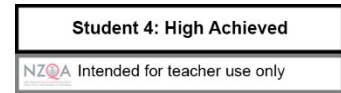


Ultimately, all of these structures acted as pieces of propaganda, used to promote a certain ideal of the Emperors who employed their use. Nancy and Andrew Ramage state in "Roman Art: Romulus to Constantine" that in the Empire "art and politics were intimately intertwined", and that the core of Roman art was not just art for art's sake, but was "monuments that recognized public service and buildings that met public needs." Leaders were aware of the power of art to convey their ideas, and often employed it to further their political ambitions, much like political advertising today, only on a grander scale.



2 By having monuments dedicated to themselves built, Emperors were allowed to present a certain ideal of themselves to the public, as there was no other form of media to show the people what their leader had achieved, or to give the people an image of their emperor.

In comparing these structures, we see a vast difference in the way the emperors wanted the public to view them. On the Arch of Titus, Titus is shown to be "glorified even above the victory who crowned him (Mortimer Wheeler – "Roman art and architecture") and defied. On Trajan's column he attempted to present himself as a great military general through showing off his conquest of the Dacians. This contrasts to the very human approach of Constantine on the Arch of Constantine, who, instead of appealing to the gods, appealed to past emperors in an attempt to associate himself with their great deeds, and to attach the population's sense of nostalgia for the golden age of Rome unto himself, and thus gain favor amongst them. On the Ara Pacis Augustae, we are led to believe that Augustus was on par with the founders of Rome, and founded a new age of fertility and prosperity. However, on every structure we see stock themes, which show of the emperor making a sacrifice. 1 This would have been due to the importance of being pious in ancient Rome, and would mean the populace would think more of their emperor. 2

A common theme that is evident on each of the structures is that of the battle between civilization, or the Romans, and barbarianism, or the non-Romans or in Ara Pacis Augustae's case the battle of peace over war.

3 Through portraying Rome's great military campaigns, they acted to ensure the Romans were aware of the great strength of Rome's army. This would allow for the Romans to feel safe and secure, and also would invoke a sense of pride and loyalty. This meant that they would be less likely to cause an uprising. An example of this is on the Arch of Constantine, where they show the Siege of Verona and the battle of Milivian Bridge. This shows how brutal the Romans could be to anyone who tries to defy them, and so would discourage any resistance against their empire. However, Ara Pacis Augustae went against the trend of directly showing this battle, and did not show any shows of violence, however implied that the war had been won, due to the peace it indicates throughout.

By showing off their architectural might, the Romans were able to both impress and intimidate the barbarians. These mega structures devoted many a scene to displaying Rome's military power through conquest of outsiders, such as the scene on Trajan's column where Dacian heads were displayed before the emperor. Due to these two factors barbarians were less likely to have an uprising, as they would have seen these structures, and believed that if they attacked, they too would have their heads presented to the emperor. 1 They would also

3 fear the military, as if Romans could design such giant structures simply for propaganda, then their military too would have been just as mighty as the structures themselves.

One common thread which connects all four structures was that they were all dedicated to the emperor by the Senate and "the people of Rome". This was stated specifically on the inscriptions on all but Ara Pacis Augustae, however we know from Augustus's writings in the Res Gestae that " ...the Senate decreed that there should be consecrated in the Field of Mars an altar to the Augustan Peace". 3 By having the Senate build these structures and dedicate them to the emperors shows that they supported the Emperors, and consequentially created an image of an solidarity with the powers of Rome. This would discourage anyone from thinking of rebellion, due to their organized unity.

Also, these structures were designed to flatter the emperors. All of them promote and showcase the Emperors great deeds, which would have complimented the Emperor, and thus would have gained the patron (who in these certain cases was the Senate) some favour (2). This meant that the Senate would have had more power, as they could sway the emperor with their influence. For example, the Senate ensured on the Arch of Constantine that there was a scene depicting Constantine making a sacrifice, which, on the Senate's part, was wishful thinking, as they wanted Constantine to follow the traditional gods. This subtle pressing into accepting ideas was common, as the Emperors would have been keen to return the favor after being complimented.