. I am consequently relying on prior documentation and interpretations, and the material will in both groups consist of selected examples rather than a comprehensive study of all available specimens. It is not my intention to compare the objects one by one, but rather to create a general view of the two traditions and thus compare them in their entirety.

In the present study, both groups of material will be sorted into four categories based on the type of memory sanction they have received. They are adapted from the categorization of types of destructive behavior against sculpture used by Stewart in his article on destruction of statues in Late Antiquity (1999:164-166), modified to include additional groups of material other than statues (see Table 1).

A complete catalogue of the material used in the analysis can be found in appendices I and II. As seen in Table 2, several objects have damage belonging in more than one category. That issue will be treated further in the analysis below (Chapter 7). Ambiguous interpretations of damage to an object have been bracketed both in the appendices and in Table 2. An overview of the categories of damage can be found in Table 1, and a more thorough presentation of each category can be found below:

Category	Category Name	Category Description
Category A	Refuse Disposal	Disposal of removed parts or whole items in wells, drains/sewers or rivers
Category B	Mutilation	Removal of head or targeted identity-bearing features
Category C	Appropriation of physical space	Graffiti or appropriation of buildings
Category D	Toppling	Smashing or toppling of the whole image

Table 1: Categories of damage used in the analysis.

6.1 Categories of analysis

Category A – Refuse disposal consists of items or removed parts of items that are disposed in wells, drains, rivers or other bodies of water. As seen above, refuse disposal was a memory sanction given both to the actual individual the memory sanction was aimed at, and his portraits. Water was to the Romans a way to dispose of polluted objects, prodigies and other unwanted beings, whether they were rejected or never accepted into the community. In Rome specifically, disposal in the Tiber cleansed the city and its inhabitants of guilt, symbolical filth and actual filth (Kyle 1998:214). In addition to whole bodies, heads from executions were probably disposed of via the Cloaca Maxima, and would consequently end up in the Tiber (Kyle 1998:220).

As Sauer (1996:43-45) points out, an effective way to blot out remembrance of an image and the person or god it represented is to dispose of it in a place from whence recovery is impossible. Bodies of water provide this effectively, and pits will also serve this purpose to a certain degree. While there could be several other reasons for an image being on the bottom of a lake or a river, for instance accidents during transport, there is less uncertainty surrounding an image's presence in a well. Firstly, it is in my opinion hard to argue that disposal of items

in wells can be accidental. Transporting heavy sculptures out of temples and other places of display and throwing them into the well would certainly be laborious, and would thus undoubtedly be intentional. Secondly, disposal of objects in a well would in most cases render the unsuitable for further use, making the disposal a choice of action which one must suppose to have been thoroughly considered. In my opinion, identification of refuse disposal is a good method of establishing memory sanctions when there are signs of damage from other categories present as well. This view is further elaborated in chapters 7 and 8.

The parallels to the many portrait heads of damned emperors found disposed in the Tiber are striking. Bodies of water make suitable depositories for assaulted sculpture, as they deem recovery of the objects difficult or impossible. Stewart goes as far as saying that disposal of assaulted statues in bodies of water was a norm (1999:166). Nothing points towards the practice being exclusive to Rome and the Tiber, or being exclusive to the secular sphere. Refuse disposal seem to have been practiced as far away as in England. There is evidence of disposal of corpses in water in London (Kyle 1998:223), and although not Mithraic, altar fragments and votives which probably originate from a rural shrine in Lower Slaughter in Gloucestershire, Britain were found immersed in a well dated to the late fourth or early fifth century AD (O'Neil and Toynbee 1958; Sauer 2003:57).

Category B – Mutilation consists of items where the head has been removed, or facial features or inscriptions have been specifically targeted, following the pattern described in Chapter 4.3. The mere absence of the head of a statue is in itself not very unusual, and is not necessarily in itself an indication of deliberate destruction. As shown in Table 2, missing statue heads often occur in combination with the presence of other signs of deliberate destruction. If the heads are found at some distance from the body or image, found deposited in pits, in water, another un-natural context or not found at all, it could indicate deliberate decapitation. Additional damage to sensory organs would also indicate the same, as would signs of toppling. The situation is slightly different regarding reliefs and wall paintings; as mentioned, accidental removal of only heads or faces is not as feasible, and even less so when several different heads or faces are gone.

Category C – Appropriation of physical space consists of items damaged by graffiti, and also appropriation of buildings by the triumphant party. The two groups of objects are different in types of monuments (portrait/cult image and building/structure), but they have in common that they have been clearly marked as taken over by the victorious party, either by simple

markings like graffiti or by having them integrated into their own structures. While the examples of graffiti in the context of memory sanctions are few, there are more examples of appropriation and transformation of buildings. The motives behind the latter are for the most part practical; the ones chosen for this study have in common that they have additional signs of deliberate damage other than the appropriation itself.

The situation concerning memory sanctions against buildings is complex, and one building can be victim of several different reactions. Davies (2000:31) points out that sanctions against architecture in most cases are confined to non-utilitarian structures, and that a *function* in society would save them. Following Davies' categorizations of memory sanctions against architecture (2000:27), it would be swift to believe that the portraits on the victory arches (D20, D21, D22) would belong in this category. The arches had a strictly commemorative function, but in these cases only some of several individuals commemorated on the arches fell victims of sanctions. The positive symbolism of the arch was so strong that it was found more sensible to cut out the "contaminated" parts of the imagery and preserve the rest.

Concerning the Mithraic material, the evidence is more ambiguous. Several mithraea have been destroyed by fire and other forms of destruction, but it is difficult to say if the fires or destructions are purposeful or accidental. We can however be certain that the filling of the mithraea with earth and debris was purposeful. This is the case with both the mithraeum at Santa Maria Capua Vetere (M19) and the mithraeum under the church of Santa Prisca (M20). In these and other cases, it can be argued that the buildings have been filled with earth and debris for purely practical reasons; to stabilize the ground, before building something else on top of them. Yet, in combination with the presence of other categories of damage, this form of appropriation could point towards deliberate memory sanctions against the building. It is however necessary to consider each case individually.

Category D – Toppling consists of images that has been toppled or/and smashed completely. Toppling of statues is mentioned in Roman sources – amongst them Cassius Dio's account of the toppling of Caligula's statues in the time immediately following his death (*Cass.Dio.* 59.30) The toppling of a statue, probably Jupiter, is depicted in a wall painting in the Christian catacomb on the Via Paisiello in Rome (see figure 23) (Sauer 2003:67-69; Stewart 2003:291-294). As for the mutilation of decapitation described in Category B, it can be difficult to prove that an image has been toppled rather than fallen by accident; it will depend heavily on the context. Deliberate toppling will be more probable if damage from one of the other categories

of destruction is present. However, several of the Mithraic images in this study have clearly been toppled, and make good examples of category D damage. As mentioned in Chapter 5.3, several Mithraic cult images have been fastened either to the wall or to revolving pivots, and the damage to them makes it clear that they have been forcefully toppled.

6.2 Omitted categories

The most abundant category of *damnationes* would be portraits and cult images that have been removed from their original context either to storage or to a new context. On the other hand, these images are generally problematic to use as sources to memory sanctions, both in secular and religious contexts. Transferring of statues from their original context is seldom detectable on the statue itself, but need often be judged from the find context. Portraits have been found stored in sculptural caches, which ultimately have ensured the portraits' survival until modern times. Religious images were often removed from their original context in the Late Roman period, and found their new home in a secular context, often in *thermae* (Curran 1994:47-48, 52). Portrait statues are in most cases not found in their original contexts, while this is more often the case with reliefs (Prusac 2011:16; Varner 2004:5). As Fejfer (2008:435) also points out, few honorary portraits have stayed *in situ* in public spaces throughout the history of a particular city. Portraits were continuously removed and replaced, and those few that remained on public display were probably of high importance to the communal identity of the city.

Re-carving and altering of portraits were common manifestation of memory sanctions. It is often quite obvious who the portraits were re-carved from, and it could be read as if the new ruler "cannibalized" the power of the previously depicted emperor. In addition to the symbolic perks of re-carving portraits, it was also economical and convenient to re-use them (Varner 2004:9). Even if re-carving was a common way to express memory sanctions against emperors visually, it does not seem to be quite as common when dealing with religious imagery. If this had been the case, then re-carving would have had a significant place in category C. This could be due to the fact that gods were to a higher extent identified through bodily features as well as their faces; thus making the re-carving of a cult image far more demanding. Relating to Mithraic cult images specifically, the motifs of the images were unambiguous and distinguished themselves from the imagery of the other Eastern cults as well as from that of the official cult. This would have made it all the more difficult to re-cut Mithraic imagery into other images. Simply replacing Mithras' head with another head would not change the identity of the sculpture the way one could with imperial portrait statues,

whose bodies were more or less standardized. Last but not least, the early Christians had not yet established a tradition for depicting their God. In the Late Roman period, Christian imagery was mostly contained to symbols such as the *chi-rho* sign, the cross and the fish, as well as images of saints and prophets. Well known depictions such as that of the crucifixion were not customary before the fifth century (Stewart 2008:138-139). As followers of a cult without cult images, the Christians had no need for re-carving images of the fallen gods into Christian images. Based on these arguments these two categories of destruction are omitted from the following analysis.

PART II: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

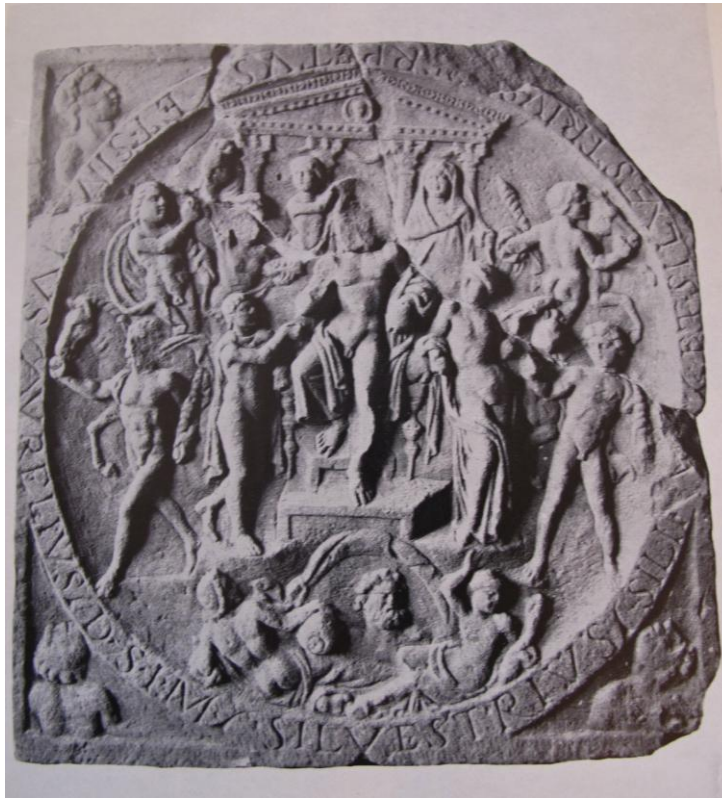


Figure 15: Reverse side of the cult image from Dieburg. From Vermaseren 1956:fig. 324.

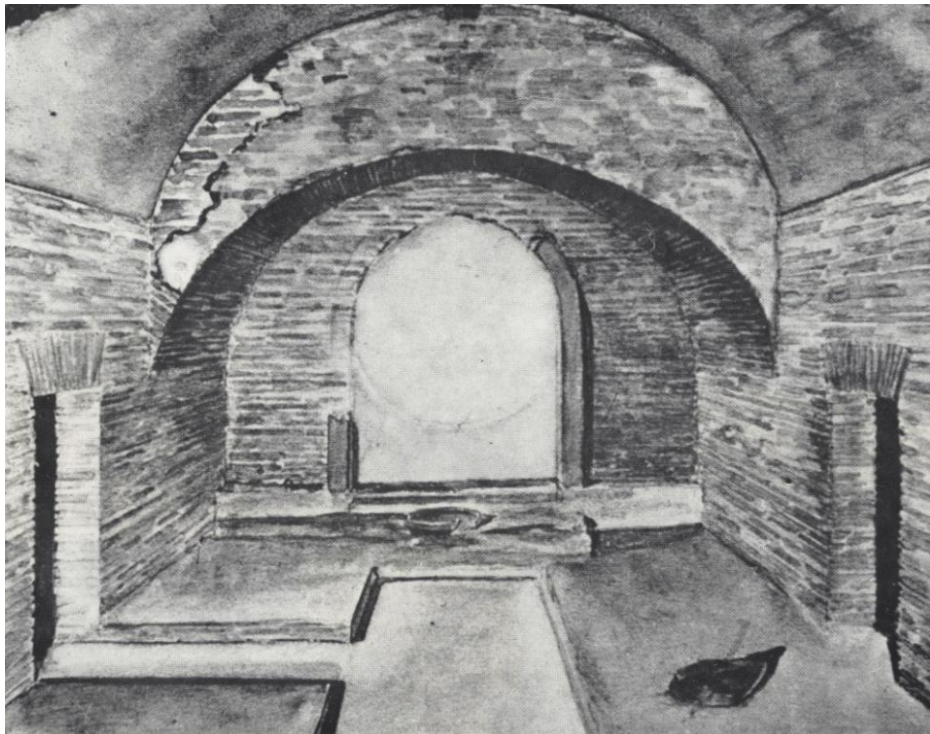


Figure 16: Reconstruction of the mithraeum under the church of Santa Prisca, Rome. From Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:plate XXXI.

7. Damaged goods: analyzing the material

The goal of the analysis is to discuss the damage of the Mithraic objects using the categories of damage deliberated above in Chapter 6 as a framework. I will thus be able to discover any corresponding damages to them when compared to the imperial images damaged in the process of *damnatio memoriae*. Each category of damage (see Table 1) is discussed separately. Each object represented in the analysis is referred to by its catalogue number found in the respective appendices.

7.1 Category A – Refuse disposal

Of the 20 Mithraic objects, 9 belong in category A. Deliberate disposal is in my opinion clear in most cases. The interpretation of the damage to the cult statue from the mitreo delle Terme del Mitra in Ostia (M16), is however somewhat unclear. Becatti (1954) does not elaborate further the finding of the heads of the sculpture in the drain, and their presence in the context could be incidental. The fact that the heads were found here, together with the arms and some other detachable pieces from the sculpture group (Becatti 1954:33), would in my opinion support that they were deliberately disposed in the drain. M16 stands apart also because the heads are the only objects in the analysis found in a drain. While the most common place of disposal were rivers, lakes and wells, there are reports of disposals of the physical bodies of memory sanctioned individuals in sewers, for instance the before mentioned Elagabalus and Julia Soemias. As mentioned in Chapter 4.3, this type of disposal was common in Rome, not far from Ostia. It is also possible that the heads of the Ostia-group were deposited in the nearest structure associated with water, namely the drains within the mithraeum itself. In this case, resemblance to the pit-disposals (see below) may also be possible.

River deposits

The objects M1-M4 are all found deposited in a river, namely Nohain in Entrains-sur-Nohain, France. The small Mithraic reliefs (M1-M3) were found together with heads of other deities (M4), which all probably originated from the nearby spring sanctuary where one or perhaps several mithraea likely were located (Walters 1974:35-36). The reliefs are fragmented, and it looks like the Mithraic reliefs as well as the heads of the other deities were purposefully mutilated. A corner of a relief depicting a beheaded Mithras next to Sol Invictus has lost Mithras' head, and Sol's forehead and face are disfigured by a deep cut, probably inflicted with a metal tool with a long cutting edge (Sauer 2003:57; Walters 1974:95-101). The Nohain

finds are the only ones in the study found deposited in a river. The decision to deposit them specifically in the river is in my opinion a conscious one. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the site is located in the marshlands. Since no architectural remains of a mithraeum are located nearby, the objects would probably have been moved some distance before being deposited. The deposit was possibly inspired by the custom of disposing of polluted objects and bodies in rivers. Disposals in the Tiber is mentioned by several ancient sources, amongst them the before mentioned downfall of Sejanus by Cassius Dio (58.11.5). Suetonius reports that Vitellius was dragged to the Tiber and thrown in, a fate normally reserved for traitors, capital defenders and gladiators (Suet.Vit.17). The Tiber was the fate for several other imperial family members through the Roman period as well, and according to Josephus (Joseph.AJ.18.3.4), this was also the fate of a cult image from the temple of Isis, which was thrown into the Tiber by the order of Tiberius. The treatment of the cult image from the temple of Isis is important. It shows that the practice of disposing of *religious* images in water has been practiced as early as the practice of disposing of *secular* images.

Varner (2001:59) suggests that the large number of images of condemned emperors retrieved from the Tiber, and other bodies of water, points towards a custom of disposing of their remains in effigy, especially when the corpses were not available. Disposing of corpses, and additionally of portraits, in water could also be connected to denial of proper burial for victims of memory sanctions. It underscores the notion that the treatment of one's portraits paralleled, or even equaled, the treatment of the person him- or herself.

Portraits deposited in rivers can be found in the imperial material as well as the Mithraic. A parallel to the Nohain finds is the portraits of Caligula found deposited together in the Tiber (D2-D4). These were also found clustered together. Deliberate immersion in the Tiber has also been suggested for the child portrait of Nero (D7) (Bergmann and Zanker 1981:332). The bronze portrait head of Nero (D8) is also found immersed in a river, namely Alde in Britain. This find demonstrates that the custom of water immersion of images of condemned individuals reached the provinces at a long distance from the capital as well. The custom was probably well known in the Gallic and German provinces as well as Britannia. The fact that the Roman way of issuing memory sanctions against its rulers were conducted this far from the *caput mundi* will in my opinion render it likely that sanctions against religious images were well known in the outer provinces – and conducted in the same way also here.

Well deposits

The Mithraic objects M12 and M13 were both found deposited in a well outside the mithraeum at Dieburg. Faunal remains were found in the same context, leading the excavator to the conclusion that the sculptures and the faunal remains were thrown in the well at the time of the destruction of the mithraeum as a means to contaminate the well, which he believes to have had cultic function based on the little amount of water it provided (Behn 1928:46). Another parallel, although not Mithraic, can be found. The excavation of a Roman well in Lower Slaughter, England, dated to the late-fourth- or early-fifth-century, provided two sculptures identified as seated deities, which both were headless. The heads were, despite careful searching through the deposits of the well, never found (O'Neil and Toynbee 1958). The excavators suggest Christian culprits, and refer to other deposits of pagan images and altars in the area (1958:51). The Caligula portrait (D1) was also found amongst debris in a Roman well, in Huelva, Spain. According to Varner (2004:38), the corroded surfaces indicate a long immersion in water. As is the case with many other portrait heads, the statue body was not found. Varner suggests that it may have been thrown into the well as an act of denigration against the fallen *princeps*.

Pit deposits

Three Mithraic objects represented in this study have been found deposited in pits. M9 and M10 were found together, deposited in a pit within the mithraeum at Dieburg. This is opposed to M12 and M13, which were deposited in the well outside the same mithraeum. M7, the cult relief from Rückingen, was also found deposited in a pit. As mentioned, the pit was enforced, leaving little doubt about the disposal being a planned event. Comparing these pit deposits to imperial portraits is problematic. I cannot rule out that some of them have been found in such a context originally, but provenance and priorities in publications have blurred this over time. The Geta portrait heads from the Arch of Septimius Severus in Lepcis Magna (D22) are possible imperial examples of pit deposits. Here, the portrait heads have been found broken off and separate from the rest of the relief in two cases. It is not certain, however, that this separation is deliberate. Taken into consideration that we have seen portraits from the other contexts mentioned here which have been disposed of consistently in the same matter as the Mithraic images, I find it plausible that these portrait heads have been deposited in pits as well, and maybe even separate from their bodies, like the Mithraic objects.

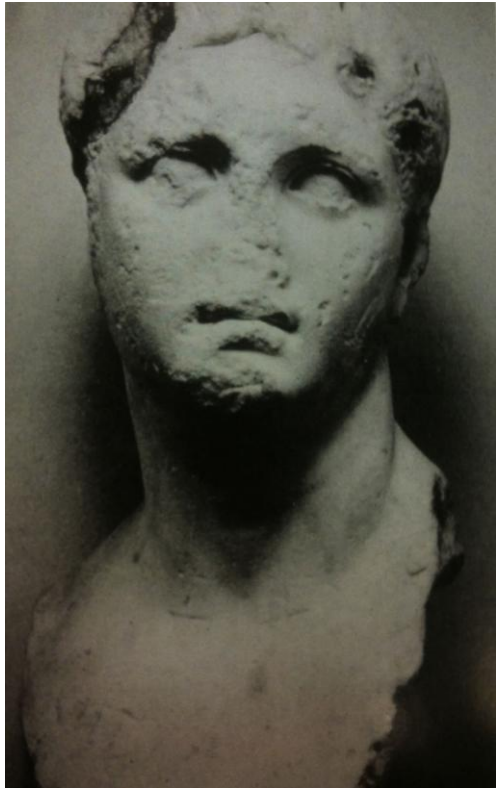


Figure 20: Portrait of Nero with VICTO inscribed. Museo Nazionale, Cagliari. From Varner 2004:fig. 42.

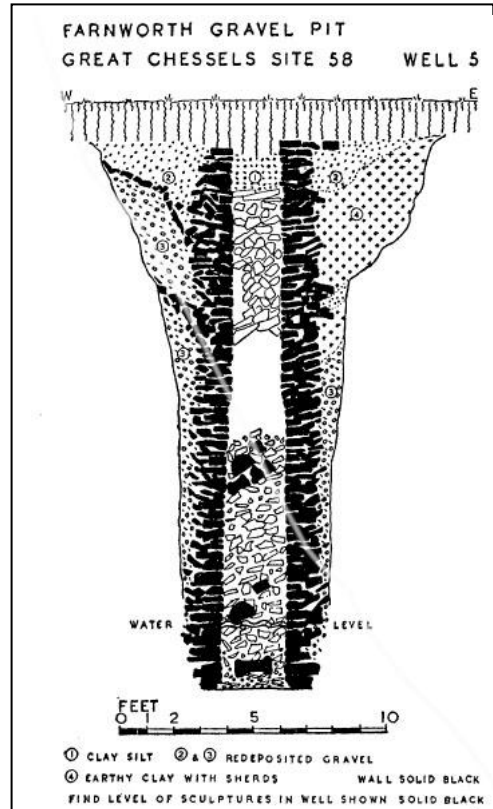


Figure 18: Sculptures in a well in Lower Slaughter, Britain. From O'Neil and Toyne 1958:50 fig. 5.



Figure 19: Wall painting from Santa Maria Capua Vetere - detail of the damage to the sensory organs. From Sauer 2003:color plate 6.



Figure 17: Missing head in the *submission scene* on the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Forum Romanum. From Brilliant 1963:Plate 80b.

7.2 Category B - Mutilation

Mutilation of face and sensory organs

Category B is by far the category containing the largest amount of images. *All* the Mithraic objects represented in this study have damage belonging to this category, some more confidently interpreted than others. The insecure cases are the wall paintings of the mithraea of Santa Maria Capua Vetere (M19) and Santa Prisca (M20). Both show damage which appear to be targeted against areas defined as important identity-bearers, specifically the head and sensory organs. In M20 are eyes and whole heads missing from the wall paintings on several figures, including the main motifs Sol and Mithras. It must however be taken into consideration that the wall paintings in Santa Prisca are generally poorly preserved.

M19 is the only Mithraic object that has the characteristic t-shaped damage known from many imperial portraits. It has been debated if the damage is intentional or not. Vermaseren himself has two deviating explanations for the damage: “It might be suspected that the destruction of Mithras’ face was caused on purpose by his antagonists. According to a custodian however, they have been inflicted by playing children (Vermaseren 1956:107)” and: “One would suppose that the sad damage to nose and eyes (...) was caused by Christians, but it is said to have happened during the excavations (Vermaseren 1971:6-7)”. These are two very different explanations, and Vermaseren’s vague choice of words is interesting. Minto (1924) does sadly not mention the damage to Mithras’ head, and the background of the damage remains unclear. Stucco is a fragile material, but even taking this into consideration, the t-shape of the damage, its position in the painting and relatively well preserved state of the rest of the wall painting, is striking, and in my opinion, deliberate damage should not be entirely ruled out.

The cult image from the first mithraeum at Doliche (M17) is a relief worked directly into the cave wall. The damage is evident: the depiction of Mithras and the bull is severely damaged, but it is still easy to see what has originally been depicted. This sort of damage, the sort that target the parts of the image considered important but still leaves the identity of the portrayed easy recognizable, is a sort of damage very common among the sanctioned imperial portraits. Here, the sensory organs especially, and other identifying parts of the portrait, are singled out and mutilated. The imperial portraits D1, D4, D10, D11, D12, D13 and D15 are all examples of this to one degree or another. D4, a bronze portrait of Caligula, is a striking example. It is easy to see the marks of the chisel used to damage it. The damage is concentrated around the t-zone. Another evident example is that of the portrait statue of Geta (D12). It has suffered

severe damage to the whole face, but especially to the eyes, nose and mouth. In contrast, the rest of the statue is well preserved. This is a good example of memory sanctions targeting only vital identity-bearing parts of the image.

Decapitation

Sculptures missing their heads are as mentioned not necessarily deliberately damaged. The neck of a statue is a weak point, and there is no reason at all to assume that all headless statues in museums around the world have been victims of deliberate decapitation. A pattern emerges, however, when several statues from the same context are found having the same damage. Examples of this are the Mithraic objects M1 - M4, M6 and M9 - M13. While M1 and M2 are reliefs missing the heads of the main figures, M3 is missing the head of Mithras. In addition, the head of Sol in the same relief is mutilated. The three objects constituting M4 are all missing their bodies. The fact that the corresponding heads (for M1 – M3) and bodies (M4) were not found in the context establishes that the decapitations were conducted before the objects were immersed in the river. M6 consists of numerous fragments of sculpture, found scattered over a large area in the mithraeum at Sarrebourg. Several of them are headless, and several are found at some distance from the matching body, a situation also pointing towards pre-depositional decapitation. There are also a number of objects from Dieburg sharing the same fate: M9 and M10 were found together in a pit within the temple and no heads have been found. M12 was found in the well, and the head remains absent. The opposite is the case regarding the Juno head, M13, whose body was never found. The Hercules relief M11 was found without his head. It was not found deposited as the other examples from Dieburg, but taking into consideration their similar fate it is possible to assume that also Hercules shared it. M13 and M14 are two of many sculpture fragments found scattered inside the mithraeum at Königshoffen (see distribution in figure 20). Here, the Mithraic images are markedly more damaged compared to images of other deities represented in the mithraeum. This contrast can also be observed in M14, where the head of the Mithraic torchbearer inside the *aedicula* (temple model) is missing, while the bust of Luna on the *tympanum* is intact (Sauer 2003:83-84).

Reliefs and wall paintings

Reliefs are the types of images which in my opinion makes the best examples of consistency in the execution of memory sanctions against images, across the spheres of religion and politics. Except for the re-carving of the reliefs on the Arch of the Argentarii (D21) and in part the relief on the Arch of Septimius Severus on the Roman Forum (D20) which have been worked for replacement, the damages to all the reliefs and wall paintings in the study surprisingly are consistent in that the heads have been specially targeted. On the painted Severan tondo (D17) only the features of Geta, the victim of the memory sanctions, have been targeted, leaving the other depicted figures intact. This pattern is recognizable also in the Mithraic wall paintings. Like the Severan tondo, the Mithraic wall paintings have, as mentioned above, damage which appears to have been directed towards identity-bearing parts of the motifs. This is especially visible in the wall painting in the mithraeum of Santa Maria Capua Vetere (M19), where the paint is missing in a t-shaped spot covering the sensory organs of Mithras while the rest of the wall painting is fairly intact. Although not as striking, the damage to the wall painting in Santa Prisca (M20) can also be interpreted as targeting identity-bearing features. While they are generally in a badly preserved state, it is evident that the damages specifically targeted to the heads of Mithras and Sol are deeper than the general wear and tear to the paint. Although it is not a wall painting, this form of removing the identity-bearing features can also be seen on the cameo depicting the portraits of Diadumenianus and Macrinus (D14), where it is easy to see that only the face and sensory organs have been attacked, leaving it easy to identify the likenesses through other identity markers featured on the cameo.

A very large part of the chosen Mithraic material consists of reliefs. Not only because reliefs are the most common type of cult image, but also because damage to them are fairly consistent. The reliefs having category B damage are M1, M2, M3, M5, M7, M8, M11, M15, M17 and M18, making up 50% of the Mithraic material. Of these, M5, M7, M8 and M18 are large cult reliefs.

The treatment of the Mithraic reliefs is in my opinion easily comparable to the treatment of the Severan reliefs. On these (D9, D20, D21, D22 and D23), we can see that only those victim of the *damnatio* has been removed from the reliefs, leaving the rest of the motif intact. The same pattern can be seen in the Mithraic reliefs as well: especially on the cult images have the heads of the central figures been removed, and non-essential figures are left intact. This is especially evident on the double sided Dieburg cult relief (M8), where the face of Mithras on

the main motif is removed, and similarly is the face of the sun god removed on the reverse side. This relief has many other characters and scenes depicted, nevertheless are these two the only ones clearly targeted. Another good example is the Königshoffen *aedicula* relief (M15) mentioned above, where the facial features of the Mithraic motif are removed, leaving those of the more neutral moon goddess intact. The most drastic example of this type of removing the motif is probably that of the relief from Doliche (M17), where, as mentioned, the motif is heavily damaged but it is nevertheless easy to see what has been depicted. In my opinion is this comparable to the Domitian relief from Castel Gandolfo (D19), where the facial features are chiseled away in a rough manner, but it can be identified as Domitian from the coiffure. In its original context, this must have been a powerful demonstration of Domitian's *damnatio*.

7.3 Category C – Appropriation of physical space

Graffiti

Two objects in the analysis have been marked by graffiti, which is one of the clearest sign of discontent towards images. In Doliche, a Christian cross has been carved into the damaged cult image (M17), at the exact spot where Mithras' head once has been. The cross sends an unusually clear message, whether it was carved into the image at the same time as the mutilation took place, or at a later time.

The other object marked by graffiti is a bust of Nero (D13). It has been carved two X's into the clavicles, and the phrase *VICTO* has been carved on the right breast. The meaning of the two X's is obscure, but Varner (1993:137-138) suggests a practical function, that they were marks made in preparation for removing the head and neck from the statue's torso. The phrase *VICTO* (to the conquered) is an ironic reversal of a dedication used for victorious athletes (*VICTORI* – to the victor) (Varner 1993:139). This is clearly a marking of the downfall of Nero and the support of his successor Claudius, although not necessarily ordered by Claudius himself.

Filling and appropriation of buildings

Bjørnebye (2007:56) argues that the technique used when filling the mithraea of Santa Prisca and Santa Maria Capua Vetere points towards peaceful motives for the action. The mithraea were both filled in through air holes, using a mix of earth, tiles, mortar and stone. He argues further that this less destructive way of putting a mithraeum out of use would point towards practical structural considerations, or even towards Mithraists blocking their temple to

preserve it, rather than religious motives. He goes as far as to argue that the mithraeum of Santa Maria Capua Vetere can be used as an example to “argue against the prevalent argument that the mithraea were in general abandoned because of attacks by Christians” (Bjørnebye 2007:56). This view is also supported by Vermaseren, who stresses that it is not in any case built a church here as a symbol of their victory, without further explaining this argument (Vermaseren 1971:1). Bjørnebye does also point out that the many incidents of churches built on foundations of mithraea may reflect the generally high density of small churches in Rome, and also that many mithraea are found during excavations aiming to discover the origins of these churches. He argues that many an excavated basement in Rome may contain a hitherto unknown mithraeum (Bjørnebye 2007:60).

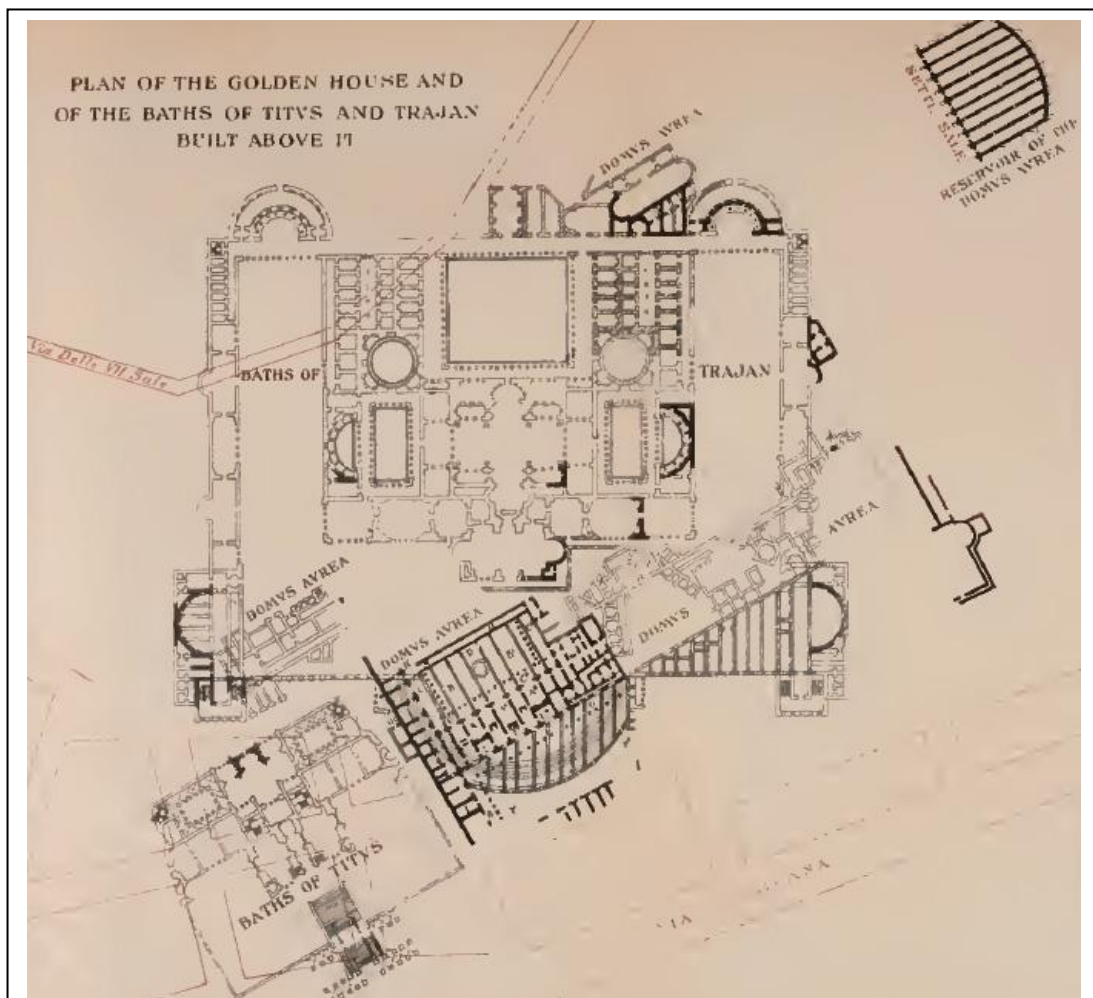


Figure 21: Plan of the Domus Aurea with the baths of Titus and Trajan. From Lanciani 1897:fig.138.

A comparison of the use of filling in these two mithraea to the fate of the *Domus Aurea* in Rome (D18) reveals striking similarities. The appropriation of the Golden House of Nero after his downfall is perhaps the most famous imperial appropriation. The great *domus* was partly destroyed, partly transformed and reused for other purposes. The *Amphitheatrum Flavium* was erected at the site of the artificial lake and the Esquiline wing was, as the Capua mithraeum, filled up with soil and used as foundation for another building, in this case for the Baths of Trajan. There is no doubt that filling and re-use of the Esquiline wing had practical motives as well. Practical considerations do not, however, rule out symbolic considerations. The treatment of *Domus Aurea* reflects the republican practice of razing the houses of individuals subjected to *damnatio* (Varner 2004:77-78). The re-use of the sites of the demolished part of the *domus* was actually not following the norm. The custom was that the site of the leveled house of the sanctioned person remained empty, as if the utter reduction of the offender could be symbolized through the emptiness (Davies 2000:38). As mentioned in Chapter 6, it is stressed by Davies (2000:31) that buildings that had a potential *function* for the new regime were saved from memory sanctions. Transferring this to the religious sphere, it appears as though some hesitance towards demolishing temples as sanctions against the dedicator existed, in fear of evoking the wrath of the gods dwelling therein. This was at least the case when the pagan religions dominated the Empire (Davies 2000:36).

These aspects could be the reasons (amongst others) for temples of the official cult being spared more often, and also for them being converted into churches. Mithraea were however an entirely different type of building. Their concealed nature and formulaic layouts would make them less attractive for conversion. Demolitions and the ensuing abandonment of the site, at least for some time, would be preferable. Filling the mithraea and using them as substructures for buildings that symbolized the conquering party is however a likely outcome, especially comparing them to the parts of *Domus Aurea* being used as substructure for the Flavian and Antonine baths, as a part of the building program of the new ruling dynasty.

7.4 Category D – Toppling

Toppling of statues and other images were probably the displays of memory sanctions against images used most often. The action is described colorfully by authors like Cassius Dio (*Cass.Dio.58.11.3-5*), as cited above in Chapter 4.3. It can also be seen on the wall painting in the catacomb on the Via Paisiello in Rome, where a man is depicted whilst toppling a statue with the help of a rope (figure 23). Cases of toppling are in most cases hard to identify, as there are many different, and more apparent, reasons for statues to fall down. There are however certain signs to look for: is the statue broken of an anchorage? Is it found at some distance from its base (if near the base at all)? Are visible evidences of toppling, for instance small scratches confined to one side of the image, combined with other forms of damage?

Signs of toppling can be seen on the entire front surface of the *togatus* of Caligula (D5). It has small damages to ears, nose and chin, and small scratches scattered around the surface of the face, as well as on the toga-clad body. These damages are all confined to the front of the statue. In addition, the *togatus* has a deep gouge in the area bordering the toga, which according to Varner (1993:18-19) is caused by a chisel in an attempt to behead the statue. The damages are confined to the front of the statue, which makes it likely that it has fallen at some point. If we also take into consideration the possible attempt to behead the statue, the evidence should point towards toppling as a memory sanction for the *togatus*.

If we study the Mithraic cases of toppling (M5, (M6), M7, M8 and M18), they are all large cult images in relief, or parts of reliefs. They are all large and heavy, and usually bolted to the back of the wall in the mithraeum. These factors make it more plausible that the cult images have been brought down deliberately. For instance is the cult image from the mithraeum at Sarrebourg (M5) 4-4.15 m tall including the base, 2.46m wide and 0.36m at its thickest, and fixed to the back-wall with iron clamps (Sauer 2003:79). This makes the task of toppling it laborious. Judging from the distribution of the relief fragments in the mithraeum, it seems like it has been further fragmented and spread throughout a larger area after it was toppled.

The relief from Königshoffen (M18) has many similarities with the Sarrebourg relief, both in structure and imagery, and also in the types of damage inflicted. Taking into consideration the geographical proximity of the two locations (see map, figure 1), some connection between the two mithraea are plausible (Walters 1974:104-105). In Königshoffen, the relief had also been clamped to the back-wall. It appears as if some debris has already built up on the floor of the mithraeum before the relief was toppled, which normally should have provided a somewhat

soft landing for it. The find context does not reflect this; fragments of the cult relief was found distributed around the whole of the mithraeum, and most of it was never found all (see figure 22 for the spatial distribution of the finds in the mithraeum. Number 9 indicates the original base of the relief). In comparison, the documentation of the spatial distribution of the fragments is unclear for Sarrebourg, but a pattern of relatively wide dispersal has been observed. The fragmentation is also illustrated by the fact that some of the fragments have been used for a stone cist for the burial of the chained body found in the mithraeum (Sauer 2003:82-83).

Although not as dramatic cases, it is clear that the cult images from Rückingen (M7) and Dieburg (M8) have been toppled as well. They also share another likeness; they are both double sided, made to revolve around a pivot. M8 was found broken of the pivot and further broken into six pieces inside the mithraeum. On M7, it is easy to see that it has been violently broken of the pivot, but except for the missing heads of the main figures, it is relatively well preserved (Behn 1926; Vermaseren 1960:80).

7.5 Preliminary conclusions

The analysis has shown likeness in the types of damage afflicted to the Mithraic images compared to the imperial portraits and buildings included in this study. I render the possibility for the images to be victims of memory sanctions even more evident when there are visible signs of damage from more than one category of analysis. As seen in Table 2, there are several of the objects that have damage belonging in more than one of the categories. In the case of the imperial objects, this applies to the objects **D1, D4, D5, D13, D16** and **D22**, and in the case of the Mithraic objects this applies to the objects **M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M6, M7, M9, M10, M11, M12, M13, M16, M17, M19** and **M20**.

Even though several of the images have damage that suggests memory sanctions alone, damage from more than one category makes the probability of memory sanctions higher. A majority of the Mithraic images in this study have damage corresponding to two or more categories of analysis, and the probability for these images being victims of memory sanctions is very likely. This would be the case whether the different types of damage were inflicted simultaneously or at different stages. They would in my opinion accentuate each other equally if the image was first mutilated and then toppled at another time, or if it was toppled and mutilated at the same occasion. Judging from the images chosen for this study, it is especially the cult images representing Mithras himself that show signs of being deliberately damaged,

although not exclusively. Bearing in mind the majority of them represented in the study this is not surprising, but if we bear in mind Roman perceptions of portraits and cult images and their near relations to the portrayed person or god, it seems sensible to want to target the principal deity of the religion represented in the image (cf. Chapter 4.2-4.3). The relationship between memory sanctions in the secular sphere and the destruction of Mithraic images will be further elaborated in Chapter 8 below.

Category	Mithraic objects	Imperial objects
A	M1. M2. M3. M4. M9. M10. M12. M13. (M16.)	D1. D2. D3. D4. D7. D8. (D22).
B	M1. M2. M3. M4. M5. M6. M7. M8. M9. M10. M11. M12. M13. M14. M15. M16. M17. M18. (M19). (M20)	D1. D4. (D5). D9. D10. D11. D12. D13. D14. D15. D16. D19. D20. D21. D22. D23
C	M17. M19. M20	D13. D18.
D	M5. (M6). M7. M8. M18.	D5. D6. D16.

Table 2: Distribution of objects in the different categories of damage. Debatable categorizations are bracketed.

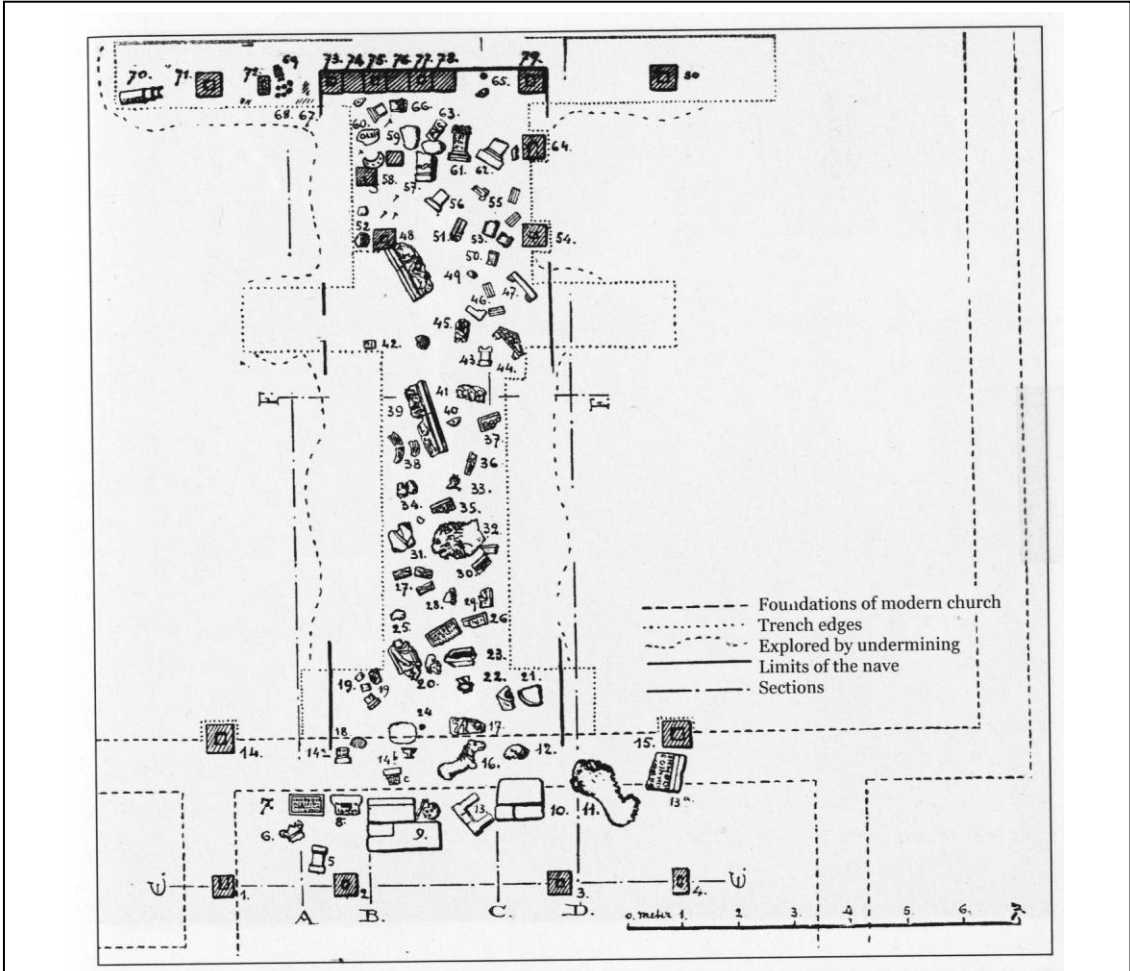


Figure 22: The distribution of pieces of the cult relief and other finds in the Mithraeum at Königshoffen Sauer 2003:fig. 44, adapted from Forrer 1915:tafel I.

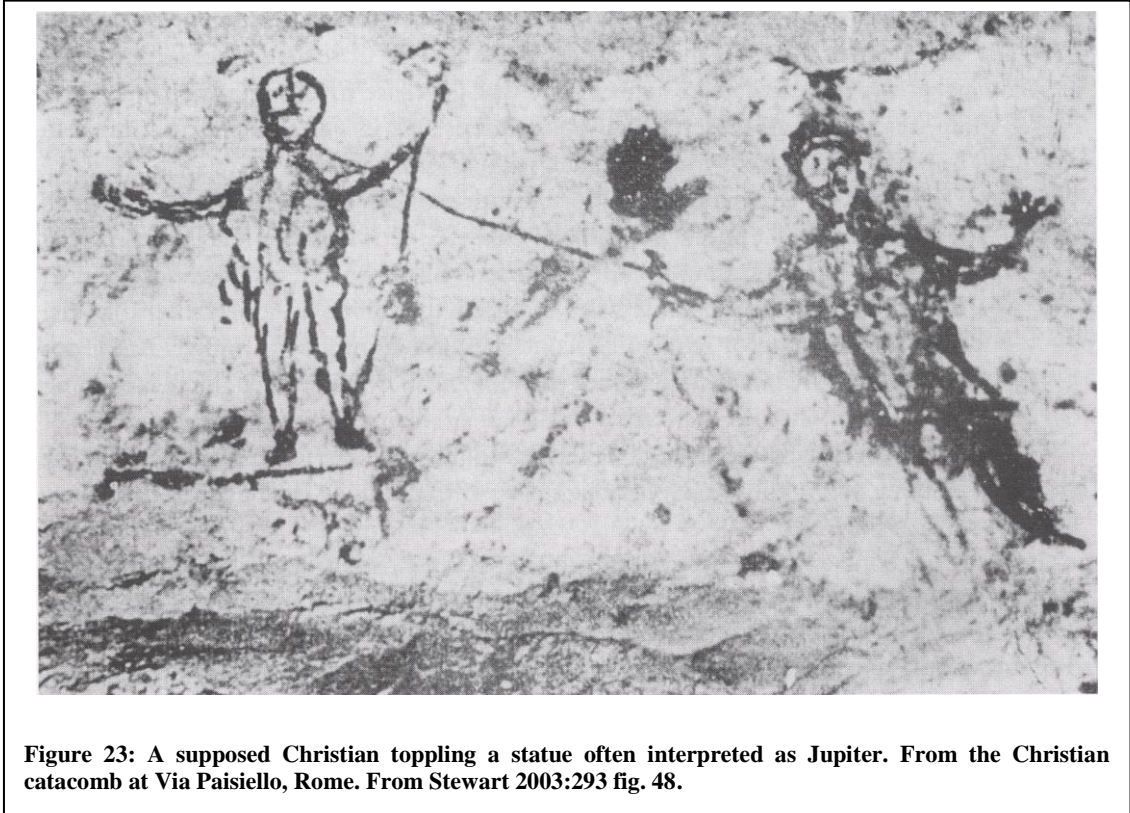


Figure 23: A supposed Christian toppling a statue often interpreted as Jupiter. From the Christian catacomb at Via Paisiello, Rome. From Stewart 2003:293 fig. 48.

8. A common *habitus* of memory sanctions?

As seen in Chapter 7, it is possible to observe likenesses in the damage inflicted to Mithraic images compared to the imperial portraits chosen for this study. This implies some sort of connection between the two groups of material. The information extracted from the analysis in Chapter 7 will be further explored and set in a larger context in this chapter; first within the defined categories of analysis, and thereafter by relating the results to the theoretical framework presented above in Chapter 4.

8.1 Memory sanctions in Mithraic contexts

Category A damages can be interpreted as direct proxies for *poena post mortem* practiced in political contexts in the Roman society. As we have seen were several public persons thrown in the Tiber or other bodies of water. The finding of a cluster of Caligula portrait heads in the Tiber (amongst them D2, D3, D4) suggests a direct proxy in the preferred treatment of the damned person and his portraits. The disposal of bodies in water was according to Varner (2001:59) intended to publicly deny proper burial and remove the polluted body from society. Further were portraits of disgraced emperors disposed of as effigies, when the actual corpse was not available. In the tradition of *poena post mortem* are the deposits of the corpses seen to be combined with posthumous corpse abuse and mutilation. This combination is also seen in the archaeological material under investigation.

The category A damaged portraits and the Mithraic images have in most cases also received other types of damages, most often category B mutilation and/or decapitation. This suggests that the refuse disposal was not the most important action, but served as an additional symbolic punishment and further degradation. The motive would not be to simply hide the image from sight, especially not in Mithraic contexts. Mithraea were not open to the public, and were probably well hidden also after they fell out of use. The motive for disposal of Mithraic images would thus not be to stop displaying provoking pagan images, but to serve a symbolic purpose.

More often than not, it is the heads which have been removed from their context and disposed of. There was probably an additional purifying aspect to the disposals as well. By throwing the images of an unwanted god or person in the river or another body of water, one could purify the area of his or her presence. This is a possible explanation for the deposit of the Entrains reliefs (M1-M4), which were found without heads or bodies on the riverbed.

Disposal of mutilated objects are in my opinion a way of extending decapitation and, most importantly would depositing the head elsewhere render it impossible to reconstruct a broken image, and further, reinstate the identity of the person, or god, inhabiting in the image. Without the identity bearing parts of the image it had no purpose. Without them, the images had no power to communicate and serve as effigies for the person or god (Freedberg 1989:259; Varner 2001:47).

Category B damages are as mentioned the most evident form of sanctions against images, and also the most expressive. A pattern of missing heads is visible in the Mithraic reliefs. Reliefs are more certain sources to these types of damage, especially decapitations. While statue heads are generally vulnerable to accidental decapitation is the chance for reliefs to suffer accidental decapitation far less than for instance statues in the round. The large number of Mithraic objects presenting category B damages indicates that the focus on the head and face as identity bearers has been important also in the religious sphere.

The imperial portraits were regarded as manifestations of the Emperor, and in the context of the imperial cult they would also function as cult images (Jacobs 2010:288). To some degree, the liminal position of the imperial portrait as cult image in the imperial cult does show that they also functioned as vessels for the god's identity. This is visible in the material represented in this study. On several of the Mithraic images are the head of Mithras and/or other main figures missing, while the remaining parts of the image are seemingly intact. In my opinion, this demonstrates a deliberate focus on removing the identity bearing parts of the image, while in the same time leave the narrative of the image recognizable. It was not the intention to remove all signs of worship or obliterate the cult image, but by removing the identity-bearing features of the god to express *infamia* and *iniuria*, and thus sanction the memory of the defeated god in a symbolic *poena post mortem*.

Most of the objects having category B damages do also present damages from additional categories, most prominently category A, as mentioned above. This combination of damage is in, my opinion, the strongest indicator of deliberate damage, as the deposit of the whole or a part of an already damaged image. This would serve as a further reinforcement, amplifying the message one wished to send by mutilating the image in the first place. This tendency is also present when there is a combination of category B and D damages, such as in the large Mithraic cult reliefs (M5, M7, M8 and M18). These large and heavy reliefs have first been toppled, a process which probably would have been a complicated and risky operation in

itself, taking the size alone into consideration. After being toppled, they have been further mutilated, and it seems like the heads have been specially targeted even here. This cannot be directly compared to the Severan reliefs, which have been displayed even after the removal of the targeted person. A parallel can however be seen in the Caligula *togatus* (D5), which has damage originating from a possible toppling as well as marks from an attempt of decapitation. This demonstrates that the practice of further mutilation of the image after toppling was practiced in the political sphere as well.

Category C consists of the perhaps *most* apparent form of memory sanctions as well as the *least* clear form. Graffiti on the two examples in this study (D13 and M17) are clear examples of a conqueror marking the images of the conquered. The filled mithraea of Santa Maria Capua Vetere (M19) and Santa Prisca (M20) are serving as more ambiguous examples of memory sanctions. While appropriation of physical space in this form, by filling the building with debris and using it as is well documented in political contexts, like that of the re-use of Nero's Domus Aurea, the motives behind the filling of the mithraea is uncertain. A comparison of the methods used and the post-abandonment use of the area render it likely that the motives have been to leave the area unusable for Mithraist congregations. By using the mithraea as foundations for Christian churches, the victory of Christianity would be further emphasized. Transformations of pagan spaces into Christian churches are examples of a well known phenomenon in the Late Roman and Early Medieval periods, and they are powerful symbolizations of the Christian religious conquest. Unlike most pagan temples, mithraea were not directly transformable into churches. Because of their small size and characteristic furnishing, other buildings would be deemed more favorable for Christian use, and the use of filling we see in the mithraea would be a subtler approach, which would send the message to the conquered party just as strongly. What would be more degrading to the Mithraic congregation than the conquerors building their house of worship and using the Mithraic cult space as foundations?

Category D damage has already been mentioned, and it has been established that toppling is more evident when combined with other types of damage – most often category B damage. Although cases of toppling can be difficult to document by studying the images themselves, we know that it has been a common way of sanctioning images. Toppling is the type of memory sanctions best documented by secondary sources, both in written sources like the vivid descriptions of toppling by Cassius Dio, as well as visually in the paintings in the catacomb on the Via Paisiello in Rome (figure 21). Toppled secular statues are often hard to

identify, because statues are most frequently not preserved *in situ* either toppled or not. It is also hard to distinguish accidentally fallen statues from deliberately toppled ones, although not impossible. The toppled Mithraic reliefs are easier to identify, as they have originally been clamped to the wall (M5, M18) or pivoted in a frame (M7, M8) and have clear signs of being forcefully removed from these.

Summary

As seen above, the likenesses in the damaged Mithraic images represented in this study do reflect the damage inflicted to the imperial images to a high degree in all four categories. Following the research hypothesis, this would indicate that they are forms of memory sanctions against the Mithraic images. Answers to the questions of who performed the memory sanctions and why are not answered by looking at the damages alone. To try and answer them, we must look at the mechanisms and motives behind memory sanctions in political contexts and examine if these are transferrable to the religious sphere.

8.2 A common habitus of memory sanctions?

In the present study I have tried to demonstrate that there are likenesses in damage done to Mithraic images and images of imperial origin. Following Bourdieu's theory of practice, this implies that motives and mechanisms behind the damage to the two groups of material are the same. As mentioned, there is discord amongst scholars investigating Mithraism about the nature of the damage inflicted on most of the Mithraic images represented in this study. In my opinion, studying memory sanctions in a political context and comparing the damage inflicted and methods used when inflicting them will contribute to knowledge of the fate of these images, and the *motive* that resulted in their damage or destruction. Damaging a ruler's portraits or other images strongly related to him (for instance Domitian's cuirass, D16) is an effective way of visual communication. Destruction of the fallen ruler's images communicate the new regime's victory, and participation in mutilation of images (and if possible, corpses) proclaim dissatisfaction with the fallen and condemned ruler and loyalty to the new regime. Defacement of portraits was thus intended to violate or obliterate the memory of the condemned and to negate an afterlife in the collective memory, in the same way as denial of proper burial inverted the normal cultural practice (Varner 2001:60). This way of punishing a defeated ruler is in my opinion transferrable to the religious sphere in general, and to Mithraic images specifically.

One of the key misconceptions about sanctions against religious images is that of mindless violence. As pointed out by Stewart (2003:284-285), studies of violence in Antiquity are based on the observation of modern case-studies which are set in a broader understanding of the workings of modern society than what we can acquire for Antiquity. This has led to an understanding of collective behavior in the Roman period as mindless and irrational violence (Killian and Turner 1957:16-19, 157-161) and chaotic outbursts of hate (Hannestad 1994:18 n.19). In my opinion, it is a misconception that religiously motivated riots is the background of destruction and mutilation of religious images. The likeness in damage between the two groups of images presented in this study contradicts these perceptions. Neither mindless and irrational violence against a fallen emperor's portraits nor chaotic outbursts of hate when a Christian discover a mithraeum would produce the same type of damage again and again. If that were the case, it would neither be conducted in such subtle ways as have been demonstrated by the images who have only suffered damage to the identity bearing parts, nor be as elaborate and demanding as the destruction of the large Mithraic cult reliefs, which would require a great degree of planning ahead of the destruction.

It is important to note that some degree of spontaneity would occur, a notion supported by Bourdieu (1990b:53-54), but we must consider that an established pattern of how to react in these situations existed. There are several accounts of so-called "statue riots" in Roman history, the most famous being the statue riot of Antioch, where the images of emperor Theodosius were toppled by a crowd (Lib.*Ora.*22.7.). These incidents were however described retrospectively, and the idea of deliberate and thoughtful destruction of the Emperor's images would have more serious implications than simply blaming the mindless crowd (Stewart 2003:290). The passage from Libanius shows that even though the actions were said to be spontaneous, there was no random pattern of reaction against the emperor's images. The images were toppled, an action well known from the toolbox of *damnatio memoriae*.

The portrait of Nero which has been inscribed with the phrase *VICTO* (D13) demonstrates an essential motive for damaging sculpture. The phrase, meaning "to the defeated", illustrates the motive for the act of *damnatio* against sculpture, namely marking the fall of the past regime and the superiority of the following. In my opinion, the history of Roman statue-destruction, and its historical parallels, demonstrates a norm of violence against images following the fall of a ruler or threats to the ruling regime (Stewart 2003:269). While this violence was a way for the new regime to accentuate its success, it was not necessarily given direct order from the

top. It is however written in the *Codex Theodosianus* that: "if there should be any temples in the country districts, they shall be torn down without disturbance or tumult. For when they are torn down and removed, the material basis for all superstition will be destroyed" (*Cod.Theod.*16.10.16). The law, written in 399, clearly demonstrates a belief in the method of sanctioning physical objects. The last sentence indicates an awareness of the connection between the (here: pagan) religion and the physical objects representing it. It is not, however, thoughtless and mindless violence that is described, but the goal of sanctioning the already subjugated pagan religion by the means of memory sanctions.

According to Bourdieu (1990b:53-54), a *habitus* is orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor, and is not a product of obedience to rules. The set of structured, structuring dispositions which are the *habitus* will, over time, regulate and guarantee the correctness of a practice. It is a product of a history of practice, and produces and enforces individual and collective practices – perceptions, thoughts and actions – over time. This is in my opinion the core of the practice of memory sanctions. Memory sanctions are as mentioned in Chapter 4.3 described as deliberately designed strategies that aim to change the picture of the past through erasure or redefinition, to protect the memory space of the community and label potential threats (Flower 2006:6; Varner 2001:46). With other words, a set of informal schemes of perception, thought and action (*habitus*) exists for protecting the memory space, and sanction the threats to it. While this is especially visible in the political sphere of society, through vivid descriptions in literary sources and the rich corpus of damaged imperial portraits, it is not a practice confined to political *damnationes*. Representatives for one religion sanctioning the images of another religion are parts of the same *habitus*. This can be seen in the likeness of treatment of the images represented in this study, both religious and political. As seen above in Chapter 7, there are likenesses between the two types of material in all four categories of damage. This tendency of resemblance supports the notions laid out by Bourdieu that likeness in practice within the same *field* indicates a likeness in the *habitus*. The traditions of *damnatio* and iconoclasm belong to the same *field*, as they are both parts of the Roman Empire, and also being practiced within the same chronological framework. The *practice* is also the same – the same damage to the same parts of the images presents itself in the analysis of the material. Practice is produced by *habitus*, which as a structuring structure reproduces practices and ensures active presence of past experiences and the perseverance of the practice over time (Bourdieu 1990b:54). Thus,

when within the same *field* the same *practice* becomes evident in the material, and a shared *habitus* will be present.

The results of the analysis in the present study show that there is continuity over time in the methods used for sanctioning images as a way of sanctioning the portrayed. This continuity persists from the early Imperial period and into the late Roman period, the period where the Christian religion came to dominate. A general conception is that the transition to a new religion represented a break in the visual expression and perceiving of art. Prusac (2011:59-60) on the other hand, argues that the “new” visual expressions were based on the earlier, and even though the field of expression became more heterogeneous, this was more as a result of a change of technique rather than a change in ideology. We must thus see them as a continuation rather than a break. These arguments reflect those presented in this study. Where it has been assumed that there is another set of sanctions and motives behind damaging and destroying religious images (e.g. Sauer 2003:46), I argue that the sanctions used by the Christians against pagan images were the same sanctions used before the transition to Christianity in the Roman Empire. We know them from the political sphere, as sanctions against unwanted and defeated individuals, but the likeness in the types of damage inflicted to the Mithraic images show that there was a likeness in the methods used, and further the thoughts and motives that underlie the destruction of the images.

Some scholars have asked the questions central to this study: were cult images really so different from secular images? Did the practice of *damnatio* have no bearing on Christian iconoclasm? (Stewart 2003:291). The similarity between *damnatio* and iconoclasm is evident, as shown in the material presented by this study. In my opinion, the difference is embedded in the research tradition: archaeologists and art historians have studied imperial portraits, while damage to religious images has been studied as a part of the field of Church history and the rise and development of Christianity in the Late Roman period. In addition has it been argued that a general ‘pacification’ of the past in historical research in the last fifty years is the reason that cultural changes in prehistory are seldom interpreted as being results of invasions and violence, and that the importance of violence in the process of social change has been downplayed as a result of this. (Sauer 2003:16). Sauer’s argumentation is in my opinion a bit exaggerated, but he may have a point when he argues that it has been a tendency to show interest in a damaged image only insofar as it poses a challenge of restoring it (Sauer 2003:17). When interest in these images has been taken, especially when dealing with damaged religious images, it has challenged our understanding of the nature of these damages

that there is a tradition for researching secular and religious images separately. Peter Stewart (2003, 2008) has helped to enlighten some of these problems, and the focus of late on the social aspects of Roman art and archaeology will hopefully lead to a greater awareness of the likenesses between religious and secular images and how they were perceived by the society that created, used and ultimately destroyed them.

8.3 Concluding remarks and future prospects

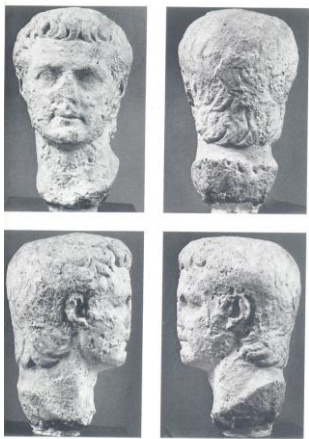
The aim of this study has been to shed light on the fate of damaged and destroyed Mithraic images. There are still many unanswered questions surrounding Mithraism that archaeology may help answer in the future, and the violent end of many of its cult images is one of the questions that has received a great deal of attention lately. In my opinion, the methods which have been applied in this study may help answer some of the questions regarding the fate of the Mithraic images, and also other damaged religious images with ambiguous provenience. By comparing them to images that are recognized as victims of memory sanctions, it has been established that the Mithraic images represented in this study have been victim to the same type of sanctions as the secular images represented in the comparative material. Following Bourdieu's theories of *habitus*, this would suggest a common vocabulary of memory sanctions in use in the Roman Empire, in both religious and secular spheres. As observed in the political sphere, memory sanctions were first and foremost used as sanctions in the event of the fall of a regime or ruler and the rise of a new, as a way of distinguishing oneself from the predecessor, and secure himself as a better ruler in the Roman memory world. The results of the present analysis suggest that this was case also in the religious sphere, where the followers of one religion would sanction the followers of another religion in the same way.

This study is focusing on a small selection of damaged images consisting of chosen examples mainly consisting of imperial portraits and images originating from the cult of Mithras. As seen from the types of damage inflicted to the images were the motives of the sanctions not necessarily to obliterate the sanctioned individual or god from the memory world, but rather to change how they were perceived. By using specific methods to sanction the images without obliterating them, would an observer identify the status of the sanctioned person, or god, as negative and conquered. Following the rise of the Christian autocracy in the Roman Empire, the methods which had been used successfully to sanction political enemies and predecessors in the entire history of the Empire would in my opinion be effective ways to accentuate the victory of the Christian religion over the pagan ones. As mentioned in Chapter 3, it has been argued that Mithraism was one of the main adversaries of early Christianity. While it is my



opinion that this relationship has been somewhat overvalued traditionally, the results from the present analysis suggest that there the motive behind damaging the Mithraic images was to demonstrate the transition from paganism to Christianity in the Roman world, and to demonstrate the power of Christianity over the conquered religions, Mithraism included.

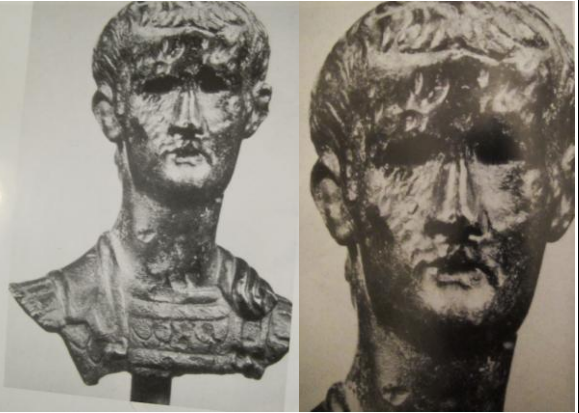

Studies on memory sanctions have generally been focused on political memory sanctions only. By conducting this study, I hope that our perspective on memory sanctions has been widened and that as a consequence of this, further and more comprehensive studies of memory sanctions will be conducted in the future, in order to shed light on this practice in a wider context.


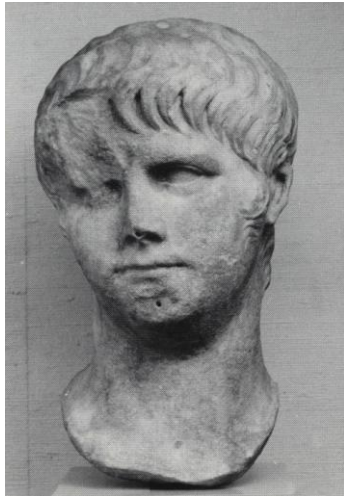
Appendix I: Emperors: portraits and related material



Cat. Nr	Subject	Provenience	Type(s) of destruction*	Description	Illustration(s)	Source/reference
D1	Caligula	Tharsis / Museo Provincial, Huelva, Spain	A B	Portrait head worked in marble. Found immersed in a Roman well. Corroded surfaces. In addition there is damage to nose and ears.		Varner 1993:21-22; Varner 2004:38-39 Illustration: Boschung 1989:kat. 16



*The types of destruction are deliberated in Table 2


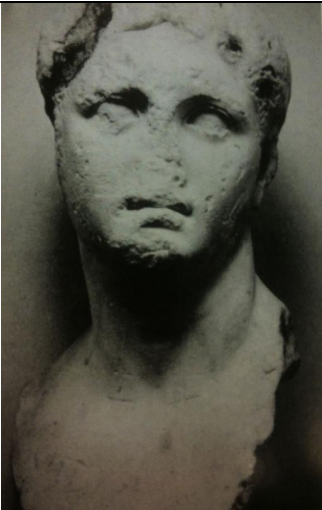
D2	Caligula	Rome / Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection, New York	A	One of four miniature busts discovered together in the Tiber. The miniatures depict the emperor bare-chested with a <i>paludamentum</i> .		Varner 2004:39 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 35
D3	Caligula	Rome / Brooklyn Art Museum, New York	A	One of four miniature busts discovered together in the Tiber. The miniatures depict the emperor bare-chested with a <i>paludamentum</i> . In addition, this one is mounted atop a bronze globe.		Varner 1993:29 Illustration: Varner 2004: fig.31



D4	Caligula	Rome (?) / Private collection, Zürich, Switzerland	A B	One of four miniature busts discovered together in the Tiber. This one has additional damage; the eyes are gouged out, and there are several visible blows to the face.		Varner 1993:29-30, 46 Illustration: Varner 2003:fig.2a-b
D5	Caligula	Unknown provenience / Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond	D (B)	A whole figure <i>togatus</i> of Caligula. It has small damages to ears, nose and chin, and in addition small scratches scattered around the surface of the face. These and other small damages are confined to the front of the statue, suggesting toppling. There is also a deep gauge in the area bordering the toga.		Varner 1993:18 Illustration: Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond: http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/


D6	Caligula	Unknown provenience / Museo Civico, Trieste	D	A bust head. The brows are chipped, part of the nose is missing, the lips scratched and there are chips to the surfaces of the rest of the face and the neck. These damages are confined to the front, suggesting toppling.		Varner 1993:18-19 Illustration: Boschung 1989:kat.9
D7	Nero	Unknown provenience (Rome?) / Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo	A	A child portrait bust head, worked for insertion. Corrosion suggests immersion in water.		Bergmann and Zanker 1981:331-332; Sande 1991:48-50; Varner 1993:86 Illustration: Sande 1991:Plate XXXV


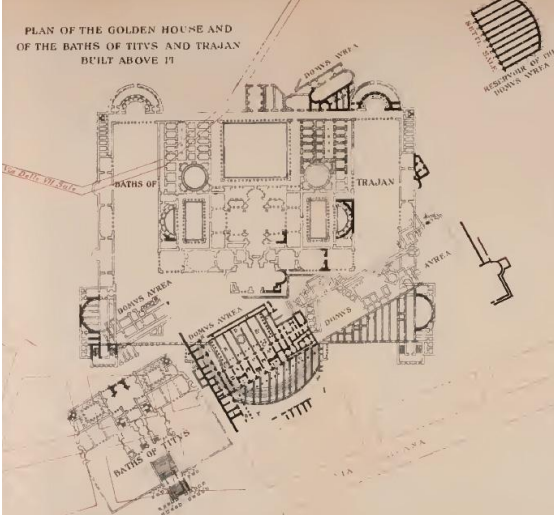
D8	Nero(?)	Alde / British Museum, London	A	Portrait head worked in bronze, found immersed in the river Alde.		<p>Varner 1993:92 Illustration: Stewart 2008:fig.19</p>
D9	Geta	Rome/ Palazzo Sachetti, Rome	B	Relief probably celebrating the joint consulship of Caracalla and Geta in AD 205. The head of Geta is removed, and no attempts of hiding it have been made.		<p>Varner 1993:375-376 Illustration Varner 2004: fig.183</p>



D10	Comm- odus	Ostia / Vatican Museums	B	Portrait bust. The left brow and eye, nose, mouth and parts of the coiffure are damaged, but restored.		Varner 2004: 138 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 137
D11	Commo dus	Unknown provenience / Philippi Museum	B	A marble portrait, which sustained damage to the forehead, brows, eyes, nose and mouth. The two latter are almost entirely obliterated. The other surfaces of the head are well preserved and undamaged.		Varner 2004:138- 139 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 138


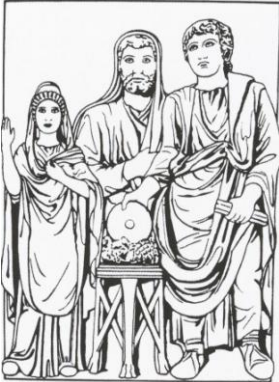
D12	Geta	Unknown provenience / Florence, Villa del Poggio Imperale	B	A full length oversized portrait statue. Severe damage confined to the facial features: the upper brow; most of the left eye and cheek; nose; mouth; chin and part of the laurel crown are missing. The remainder of the statue is well preserved.		Varner 2004: 170-171 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 165a-b
D13	Nero	Cagliari, Museo Archeologico	B C	A portrait head. Damage to the face and sensory organs. In addition, there are two X's carved into the clavicles, and the phrase <i>VICTO</i> carved on the right breast.		Varner 1993:137; Varner 2004:49-50 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 42



D14	Macrinus / Diadumenianus	Bonn, Rheinisches Landesmuseum	B	<p>A cameo with facing likenesses. The face of Diadumenianus is almost entirely chipped away. The features of Macrinus have also been damaged; the brow, eye and nose are missing. The cameo is one of only a few deliberately defaced gem portraits found.</p>		<p>Varner 2004: 186-187 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 191</p>
D15	Macrinus	Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard Museums	B	<p>A portrait of Macrinus. One of only four remaining marble images of him, all of which are mutilated.</p>		<p>Varner 2001:53-54 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 189a</p>

D16	Domitian	The Art Museum, Princeton University	B	<p>A cuirassed torso, with a relief depicting two Victories crowning a trophy. In addition to the head missing from the torso, the heads of the two Victories have also been removed.</p>			<p>Varner 2004: 114 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 109</p>
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D17	Geta	Fayum / Berlin Staatliche Museen	B	<p>A painted tondo depicting Septimius Severus, Julia Domna, Caracalla and Geta. The facial features of Geta have been completely erased.</p>		<p>Varner 2004:181- 182) Illustration: Varner 2001: fig. 187</p>
D18	Nero / Domus Aurea	Rome	C	<p>Nero's famous grand palace, which was partly demolished and replaced with other buildings, and partly reused and incorporated into other buildings.</p>		<p>Varner 2004:77-78 Illustration: Lanciani 1897: fig.138</p>

D19	Domitian	Castel Gandolfo, Antiquario	B	<p>Part of a relief. Preserved are the upper parts of a cuirassed torso. The facial features are obliterated, the marks of the chisel being very distinct. Identified as Domitian on the background of preserved part of the coiffure.</p>		<p>Varner 2004:113 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 108</p>
D20	Geta / Plautianus	Arch of Septimius Severus / Rome	B	<p>The so-called <i>submission scene</i>. The only figure to entirely have lost its head is the figure behind that of Septimius Severus. Damage to neck, surface roughened and iron dowel inserted for replacement of the head. Interpreted as both Geta and Plautianus.</p>		<p>Bonanno 1977:144; Brilliant 1963:207, 256; Varner 1993:355-356 Illustration: Brilliant 1963: Plate 80b</p>



D21	Plautan- ius / Plautilla / Geta	Arch of the Argentarii, Rome	B	<p>Interior western panel: Out of three initial figures in the scene only one is left, namely Caracalla. The two others, interpreted as Plautianus and Plautilla, are removed. The surface is here raised and roughened. Interior eastern panel: Out of three initial figures in the scene, two are left, namely Septimius Severus and Julia Domnia. The other, interpreted as Geta, is removed. The empty space has been re-carved to hide the removal. Southern façade: A series of <i>signa</i>, where the likenesses of Geta have been removed from a series of busts. These are not re-carved.</p>	 	<p>Bonanno 1976:148; Varner 1993:353, 2004:177- 178 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 158,159</p>
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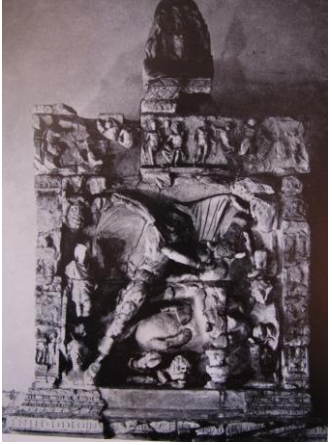
D22	Geta	Arch of Septimius Severus, Lepcis Magna (modern Libya)	B (A)	<p>Geta's head removed from at least six panels, amongst them the four principal panels. From two of them, his head has been found broken off separate from the rest of the relief. The head from the <i>dextrarum iunctio</i> scene has possibly been deposited.</p>		<p>Bonanno 1976:152-153; Varner 1993:378-379, 2004:178-181 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 184a-184b</p>
D23	Geta	Palazzo Sacchetti, Rome	B	<p>Historical relief probably celebrating the consulship of Geta and Caracalla in AD 205. The head of Geta has been removed, and it has not been replaced or reworked as to hide the removal.</p>		<p>Varner 1993:375-376 Illustration: Varner 2004:fig. 183</p>


Appendix II: Mithraic cult images and mithraea


Cat. nr	CIMRM nr	Subject	Location	Type(s) of destruction*	Description	Illustration(s)	Source/reference
M1	942	Sol Invictus / Luna	Entrains-sur-Nohain / Museum at St. Germain-en-Laye	A B	The relief depicts Sol Invictus in a chariot, a clothed figure; probably Luna, and also a krater and a snake. The relief is identified as Mithraic on the basis of the two latter, together with the context of the find. Both figures have lost their heads.		Walters 1974:96- 97 Illustration: Walters 1974: Plate XII



*The types of destruction are deliberated in Table 2



M2	943	Mithras Bullslayer	Entrains-sur-Nohain / Museum at St. Germain-en-Laye	A B	The relief depicts Mithras slaying the bull. The stone is somewhat corroded from the immersion, and the head of the god is missing.		Walters 1974:97 Illustration: Walters 1974:Plate XIII
M3	-	Sol Invictus Mithras Bullslayer	Entrains-sur-Nohain / Museum at St. Germain-en-Laye	A B	Upper left part of a relief, depicting Sol Invictus and Mithras. Sol's head (left) is mutilated, and Mithras' head is missing, together with his arms and greater part of his legs. Identified as Bullslayer from the tip of the bull's tail between Sol and Mithras.		Walters 1974:98 Illustration: Walters 1974:Plate XIV



M4	-	Three deities, associated with Mithras.	Entrains-sur-Nohain / Museum at St. Germain-en-Laye	A B	<p>Three small stone heads, found at Entrains, at the same site as the Mithraic stone reliefs.</p> <p>The corresponding bodies were not found.</p>		<p>Walters 1974:101</p> <p>Illustration: Walters 1974:Plate XV-XVI</p>
M5	966	Mithras Bullslayer	Sarrebouurg (Pons Saravi) / Museum at Metz	B D	<p>The main cult relief from the mithraeum at Sarrebouurg (Pons Saravi), originally clamped to the back wall of the mithraeum. A central scene depicting the tauroctony, and surrounding it are smaller panels with other Mithraic scenes. Mithras' head is missing from the central scene</p> <p>The large relief has been toppled and probably further fragmented throughout the space of the mithraeum.</p>		<p>Walters 1974:101-105; Sauer 2003: 82-83</p> <p>Illustration: Vermaseren 1956: fig 236</p>


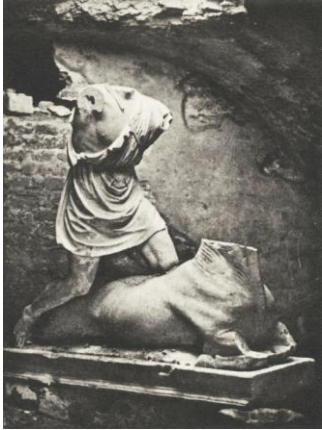
M6	967-975	Fragments of sculpture	Sarrebourg (Pons Saravi) / Museum at Metz	B (D)	Fragments and parts of broken sculpture, found scattered throughout the Sarrebourg mithraeum. Several are headless, or the heads are found separated at some distance.	-	Walters 1974:105-108, Sauer 2003: 82-83.
M7	1137	Mithras Bullslayer / Sol Invictus/Sacred meal	Rückingen	A B D	Double sided relief cult image made to revolve in a frame. The front depicts the tauroctony, and the back shows the sacred meal shared between Mithras and Sol Invictus. Smaller panels featuring other Mithraic motives surround the main motive on both sides. The relief has been forced of its anchorage, and the heads on both main motives are missing. The rest of the motives are relatively well preserved. The relief was found deposited in a pit.		Sauer 1996:46; Sauer 2003:34-37; Vermaseren 1960:80 Illustration: Sauer 2003:plate 19-20



M8	1247	Mithraic hunting scene/ Phaeton	Dieburg	B D	<p>Double sided relief cult image. The main motive is a hunting scene, surrounded by panels featuring other Mithraic motives. On the reverse is Phaeton addressing his father, the sun god. The relief was found broken in six pieces in the aisle of the mithraeum. When assembled, it is possible to see a deep wedge-shaped mark in the place where the hunting Mithras would have been. The head of the sun god on the reverse side is missing.</p>		<p>Behn 1926:685-688; Behn 1928: Illustration: Vermaseren 1956:fig 323-324</p>
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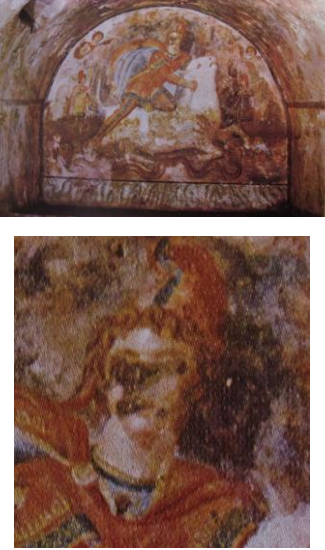
M9	1248	Mithras Rock- born	Dieburg	B A	A sculpture depicting Mithras born out of a rock, found in the mithraeum at Dieburg. The sculpture was found without a head, deposited in a pit within the temple.		Schwert- heim 1974:163 Illustratio- n: Behn 1928:29
M10	1249	Mithras Bowman	Dieburg	B A	A sculpture depicting Mithras as a bowman, found in the mithraeum at Dieburg. The sculpture was found without a head, deposited in a pit within the temple.		Schwert- heim 1974:163 Illustratio- n: Behn 1928:29


M11	1252	Hercules	Dieburg	B	A relief depicting Hercules, found in the mithraeum at Dieburg. The relief was found without a head.		Schwertheim 1974:164 Illustration: Behn 1928:31
M12	1259	Mithras bull carrier	Dieburg	B A	A relief depicting Mithras carrying the bull from the mithraeum in Dieburg. Fragments of the relief were found in a well outside the building. The part with the head was not found.		Schwertheim 1974:163 Illustration: Behn 1928:29

M13	1261	Juno (?)	Dieburg	B A	<p>A sculpture head and part of a torso, probably depicting Juno. The fragment was found deposited in a well outside the temple building. The rest of the sculpture was never found.</p>		<p>Schwert-heim 1974:166 Illustration: Sauer 2003:plate 15</p>
M14	1340	Mithras Rock-born	Königshoffen	B	<p>A sculpture depicting Mithras born from a rock. The head is missing.</p>		<p>Sauer 2003:84-85 Illustration: Forrer 1915:tafel XIX</p>

M15	1347	Cautopates/ Luna	Königshoffen	B	<p>An <i>aedicula</i> relief depicting the torchbearer Cautopates, and also the moon goddess Luna on the pediment. The torchbearer has lost his head, while Luna is intact.</p>		<p>Sauer 2003:84-85 Illustration: Forrer 1915:Tafel XV</p>
M16	230	Mithras bull- slayer	Ostia / Mitreo delle Terme del Mitra	B (A)	<p>A sculpture group of Mithras killing the bull. The head of both Mithras and the bull was found separate from the sculpture group, in a drain running along the western wall of the mithraeum.</p>		<p>Becatti 1954: 32 Illustration: Becatti 1954:Tavolo IV</p>

M17	-	Mithras bull- slayer	Doliche/Dülük	C B	The main cult relief is severely damaged with a sharp object. A Christian cross has been carved into the image at the exact spot where Mithras' head once have been.		Sauer 2003:63 Illustration: Schütte- Maischatz & Winter 2000:98 fig. 143
M18	1359	Mithras bull- slayer	Königshoffen	D B	The main cult relief from the mithraeum at Strasbourg/Königshoffen. It was found smashed into hundreds of pieces scattered throughout the mithraeum. The 360 identified ones constitute only a small part of the relief. Among the missing parts is Mithras' head.		Forrer 1915:59 Illustration: Sauer 2003:plate 43

M19	180 181	Mithras bull- slayer/ whole mithraeu m	Santa Maria Capua Vetera	(B) C	There is a t-shaped injury to Mithras' face in the painted main cult image. Nothing else in the mithraeum is damaged, but it has been filled with a mix of earth and debris some time after AD 330.		Vermase- ren 1971 Illustratio- n: Vermase- ren 1971:Plate III
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M20	483 479 476	Wall paintings/ stucco cult image/ whole mithraeu m	Santa Prisca	C (B)	<p>The mithraeum has been filled with a mix of earth and debris.</p> <p>On the wall paintings, eyes and faces of several figures, among them Mithras and Sol, are damaged.</p>		<p>Vermaseren and van Essen 1965:149, 241-242 Illustration: Sauer 2003:plate 63</p>
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Appendix III: List of Roman emperors in the West Empire until AD 476

Augustus	31 BC – AD 14	Gordian III	238 – 244
Tiberius	14 – 37	Philip the Arab	244 – 249
Caligula	37 – 41	Decius	249 – 251
Claudius	41 – 54	Trebonianus Gallus	251 – 253
Nero	54 – 68	Aemilius Aemilianus	253
Galba	68 – 69	Valerian	253 – 260
Otho	69	Gallienus	253 – 268
Vitellius	69	Claudius II	268 – 270
Vespasian	69 – 79	Quintillius	270
Titus	70 – 81	Aurelian	270 – 275
Domitian	81 – 96	Tacitus	275 – 276
Nerva	96 – 98	Florianus	276
Trajan	98 – 117	Probus	276 – 282
Hadrian	117 – 138	Carus	282 – 283
Antoninus Pius	138 – 161	Numerian	283 – 284
Marcus Aurelius	161 – 180	Carinus	283 – 285
Lucius Verus	161 – 169	Diocletian	284 – 305
Commodus	180 – 192	Maximinian	286 – 305, 307 – 308
Pertinax	193	Constantius I	305 – 306
Didius Julianus	193	Galerius	305 – 311
Septimius Severus	193 – 211	Severus II	306 – 307
Caracalla	211 – 217	Maxentius	306 – 312
Geta	211	Maximinus Daia	310 – 313
Macrinus	217 – 218	Licinius	308 – 324
Elagabalus	218 – 222	Constantine	306 – 337
Alexander Severus	222 – 235	Constantine II	337 – 340
Maximinus Thrax	235 – 238	Constans I	337 – 350
Gordian I	238	Constantius II	337 – 361
Gordian II	238	Julian	360 – 363
Pupienus and Balbinus	238	Jovian	363 – 364

Valens	364 – 378
Valentinian I	364 – 375
Gratian	367 – 383
Valentinian II	375 – 392
Eugenius	392 – 394
Theodosius I	379 – 395
Honorius	395 – 423
Johannes	423 – 425
Valentinian III	425 – 455
Petronius Maximus	455
Avitus	455 – 456
Majorian	457 – 461
Libius Severus	461 – 465
Anthemius	467 – 472
Glycerius	473 – 474
Julius Nepos	474 – 475
Romulus Augustulus	475 - 476

The list is taken from Marina Prusac (2011:129-130) *From Face to Face: Recarving of Roman Portraits and the Late-Antique Portrait Arts*. The list does not include emperors in the East Empire after the parting of the Roman Empire in AD 395.

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All abbreviations in in-text references are according to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2003).

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