

Architecture for Self-promotion by ธนยุรัตน์ ปังเส็ง

How Do the Romans Use Architecture for Self Promotion? (250 words)

The words of Augustus' Res gestae (things done) are incorporated into one of the walls of Richard Meier's Ara Pacis Museum. They provide a list of the emperor's accomplishments in war, peace, and architecture. One of the themes of lectures 9 and 10 ("[From Brick to Marble](#)" and "[Accessing Afterlife](#)") is that Roman patrons (emperors and freedmen alike) decorated buildings with portraits and narratives of their achievements. Using the Ara Pacis Augustae and the Tomb of the Baker as examples, discuss how and why Augustus and Eurysaces used architecture for self-promotion. Also keep in mind what that self-promotion focused on and the ways in which Augustus and Eurysaces presented themselves and their professions, wives, and families.

Diana Kleiner

Rubric:

This peer grading is worth 15% of the total grade.

Is the author's thesis clearly articulated and easy to identify?

Did the author construct a convincing argument around that theory?

Does the author use specific examples as evidence to support that argument?

Is the paper well organized, and does it include an effective introduction, a strong middle section, and a compelling conclusion?

Is the paper written in a clear way that is easy to follow?



Each of the criteria is worth 5 points, for a total of 25. However, it is impossible to score less than 5 with a submission of any sort. Written feedback is optional (in the form "What did the author do best and what would have made this assignment more successful?")

*Note that although there is a word limit of 250, it is possible to bypass it with a pdf submission, uploaded through a different course. However, there are only 250 words in the submission below.*

Architecture is one of History's most efficient tools when it comes to show and study the way in which certain civilizations lived. The Romans acknowledged this useful characteristic of architecture and took advantage of it, telling their story in the way they wanted it to be remembered.

The Ara Pacis Augustae is an excellent example: the monument itself, just for existing, praise the diplomatic ability of the Emperor Augustus and his ability to keep PEACE. The relief work on the exterior shows him, his family and important people of the Imperium, all of them sharing a space with mythological figures related to Rome's history, highlighting the relevance of Augustus in the history of Rome in that particular moment and in years to come. Even the placement of the monument was carefully orchestrated, to make sure that the Egyptian obelisk (symbol of the victory in Actium) was right in front of it, contributing to the narrative.

The Tomb of the Baker, even though it was a tomb for his wife, depicts in great detail the narrative of the family business in the highly detailed frieze, and the cylinders of the walls that are reminiscent of grain measures. Breadmaking was Eurysaces' job, so this monument was his own version of Augustus' Res Gestae, depicting his achievements and ways of managing the business.

In both of the monuments the objective was to get the story across in a way that the patrons wanted, to preserve their achievements for posterity in their own terms.

