



## **Myth at the heart of the Roman Empire**

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How and why did ancient Romans use myth to validate their power? Emperor Augustus legitimised his rule by entwining his own ancestry with the mythical stories of Rome's foundation, and created a divine aura around Rome as capital of the vast empire. This album visits key emblems associated with Rome's beginnings: the Forum and the Capitoline Hill with its statue of the she-wolf and Romulus and Remus; the Emperor Augustus's palace and ceremonial altar, and the 17th Century D'Arpino frescos of foundation myths commissioned by Pope Innocent X to underpin his authority. By monumentalising and glorifying their real and legendary past, Romans painted their own history and this continues to encapsulate Roman identity today. This material forms part of the Open University course A330 Myth in the Greek and Roman worlds