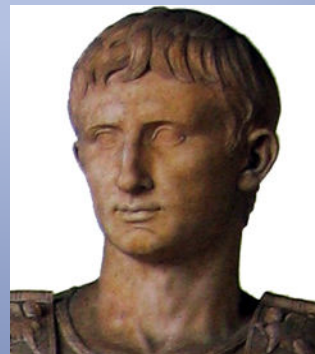


CLASSICAL SCULPTURE

Lesson 3. Roman sculpture

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1.



Augustus' wife: Livia



Figure 1. Denarius of 20 B.C.
Top: Augustus.
Inscription: R TVRPILIANVS III
VIR FERON
Right: Kneeling Parthian offering
the standards.
Inscription: CAESAR AVGVSTVS
SIGN RECE

(see reference 12 in bibliography)

Augustus of Prima Porta. Early 1st century AD
(marble) after a bronze of the 1st century B.C.

1. CATALOGUING

Title

Sculptor

Chronology

Material

Typology



WORD BANK:

Unknown,
Marble,
Carved, Statue
in the round

1. FORMAL DESCRIPTION

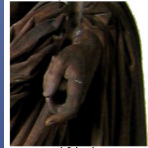
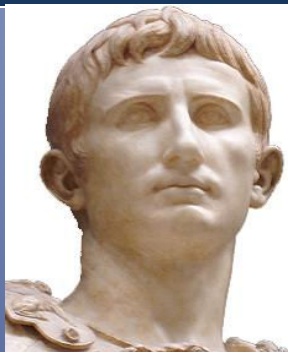
Composition

Treatment of forms: body, draperies...

Movement

Expressivity

Style



WORD BANK:

Balanced
Weight
Contrapposto
Naturalistic,
Armour, Cuirass or metal breastplate,
Tunic, Crumpled toga,
Reliefs
Arm, legs, limbs
Movement
Repose
Serenity
Idealisation
Portrait
Roman sculpture
Proportions
Joints, Hair, Face



Crumpled toga



Armour, Cuirass or metal breastplate



Reliefs

2. INTERPRETATION

Iconography is the branch of art history which studies the identification, description, and the interpretation of the content of images. The word *iconography* literally means "image writing", or painting, and comes from the Greek *εικον* (image) and *γραφειν* (to write).

Symbols are objects, characters, or other concrete representations of ideas, concepts, or other abstractions.

2.1. Read this text and relate the two columns in the grid below :

The statue of Augustus of Prima Porta depicts the youthful Augustus, the first Roman emperor, as a general of generals (cuirass) and as a civilian authority (toga), with a sceptre in his left hand and pointing the way to Rome's imperial future with his right arm.

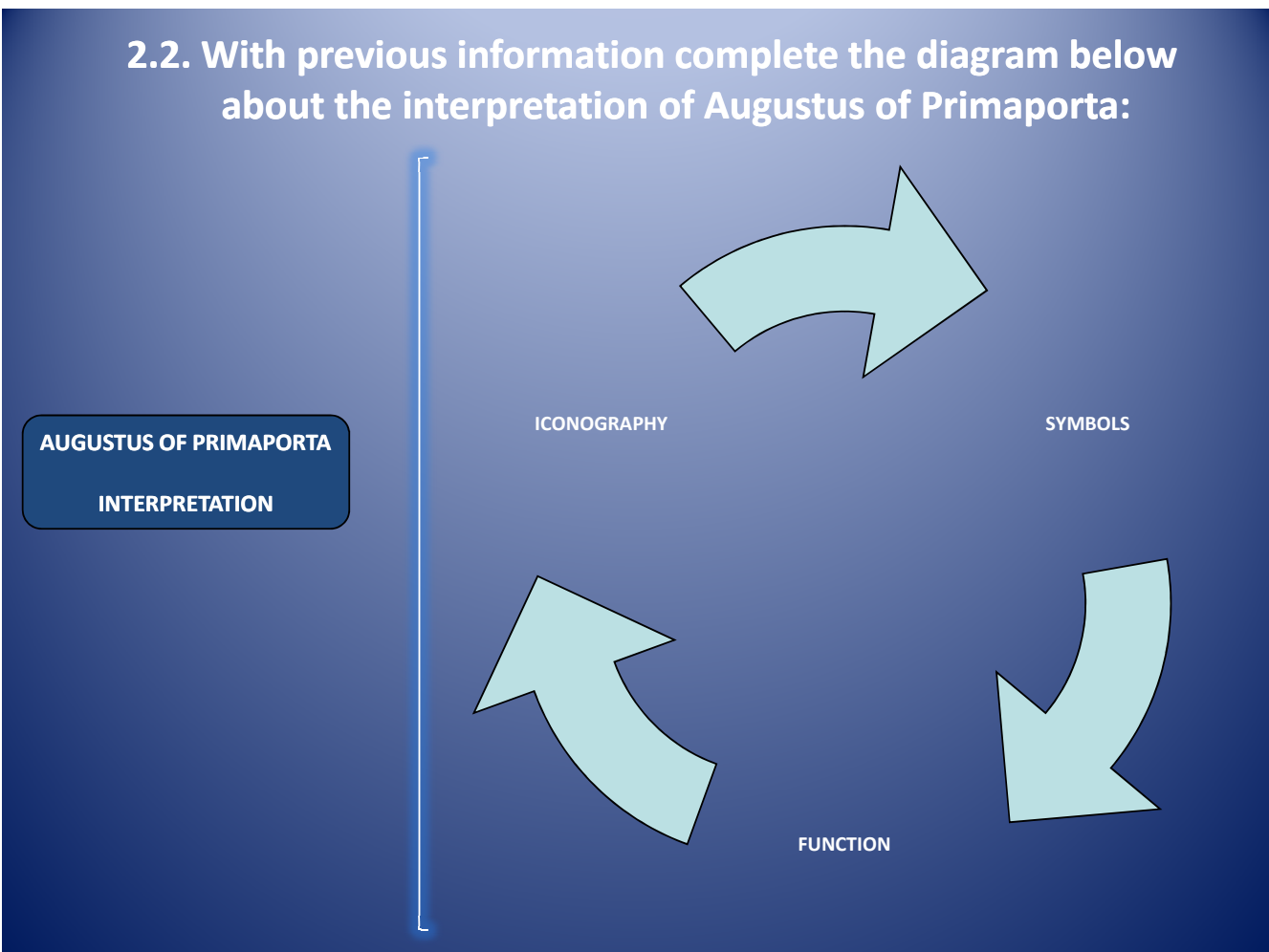
Specifically, the statue celebrates Augustus's recovery of Roman military standards lost in a battle some years ago. Augustus is depicted to be still and calm. There is little movement. Even on the breastplate (cuirass), there are no signs of battles or violence. This is in accord with the peaceful Augustan era where civil wars had finished.

Augustus is the representation of Roman virtues: youthful vigor, moral rectitude and confidence. It also expresses Rome's and Augustus's imperial dignity. Even Cupid's presence, at Augustus's side, is an allusion to his supposed descent from the goddess Venus (Cupid's mother).

Roman realism took an idealistic turn when Augustus created the Roman Empire in 27 B.C. so he modified his image and idealized it, making himself appear godlike. Augustus's propaganda was a big hit and the statue was so popular that it was copied at least 148 times, and in this sense this statue was a good example of the emperor's glorification.

ICONOGRAPHY	SYMBOL	Answer
1. Sceptre	a) descent from goddess Venus	1- b)
2. Still and calm	b) power and authority: emperor	2 -
3. Cupid	c) peaceful era	3 -
4. Cuirass	d) military authority	4 -
5. Toga	e) godlike appearance	5 -
6. Young appearance	f) vigor, confidence and rectitude	6 -
7. Idealization	g) civil authority, first citizen	7 -

2.2. With previous information complete the diagram below about the interpretation of Augustus of Primaporta:



3. ROMAN RELIEFS

ARA PACIS AUGUSTAE



TRAJAN'S COLUMN

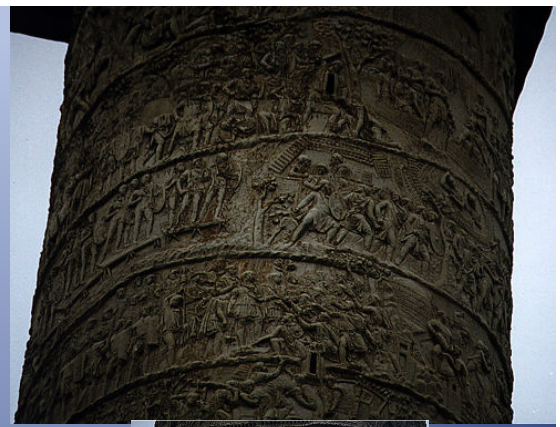
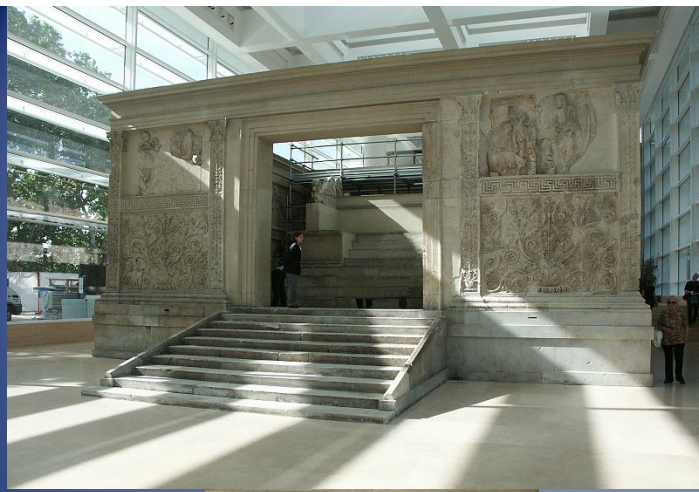


http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/Europe/Italy/Lazio/Roma/Rome/Ara_Pacis/home.html



http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/Europe/Italy/Lazio/Roma/Rome/Traians_Column/home.html





ARA PACIS AUGUSTAE

When the Roman emperor Augustus took over Rome after the civil wars at the end of the Roman Republic, he built a Altar of Peace (Ara Pacis in Latin), to show that the fighting was over. The Ara Pacis was consecrated in 9 B.C., the 30th of January.

The Ara Pacis, or Altar of Peace, is a Roman sacrificial altar enclosed in a screen of Parian marble beautifully carved in high relief with allegorical and ceremonial scenes ornamented with elegant plant motifs.

The frieze shows Augustus and Marcus Agrippa (on the left, with his head covered) and other authorities, leading a procession to dedicate the Altar of Peace and glorify Augustus' government. In many ways, this frieze is like the Parthenon frieze of four hundred years earlier, which also shows a procession.

A big obelisk was built near the Ara Pacis in a huge space and the tip of its shadow pointed out exactly the Ara Pacis the 23th of September, Augustus' birthday.

This artwork is not the only good example of a symbolic mix of politics, propaganda, gratitude, and the cult of personality in Rome: Trajan's column and the Arch of Constantine will follow.

TRAJAN'S COLUMN

Trajan's column is a monument raised in Rome in honor of the Roman emperor Trajan. Completed in 113 A.D. this column is famous for its spiral bas relief which commemorates Trajan's victories in the Dacian wars.

The scenes depict mostly the Roman army in military activities as well as constructing fortifications and listening to the emperor's address. The carvings are crowded with sailors, soldiers, statesmen and priests, showing about 2,500 figures in all. The emperor Trajan makes 59 appearances among his troops in this column.

According to coins depicting the column, it was originally topped with a statue of a bird, possibly an eagle, and later by a heroically nude statue of Trajan himself which disappeared in the middle Ages. It is another good example of symbolic mix of politics, propaganda, gratitude, and the cult of personality in Rome and in Roman sculpture.

3.1. Choose one of these artworks and using the following sentence starters explain its interpretation:

- The iconography of ... depicts ...and are represented...
- There are represented several symbols as ... that show clearly that this art work had a public function: ...

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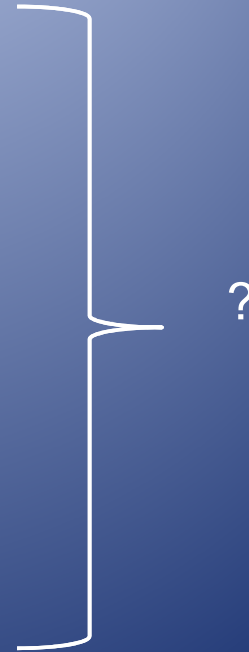
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3.2. ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS (5 Ws)

Using the following 5 Ws prepare two questions for asking classmates:

- WHAT
- WHO
- WHEN
- WHERE
- WHY



3.3. Read the following sentences about Roman sculpture and indicate if they are true (T) or false (F). If they are false rewrite them correctly:

i. Roman sculpture is not connected with Greek sculpture.....

ii. Roman sculpture depicts a more realistic and practical iconography

iii. Roman reliefs have a narrative character with real people and facts.....

iv. Roman sculpture is not interested in political propaganda.....

v. Roman sculpture never glorifies emperor and authority.....

vi. Portrait is more important in Greek than in Roman sculpture.....

vi. Roman sculpture is interested in portraits and in reliefs.....

vii. Roman sculpture does not have a political function.....

ix. Roman emperors are represented with a godlike appearance.....
