

In this topic, we will explore the links between myth and portrayal of power. In the Greeks and Romans' world, myths were more than just stories. Myths stood as symbols of power that was used to define a civilisation, city, family or even an individual. When combined with architecture and sculpture they could stand as statements of power for those exhibiting them. For the Romans we examine Augustan Rome and its architecture and how it was used to project a particular image of power and heritage. We examine the Augustus of Prima Porta and the Ara Pacis in detail.

Fall of the Roman Republic

1	Emperor Augustus	Born in 63BC, his real name is Gaius Octavius Thurinus. He was from a Roman aristocratic upper-class family. He would be the first Emperor of Rome, following his defeat of all those associated with the Roman Republic.
2	Roman Republic	The Roman Republic was the original system of government in Rome, and throughout its empire. It was a democracy, but one where only male citizens could vote.
3	The Senate	Despite being a democracy, the Senate controlled much of what happened in Roman politics. It was elected but was dominated by the wealthy and upper-classes (Patricians).
4	The Consul	The Consul was the most influential figure in the Roman Republic. Elected for one year only, in order to stop anyone gaining too much power.
5	Julius Caesar	Julius Caesar effectively destroyed the Roman Republic by breaking many rules, such as being made Consul for life. Whilst he was never made Emperor he would effectively rule like one.
6	Julius Caesar Assassinated	Julius Caesar was assassinated by Roman Senators in 44BC, when he was stabbed twenty-three times when he arrived at the Senate. His death marks a major moment in Roman Republic with the end of the Republic and the start of the Roman Empire.
7	Civil War	Julius Caesar's death led to a power vacuum in Rome, and led to a civil war between those that had supported Caesar, and those that wanted to restore the Republic.
8	Caesar's Supporters	Caesar's supporters were led by Gaius Octavius Thurinus, known as Octavian, and Mark Anthony.
9	Julius Caesar's Heir	Julius Caesar was Octavian's great uncle. When Julius Caesar was assassinated, he surprisingly named Octavian as his heir and adopted son. From this point, he took the name Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus.
10	Republican Supporters	The Republic's supporters were led by Brutus and Cassius.
11	Octavian Triumphant	Octavian's army proved too powerful for the Senate and its supporters, and he demanded he be made consul, that Brutus and Cassius be declared enemies of the state, and that he would rule in a triumvirate with Mark Anthony and Marcus Lepidus.
12	Second Triumvirate	The Second Triumvirate of Octavian, Anthony, and Lepidus lasted ten years before it fell apart. Greed and jealousy soured the relationship. Lepidus was accused of inciting a revolt and exiled, but Mark Anthony was more tricky. It was his relationship with Cleopatra that proved decisive.
13	Battle of Actium	When Mark Anthony was in Egypt fighting the Parthians, Octavian looked at Mark Anthony's will held at the Temple of Vesta. It revealed that upon his death, he would leave his part of the Roman Empire to Cleopatra. This outraged Romans and Octavian went to war with him. He defeated him at the Battle of Actium in 31BC.
14	Emperor Caesar Augustus	With Mark Anthony defeated, Octavian became Emperor Augustus at the age of 33, with the name given to him by the Senate. It means venerable, esteemed, and respected.

Augustan Architecture

15	Four Aims of Augustan Architecture	Augustus had four clear aims in his sculpture and architecture. They are outlined below.
16	Aim 1: Golden Age of Architecture	Augustus saw fifth-century Greece as a high point in architectural and sculptural design. He was inspired by buildings like the Parthenon and sought to recreate these styles in his own sculpture and architecture.
17	Aim 2: Pax Romana	Pax Romana means <i>The Peace of Rome</i> and was key to Augustan Rome. The Battle of Actium marked the end of the internal fighting and civil wars. Augustus sought to promote himself as a bringer of peace.
18	Aim 3: Pax Deorum	Pax Deorum means <i>The Peace of the Gods</i> , was a key concept for Romans. If the Gods were appeased Rome would flourish, if they were angered Rome would suffer.
19	Aim 4: Self and Family Promotion	Although Augustus gave the impression of Rome being a republic, he certainly wanted and needed to promote his family. To do this he emphasised his family's links to the gods, while promoting future heirs.

The Augustus of Prima Porta

20	Origins	The Prima Porta was based on the Doryphorus (spear-bearer), sculpted by Polykleitos around 440BC. The sculpture was praised as a depiction of the ideal man, but this is not a direct copy. The Augustus of Prima Porta has been Romanised to promote the Augustan ideal.
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21	Projection of Power	The sculpture has been cleverly designed to project the Augustan ideal. This includes the clothing, the use of the right arm, the standard military flag, and the inclusion of gods.
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The Ara Pacis

22	The Ara Pacis	The Ara Pacis means <i>Altar of Peace</i> , and was commissioned by the Senate in 13BC to honour the return of Augustus from Hispania (modern day Spain) and Gaul (modern day France).
23	Location	It was located on the Field of Mars in Rome. A significant venue as it was where all political and military life in Rome took place. This includes all elections and where returning armies would settle.
24	The Altar	The altar itself was elaborately carved with scenes that related to the sacrifices that took place on it. The scene shows semi-nude slaves leading the sacrificial animals.
25	The Enclosure Wall	The altar was surrounded by an enclosure wall that was sculpted inside and out.
26	Western and Eastern Wall Sculpture	The western and eastern walls contained a doorway into the enclosure. The walls contained scenes that linked the Augustan family to the founding of Rome and Rome's important gods.
27	Northern and Southern Walls	These walls depicted the procession that took place to the Ara Pacis before the annual sacrifice. The northern and southern walls are stylistically similar to the frieze on the Parthenon that showed the Panathenaic Procession.
28	The North Frieze	The northern wall depicts senators and priests on the religious procession to the sacrifice. One carries a jug and an incense box, which were both used in the sacrifice. Others carry laurel leaves, which were common in sacrifices. The bottom of the frieze contained floral patterns.
29	The South Frieze	The southern frieze shows the imperial family on the far right. This includes Augustus' wife, Livia, his head general, Agrippa, and nephews, Lucius and Gaius Caesar, and Tiberius, Livia's son. The family are preceded by priests, identified by their caps.