



The Forum of Augustus as a Site of Memory

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Introduction and Status Quaestionis

A proliferation of “Memory”

Memory is a very diverse subject that can unify different topics. In public discussion, in academia, in media, there has been no shortage of examinations of memory. Remembering is a major activity on virtually all layers of our contemporary sociocultural society. Memory is featured in newspapers and TV shows constantly. Memory has become an ever-present entity in both the public discourse and in the political world, with examples permeating throughout our everyday lives, such as “holocaust memory”, “tradition” and “national identity”, to name but a few currently debated memory issues. There is even a flourishing business aspect to memory. Examples of this consist of a heritage industry that uses castles as museums, for instance. One of the most famous examples is the use of the “The Secret Annex” as a museum by the Anne Frank Foundation.

Absolutely vital to the study of sites of memory is the core concept that ties it together, which is memory itself. This discipline is called memory studies. The works of Pierre Nora, especially his *lieux de mémoire* are especially prolific in this discipline. There has been much discussion on this particular topic. *Lieux de mémoire* in Rome can be used in various ways. This thesis places focus on the early Augustan era, right when the Parthian standards were recovered, as this particular era was a time in which the old conventions shifted and gave way to a new Roman state. Memory culture is a powerful concept in the hands of the right ruler, and Augustus was very proficient in using this to further his goals and to set up his dynasty. This thesis is based off of writers such as Halbwachs, Nora, Assman and Beiner, who all have “sharpened” the concept of memory culture and made their own additions. This thesis aims to define *lieux de mémoire* as physical places.¹

Lieux de mémoire are a very suitable subject for study, because there is often a visual element to it that makes it approachable for anyone, not just historians. This visual element also means that a historian is not necessarily restricted to the accounts of the ancient literate elite, but can also make hypotheses based on archaeological or monumental remains. Of course, these are hypotheses. One cannot write a conclusion based on a single archaeological presumption. To this end, this thesis aims to focus on one particular place as a potential *lieux de mémoire*, to encapsulate this place in its totality. This thesis will go over the Forum of Augustus. The Forum of Augustus housed several statues of major heroes with inscriptions of their great deeds. The emperor Augustus may have tried to show that he eclipsed these heroes. The Forum Augustus also held many references to Rome’s mythical origin with statues of the lineage of Aeneas, and the forum was also home to the Temple of Mars Ultor, where loot was kept from various

¹ While Nora has made the argument that texts and ceremonies can be *lieux de mémoire* as well, it is my opinion that certain texts or ceremonies are “additions” to the physical site, who usually is the actual *lieu de mémoire*. Of course, you need to look at these things on a case-by-case basis but I think that valuable texts or ceremonies usually add to the completeness of another place that is to be defined as a *lieu de mémoire*.

conquests. This all speaks to the visitor's eye, despite not a word having to be uttered, making it potentially an interesting case of a *lieu de mémoire*.

Prior to the end of the Second World War, there had been very little interest for the process of memorisation between people as well as very little interest in memory studies amongst historians. The particular field of memory studies did not increase in influence in any substantial way up until the later decades of the twentieth century. One exception to this was the French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who had coined the term "Collective Memory" long before the Second World War had even broken out.² In his work, "*La Mémoire Collective*", he argued that there were two kinds of memory existing side by side: the memory of individuals, called individual memory and the memory of a larger group, called the collective memory. The American historian John Gillis argues that this does not mean that the individuals in said larger groups do not have their own memories. Through his definition, the collective memory seems like a kind of synonym for a societal memory, therefore by extension a national memory.³

According to Halbwachs, the collective memory and the memories of the past that have been placed inside this collective are inextricably linked to the identity of the society they belong to. The collective memories are rooted deep in the different social groups and when this group ceases to be, so do these memories⁴. This would imply that there is a finite end to collective memory, causing a rift between written history and collective memory. An example of this would be the end of the Dutch VOC in 1800. The records show us that the VOC was disbanded, but we cannot access the collective memory of that time anymore, since we cannot ask people how they feel about this. We might have some fragments remaining in diaries, but these written records persist for much longer than the general sentiment felt at the time. The Dutch historian Jos Perry wrote the book "*Wij herdenken, dus wij bestaan*", published in 1999, in which he researched several reasons why we remember. His conclusion was that the events we collectively remember give identity to those who remember, reaching the same conclusion as Halbwachs himself had surmised.⁵ An individual can identify himself with the memories of a larger group. The idea that a group has been through a shared past causes the individual to feel like they are belonging to said group. Therefore, in memory research it is important to not only look at what is being remembered, but who is remembering as well.⁶

Collective memory has been the subject of debate amongst historians. Amongst the people who have engaged in debate, the Israeli historian Guy Beiner stands out in particular. Beiner has been critical of the usage of the word "collective" in memory studies. Beiner also argues that cases of exact conformity of memories between individuals very rarely, if not never, exist.

² Halbwachs, M. *On Collective Memory*, translated by Lewis Coser, (Chicago 1992) 33.

³ Gillis, J.R. "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship", in: Gillis, J.R. (ed.), *Commemorations :The Politics of National Identity*, (Princeton 1994) 3-25, at 3.

⁴ Halbwachs, M. *On Collective Memory*, translated by Lewis Coser, (Chicago 1992) 38.

⁵ Perry, J. *Wij herdenken, dus wij bestaan. Over jubilea, monumenten en de collectieve herinnering*, (Nijmegen 1999) 29.

⁶ Ibidem.

If we go by the notion that memories are a deliberate construct, Beiner states, these exact same memories are the possible target of manipulation or altering, targeted by those with investment in the continuity of constructs like this. Beiner has been advocating for the forgoing of the term “collective memory”, and writes that “social memory” should be used instead.⁷

The conditions for *lieux de mémoire*

The French historian Pierre Nora came up with the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, which can be translated as “sites of memory”. This translation is what will be used for the remainder of this thesis. Nora defined the concept of sites of memory as: “Any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community.”⁸ Sites of memory can be physical places, but can also be rituals or symbols. These physical and symbolic places are characterised by associations they have with events that took place in the past. The rift that had existed between the memory and the past is to be bridged by these sites of memory. In this way, the past is chained to a specific place and appropriated by the dominant memory culture, making the past a part of the present. This chaining prevents certain events from fading into oblivion, while inversely causing other events to be forgotten.⁹ According to Nora, in order to classify something as a site of memory, it has to check off three conditions. The site must have a symbolic, a material and a functional dimension.¹⁰ Of these three, the functional and the symbolic dimensions are used to distinguish between sites of memory from other important cultural places, in effect gatekeeping them so that not just any occurrence can be classified as a site of memory, which would cause the term to lose all value.¹¹

The German historian Astrid Erll has deigned the distinction made by Nora between these history and memory as problematic. She states that the study has been splintered by national schools, making Nora’s distinction only marginally applicable. Nora’s theory is inherently based in France. Erll argues that his theory is therefore not applicable as a general idea that can be used everywhere. Looking at memory studies in Great Britain, which has evolved from the writings of the Italian philosopher Gramsci, will lead you to a different conclusion than looking at memory studies in France, based on Nora would. Looking at memory studies in America, where the study has evolved from examining the works of Jacques Derrida will also lead you to

⁷ Beiner, G. *Remembering the Year of the French: Irish Folk History and Social Memory*, (Wisconsin 2007) 27. As Beiner is specifically referring to Irish folk history, he does not give an all-encompassing definition of social memory applicable across all time periods.

⁸ Nora, P. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Volume 1: Conflicts and Divisions* (New York 1996) XVII.

⁹ Nora, P. “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*”, translated by M. Roudebush, *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7-25, at 13. The categories serve to ensure a division, lest every historical text, place or finding can be a site of memory. If something is only functional, like a testament, it is usually only an object used in another ritual. Another example given is a minute of silence, which is only fulfilling the symbolic dimension. It is an appeal to the memory of something else, not a site of memory of itself.

¹⁰ Nora, P. *Realms of Memory*, XVII.

¹¹ Nora, P. “Between Memory and History”, at 19.

different ideas than if you were to look at Maurice Halbwachs' works.¹² This makes it very hard to pinpoint any particular school of memory studies as the dominant or leading one. This thesis will use Nora's train of thought, seeing as that is the original one of these schools and his definition is very applicable to this particular subject.

The Australian cultural historian Susannah Radstone has argued for a very nuanced and critical view to memory studies, in order to offset the problematic elements found in Nora's works. She calls for the emphasising of the notion that memory culture and the study thereof is a grey area. She calls the attempt to study memory culture a permanent struggle and an ambiguous effort.¹³ This thesis will use the works of Nora as a scaffold on which to build further, keeping these remarks in mind.

Romanising and imagery

How does one link the study of memory culture to early Augustan architecture, in particular to a monument like the Forum of Augustus? Erll argues that all memory studies come from a very basic anthropological question: "How do people construct images and narratives of their past in different social, cultural and historical contexts?".¹⁴ The times were rapidly changing as the Roman Republic faded into the Roman Empire, leaving the question on how people dealt with the onset of the new political reality. The American historian Karl Galinsky added to this in his *Memoria Romana*, published in 2014. He writes that the sum of all Roman traditions stretching back as far as memory allows it is called *memoria*. Orators would draw on *memoria rerum Romanum*, the collective memory by and of Romans.¹⁵ Galinsky states that we as historians are looking at the process of Romans romanising their own past, in which collective memory is both the process and the result.¹⁶ When he describes this process, it is not the same definition of actual romanisation of the peoples conquered by Romans. Rather, Galinsky uses the concept as an ongoing process in which the end goal, a shared past, is part of the process and part of the end result. Galinsky directly references the perspective of Reinhart Koselleck, who in his *Futures Past: On The Semantics of Historical Time*, published in 1985 wrote that: "History is made from stories, but what turns a story in history cannot be read from sources directly."¹⁷ Galinsky argues that our sources are from *nobiles*, and therefore our perspective is warped from the viewpoint of the upper class of Roman citizens, who would have different outlooks than lower class citizens.¹⁸

Of specific note is the work of Paul Zanker, who in his *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, published in 1987, placed great care and special focus on using imagery and iconography as a unifying factor to tie together the policies Augustus introduced and could use

¹² Erll, A. *Memory in Culture*, (Cambridge 2011) 11.

¹³ Radstone, S. *Memory Studies: For and Against*, (Thousand Oaks 2008) 36.

¹⁴ Erll, A. *Memory in Culture*, (Cambridge 2011) 11.

¹⁵ Galinsky, K. "Introduction" in: Galinsky, K, (ed.) *Memoria Romana: Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory* (Ann Arbor 2014) 1-12, at 2.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 1-12, at 7.

¹⁷ Koselleck, R. *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, (New York, 2004) 4.

¹⁸ Galinsky, K. "Introduction", 1-12, at 8.

to not only legitimise his power, but to hold on to it as well. Zanker is one of the most influential writers of the later twentieth century, but his work has not been undisputed. Historians such as Baywell have criticised Zanker for making his model a bit too broad, too all-encompassing, and skipping over developments that had been going on for longer than his work entails.¹⁹ However, most, if not all historians recognise the value and importance of the work that Zanker has done, inspiring many others to follow in his footsteps. It is for that reason that I have decided that the direction taken by Zanker is one that can still contribute to a healthy discussion.

This thesis aims to examine the process of Romans romanising their own past as described by Galinsky through the lens of the Forum of Augustus, which is an excellent focal point as it was built at the start of a new dynasty and represented a link between the old Republican heroes and the newly deified line of *gens Julii*. The concepts that are of value to later Republican Roman elites can be seen in monuments like the Forum of Augustus, making it a perfect study subject. This all ties in to the concept of memory culture as a whole. Viewed through the lens of Nora's sites of memory, these concepts can be synthesised together along with any potential renewals of old ideas or new ones brought in during this time.

This has all lead to the question: "In what way does the Forum of Augustus exude the tendencies of a *lieu de mémoire*?"

To answer this question, this thesis closely examines memory culture and archaeological descriptions of the Forum of Augustus as the site no longer exists. The focal point of the research are ancient written sources. These are examined through memory cultures and the lens of Nora's sites of memory and Galinsky's process of "romanising" one's own past. However, these texts do not exist in an archaeological vacuum. The ancient writers know what several monuments such as the Forum of Augustus look like as the site still existed in their time. Where necessary, archaeological descriptions are used to corroborate these accounts. The ancient writers used are, amongst others, chiefly Suetonius, Tacitus, Ovid and Livy, as they are closest to the Augustan era. However, while these are the writers that are closest to the Augustan era, with the exception of Ovid and Livy, they are still substantially removed from the actual events they describe. This is something one needs to keep in mind. This thesis uses the concepts of memory culture as previously explained in the SQ and adds impressions based on archaeological findings there and descriptions thereof. The thesis is divided into three sub chapters, each with its own central question.

The central question for the first chapter is: "How does memory culture exist in the late Roman Republic and early Roman Empire?" By examining memory culture as a general idea and its place within Roman society, the stage is set and certain ideas and values can be explained before delving in deeper. It also allows us to tie the concept of memory culture to contemporary sources.

¹⁹ Barnwell, G.B. Review of "The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus" in: *The Classical Review*, vol. 41.1, (1991), 168-189.

The central question for the second chapter is: “How do monuments contribute to the idea of the virtuous Roman?” By examining the monuments of Rome, the concept of a shared past and collective memory can be tied to memory culture by actually looking at the ancient architecture, taking their considerations into account. Concepts such as *virtus* and *auctoritas* are examined, to elucidate upon the role of these concepts in Augustus’ rise to power.

The central question for the third chapter is: “How is the Forum of Augustus exemplified and remembered by ancient writers?” By now focusing on one particular monument, in this case the Forum of Augustus, the conclusions of the previous chapters can be held against this particular monument and compared with secondary literature and the site itself. The process of “Romans romanising their own past” and sites of memory as described by Nora will come into play here, as we examine the site of the Forum through these lenses.

This thesis is written as a qualitative rather than a quantitative product, seeing as how the original location no longer exists and we are dependent on ancient writings. Of course, these writings will be analysed with a very critical eye and where necessary will be corroborated by secondary literature and archaeological accounts.

This thesis aims to find out whether the Forum of Augustus ties in the memory culture of the early Roman Empire and if so, what that role is. The usage of the ancient writings of Suetonius can be inferred as direct results of said memory culture, as they were written many years after the Julio-Claudian dynasty. This thesis aims to add to an ever-growing list of potential monuments to be able to be used in memory studies of the early ancient Roman Empire.

Chapter 1: Memory Culture in a City on the Crossroads

In this chapter, memory culture in the late Roman Republic and the early Roman Empire is examined. The aim of this chapter is to explain how memory culture was a very present factor in Roman culture around this time. While Rome was steeped in memory culture, there were a few different factors that contributed to its success and presence. This chapter explains these factors to set the stage and cultural backdrop for the Forum of Augustus as a site of memory. It also delves into the question of “who controls memory?”. It is essential to look at the bigger picture before we can move on to a more detailed analysis of the Forum of Augustus.

The memory of the individual is a fluid thing. Concepts are created in the mind of the individual, and recreated when necessary to call upon the memory of said concept. Social memory evolves much in the same way. The memory of the concepts as held by larger groups, be it historical remembrance or any larger memory of a like type, operate the same way. Memories constantly change. They acquire new depths when new insights are learned, then move in new directions. What may be the “truth” may no longer be the truth a mere generation later. The Roman populace could be characterised as enthralled with memory, because to them the alternative, forgetting, was very much in the same vein as oblivion.²⁰ Therefore, if cultural memory is to be conceptualised for the Romans, it is imperative that it is known how the Romans understood their own history.

Memory everywhere

Memory was a vital part of Roman life in the late Republic and in the early Empire. One can hardly argue with the notion that memory pervaded the entirety of life in Rome for the elite. For Romans, the past was not something to just look at, but a vital key that shaped their definition of their own present reality. Memory was a very powerful tool in the hands of the elite. Of course, this included not only the ability to remember, but perhaps just as importantly it also included the ability to forget. Phenomena such as *damnatio memoriae* are prime examples of memory not only being an essential part of Roman life, but also of a control of memory in the hands of the powerful.²¹ Memory was not only for the elite but for the common people as well. Theatre, public funerals, triumphs, oratories such as panegyric and *laudatio funebris*, literature and the very architecture of the city of Rome itself all lent credence to a large memory culture that was very much upheld on several levels of society.²² Memory was a large part of Vergil’s *Aeneid*, which Galinsky argues was a reconstruction of Roman cultural memory of itself.²³ The *Aeneid* is also probably the most widely read Roman piece of fiction, even in our modern age. At the Capitoline hill stood the temple of Juno Moneta. Moneta was the Roman version of the Greek goddess of memory, Mnemosyne. The temple of Juno Moneta was a public archive, where “memories” of major public events and laws were stored. This highlights the importance of memory to the Romans themselves. They had dedicated an entire

²⁰ Gowing, A. *Empire and Memory: The Representation of the Roman Republic in Imperial Culture* (Cambridge 2005) 2.

²¹ Le Goff, J. *History and Memory*, (New York 1992) 67-68.

²² Ibidem.

²³ Galinsky, K. “Introduction”, 1-12, at 1.

temple to it. One can barely move through Rome without stumbling on one of these facets of memory.

What then, does the end of the Roman Republic do for memory culture in the city? While pondering over what Roman identity exactly entailed was very much an affair of wealthy elites, the general populace was not entirely without power. However, true power lay with the Senate, of which one could only apply for membership if one belonged to a distinguished family and possessed significant wealth. The Roman Republic had existed in this way for several centuries, with no central monarch or authority figure. Because the transition from the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire was a gradual one, the ideas of the Roman Republic persisted for far longer in the nascent Empire, rather than dying along with the Republic.²⁴

Memory Manipulation

Galinsky extensively describes how orators of the late Roman Republic would draw on a shared familial past when making their speeches. These speeches were of an extensive cultural role within the society of the late Roman Republic. The orator made use of *memoria rerum Romanorum*, which Cicero describes as “memory of, and for Roman history”.²⁵ Roman orators would often use historical events and information they had collected over the years in their speeches.²⁶ One could argue that *memoria rerum Romanorum* is another form of collective memory. This is further exacerbated by the example of orators again. Orators used their speeches for their own political gain, or to sway the opinion of the listeners. The orators would bend or use the past events shared together as a springboard to reach a purpose. This results in a *memoria rerum Romanorum* that is not a shared homogenous consensus across all Roman elite, rather, a collection of several various *memoriae*.²⁷

Galinsky argues that *memoria* is the shared memory between people, the sum of all the traditions they remember, for as long as they can remember it. He also adds that this however imposes a time limit upon these traditions and memories. *Memoria* is only applied with any memories that are still around in the viewpoints of the people alive at the time. Therefore, *memoria* is also the funeral rite, the inscriptions at the graves. It is the duty of the living to remember their dead. At the exact opposite lies *damnatio memoriae*, the duty of the living to forget.²⁸ While *damnatio memoriae* is a hugely popular term under scholars, the term was never actually used in the Roman time. Harriet Flower states that *damnatio memoriae* is a term of convenience, and that the term “memory sanction” is more applicable to this political tool. She states that these sanctions were purposeful tactics to try and change the way people looked at their own common past.²⁹ From the get-go, we therefore can surmise that Romans

²⁴ Gowing, A. *Empire and Memory*, 3.

²⁵ Cicero. *Brutus*, 322. Translated by George Hendrickson (Cambridge 1939).

²⁶ Galinsky, K. “Introduction”, 1-12, at 2.

²⁷ Ibidem, 1-12, at 2.

²⁸ Ibidem, 1-12, at 2.

²⁹ Flower, H.I. *The art of Forgetting: Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman Political Culture* (Chapel Hill, 2006) 2.

by the time of the late Republic and early Empire were quite used to memory manipulation and preservation, both key facets of sites of memory as described by Pierre Nora.

Memoria and Historia

Elite citizens of Rome would harness a very strong link between *memoria* and history, or *historia*. Roman authors saw their own writings as being subservient to the importance of the memorisation of their own lives and the times they lived in. This, in effect creates a very apparent and inherent bias in between the lines written on the pages of the works of these authors. Regardless of any bias, these writings still had the power to create “a vision” of a memory for any Roman who had themselves lived through the time that was described, like for example, Velleius Paterculus’ *Compendium of Roman History*. This “vision” may be completely based on falsehoods, but that does not reduce their power to create or supplant a memory. Histories such as the one described just above are very important to establish a narrative and an individual’s idea of collective memory, despite how problematic they are to us contemporary historians, and despite their subpar usability as a source for historical information.³⁰ The decision of not just what should be remembered, but the way it is supposed to be remembered is the will of the author, defined as ‘willed creation” by Gary Miles.³¹ This “will” also explains why there are so many variances of the use of Republican history in the later Roman Empire. While *historia* and *memoria* are inextricably linked in the eyes of the Roman writers, modern historians such as Pierre Nora generally reject this notion, illustrating that these two exist with a rift between them, as described earlier.³² Roman writers however tend to fuse the concept of *historia* with directly “defining the past”. This means that works such as monuments, poetry, and inscriptions on gravestones, buildings and statues are just as valid as any written source as the objective of most Roman writers was not to create an accurate report of the past, or a valid testimony. Their objective was just as much to preserve their own image of their past. Take for example the works of Cicero. He had absolutely no qualms in using the *Annales* of Ennius as a valid historical source for his own *Marius*. This of course becomes a problem when one takes into consideration the many mythical elements that are present in the *Annales* which cannot be corroborated at all. To the Romans, *historia* becomes a means to achieve *memoria*.³³

Cicero, in his *Epistulae ad Familiiares*, 5.12, writes to his friend Lucceius who is writing a history. It can be argued that Cicero is looking at Lucceius writing a *memoria*. Cicero then tries to convince Lucceius to embellish the account of the story, for the amusement of the readers. The line that divides poetry from historiography can become a little blurry, as one can see here.³⁴ While the story obviously had to be based on truth, there was nothing withholding the

³⁰ Ibidem, 10.

³¹ Miles, G. *Livy: Reconstructing Early Rome* (Ithaca 1995) 73.

³² Nora, P. *Realms of Memory, Volume 1*, xix.

³³ Hutton, P. H. *History as an Art of Memory* (Lebanon 1993) 156.

³⁴ Cicero. *Epistulae ad Familiiares*, 5.12, translated by W.G. Williams, (London 1970) “For nothing is better fitted to interest a reader than a variety of circumstance and vicissitudes of fortune... which will make very pleasant reading... For what man of us is not delighted, though feeling a certain compassion too, with the death scene of Epaminondas at Mantinea?”.

author to “spruce up” the text to make it more interesting to the recipient, and these edits are often deliberate. Within the established connection between *historia* and *memoria* one can find some relation of Roman thought. In particular, the relation between those alive and those deceased. It is of vital importance to understand the effect this relation had on the elite populace of the city of Rome. Gowing argues that this relation explains a lot about the very tangible anxiety the Roman elites felt about the impending demise of the Republic and the onset of the new Empire.³⁵

Rome and its surrounding outskirts were littered with tributes to the dead. Cicero describes the great importance of crypts, arches and tombstones in his *Cato Maior de Senectute*. Cicero writes that these mark a place in which he can refresh his memory of the deceased individual.³⁶ Other Roman traditions such as the Roman funeral rites, the *laudatio funebris*, and the wax masks of the dead served this purpose of refreshment as well, keeping their deeds and images in the *memoria* of the public. This celebration of “the glorious dead” is an essential part of Roman society, especially with the onset of the new Empire. Therefore, this celebration would need to be held regularly, usually on an annual basis. Historical memory needed to be stoked, like a fire in an engine.³⁷

The problem of permanence

While we as historians are reliant on the written evidence we find, a great deal of the texts that survived to the present day, such as Cicero’s, were not merely for reading, but are transcriptions of oratories or songs. The intended audience would be the same whether you were literate or not, because the speech, song, or poetry would be delivered verbally. Only after the act was over did one consider putting it down on papyrus and making a more permanent copy.³⁸ This makes it hard for us to make any grand sweeping statements about memory culture as a whole, as a great deal of work will be considered ‘lost’ by this standard. Songs would be performed by a chorus, but we have only a very rudimentary amount of any songs that have been recorded. We only know who wrote the lyrics for a very small number of the songs that we do have. However, we assume that these songs must all have an author. What did this author write and what did the corresponding chorus perform? We can assume the performance is what stayed with the common people, who would gather to listen rather than read any books. Due to our dependency on written sources, we lack a vast array of potential other sources, such as performances at festivals that would be held constantly throughout the year, which would be a perfect excuse for common people to gather and hear

³⁵ Gowing, *A. Empire and Memory*, 13.

³⁶ Cicero. *Cato Maior de Senectute*, 7.21, translated by J.S. Reid, (Charleston 2010) “I, for instance, know not only the people who are living, but I recall their fathers and grandfathers, too; and as I read their epitaphs I am not afraid of the superstition that, in doing so, I shall lose my memory; for by reading them I refresh my memory of the dead.”.

³⁷ Gowing, *A. Empire and Memory*, 15.

³⁸ Wiseman, T.P. “Popular Memory”, in: Galinsky, K, (ed.) *Memoria Romana: Memory in Rome and Rome in Memory* (Ann Arbor 2014) 43-62, at 53.

songs or poetry.³⁹ While not a written source, one cannot deny the possibility of a very real facet of memory culture having been “lost” there.

The theatre was one of the only ‘mass-media’ that Antiquity provided. Wiseman states that the classic plays, such as the Athenian ones, were assumed to be based in fact. One only had to edit out the supernatural from these performances, just as one had to do with the reading of epic literature.⁴⁰ This is supported by statements like the one Plutarch made in his *Theseus*.⁴¹ Historians would be considered artists like poets and singers in this regard, for their works would also be often read out loud at events, often in the company of wealthy elites. However, despite the fact that we know a lot about the recitals at noble houses, we should not assume that history was merely for the elite society of Rome, as historians like Livy would draw crowds of often quite a formidable size.⁴²

The historian Livy would name himself a preservationist of memory, and would describe reading his *History* as being virtually the same as gazing at a monument.⁴³ This too, illustrates the very tangible link between physical monuments, text, and the upkeep of *memoria* through *historia* present in the city of Rome at this time of change. History becomes a monument itself, a monument to Roman glory of the past which is something to be respected, to be feared and to be maintained. One can see a slight shift here from Cicero to Livy. While the two men did not differ that much on the importance of the upkeep of memories of the past, in particular Livy’s account of reading history is more akin to visiting a crypt of a famous relative than it is to envision the reader living at the time, as described with Cicero’s history. Livy is looking back at the past of the Roman Republic, now something of an age past, dead, but certainly not forgotten.⁴⁴ More importantly, Cicero was not subject to a new political hegemon that was very intent on having the past be memorised in a very particular way. This is also the main debate with the accounts of Livy. Historians like Gowing assert that Livy was essentially writing while on the new *princeps*’ payroll, making it hard to view his work as objective.⁴⁵ At the same time, other historians, such as Torrey Luce, have argued that every ancient writer can be accused of bias, and that it would be foolish to rule out entire works of literature in a field where there already are so few.⁴⁶ For this particular subject, it does not really matter whether or not the descriptions given by ancient writers are absolute truths. Rather, their effort in the

³⁹ Ibidem, 43-62, at 55.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, 43-62, at 56.

⁴¹ Plutarch. *Theseus*, 28.2, translated by B. Perrin, (New Haven, 1914) “As for the calamities that befell Phaedra and the son of Theseus by Antiope, since there is no conflict here between historians and tragic poets, we must suppose that they happened as represented by poets uniformly.”.

⁴² Wiseman, T.P. “Popular Memory”, 43-62, at 62.

⁴³ Livy, *Praefatio*. 10-12, translated by D. Spillan (Boston 2009) “This is what is particularly salutary and profitable in the study of history, that you behold instances of every variety of conduct displayed on a conspicuous monument; that from thence you may select for yourself and your country what to imitate and... which you may avoid.”.

⁴⁴ Gowing, A. *Empire and Memory*, 23.

⁴⁵ Ibidem.

⁴⁶ Luce, T.J. “Ancient Views on the Causes of Bias in Historical Writing” in: *Classical Philology*, vol. 84, no. 1 (January 1989), 16-31, at 27.

deliberate “editing” of memory is far more important, which is something that would likely have happened whether the writer was autonomous or not.

Legacy

The problem of authors and artists now working while under the rule of a single leader only grows exponentially once the first *princeps* Augustus passes away. When Augustus passes away, Tiberius at first, prior to his taking over as *princeps* in 14 AD, visits the Senate in Rome and asks them to take back the reins and rule over the nation, but the Senate refuses to do so.⁴⁷ Caligula initially had very little backing to his claim as *princeps*, but gained power through an alliance with himself and the praetorian guard, basing his legitimacy off his family name and an old Republican formula, accessing the memory of the Republic amongst his followers to gain his power.⁴⁸

However, we do see later on that the Senate tried to reinstate the Roman Republic, after the murder of the emperor Caligula, in 41 AD, described by Suetonius.⁴⁹ These very same senators also tried to ban the memory of Caesar and Augustus.⁵⁰ We see that the state tries to exert control over what is and what is not allowed to be remembered. One of the generals involved in the murder of Caligula is described by Flavius Josephus as being nostalgic for the Roman Republic – despite him not being around during that time. This general, one Sentius Saturninus, is described as distraught about the fact that he has no living memory of Rome before the principate, but then states that his short-lived experience of a Rome without the yoke of an emperor tasted more sweet than anything he ever experienced prior.⁵¹ Clearly, the memory of the Republic had at that point been far from eradicated. However, the memory of the Republic was from this point onwards firmly in the hands of the *princeps*, made even more apparent when after Caligula, the next emperor, Claudius, did not attempt to restore the Republic. Neither did his successor Nero, nor did the new dynasty of emperors after the tumultuous period that ensued after Nero’s passing. Authors that would write history from the reign of Augustus onward would be presented with a choice: either cooperate with the *princeps* and

⁴⁷ Tacitus. *Annals*, 1.11-13, translated by J. Jackson (Cambridge 1937) “He thought then, that, in a state which had the support of so many eminent men, they ought not devolve the entire duties on any one person; the business of government would be more easily carried out by the joint efforts of a number.”.

⁴⁸ Barrett, A.A. *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*, (New Haven 1998) lxxxvii.

⁴⁹ Suetonius. *Life of Claudius*, 10.3, translated by J.C. Rolfe (London 1914) “Received within the rampart, he spent the night among the sentries with much less hope than confidence; for the consuls with the senate and the city cohorts had taken possession of the Forum and the Capitol, resolved on maintaining the public liberty.”.

⁵⁰ Suetonius. *Life of Caligula*, 60, translated by J.C. Rolfe (London 1914) “The conspirators too had not agreed on a successor, and the senate was so unanimously in favour of re-establishing the republic that the consuls called the first meeting, not in the senate house, because it had the name Julia, but in the Capitol; while some in expressing their views proposed that the memory of the Caesars be done away with and their temples destroyed.”.

⁵¹ Flavius Josephus. *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIX,2,2, translated by W. Whiston (London 1737) “As for myself, I cannot remember our former time of liberty; as being born after it was gone; but I am beyond measure filled with joy at the thoughts of our present freedom. I also esteem those that were born and brought up in our former liberty happy men and that those men are worthy of no less esteem than the Gods themselves who have given us a taste of it in this age.”.

write history that remembers and forgets what the *princeps* wants to be remembered and wants to be forgotten, usually in the form of panegyric, or write your own unauthorised history.⁵² The very real dangers of writing history that the *princeps* did not approve of was made apparent when in 25 AD, a historian was brought forth and put to trial, on the orders of Tiberius. The charge: treason. This historian was indicted for having written a history that the *princeps* had deemed to be too full of understanding and too sympathising with the assassins of Julius Caesar. Tiberius had deemed him guilty and had his works burned. The “guilty” party would starve himself to death; in Tacitus’ view a final act of defiance.⁵³ Other historians however did not widely attempt to repeat this “sympathising” again, leaving the *historia*, and with it, the *memoria* of the Roman Republic largely uncontested in the *princeps*’ care.

Conclusion

How did memory culture exist in the late Roman Republic and early Roman Empire? As shown, memory culture was very dominant in the ancient city of Rome during this period of transition. As for what this specific memory culture exactly entailed, one has to make a very clear distinction between memory accessible to everyone of the *populus* and memory that would be considered more restricted. However, this distinction is, as we have been able to see, not a mutually exclusive business. Usually, the prime example of any exclusivity in memory would be the written word, locked behind the ability to read or write, accessible only to elite members of society. In this instance however, most authors would not usually write their works to be written down, but to be spoken aloud, a varied and greater group of people could enjoy said work. Only after having “performed” would the work be recorded, having become a part of memory itself, to the day that the speech was delivered. The Roman people were spoiled for choice with a rich tapestry of orally performed culture such as poetry, songs, festivals and oratory. This was accompanied by a city full of visually stimulating monuments such as temples, crypts, arches and statues, which often did not necessarily need any supporting texts in order to imbue the viewer with a specific memory. Whether that memory was based in factual reality was usually not a major concern as long as the core of the matter was truthful.

Rather, the landscape of memory would be dictated by the sum of most major Roman traditions, their *memoria*, which was often and easily conflated with *historia*. Ancient writers such as Cicero would encourage other historians to embellish and add details to histories to make them more enjoyable to listen to and read. It seems the thought of the era was that the a good story was more important than complete factual accuracy. Be that as it may, *memoria* was a limited and finite concept. One could only remember what was still present in the mind of the public, after all. Therefore, most of the memory culture present in Rome during the late Republic and early Empire had a function that is not unlike that of a library. Citizens of Rome, as Cicero described, would be able to visit a crypt and refresh their memory of the dead and

⁵² Gowing, A. *Empire and Memory*, 26.

⁵³ Tacitus. *Annals*, 4.35.2, translated by J. Jackson (Cambridge 1937) “To every man posterity renders his wage of honour; nor will nor lack, if my condemnation is at hand, those who shall remember, not Brutus and Cassius alone, but me also!” He then left the senate, and closed his life by self-starvation. The Fathers ordered his books to be burned by the aediles.”.

the deeds of great men of the past. Yet there have been noticeable changes in this particular view. Livy's view of the memory of the Republic was significantly different from Cicero's, far more akin to paying respect to the deceased rather than to immerse the visitor in a memory. Both writers remember, but Livy's account has a far greater sense of finality, having been written after Augustus ascended to his throne. This should come as no surprise given that the writers were decades apart from each other, but it does show a very visible shift had taken place in the way people could look back at their own past. More evidently, it showed who controlled, or at least attempted to control, that view of the nation's past, clearer than ever before. The next chapter will attempt to showcase how monuments, a tangible "memory", are a part in the memory policies of the elites of Rome.

Chapter 2: Monuments as a testament to greatness

In this chapter, monuments in the city of Rome during the Augustan age are closely examined. What was the role of monuments in the memory culture of the Romans as we discussed in chapter 1? How did Augustus use buildings to his advantage? How did they contribute to the idea of an “virtuous Rome”? In this instance, “virtuous Rome” denotes several unifying factors under Augustus. This chapter aims to connect between monuments, memory culture in Rome and the Forum of Augustus as a site of memory.

Making a memoryscape through monuments

The Romans were set on the idea that memory is not just a tool to remember, but an actual weapon to shape the future with. In Augustan Rome, *memoria* was kept through monuments. This particular time period stands out because of the enormous amount of newly built monuments that were a key part in keeping memories alive, how certain monuments were built for very specific memories, and how easily these monuments could be altered, appropriated, or removed.⁵⁴ The American historian Josephine Shaya writes that “*a monument is not just something to record the past, but something to reconstruct the past with. Monuments offer simplified meanings to complicated events.*”⁵⁵

By exemplifying the great accomplishments of outstanding citizens of the past, it was possible to inspire new powerful figures to follow in their ancestors’ hallowed footsteps.⁵⁶ Monuments, often made of stone, give off a sense of permanence.⁵⁷ Temples, baths, forums and monuments were often built, not just to make life more enjoyable for Romans or design a practical place to gather, but just as much to link the construction of the designated building or monument to the individual that had it built, often by naming said building after the commissioner or inscribing their name in the building. That link could be claimed by others, or destroyed after a change in power relations.⁵⁸ Statues were seen as one of the most important means to keep a record of great deeds for Roman statesmen. The construction of statues was managed by the imperial regime. Of course, it is hard to explicitly define this political organ. When “the regime” or “the government” is used in this chapter, what is meant is the emperor Augustus or his direct associates. Augustus was probably not the be all, end all final arbiter on every decision in the Empire, but policies his associates would bring into law would have to be condoned by him. It is very hard to make any grand sweeping statements about who had what particular piece of power, and who is responsible for each individual edict. This thesis goes along with the thought that agency, in the end, lay with Augustus and his direct subordinates.⁵⁹ Knowing the construction of statues was in the hands of the state allows

⁵⁴ Kousser, R. “Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome: A Comparative Perspective” in: Galinsky, K and Lapatin, K. (ed.) *Cultural Memories in the Roman Empire*, (Los Angeles 2015) 33-48, at 34.

⁵⁵ Shaya, J. “The public life of monuments: The Summi Viri of the Forum of Augustus” in: *American Journal of Archaeology*, vol. 117, no. 1, (January 2013) 83-110, at 83.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, 83-110, at 106.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, 83-110, at 83.

⁵⁸ Kousser, R. “Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome”, 33-48, at 33.

⁵⁹ Starr, C.G. “The Perfect Democracy of the Roman Empire” in: *The American Historical Review*, vol. 58, no.1 (October 1952), 1-16, at 5.

historians to see which people the imperial government would want to elevate as a part of the cultural memory of “great Romans”.⁶⁰ While many of these statues have been lost, their pedestals often included *elogia*, records of their deeds. These pedestals have been recovered in far greater numbers than the actual statues that were placed on top of the pedestals.⁶¹

A prevalent belief in Roman society usually involved the belief that Rome had earned the lands and wealth she possessed through an overarching virtue, *virtus*. This *virtus* was not something a man was predisposed to, but rather something that was provided to him by the state.⁶² However, when describing this term, one must keep in mind that the meaning of this term has shifted considerably over time. It could simply mean “virtue”, but is often a synonym of something more akin to “excellence” as described by Cicero. Not just virtue, but oratory skill and wisdom would also be considered *virtus*.⁶³ The same shift in meaning goes for freedom, or *libertas*. When *libertas* is described by Cicero, he refers to the state, the infrastructure, and the role of the Senate therein. Any claims the *princeps* made to *libertas* cannot be the same as the *libertas* described by Cicero, because Augustus was a single ruler, and had effectively hollowed out the office of senator for his own gain.⁶⁴ When speaking of *libertas*, the emperor tries to call out to the *memoria* of the Roman Republic, and to the *virtus* that the citizens of the Republic had. The *libertas* one could experience while living as a citizen of Rome would inspire a thoroughbred and vast love and loyalty for the nation. There was a tangible fear that if the citizenry would lose this “freedom”, the nation would be lost.⁶⁵ In order to alleviate these fears, the newly minted *princeps* took on a rather interesting strategy. Through monuments and statues, the idea of the “virtuous Roman” could be fostered and nourished through the virtues displayed.

The first emperor, Augustus, made a dedicated effort to place a large focus on Rome’s military exploits. If he could show that the generals under him had won bigger and more meaningful victories than the generals of the old Roman Republic did, that would show to the people that despite the advent of the *princeps* and the Senate’s power being severely diminished, Rome had not lost anything in becoming a principate. Rather, Rome had regained the virtue of military prowess that had made Rome great in the first place.⁶⁶ When Augustus describes *virtus* he therefore refers to the excellence that Cicero considered to be *virtus*, but his version has shifted far more to the military side of things. One specific monument that comes to mind when thinking of *virtus* being a synonym for military skill is the temple of Mars Ultor, at the Forum of Augustus. This would be a key example of the (re)possession of the male *virtus*, which would add to the legitimacy of Augustus’ rule. More on this concept in the next chapter

⁶⁰ Weisweiler, J. “Making Masters, Making Subjects: Imperial Ideology and Memory Policy in the Early Roman Empire and in the Later Roman State”, in: Galinsky, K and Lapatin, K. (ed.) *Cultural Memories in the Roman Empire*, (Los Angeles 2015) 66-85, at 66.

⁶¹ Hojte, J.M. *Roman Imperial Statue Bases: From Augustus to Commodus*, (Aarhus 2005) 14.

⁶² McDonnell, M. *Roman Manliness, “Virtus” and the Roman Republic*, (Cambridge 2006) 34.

⁶³ Ibidem, 107.

⁶⁴ Arena, V. *Libertas and the Practice of Politics in the Late Roman Republic*, (Cambridge 2012) 60.

⁶⁵ Weisweiler, J. “Making Masters, Making Subjects”, 66-85, at 67.

⁶⁶ Ibidem, 66-85, at 68.

of this thesis. Meanwhile, old public statues of exemplary Republican men were slowly but surely removed over time, while the building of any new public statues had to be approved by the government.⁶⁷ There were still statues and monuments being made to tribute great senators without the outright permission of the emperor, but those monuments were often not for public display, but to be built in the mansions and backyards of the commissioner.⁶⁸

The (re)building of Rome

After Augustus won the battle of Actium in 31BC, he soon started a major and expansive building programme. Augustus had won the war and had in practice become the single ruler of the Roman world, and had set out to repair a devastated Roman Republic. With his new building policy, Augustus shepherded in the shift from a Roman Republic to a Roman Empire, making sure to imbue the monuments and the buildings with traditional Roman values.⁶⁹ Paul Zanker, in his *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* argues that this marked a “return to form” that was not so much actually a return to Republican form than it was a coercion to a cityscape that was more in line with what the newly minted *princeps* wanted it to be. Zanker states that monuments of themselves can be a form of “subliminal messaging”, even to those who know nothing of the context nor story behind said monument. Not a piece of propaganda, but rather, a part in an ongoing process, one aimed to influence the culture of Rome.⁷⁰ Of course, Zanker has not been undisputed, falling roughly in one particular “school” of thought, one that encompasses historians such as Tonio Hölscher as well. They argue that the *princeps* made the “power of the image” a deliberate effort in imperial cultural context, as a form of “state policy”. The other “school” encompasses academics such as Jan and Aleida Assmann, and argues that this was not so much a state policy as it was a personal need for Augustus to reinvent moral and ideological codes with himself in the middle.⁷¹ For this thesis, the choice has been made to follow Zanker’s lead. Assmann’s school, while greatly adding to the discourse in the ideas put forth by Zanker, are in my personal opinion, add-ons to Zanker’s theory, rather than detractors. The dimension of cultural memory allows for both these schools to co-exist. Zanker describes Augustus as deliberately editing the state’s view of said cultural memory, and Assman describes Augustus’ reinventing of cultural policy, but all historians seem to agree that Augustus made a conscious effort to change morals, and had a free hand to write his own history.⁷² Zanker’s work begs the question: “what does the monument contribute to the idea of Rome in cultural memory?”. To answer this question, one need not only look at the monuments themselves, but an examination of literary sources can

⁶⁷ Alföldy, G. “*Pietas immobiles erga principem* und ihr Lohn: Öffentliche, Ehrenmonumente von Senatoren in Rom während der Frühen und Hohen Kaiserzeit” in: Alföldy, G, and Panciera, S. (ed.) *Inschriftliche Denkmäler als Medien der Selbstdarstellung in der römischen Welt, Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien* 36, (Stuttgart 2001), 11-46, at 12.

⁶⁸ Weisweiler, J. “Making Masters, Making Subjects”, 66-85, at 68.

⁶⁹ Welch, T.S. *The Elegiac Cityscape: Propertius and the Meaning of Roman Monuments*, (Columbus 2005) 3.

⁷⁰ Zanker, P. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, (Ann Arbor, 1988) 335.

⁷¹ Hölscher, K.J. *Reconstructing the Roman Republic: An Ancient Political Culture and Modern Research*, (Princeton 2010) 66.

⁷² Eck, W. *The Age of Augustus* (Munich 2003) 125.

add to our knowledge as well. Augustan Rome had a wealth of literary sources, from writers, to poets, to playwrights, who often describe the image of the city in their works.

Of particular interest is the poet Propertius. According to the historian Tara Welch, Propertius' works show that Propertius looks at the new monuments of the Augustan era as attempts to turn the city's identity and behaviour into something that is more in tune with the wishes of the emperor. In this sense, the monument is another "text" that can be interpreted, read, or skimmed over in the vast array of Augustan "literature". Welch describes that the city of Rome, according to Propertius, exists in a kind of physical plane that invites visitors to come and experience the Roman state by moving throughout the city.⁷³ Welch states that this is because Propertius was always surrounded by Roman imagery. Propertius tried to imprint this imagery onto his readers. He did this by not merely describing the imagery, but giving descriptions of senses as well, such as sounds, smells and sight. In this way, he could play off both the public memories of Rome, held by the readers, as well as the readers' expectations of the city.⁷⁴

One example is illustrated in Propertius' *Elegy 4.2*, in which a statue of Vertumnus is offered gifts and praised by passers-by who are on their way.⁷⁵ Propertius' sketches out a landscape that is not just a "text" for the readers, but also a context for the very same recipients. By describing the statue and area this way, he could incorporate public history, describing the war with Lygmon. He allowed the reader to imagine the sound of the Tiber flowing nearby, and the sounds the crowds make on their daily business. This way, even Romans that did not live near Rome could still experience a taste of living in Rome, of being near Augustan monuments such as this statue. This gives greater credence to the space these buildings occupy in Roman memory culture, allowing visitors who have never been to Rome to still "recognise" the monuments described by Propertius. In my opinion this is a fascinating blend of *historia* and *memoria* to create a sense of what Rome looks like.

During this same time, Augustus made a concentrated effort to link his own name to the construction of new monuments and buildings. Augustus' claim that "he found Rome a city of bricks and left it a city of marble", described by Suetonius.⁷⁶ This, along with a large list of all 82 temples, along with 23 buildings and monuments he had ordered the construction of, or ordered to be restored to former glory, was but another facet in his effort to legitimise his

⁷³ Welch, T.S. *The Elegiac Cityscape*, 4.

⁷⁴ Ibidem.

⁷⁵ Propertius. *Elegy 4.2*, translated by A.S. Kline (London 2002): "...This crowd of mine delights me. I enjoy no ivory temple: it is enough that I oversee the Roman Forum. I was named Vertumnus from the winding sound of the river, and because I receive the gifts of returning spring, which you believe to be returning for your sacrifice to Vertumnus... And Rome, you gave rewards to my Tuscans, at the time from when Lygmon came with their armed allies and crushed fierce Tatius Sabine's soldiers. I saw the broken ranks, the abandoned weapons, and the enemy turn their back in shameful flight. Seed of the Gods, grant that toga'd crowds of Rome may pass before my feet forever."

⁷⁶ Suetonius. *Life of Augustus*, 28.3, translated by J.C. Rolfe (London 1914).

regency and the existence of the nascent Empire.⁷⁷ In these early days of the Empire, the Romans used their experience with monuments efficiently. The widespread construction of reliefs depicting wars won by the Romans, along with portraits of great men summing up their deeds in service to the Roman state became a key feature of the *princeps*' efforts to institutionalise the collective memory of the Romans of their contemporary age.⁷⁸ The shared cultural memory of the Romans, their *memoria*, was used to deliberately create a sense of continuity from the Roman Republic, while paradoxically shifting away from this state.⁷⁹

Roman monuments were very often infused with a dose of fictionalisation. These monuments showed an idealised description of reality as the imperial regime condoned it, but, in contrast to the Greek monuments that would often describe mythical battles or divinity, the Roman monuments of the Augustan age were often rooted in the contemporary age of Augustus himself by having, for instance, the war equipment be as accurate as possible, or the hairstyle of the commander to be accurately represented. This allowed the viewer to place the event commemorated at the monument in a distinct time period, namely, the reign of Augustus. This was different from Greek monuments which are often depicted vague enough to be applicable in more than one time period.⁸⁰

One cannot underestimate the effect stolen artefacts had as monuments, as well. While lavish works of art, made by highly skilled artisans such as sculptors, jewellers, and painters were assumedly at first meant as a display of wealth and power for the people who commissioned them, these same works of art took on a whole different meaning when transported to Rome in the caravans of loot from conquest.⁸¹ These pieces of loot made for excellent witnesses to the skill and wit that the Roman generals had displayed in attaining their victory over the original owners of said art.⁸² These works of art were now a monument and part of Roman memory culture by themselves, but the memories that they were now referencing were completely different than what the original creator had intended.⁸³

⁷⁷ Sumi, G.S. "Monuments and Memory, The Aedes Castoris in the Formation of Augustan Ideology" in: *Classical Quarterly*, 59.1, (London 2009) 167-186, at 167.

⁷⁸ Kousser, R. "Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome", 33-48, at 40.

⁷⁹ Elsner, J. "Cultural Memory, Religious Practice, and the Invention of Tradition: Some Thoughts on Philostratus's Account of the Cult of Palaemon", in: Galinsky, K and Lapatin, K. (ed.) *Cultural Memories in the Roman Empire*, (Los Angeles 2015) 101-115, at 101.

⁸⁰ Kousser, R. "Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome", 33-48, at 40.

⁸¹ Miles, M.M. *Art as Plunder: The Ancient Origins of the debate of Cultural Property*, (Cambridge 2008) 61.

⁸² Aldrete, G.S. *Daily Life in the Roman City: Rome, Pompeii and Ostia*, (London 2004) 176.

⁸³ Kousser, R. "Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome", 33-48, at 35.

The Self-Proclaimed Intent of Augustus

The public space with the largest number of statues was the Forum of Augustus. Weisweiler refers to the Forum of Augustus, describing it as “carefully calculated in order to celebrate the military glory of the new regime”.⁸⁴ Statues adorned the Forum of Augustus and allowed any visitor to walk past a “timeline” in which the Republic “naturally” ended up turning into the Empire while at the same time reading about the lives and deeds of virtuous and exemplary Romans in order to inspire their contemporary generation. Augustus even put the purpose of the Forum of Augustus in an explicit description, which was written down by Suetonius in the biography of Augustus written by him:

“Proximum a dis immortalibus honorem memoriae ducum praestitit, qui imperium p. R. ex minimo maximum reddidissent. Itaque et opera cuiusque manentibus titulis restituit et statuas omnium triumphali effigie in utraque fori sui porticu dedicavit, professus et edicto: commentum id se, ut ad illorum vitam velut ad exemplar et ipse, dum viveret, et insequentium aetatum principes exigerentur a civibus. Pompei quoque statuam contra theatri eius regiam marmoreo lano superposuit translata e curia, in qua C. Caesar fuerat occisus”.

“Next to the immortal Gods he honoured the memory of the leaders who had raised the estate of the Roman people from obscurity to greatness. Accordingly, he restored the works of such men with their original inscriptions, and in the two colonnades of his forum dedicated statues of all of them in triumphal garb, declaring besides in a proclamation: “I have contrived this to lead the citizens to require me, while I live, and the rulers of later times as well, to attain the standard set by those worthies of old.” He also moved the statue of Pompey from the hall in which Gaius Caesar had been slain and placed it on a marble arch opposite the grand door of Pompey's theatre.”⁸⁵

Augustus’ aim for this Forum was to evoke and endow the visitor in the cultural memory of the Romans, confined within this space, while also guiding the visitor towards a conception of Rome that he wishes the visitor to have. At the same time, Augustus was able to outperform these virtuous “heroes” of the old and new era, by placing a giant statue of himself in the middle of the Forum square, and having his *elogia* be a part of the base of that respective statue, showing his deeds and insinuating that he not only matched the greats of the past era, but actively surpassed most, if not all of them.⁸⁶ This will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

In the half century of Augustus’ rule, Augustus’ actions and regime became inextricably linked to the whole of Roman culture. Augustus himself placed a special note to his influence as a man with no more power than any other consul, stating that he had other people obey him

⁸⁴ Weisweiler, J. “Making Masters, Making Subjects”, 66-85, at 69.

⁸⁵ Suetonius. *Life of Augustus*, 31.5, translated by J.C. Rolfe (London 1914).

⁸⁶ Frisch, P. “Zu den Elogien des Augustusforums” in : *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 39 (1980) 91-98, at 95.

because of his sense of authority, *auctoritas*, stating so in his *Res Gestae*.⁸⁷ This paradox, according to Galinsky, is a key facet in what gave the “Augustan era” its namesake. Augustus’ *auctoritas* went above and beyond the limits of the constitution of the Roman Republic, insofar that new words such as *princeps* would be introduced, showing his enormous influence on the era.⁸⁸ According to Galinsky, *auctoritas* is an intentionally vague term which allowed Augustus to feign a lack of any vested formal power. At the same time, *auctoritas* is very precisely defined as authority and wisdom and is not limited to just those aspects. The *princeps’ auctoritas* is something that calls out for others to respond, to interpret, and to participate in. Political men would from that point onward need to manoeuvre around Augustus, who would be ever present in the political landscape despite having no official dictatorship.

Of course, Galinsky’s line of thought is not completely without its detractors. The British historian Jás Elsner, for instance, suggests that the fact that Galinsky’s eagerness to link the power of the Emperor and the influence he had on Roman cultural memory is itself proof that the “propaganda” Augustus would have us believe is very effective. He, amongst other critics, thinks Galinsky is not critical enough, stating that Galinsky fails to realise that our contemporary appreciation of Augustan art is direct effect of our reading of Augustan texts.⁸⁹

It is my belief that Galinsky is very usable, however. Galinsky falls in the same category as Zanker does, placing great importance on the image, rather than merely on text. While it is very important to be critical, in my opinion Galinsky’s explanation of the paradox of *auctoritas* resulting in world where words like *princeps* needed to be invented shows that the effect Augustus had was very tangible indeed. By describing himself as leaning on his *auctoritas*, Augustus himself shows that he never wishes to be stepping stone in history, not just another dictator. Rather, he would elevate himself to some kind of larger figure, needing no “official” power in order to effectively rule the world.

This dynamic of ambiguity in Augustus’ rule leads to the vitality of Augustan culture, giving artists the “freedom” to explore a “revitalised” Rome within the confines of Augustus’ wishes. With this “freedom” comes a breath of fresh air into poetry, art, music and monumental architecture.⁹⁰ More than any kind of direct initiative that had to be hand-written and approved by Augustus, his *auctoritas* allowed Augustus to be the “editor-in-chief” of a plurality of initiatives that came to be in his time. Not the sole curator of any political policy, artwork and monument, but definitely the one that guarantees, approves and in the end legitimises

⁸⁷ Augustus. *Res Gestae*, 34.2-3, translated by P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore (Cambridge 1969) “I transferred the commonwealth from my power to the judgement of the Senate and the people of Rome. For this service of mine I was named Augustus by decree of the Senate, and the doorpost of my house was publicly wreathed with laurel leaves and a civic crown was set up in the Curia Julia, which, as attested by the inscription thereon, was given me by the Senate and the people of Rome on account of my courage, clemency, justice, and devotion. After this time, I excelled all in authority, although I possessed no more official power than others who were my colleagues in several magistracies.”.

⁸⁸ Galinsky, K. *Augustan Culture: an Interpretive Introduction*, (Princeton 1996) 12.

⁸⁹ Elsner, J. Review of *Augustan Culture: an Interpretive Introduction* (October 1998) accessed from <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/237#.Xkm2dlpKjIU> on 12-2-2020.

⁹⁰ Galinsky, K. *Augustan Culture: an Interpretive Introduction*, (Princeton 1996) 12.

the works of others. Those works or those men who the *princeps* does not approve of are at the same time left at the wayside, often ignored.⁹¹

The concept of *auctoritas* is also interesting because it can be construed in different ways by onlookers. If three Romans from different walks of life read chapter 34 of the *Res Gestae*, the soldier would surmise that the authority described by Augustus refers to his conquests, while a plebeian would likely surmise that this authority refers to Augustus as the patron of the city. The senator could see this authority as a reference to this style of governance.⁹² All of these men, however, would recognise the splendour and decisive influence that Augustus had over their lives and their citizenship. This is what Augustus means by “restoring” the *res publica*. He attempts to breathe new life into the Roman values and to use them as a single beacon for the Roman people to unite under- with him at the helm. The iconography in various monuments would suggest that making an appeal to a shared *historia* for citizens of Rome under the guise of *memoria* would be a great beneficial tool to gather and lead the people in one singular direction.⁹³

Augustus creates the conditions for an ideal “mold” of Rome, one in which the people can identify themselves as part of something that has always been there, a virtuous and victorious Roman people, while at the same time reimagining their own shared past. Augustus creates *memoria* for his sanctioned writers, poets, and architects to write *historia* with. This deliberate editing and pruning of the shared past within the confines of the Roman memory culture makes it that much easier to see several of his building projects, such as the Forum of Augustus, as *lieux de mémoire*. Augustus’ efforts to link his *auctoritas* to the culture and with it, the memory culture of Rome, speaks volume of the lengths he was able to go to ensure his legacy and his influence would remain far beyond his lifetime.

Conclusion

How do monuments in Augustan Rome contribute to the idea of a “virtuous Roman”? As shown, the policy and rationale behind building monuments was not to merely remind the Roman citizenry of the events that had transpired, but also to offer a simplified, often idealised depiction of said events and to directly influence the *memoria* of the citizens. By carefully navigating through a web of political circumstances, Augustus’ regime was able to gain an enormous amount of influence over the construction of statues, monuments, buildings, and creation of art. Augustus did so by leaning on his *auctoritas*, a concept that is intentionally left vague by him, so that he would not overstep any boundaries, while at the same time allowing him to gain more power than any other magistrate from Rome had had up until that point.

Augustus used his power to reform the cityscape to something that was more in line with the vision he had for Rome, one in which past grievances were set aside and all Roman citizens

⁹¹ Rich, J. “Making the Emergency Permanent: Auctoritas, Potestas, and the evolution of the principate of Augustus” in: Rivi  re, Y (ed.) *Des R  formes August  ennes*, 37-121, at 62.

⁹² Galinsky, K. *Augustan Culture: an Interpretive Introduction*, (Princeton 1996) 23.

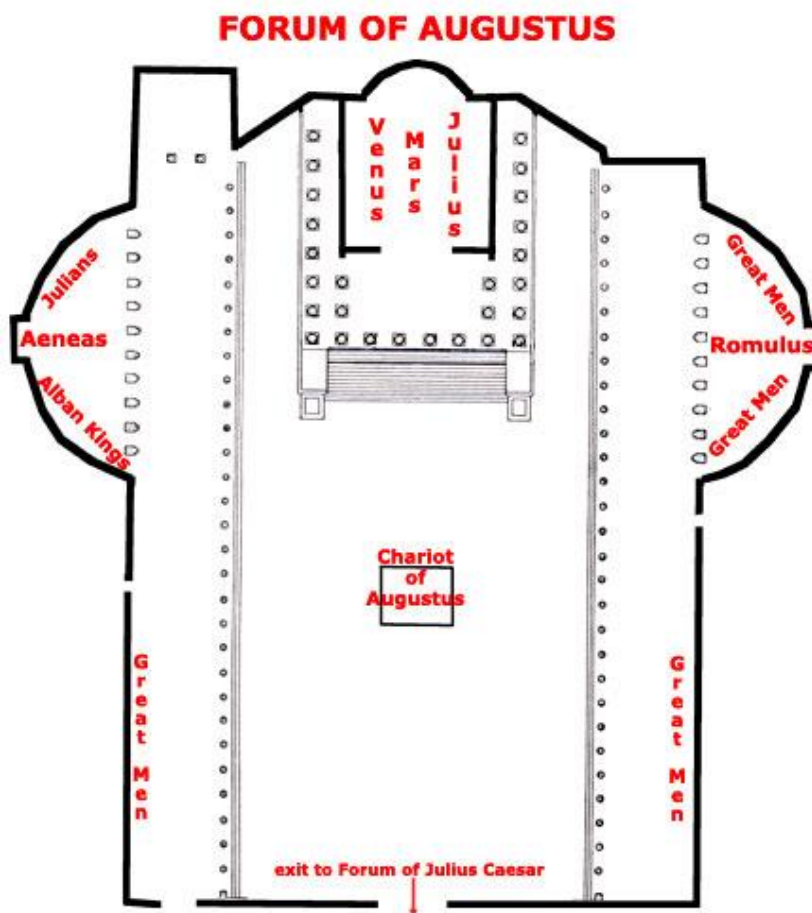
⁹³ Goldman-Petri, M. “Acting “Republican” under Augustus: The Coin Types of the *Gens Antistia*” in: Osgood, J, Morell, K and Welch, K. (ed.) *The Alternative Augustan Age* (Oxford 2019) 199-215, at 203.

would be united again. They would of course be united under his rule. To this end, Augustus sponsored the writing of poetry, the creation of art, as well as the building of monuments and statues dedicated to great men who had shown great prowess, skill, statesmanship or virtue. This was part of a deliberate reshaping of the public *memoria* to create *historia*. Augustus took great effort in ensuring monuments of battles could be directly linked to him and his contemporary age, through details such as hairstyles, up to date war equipment, or by displaying loot captured from defeated nations in wars and battles under his command.

The message here is clear: those who support Augustus and his reforms will be amply rewarded with riches, prestige, glory, and a place amongst the great men of Rome to be remembered. This, in combination with the gigantic focus on memory as we saw in the previous chapter of this thesis, made it hard to resist such a tempting offer. Augustus tried to show that he did not usher in a new system, but rather had restored the virtues of the old Republic, and with it, paved the way for more Romans to become virtuous. Monuments influencing this *memoria* only made this wilful pruning of the public memory that much more easily done, setting the stage for several particular monuments such as the Forum of Augustus, which soak the visitor in the message Augustus wanted to spread, and evoked the memory that Augustus wanted the visitor to have. This makes it possible to view several of these monuments as *lieux de mémoire*. The next chapter will focus exclusively on the Forum of Augustus, to further showcase the effect of monuments and memory culture as displayed in the thesis up to this point.

Chapter 3: The Forum of Augustus as part of a narrative

In this chapter, we zoom in on the Forum of Augustus. What message did Augustus want to convey with its construction? How do the virtues discussed in the previous chapter come into play here? How did Augustus place himself to be the key focal point of the monument? The most important question is right before us: How does the Forum evoke a specific cultural memory, and how did Augustus shape this memory to his liking? Can that manufactured memory serve a purpose for exemplification? This chapter aims to elaborate on the Forum of Augustus as a deliberate strategy in a narrative that the *princeps* wanted to spread. The way the Forum was exemplified by ancient writers comes into play in this chapter as well.



Plan of the Forum of Augustus.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Map of the Forum of Augustus, in: "The Art of Power", accessed from <http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/forumaugplan.html> on 14-2-2020.

The Forum of Augustus: Technical and Aesthetical details

The Forum of Augustus was a marble square, about 90 meters wide and 125 meters long, with a gallery of colonnades on both the western and the eastern side. At the north end of the square, the Temple of Mars Ultor is located. The temple was accessed through a large staircase, and the temple was held up by eight pillars, each about 20 meters tall. The pediment of the temple had a relief, with images of the gods. The forum was surrounded by walls. These walls were about 30 meters tall, giving a sense of an enclosed space.⁹⁵ The Forum had a single entrance, which was at the south end of the square. The Forum was apparently spectacularly beautiful, so much that it was entered in Pliny the Elder's list of the great wonders of Rome.⁹⁶

The Forum of Augustus and Temple of Mars Ultor, are both described as *manubialis*, or manubial buildings. Manubial buildings were buildings that were built with funds that came from a particular war, often promised or dedicated by Roman generals to a deity in said war.⁹⁷ The temple to Mars Ultor was built after Augustus, then named Octavian, had sworn to build Mars a temple should he win the battle of Philippi. This was in 42BC, when Octavian and his allies were battling those responsible for the assassination of Julius Caesar, Octavian's adoptive father.⁹⁸ Suetonius describes how Augustus was not able to procure all the land he needed to effectively realise his master plan, which would explain why the Forum of Augustus and the Temple of Mars Ultor are at several points aligned asymmetrically.⁹⁹

By 2BC, the Forum of Augustus along with the Temple of Mars Ultor, although at that point still unfinished, were dedicated.¹⁰⁰ By the time of the dedication, on both sides of the forum, a great variety of statues of Roman *summi viri* had been placed in a sort of "Hall of Fame", along with their *elogia*. The Forum was mostly constructed out of *peperino* tufa, along with marble imported from Carrara, which is located in modern-day Spain. On the east and west end of the Forum, a gallery of columns is featured, having several statues containing *elogia*. This gallery of columns is made out of a range of different kinds of stone material, imported from all across the Roman sphere of influence. *Africano* from Teos, at the present day western Turkish coast, *pavonazzetto* hailing from Docinim, in Asia Minor, as well as *giallo antico* from Numidia,

⁹⁵ Woolf, G. "Mars and Memory" in: Galinsky, K and Lapatin, K. (ed.) *Cultural Memories in the Roman Empire*, (Los Angeles 2015) 206-224, at 207.

⁹⁶ Pliny the Elder. *Natural History*, 36.102, translated by J. Bostock (Charleston 2009): "Should we not mention among our truly noble buildings...the Forum of Augustus...buildings the most beautiful the world has ever seen?"

⁹⁷ Popkin, M.L. *The Architecture of the Roman Triumph: Monuments, Memory and Identity*, (Cambridge 2016) 46.

⁹⁸ Ovid. *Fasti*, 5.569-575, translated by P. Wiseman (Oxford 2011): "From such great deeds was the *princeps* to be initiated. Stretching out his hands with the just army standing on one side, the conspirators on the other, he uttered the following speech: "If my father and Vesta's priest is my authority for war... be present, Mars!.. You will receive a temple and be called Avenger, if I am victorious." He made the vow and returns in joy from the routed foe."

⁹⁹ Suetonius. *Life of Augustus*, 56.2, translated by A.S. Kline (Manchester 2010): "He made his forum narrower than he had planned, because he did not venture to eject the owners of the neighbouring houses."

¹⁰⁰ Roth, L.M. *Understanding Architecture: Its Elements, History and Meaning*, (Boulder 1993) 222.

present day Algeria. The effect this had on the visitor is that one is “walking through Rome’s domain” which consisted of the entire Mediterranean, in a major display of the power and sovereign rule of the Romans, having vanquished all of their enemies.¹⁰¹

The focal point of the Forum of Augustus was the Temple of Mars Ultor, (Mars the Avenger), located at the north end of the Forum. The front of the temple had “AVGVSTVS” inscribed on it. From the steps of the temple, the visitor would look south at a rather gigantic statue of Augustus driving a chariot around, the base of which had been inscribed with the words “PATER PATRIAE”, meaning “Father of the Fatherland”. This is a significant moniker to adopt. All had been built to imbibe the visitor with the sense that Augustus’ Roman Empire was the natural and fated destination of the Roman republic.¹⁰² The Forum of Augustus could aesthetically be considered a style fusion between the Roman element and the Greek artistry. While it was not completely lined up and symmetric, the attempt was surely made, which is a very common theme in Roman architecture. The Temple of Mars Ultor has a Roman style cella and podium, but the steps to the temple and the columns supporting the temple are made to resemble the entrance to the Acropolis in Athens.¹⁰³ This mix of styles is also present in other Augustan public works, such as the Temple of Divus Julius or the Ara Pacis. Typical examples of this blend can be spotted in the columns, which have Pegasus heads, with wings turning into floral arrangements.

This all resulted in the Forum of Augustus not looking like an average run of the mill classic Roman building, but in fact ensured the Forum of Augustus looked like a vast and broad sweep across the Roman history: from the archaic style to the Hellenistic style, together with the Roman and Etruscan architectural conventions. Not just a blend of all the known world in style, material and architecture, but more importantly, a suitable place for the *princeps*, who safeguards and rules it all, to have left his mark.¹⁰⁴ This is further exacerbated by the usage of local stone, from Gabii, which held together the Forum on the most critical parts of the construction, symbolising how the entire Roman world was held up and supported by Italy. There was also plenty of space for rich adornments, demonstrated by using sheets made of marble to decorate the outer façade of the Temple of Mars Ultor, rather than solid blocks of marble being used. Through its architectural inspiration and the way the Forum was decorated, the suggestion that the Forum of Augustus was made to be the equivalent of the Acropolis in Athens arises. The glory of the Roman Empire is displayed proudly.¹⁰⁵ These notions are hard to trace in ancient writings, however. It is not completely illogical to think that this train of thought is a perception of modern-day writers, however easy it is to imagine being overwhelmed by the visual theatre of the Forum.

¹⁰¹ Papandrea, J. *Rome: A Pilgrim’s Guide to the Eternal City*, (Eugene 2012) 30.

¹⁰² Sear, F. *Roman Architecture*, (London 1982) 61.

¹⁰³ Galinsky, K. *Augustan Culture*, 200.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, 202.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem.

The usage of the Forum

When entering the Forum of Augustus, the visitor would at first be greeted with the sight of *spolia*, the conquered loot from Roman conquests. Augustus managed to recover the lost standards from Parthia in one of his wars. These standards were also displayed in the Temple of Mars Ultor, proving, at least to Ovid, that Augustus had avenged the Romans a second time.¹⁰⁶ When walking through either one of the galleries on the west or eastern side of the square, the visitor would be bombarded with statues of the ancient kings of Rome, the kings of Alba Longa, ancient and mythical Romans such as Romulus and Aeneas, generals who had received triumphs in the past, as well as a small contingent of women. The statues of Romulus and Aeneas both had a major place, having received a niche to themselves, surrounded by, on Romulus side, several statues of the great men of Rome's past. On Aeneas' side, statues of the kings of Alba Longa congregated together with statues of the Julian dynasty, Augustus' direct ancestors, with Ascanius as the one who adopted the name Julius, leading all the way down to Julius Caesar and Augustus himself.¹⁰⁷ Mars, the father of Romulus and Remus is considered an ancestor the Roman people, while Venus is considered an ancestor to the line of Aeneas, supposedly ending up in the Julian dynasty. Perhaps this is why Augustus' description of PATER PATRIAE on the statue in the centre might have been apt in his eyes. No matter how one looks at it, it is hard not to consider Augustus taking a central place in the Roman *historia* through this square, either through his valour, through his dynasty, or through his accord with the gods.

It is quite well-described what usage the Forum of Augustus must have had during its time. Cassius Dio describes how Augustus states that:

“τούς τε ἐκ τῶν παίδων ἐξιόντας καὶ ἐς τοὺς ἐφήβους ἐγγραφομένους ἐκεῖσε πάντως ἀφικνεῖσθαι, καὶ τοὺς ἐπὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς τὰς ἐκδήμους στελλομένους ἐκεῖθεν ἀφορμαῖσθαι, τὰς τε γνῶμας τὰς περὶ τῶν νικητηρίων ἐκεῖ τὴν βουλὴν ποιεῖσθαι, καὶ τοὺς πέμψαντας αὐτὰ τῷ Ἄρει τούτῳ καὶ τὸ σκῆπτρον καὶ τὸν στέφανον ἀνατιθέναι, καὶ ἐκείνους τε καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς τὰς ἐπινικίους τιμὰς λαμβάνοντας ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ χαλκοῦς ἵστασθαι, ἃν τέ ποτε σημεῖα στρατιωτικὰ ἐς πολεμίους ἀλόντα ἀνακομισθῇ, ἐς τὸν ναὸν αὐτὰ τίθεσθαι.”

“...those who were passing from the class of boys and were being enrolled among the youths of military age should invariably visit the Forum; that those who were sent out to commands abroad should make that their starting-point; that the senate should take its votes there in regard to the granting of triumphs, and that the victors after celebrating them should dedicate to this Mars their sceptre and their crown; that such victors and all others who receive triumphal honours should have their statues in bronze erected in the Forum; that in case military standards captured by the enemy were ever recovered they should be placed in

¹⁰⁶ Ovid. *Fasti*, 5.590-595, translated by P. Wiseman (Oxford 2011): “He...recaptured the standards recognised by their own people...Duly were both a temple and a title to the god who had twice avenged us, and the well-deserved honour pays the debt of the vow.”

¹⁰⁷ Gonçalves, A.T.M. *The Forum of Augustus and its instructive character: the history of Rome recreated in stone*, (Goiás 2017) 6.

the temple; that a festival should be celebrated besides the steps of the temple by the cavalry commanders of each year.”¹⁰⁸

This description by Cassius Dio is quite close to the way Suetonius describes the Forum of Augustus in his *Life of Augustus*. According to Suetonius, Augustus himself claimed that he built the Forum for a particular reason:

“Publica opera plurima exstruxit, e quibus vel praecipua: forum cum aede Martis Ultoris, templum Apollinis in Palatio, aedem Tonantis Iovis in Capitolio. Fori exstruendi causa fuit hominum et iudiciorum multitudo, quae videbatur non sufficientibus duobus etiam tertio indigere; itaque festinatius necdum perfecta Martis aede publicatum est cautumque, ut separatim in eo publica iudicia et sortitiones iudicum fierent. Aedem Martis bello Philippiensi pro ultione paterna suscepto voverat; sanxit ergo, ut de bellis triumphisque hic consuleretur senatus, provincias cum imperio petitori hinc deducerentur, quique victores redissent, huc insignia triumphorum conferrent.”

“He built many public works, in particular the following: his forum with the temple of Mars the Avenger, the temple of Apollo on the Palatine, and the fane of Jupiter the Thunderer on the Capitol. His reason for building the forum was the increase in the number of the people and of cases at law, which seemed to call for a third forum, since two were no longer adequate. Therefore it was opened to the public with some haste, before the temple of Mars was finished, and it was provided that the public prosecutions be held there apart from the rest, as well as the selection of jurors by lot. He had made a vow to build the temple of Mars in the war of Philippi, which he undertook to avenge his father; accordingly he decreed that in it the senate should consider wars and claims for triumphs, from it those who were on their way to the provinces with military commands should be escorted, and to it victors on their return should bear the tokens of their triumphs.”¹⁰⁹

The civil war had passed, but certainly not the wars of conquest. This brought along a shift in the use of imagery appropriate for the *princeps*' wishes. Augustus first wanted to build upon the names of the great Republican heroes of yore, with the final goal to add himself on to that list. He did so while focusing on his own splendour, power and gigantic wealth. Finally, Augustus wanted to shape the future. Roman nobility that had not been born yet would enter the Forum of Augustus when they were to reach their age of adolescence, and pass by through the galleries filled with statues of *summi viri*, “top men”.¹¹⁰

The Senate would gather at the Forum of Augustus to discuss matters of war, the generals commanding the armies would set out from the Forum, and triumphant victors would dedicate their loot to Mars on the Forum as well. By doing this, Augustus connected his own image with the glory of conquest and victory to anyone who would come across the Forum in its prime, filled with *spolia*, surrounded by statues of *summi viri* who were labelled with their military

¹⁰⁸ Cassius Dio. *Roman History*, 55.10.2, translated by E. Cary (Cambridge 1927).

¹⁰⁹ Suetonius. *Life of Augustus*, 29.1-2, translated by J.C. Rolfe (London 1914).

¹¹⁰ Woolf, G. “Mars and Memory”, 206-224, at 220.

victories and their many exploits on their *elogia*. The young Roman aristocrat would see noble senators declaring wars, courageous generals set out and glorious armies return in triumph, all on this Forum. Given such a spectacle to behold, who would not want to have his image join those illustrious ranks of *summi viri*, to be remembered forever? The purpose for using *summi viri* as “teachers of values” is quite clear. Mars, looking onto his spoils, surrounded by victorious men, all linking Roman *historia* and Roman *memoria*, all retrofitted to link to Augustus. One could say that this is the ideal location for indoctrination.¹¹¹ Senators would see the “mold” for glory and fame, setting a sort of guideline for ambition, allowing their own course and career to be following along a beaten path set out for them by the *princeps*, and according to his preference. Augustus believed that this, the setting of *exempla* for other men to weigh their own contributions and dedication to Roman life to, as well as this guideline for living one’s life, was possible through usage of Roman *historia*, allowing Augustus to place himself firmly in the centre of the *exempla* used.¹¹²

Romanising the past with a theatre of *memoria*

By way of the Forum of Augustus, Augustus tried to prove himself to be the “restorer” of the old traditions, reclaiming military valour and *virtus* from the clutches of the abyss, and granting the conditions for glory back to the citizens of Rome. Giving the statues of *summi viri* an instructing role to Roman citizenry and creating the Forum of Augustus as a place where *memoria* meets up with *historia* allowed Augustus to create an image of an ever-victorious and always glorious Rome, one in which he was at the centre point, but also one where the visitor could become a part of this great long line of heroes. A glorious past, free from the shackles of a civil war that had taken place mere decades before, and a shining future to be guided towards with the help of the *princeps*. The large focus on the “reclamation” of virtue, *virtus*, in this context a military affair, was meant to show that the new-born Roman Empire would be able to not only match great conquests from the past, but had in fact recovered some of the essence of what made Rome great. The large territorial expansions taking place under Augustus, as well as the *spolia* of the conquests being brought back to the Forum of Augustus, to be proudly displayed, certainly would help propel this carefully crafted narrative of military superiority. All of these visions of the past are something in particular useful to those who are unable to read. The average Roman citizen would not consider it critically important whether or not the current ruler had any legal basis to rule them, but would be concerned whether or not their leader would be good for them, and would improve their lives. More importantly, for Augustus, it was important to give these people the idea that they needed his guidance and leadership.¹¹³ Influencing the *memoria* of the average Roman citizen to retrofit Augustus as part of the “eternal” *historia* of the city would help with that endeavour. For the elites, attention is mostly focused on the benefits that come with the regime of the leader. Autocracy was an accepted standard, but the stability that came with the Augustan peace was unique,

¹¹¹ Ibidem, 206-224, at 221.

¹¹² Luce, T.J. “Livy, Augustus and the Forum Augustum” in: Raaflaub, K.A. and Toher, M. (ed.) *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, (Berkeley 1990) 123-138, at 129.

¹¹³ Wallace-Hadrill, A. “The Emperor and his Virtues” in: *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 30.3, (1981), 298-323, at 299.

given how long the peace lasted, compared to Augustus' predecessors.¹¹⁴ When looking at the Forum of Augustus in the context of military might, a link to Vergil has been made. In particular, book 6 of the *Aeneid* lists a selection of great Romans, which might have served as inspiration for the "Hall of Fame" displayed on the Forum of Augustus.¹¹⁵

The Forum of Augustus was the final piece to complete the rebuilding of Rome. Other temples and major buildings which had been damaged or left in bad condition since the civil wars, such as the Ara Pacis and the Pantheon of Agrippa had been restored prior to the completion of the Forum.¹¹⁶ This, in turn, gave Augustus the power to point to other buildings he had restored or rebuilt by that time and use those buildings as evidence for his intention of restoring the *res publica* as well. By placing great focus on the fact that Augustus had purchased the land used for the Forum privately, rather than driving off the previous owners of the land, Augustus once again tried to show that he respected and protected the *res publica*, as the ownership of property was one of the key facets of the *res publica* he wanted to appear to be restoring to former glory. The state guaranteed the *libertas* of its inhabitants. The Temple of Mars Ultor had the two founding myths of Rome on either side, with the name Augustus etched in the front of the temple, right in the middle.

With that, the story had been completed. Augustus had created a direct link from a mythical origin story, a connection to divinity and his own lineage, using those same deities to show a shared past, as well as a shared destiny for all Roman people. He had appropriated Greek deities, as well as Romulus and Aeneas to legitimise his own imperial power.¹¹⁷ From this point onward, no reorganisation of the state could be held without keeping the *summi viri* in the back of the mind, as they were the ones that made Rome great in the first place. The constant reminding of the past was now a cog in the machine which ensured Augustus and his dynasty had a firm place in this version of the past and would be an unavoidable facet of the future.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

How did the newly-minted *princeps* use the Forum of Augustus to suit a narrative of dependency, stability, recovery of virtue, and glory? By focusing on making the Forum of Augustus the most magnificent structure he could have possibly built, as a final crown jewel upon his other many works of restauration and reconstruction that had taken place by that point, Augustus was able to visually impress any visitor to his Forum of Augustus. The materials gathered from all across the known world created a sense of a vast empire, the blend of styles and architecture created a sense of a long-held tradition being respected and culminating into the structure. The *princeps* wanted to create a sense of cohesiveness, with himself as the focal point right in the middle of it all. He did this through multiple routes. The first of which is unifying two creation myths for the city of Rome, one being Romulus and the other being

¹¹⁴ Ibidem, at 319.

¹¹⁵ Chaplin, J.D. *Livy's Exemplary History*, (Oxford 2000) 192.

¹¹⁶ Geiger, J. *The First Hall of Fame. A study of the statues in the Forum Augustum*, (Boston 2008) 57.

¹¹⁷ Revell, L. *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*, (Cambridge 2009) 107.

¹¹⁸ Geiger, J. *The First Hall of Fame*, 35.

Aeneas, creating a way for both of these myths to be directly linked up to his own dynasty and more importantly, to his own person. He did this by filling the Forum of Augustus to the brim with statues of *summi viri*, top men, great men who had been of service to the city of Rome and its inhabitants. By placing his own dynasty, linked to divinity, amongst these heroes of old, he tried to show that the deeds done by him were just as equal as those great ones. It also allowed Augustus to prune and make deliberate edits in the way he wanted the *historia* of the Roman people to be presented. People who, in Augustus' eyes, proved problematic could be effectively, over time, be made far less significant in public *memoria* by not having their statue be represented at the Forum of Augustus.

All in all, the structure of the Forum of Augustus leads to the visitor being drenched in a visual and historical spectacle, just the way as it was intended by Augustus. If one were to look at the Temple of Mars Ultor, he would need to look past a gigantic statue of Augustus himself driving a chariot around. If one were to visit the Temple of Mars Ultor, they would see the temple was filled with the loot of conquest, further solidifying the idea that with Augustus at the helm, the glory of war and the support of Mars was at the beck and call of the Romans. This was further exacerbated by having Senate meetings about war as well as generals setting off for war take place at the Forum of Augustus, by imperial policy. The dimensions explained by Pierre Nora for *lieux de mémoire* all come together at this place, in symbolism running rampant across the location, in deliberate *memoria* being thrust upon the visitor, in the functionality of the Forum, and in the material splendour of the place. The Forum of Augustus was, exactly as intended, a veritable marvel to behold.

Conclusion: The site of Memory

The leading thought going into this thesis was to showcase the massive influence the newly risen emperor of Rome had on his subjects, and even far beyond his reign on our own contemporary time. To this end, this thesis aimed to look into the Forum of Augustus, because this particular location seemed like the perfect example of memory culture flowing into tangible influences felt by the Roman citizens.

The central question to this thesis was: “In what way does the Forum of Augustus exude the tendencies of a *lieu de mémoire*?”

This has been examined in a funnel-like way, with the first chapter focusing on memory culture of the late Roman Republic and early Roman Empire in general, narrowing this down to monuments and Augustan influence in the second chapter, and finally narrowing down even further, examining the Forum of Augustus in the third chapter, with the concepts and terms discussed in earlier chapters.

To see how memory culture existed in the late Roman Republic and early Roman Empire, several instances of memorisation were examined. Memory culture in this particular era was defined by the sum of major Roman traditions, called *memoria*. This *memoria* was for Roman citizens very easy to equalise with *historia*, the common history of the Roman people. Memory was not an exclusive business, left only for wealthy elites. While these elites got to enjoy and relish in facets of memory culture far more often than common people, this does not mean that ordinary Romans were totally oblivious to memory in Rome. Ancient authors of the works we read in our contemporary age usually wrote them down after having cited the works publicly as a performance, rather than something to be read at one’s own leisure.¹¹⁹ This makes the ability to read or write, often seen as something that fosters inaccessibility to these works among the greater populace, essentially a minor factor in reviewing memory culture, as we know that these performances would be done publicly, allowing people to repeat these performances, speech, pieces of poetry or experiences at a festival to others orally. The city was also adorned with temples, crypts, statues, also built in commemoration of events, victories, or deities. These buildings often do not need any written texts in order to imbue any intended message to the viewer. Nor did these works of art need to be completely objectively true in order to send a message to any onlooker. Writers like Cicero would add certain bits to the histories he was writing in order to make them more compelling and enjoyable to read and listen to.

Memoria, however, is a concept that has its limits. Memory is categorised in this era, that of the late Roman Republic and the Early Roman Empire as being something that is not wholly incomparable to a database or an archive. Roman citizens would visit places, and in these places would be reminded of the people in their past, such as a great Roman citizen in a public crypt, or a memory of a battle in a triumphal arch. However, this particular view is one of several. Writers such as Livy held substantially different views than Cicero when it came to the

¹¹⁹ Wiseman, T.P. “Popular Memory”, 43-62, at 62.

memory of the Romans, mostly due to Livy writing several decades after Cicero, with the end of the Roman Republic having come about at that point. What's most important about memory culture in Rome is that, at least insofar as the *memoria* goes, there have been very much controlled attempts to control the view of the nation's past, benefiting the elites of Rome.¹²⁰ What is remembered, but more importantly, what is not remembered, and would therefore face oblivion in a few generations, when the Romans of that era would have no recollection of said event, thus leaving cultural memory of this time in the hands of the elite.

Weaponising memory

In order to make sure that important events would be remembered, the elites of Romans essentially "weaponised" memory. By exemplifying the deeds and heroic acts of past Romans, commemorating those in stone statues or another kind of monument, one could set a standard for others to follow. This would of course also allow the leading authority to exemplify those Romans they agreed with, while simultaneously allowing any dissidents to fade into obscurity over time. The construction of monuments and public places such as bathhouses worked twofold: It allowed the public to reflect on an event or have a facility to make their lives more enjoyable. At the same time, the builder's name would get inextricably linked to said monument or building.¹²¹ In particular, statues were of great importance, having *elogia*, the written sum of their great deeds, often affixed to the pedestal on which the statue stood. Romans of this time believed that the prosperity, security and wealth of the Roman people was due to them being a virtuous people. On account of their virtue, *virtus*, their providence was based and something that kept it that way. Therefore, it was important to inspire the next generations of Romans to be virtuous. This is something which the new *princeps*, Augustus, eagerly latched onto at the onset of the new Roman Empire. By "reinventing" the Roman past, he was able to not just scrub clean any imperfections the Romans may have had in their past, but also to present himself as the saviour and guiding hand to a prosperous future for Rome. He utilised the knowledge of Roman *memoria*, deliberately conflated it with their *historia*, in order to create a sense of continuity from the Roman Republic, while at the same time moving away from the Republic into the Empire the Roman state would become. These monuments, depicting exemplified heroes of the past, glorious conquests and blessings of Roman deities often showed a fictionalised and idealised version of the past, one that was in agreement with whatever message the ruling authority wanted to push.¹²²

Augustus was able to use his power to rebuild the city of Rome into something that suited him better and aligned with the vision he had for the city. Roman citizens would unite, and discard their old grievances under his rule. Augustus promoted writing, creating works of art and building of monuments that would show off men of great virtue, or of great skill. He would then link these men, these *summi viri*, to his own personage, ensuring that these depictions of

¹²⁰ Gowing, A. *Empire and Memory*, 26.

¹²¹ Kousser, R. "Monument and Memory in Ancient Greece and Rome", 33-48, at 33.

¹²² Ibidem, at 40.

great men could be linked to him and his time, by having the depiction add details such as hairstyles or equipment from their own time.¹²³

Supporting Augustus and the new Empire would be rewarded with riches, glory as well as opportunities to place yourself among the *summi viri* of Rome, to have a legacy that will never be forgotten. It would be hard for any ambitious Roman to say no to an offer like that. Because Augustus framed this new style of governance not as a drastic alteration, but rather as a continuation of the Republic in a better form, he managed to placate a majority of Roman elites. He had “restored” the Republic and in doing this allowed more Romans to become virtuous. He had created the conditions for an idealised “mold” of the city of Rome, a way for people to identify themselves as being part of a great Empire that was always victorious and virtuous, reimagining their own past to better suit this narrative. Augustus had created a state sponsored *memoria* which artists could use to write *historia* with. The wilful editing of the cultural memory and shared past of the nation makes it very much possible to see certain building projects such as the Forum of Augustus as *lieux de mémoire*.

The Forum of Augustus

The Forum of Augustus is the masterpiece in this grand narrative Augustus tried to spin. The Forum was lined with statues of *summi viri* and their *elogia* on both sides, leading up to the northern end, where the Temple of Mars Ultor was located. The statues great men included Romulus and Aeneas, both featured in legendary founding myths of Rome. Augustus attempted to link both of these myths to his own personage, by having statues of his direct ancestors surround the statue of Aeneas, so that he could claim a link to divinity. The “mold” described earlier was envisaged with the statue of Augustus himself, riding a chariot, before the Temple of Mars Ultor, filled with the loot of conquest from the wars that Rome fought and won. The visitor is bombarded with imagery upon entering, showing the idealised picture: a perfect history of the Roman people and their natural heroic and valorous course into the glorious Roman Empire it was always meant to become. This Forum was used for military gatherings, Senate meetings about war, and the place where generals would set off for war, linking the place to victory, but also, that same victory to Augustus again, allowing Augustus to claim the victories of the Roman people as his own and setting an example of what great Romans should do in accordance with his own preferences.¹²⁴ The Forum was made out of a variety of materials from across the Roman world and built to incorporate many styles to visually impress the visitor.

Here, *memoria* is referenced directly, but only in the way that Augustus prefers it to be, conflating it with *historia*, trying to pass it off as one and the same. In visiting the Forum of Augustus, the visitor is given the impression that all will be right with the Roman people as long as you place your faith in the hands of Augustus.

¹²³ Elsner, J. “Cultural Memory, Religious Practice, and the Invention of Tradition”, 101-115, at 101.

¹²⁴ Woolf, G. “Mars and Memory”, 206-224, at 221.

All of this ties back into the dimensions Pierre Nora set out for his *lieux de mémoire*. In order to qualify as a site of memory, the place must adhere to three dimensions. The place must occupy a material dimension, a symbolic dimension and a practical dimension.¹²⁵ All of these dimensions are fulfilled at the Forum of Augustus. The material dimension is fulfilled by the visual splendour of the Forum, with the marble gathered from across the Roman world and the many statues of *summi viri* strewn across the Forum, together with the *spolia* of the wars placed in the Temple of Mars Ultor. The symbolic dimension is fulfilled by ways of the *elogia* showing the virtues of the *summi viri*, the placement of the statues of Aeneas and Romulus tying this to Augustus' dynasty and the Temple of Mars Ultor housing the standards recovered from the Parthians, with the statue of Augustus himself adorning the front of the temple. Finally, the practical dimension is fulfilled by Augustus' decree that the Forum be used for military purposes and having the Senate gather there to discuss on matters of war. This elevates the Forum of Augustus from merely a monument to a site of memory, a place where the governing body deliberately tries to create a memory, because they are of personal benefit to the continuation of said constructed memory. The site of memory is a key feature in implementing this memory into any visitor. The Forum of Augustus exudes all the tendencies of a *lieu de mémoire*, being built as part of a longer on-going process of reinventing the Roman past to be used for the benefit of the new *princeps*, having that memory be pruned and edited to facilitate an easier implementation into the subconscious of the visitor, as well as being a very visually striking place, drawing visitors to it. This malleability of memory means that the *princeps* was able to put the Forum of Augustus to good use in securing his own legitimacy and proving an example for his own new dynasty of emperors. Further future research into this deliberate pruning of social memory by the *princeps* could prove very fruitful in gaining insight in the way that the Romans dealt with memory culture. Perhaps the focus can be placed more on not just Rome itself, but messages spread throughout the Roman world, for instance, on coins.

The memory of Augustus would endure for many generations after his own, and the Roman Empire would continue for several centuries. His grand vision was a success, at least in that regard.

¹²⁵ Nora, P. *Realms of Memory*, XVII.

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