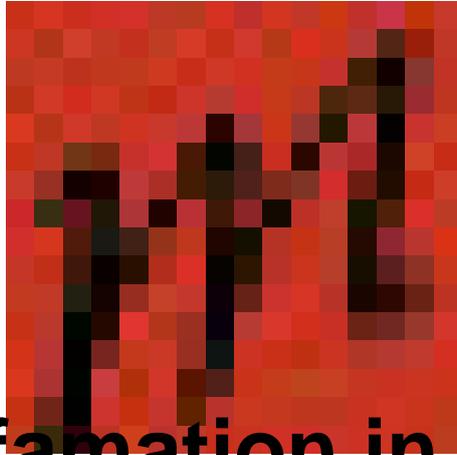


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XII.16 Defamation in the crime of lese-majesty

- The Spirit of Law - Book XII. On laws that constitute political liberty in its relation to the citizen -

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XII.16 Defamation in the crime of lese-majesty

We must give the cæsars their due : they were not the first to imagine the sorry laws they made. It was Sulla [1] who taught them that slanderers should not be punished ; soon they went so far as to reward them. [2]

[1] Sulla made a law of majesty, which is mentioned in Cicero's orations (*Pro Cluentio*, art. 3, *In Pisonem*, art. 21, second *In Verrem*, art. 5, *Epistolæ ad familiares*, book III, letter 11). Cæsar and Augustus inserted them into the Julian laws ; others added to them.

[2] *Et quo quis distinctior accusator eo magis honores assequatur, ac veluti Sacrosanctus erat* (Tacitus [*Annals*, book IV, ch. 36]).