# CORVUS

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# EDITORS

*Editor-in-Chief*

**NIĠEL KLEMENČIČ-PUGLISEVICH** is in his final year of study for his BA (Hons.) History and Greek & Roman Studies with minors in Archaeology and Medieval & Early Modern Studies at Carleton University. Following graduation, Niġel will be pursuing archaeological work throughout the Mediterranean and beginning his MA in Public History at the University of Western Ontario. His research centres around the history and long-term effects of colonial archaeology in the central and eastern Mediterranean regions, looking particularly at Malta and Jordan under British occupation.

*Managing Editor*

**ELOISE GREENFIELD** is a third-year student pursuing a double major in Greek and Roman Studies & History. Envious of their memorization techniques, she is most interested in the tradition of oral poetry and the epic poems of Homer. This is her second year as a Corvus editor.

*Senior Editors*

**ZOË BREWERTON** is a third-year student in the Bachelor of Humanities program with a minor in Greek and Roman Studies. After her undergraduate degree, she plans to either pursue a Master's degree in Classics or continue on to complete a law degree. Her current research interests include magic and material culture, mystery religions, Greek tragedy, and examining race, gender, and sexuality in the ancient world.

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**MARTINA PETERSON** is a 4th year Linguistics student at Carleton and is editing for CORVUS for the second time. She has always had a huge interest in language history and variation and has a great appreciation for the study of history in all its forms. She is passionate about academic and educational communication and aspires to one day work professionally in publishing.

# CONTRIBUTORS

**SAIBA ANAND** is a third year student studying political science, classical civilizations, as well as art history at the University of Toronto. Saiba's research interests include, but are not limited to, ancient political theory-- as it combines aspects from both of her majors--, religion and chthonic cults, colonization in antiquity, as well as analyzing the socio-political circumstances of Greek literature. Saiba hopes to continue studying ancient material, either through attending graduate school and working in academia, or by pursuing museum studies. Her paper displays a combination of her research interests, and she hopes that its publication will open up new pathways of discourse and discussion among Classics students and the Classics community.

**CHLOE CARROLL** is a fourth-year undergraduate student at Carleton University in the Department of English Language and Literature. Chloe's interests are vast, looking at works from antiquity to contemporary and experimental forms of expression in literature. She will be continuing her studies and exploring her interests as a Master's student of English literature in the upcoming year.

**CHRISTOPHER DEAN** is a part-time student (3rd yr. standing) in Greek and Roman Studies, who works full-time in the field of risk management. Christopher discovered his interest in Classics when he took a course as an elective in the final year of his first BA-so returning to Greek and Roman Studies has been a long-time goal. Christopher plans to continue his studies of ancient civilizations by participating in fieldwork, and continuing to publish, as he finishes his degree.

**COLLEEN DUNN** is a part-time 4th year student at Carleton University pursuing a double major honours degree in Greek and Roman Studies and Religion. She is a 40 year veteran of pediatric diagnostic imaging and enrolled at Carleton post retirement. Her courses, along with life experience, provide inspiration for her poetry. Her goal is the pursuit of knowledge and a greater understanding of the world.

**PASCALE LARIVIERE** is a first year undergraduate student majoring in Greek & Roman Studies and Psychology at Carleton University and an emerging poet and playwright. Her interests include gender and sexuality in the ancient world, and the literature of ancient Greece and Rome. Her interest in ancient theatre and poetry comes from her own background as a poet and playwright, having previously had her work read on-stage by theatre companies in Vancouver. She is thrilled to have her poetry published in Corvus and hopes to publish academic work as she continues her degree.

**ISABEL VITKIN** is a fourth-year student at Western University, completing an Honours Specialization in American History and a minor in Classics. Her research interests include the decline of the Roman empire and its various colourful emperors during late antiquity. She also loves examining the significant linkages between American and Roman civilizations. Isabel will be pursuing Teacher's College upon graduating, specializing in History and English.

**SOPHIE VO** is a third year at Emory University in the Department of Ancient Mediterranean Studies. She is double majoring in Biology and Ancient Mediterranean Studies with future plans to attend an MD-PhD program in archaeology and medicine. She is currently an intern for the Greek and Roman Department at the Carlos Museum working on the upcoming exhibit "Making an Impression: The Art and Craft of Engraved Roman Gemstones." Her current research focuses on the Roman othering of Egypt through Orientalizing features in literature and archaeology, specifically in Roman gemstones and elegies. She loves ancient Mediterranean studies and loves to speak to anyone who shares her passion!

**ALENA WILSON** recently graduated with a bachelor's degree in Communications and Media Studies from Carleton University. Throughout her undergraduate career, she found her passion in religion studies and frequently combined both fields of study in her academic work. She thoroughly enjoys researching how people discuss religion in social media, and has engaged heavily in ancient texts as well. As a polyglot, she has started learning 5 languages, most recently learning Koine Greek in the hopes to be able to use it in the Religion and Public Life master's program at Carleton.

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This edition of Corvus is a special one for me personally. It comes at the end of my undergraduate experience at Carleton University's Greek & Roman Studies programme and marks my third year involved in the amazing student enterprise that is our very own undergraduate journal. The three years that I've been involved have each been affected by COVID-19 in some capacity, which have brought upon delays and missed opportunities for us to gather and celebrate our achievements. These challenges do not mean that Corvus itself suffered—in fact, I think it has bolstered greater interest.

Corvus has provided some degree of a community to the Greek & Roman Studies students at Carleton during these years, serving as the main hub of GRS student activity and, indeed, student academic achievement! Most of the articles published in this volume, as in previous ones, are Carleton students who have been involved with GRS to some extent, either socially or through courses, or perhaps it is even their major or minor. This year, Corvus is also publishing three students from other departments, two of which are elsewhere in Ontario, and one from out of the country.

It brings me a lot of pride to see Corvus growing each year and becoming a place for students to share their research, even those students from outside of the journal's primary home at the College of the Humanities at Carleton.

Myself and the other crucial members of the Corvus team would like to thank the College of the Humanities for their generous support of this initiative. As well, major thanks to the students and alumni who have kept Corvus strong for all these years. I would also like to thank each member of the Corvus editing team for their dedication and hard work, because this certainly would not be possible without each of them.

I leave Corvus in the loving hands of its remaining editors and I am so excited to see how it evolves in the years to come!

Sincerely,

Niġel Klemenčič-Puglisevich

Editor-in-Chief, Corvus

# THE UNITING OF ROMAN LITERATURE AND IDENTITY
# BY WAY OF OTHE RING THE FOREIGN

## SAIBA ANAND

### *Abstract*

*Throughout the numerous years in which Roman literature flourished and was produced, many of the authors that defined this category did not truly identify as from the city of Rome. Instead, many authors were members of the empire but neglected to be Roman themselves. That said, the definition of Roman literature encompasses more than the texts, writings, and poetries having been produced in the empire or constituencies under Roman rule. A key illustration of the genre of Roman literature and its connectivity is identified through the definition of what is evidently not Roman, but rather foreign in its alterity. By uniting a Roman identity through what is not Roman was a key factor in literature of the Roman period, and thus through Caesar's The Gallic War, Pliny the Elder's Natural History, and Lucian's A True History, we can see unity among the texts as Roman due to their relation to the "other"; either through a superior gaze or an unbiased one.*

Throughout Roman Literature and its authorship, the clarification of the Roman identity and attempts to connect to its definition are varying, diverse, and vast according to the time, space, genre, and audience in which the context of the text resides. Yet, many Roman texts use descriptions and characterizations of non-Romans as a uniting identity of the Roman individual, defining the Roman self in contrast to what it is distinctly not. Demonstrated specifically in Caesar's *The Gallic War* and Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*, the physical illustration of the appearance and behaviours of non-Romans is a focal point in formulating a separation from—and superiority over—foreign identities, compared to the intended audience of the text. However, despite the often inferior and

disparaging descriptions, the uniting factor of characterising the non-Roman in relation to the Roman, can stray from its desire to place supremacy and authority over the foreign. Displayed in Lucian's *A True History,* the possibility of critiquing this form of portrayal through specific genres juxtaposes the narratives produced in historiographical and ethnographic contexts. Thus, the othering of the non-Roman and its interpretation illustrates the Roman identity through literature and contrast, while working as a unifying aspect of Roman literature itself; either working to claim superiority and dominance, or critique and oppose this pattern of barbarizing the foreign.

Caesar's recounting of many significant battles, invasions, and military tactics pointedly in his narration in book 5 of *The Gallic Wars*, which chronicles the second British Expedition, when the Romans encountered the inhabitants of Kent, claiming that they were "by far the most civilised."[1] Although through Caesar's perspective there are possible civilised and commendable aspects of the people of Kent, the passage remains descriptive of the divergence of features and behaviour, through tone and language, from those particularly Roman. Caesar illustrates an unflattering and didactic tone throughout the passage of section 14, using specific wording and language such as "their way of life" that works to initially separate the people of Kent from Caesar, Romans, and thus the reader.[2] The didactic tone arises from Caesar's position and description on the people of Kent, as he delineates on the group from a detached perspective, as if he were studying them rather than interacting with them. Preempting the passage as if he had vast

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[1] Knox, Peter E., and McKeown, J. C.. *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. p. 153
[2] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.153

knowledge on each community and their culture within the area, Caesar states: "of all the island's inhabitants,"[3] speaking from a position of superiority and legitimacy over such populations. The didactic tone Caesar presents removes the people of Kent from the level of the author, and thus the level of Roman-ness. The group requires analysis and examination to be understood, as they are still perceived to be definitively different, and therefore lesser than the Roman identity.

The appearance and behaviour of the people of Kent are also strategically described, in order to alienate the group on physical and cultural characteristics that align with being unadvanced and barbarous. Despite Caesar's lack of outright superior language, the tone has underlying arrogance, as seen when describing the physical features of their "long hair" and how they "shave their bodies;" Caesar precedes this statement of the people of Kent by describing how they "appear more frightening in battle," and choose to "clothe themselves in animal skins," aligning the people within an intense and violent context, attaching their looks to the aggressive nature of wartime.[4] Furthermore, the appearance of the people of Kent is diminished by Caesar in a veiled didactic tone, as the commentary that they were the "most civilised," formulates a notion that they have the potential of decorum in a Roman definition that is wasted due to their choice of appearance.[5] Caesar's particular congruence of the extremes of the people of Kent and their blue-painted skin for wartime, contributes to the imagery of the group as extreme and barbaric, facilitated by the precisely chosen behaviours Caesar comments on

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[3] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.153
[4] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.*p.153
[5] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.*p.153

as distinctive of the group. The description of the lack of agriculture produced within Kent, replaced with the consumption of milk and meat, places the group as reminiscent of 'normal' but still inferior and unelite compared to Romans, as the Romans idealised agriculture, produce, and farming, while also attaching the form of food production to intellectual and technological advancements.[6] The text focuses on the appearance of the people of Kent as decisions, rather than specific unchangeable aspects, fixating on features such as the length of their hair, their selection of facial hair, lack of body hair, and painted skin when in battle.

Caesar moreover criticises the significant societal institutions of marriage and family within the text, creating an image of the people of Kent as absurd, stating they "share their wives in common (...) any offspring they have are held to be the children of him to whom the maiden was bought first."[7] The underlying comparison and judgement from a Roman bias of such poignant societal institutions alienates the behaviours of the people of Kent, as marriage and children within the Roman world were sacred to citizenship, the role of masculinity through fatherhood within the family, and societal norms.[8] Caesar writes the people of Kent through a strong Roman perspective, criticising the features of the people according to what is most different, alienating, and barbarian. He also emphasises that despite inherent appearance, the choices and behaviours of them

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[6] Carlo Scardino. "Agriculture in the Classical World." in: *Oxford Bibliographies*. In *obo* in Classics,*.,* July 28, 2018.
[7] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature*. p.153
[8] Mary Harlow. "Roman Family." in: *Oxford Bibliographies*. In *obo* in Classics, January 30, 2014.

are the key dividing aspect from Romans, who remain elite, superior, and preferable in contrast.

Pliny similarly formulates a Roman bias and superiority over numerous groups in *Natural History*, however, compared to Caesar's concealed cavalier tone, Pliny's attempts at ethnographic descriptions and inherent comparison are openly derogatory and dehumanising of the non-Roman. While Pliny and Caesar share a didactic tone, Pliny's tone, in Book 7 section 9, is evidently pompous and diminishing towards the Scythians, establishing them not only as non-Roman, but even non-human. Pliny distinctly creates a goal in his text to dehumanise non-Romans, signifying and implementing the notion that the most human, and thus better, group is the Romans, as they are not animalistic, barbaric, or uncivilised like the groups Pliny attempts to describe; in the following quotation, he insinuates that what is human is equivalent to what is Roman: "a foreigner barely passes for a human being!"[9] Pliny's first claim against the Scythian people is that they "eat human flesh," immediately attributing presumed characteristics to the Scythians as inhumane, barbaric, and inferior to the Romans and the values of the audience.[10] The introduction of Pliny's claim that Scythian tribes also practice "human sacrifice, which is only one step removed from cannibalism" explicitly illustrates these tribes as immoral, barbaric, and uncivilised.[11] Pliny promotes the idea to a Roman audience, that not only do the Scythians partake in these actions of eating human flesh and human sacrifice, but through these actions are barely considered human. The key points of Pliny's description

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[9] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.398
[10] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.398
[11] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.398

work to shed any human characteristics related to the Scythians, and instead of comparing them to the "human" or Roman, they are compared to the mythical, monstrous, and uncivilised. The usage of "tribe" and the unclear statement of placement of the Scythians within Pliny's description corroborates his attempts to depict the Scythians as uncultivated or crude, portraying the group as unrooted to a society, as society is essential to Rome and its self-proclaimed superiority.

Pliny continues his ethnographic account by rooting his claims within mythological understandings of monsters such as the Laestryognians and Cyclopes, as seen in the *Odyssey* on Odysseus' journey home, where he was forced to confront these creatures. As Pliny states it may seem "unbelievable" for the Scythian tribes to eat human flesh, he concretes this claim through the area in which the Scythians live (Sicily), explaining that "in Sicily there once existed peoples equally bizarre, the Cyclopes and the Laestrygones."[12] Pliny thus suggests that there is correlation between the mythological creatures and the Scythians, equating them to one another and furthering the notion that they are less human, further detaching them from the upper sphere of Roman-ness. Therefore, the implications Pliny creates by detaching the Romans from those foreign to them by way of comparing them to non-human and monstrous entities present the notion that definitions of Roman-ness and the human race are almost interchangeable, and close to one and the same. In relation to Caesar, Pliny's characterization of 'the other' works to present the foreign as non-human, as well as non-Roman, while Caesar's depiction formulates a hierarchy among different groups, both in the bias of Roman authority and

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[12] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p.398

prestige. The clear identification by Caesar of those from Kent as "civilised" and "people" is distinctly different from Pliny's goal to make the Scythian tribes appear barely human. Each author presents a Roman bias that places each group in relation to Roman standards, while also devaluing each group as more uncivilised and barbaric than the "normal".

Lucian in his novel *A True History* criticises and satirises the ethnocentric descriptions of the non-Roman that are prevalent in Roman literature, focusing on the absurdity produced in attempting to discredit and diminish cultures foreign to one's own, as well as contradicting the plausibility of these accounts as completely honest. Lucian compares Caesar's description of the people from Kent to his, through physical differences from Lucian's character to the people he meets on the moon, absurdly formulating differences that critique the desire for Romans to separate themselves from those that are foreign to them. Lucian illustrates the people on the moon, stating "they think a man is handsome if he is bald and hairless, and they loathe long-haired people,"[13] mimicking Caesar's fascination with the way in which a group styles and prefers their hair. However, Lucian propagates these descriptors to be more bizarre and over the top, displaying the bias and exaggeration accompanied by writing histories and ethnocentric accounts: "each man has a large cabbage growing over his bottom like a tail."[14] Thus, the absurdity and overdramatic descriptors present such groups of people as even furthered

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[13] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 583
[14] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 583

from the Roman identity, not only in othering features or characteristics, but from humanity as well.

Lucian's text is satirical of Caesar's definitions of the non-Roman, and displays the ways in which Caesar finds minimal differences in appearance and choices noteworthy. The comparison of marriage and children is further explored in Lucian's over the top characterization of the people from the moon, displaying a critique of the underlying offence and judgement of Kent's marriage customs. Lucian's narrative depicts that the people of the moon have men give birth and switch genders to do so: "Up to the age of 25 each acts as a wife, and after that as a husband. They carry their babies not in the belly but in the calf of the leg."[15] The beyond reasonable description of this reproductive difference formulates a comparison to Caesar's discontent at Kent's marriage customs, but also Pliny's dehumanisation of the Scythians, as Lucian clearly portrays the moon people as not human, normalising the absurdity within his text. Lucian's tone is clearly absurd, bizarre, eccentric, and overdramatic, using quick-paced language to jump from one claim to another, such as phallus-shaped Tree-men, roasted frogs, different forms of passing food, and even people evaporating instead of dying, demonstrating the unsupported claims and quick explanation that the authors of ethnographic and historical texts often do when describing others.[16]

Lucian's satirical description of the moon people in his text even more so parallels the writings of Pliny, especially in Pliny's absurd, baseless claims of Scythian tribes, that

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[15] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 582
[16] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 582

attempt to dehumanise them and glorify Romans in comparison. Both the audience and the author understand the impossibility and unbelievability of the claims Lucian makes, however this relates to Pliny's attempts to justify his assertion that the Scythians in Sicily were somehow related to the mythical monsters and creatures found in the *Odyssey*. Lucian writes that "my guess is we Greeks have got our word 'belly of the leg' from there," ridiculing original texts that hope to justify their observations of other cultures with lack of evidence and simple explanations.[17] Lucian's didactic tone in his description of the people on the moon in his narrative mimics that of Caesar and Pliny's, his character seemingly becoming an expert on this culture and people he encountered for the first time. Lucian specifically writes that "I noticed some strange and remarkable things," depicting a commentary on how, although authors gain a brief interaction with foriegn groups and people, they claim to be experts and analyse cultures as lesser than Roman.[18] Conclusively, the outlandish and imaginary creation of the people from the moon in Lucian's satire demonstrates the bizarre accusations and definitions that Caesar, Pliny, and other Roman authors make to lessen, diminish, and describe foriegn groups, as Lucian focuses on physical appearance and customs as the most differentiating features to alienate the Moon people, in a more evidently false way than that of others.

Overall, the ethnocentric descriptions of the non-Roman throughout Roman literature unify the texts on the semblance and notions surrounding 'the other' and the foreign, in comparison to what is known. Caesar and Pliny the Elder's attempt to

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[17] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 582
[18] Knox & McKeown, *The Oxford Anthology of Roman Literature.* p. 582

establish hierarchy among the cultures and groups of the world through diminishing definitions and strategic defamations illustrate the relatability and consolidated image of Roman-ness in the view of what it is distinctly not. Lucian's satire of these accounts works to depict the exaggeration, ridiculousness, and biases in these definitions of culture. Ultimately, Roman-ness is a constant factor throughout Roman literature, as it defines both the author and audience of the text. Therefore, the connecting placement of creating an image of Roman identity and culture through what it is not displays an even greater notion of what is Roman: its appeal to relatability for those who are Roman, regardless of debate over what is definitively considered Roman.

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# CLEAR AND PRESENT LEGACY: THE INFLUENCE OF ROMAN ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLES FROM ANTIQUITY TO PRESENT

## CHRISTOPHER DEAN

### *Abstract*

*One of the most important legacies of the ancient Romans was the quality, scale and ambition of their architecture and engineering. This paper argues that key principles of Roman architecture produced buildings which are unique in their extremely pleasing aesthetics and high degree of functionality. The origin of these principles is described using the only known publication on architecture from antiquity, De architectura (ca. 20 BC) by Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (ca. 70 BC–15 BC). These are widely known as Vitruvian principles, and their importance and influence in Western construction are established through visual and contextual analysis of relevant buildings from antiquity to present. The ongoing application of these tenets begins with the Pantheon in Rome and follows their transmission to the present by focusing on architectural works associated with Andrea Palladio (1508–1580), Richard Boyle (Lord Burlington, 1694–1753), and Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826). In addition, germane philosophical movements are also considered to analyze contextual factors that supported the continued prominence, relevance and utility of these principles.*

This paper discusses key principles of Roman architecture and assesses the legacy of their influence in Western architecture from antiquity to present. These simple yet powerful principles represent core tenets for designing and constructing attractive and effective buildings, as evidenced by their continued application for different uses and structures over two millennia. The influence of these principles is demonstrated through a visual analysis of relevant buildings, with a focus on the key role of Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio to invigorate and spread these precepts. Pertinent philosophical

movements are also reviewed to analyze contextual factors that supported the continued

familiarity, appreciation and use of these principles.

One of the most important legacies of the ancient Romans was the quality, scale

and ambition of their architecture and engineering "across a sprawling empire…that

accommodated every aspect of Roman life–public to private, secular to sacred, high to

low."[1] In response to these accomplishments, a former architect and engineer Marcus

Vitruvius Pollio wrote *De architectura* in approximately 20 BC to codify this

knowledge.[2] *De architectura* is currently thought to be the only surviving document on

architecture from antiquity and it provides insight into Roman design and construction.

The treatise covers many aspects of architecture, such as the training and education of

architects, architectural principles, town planning, temples, public buildings, private

dwellings, orders and decoration.[3]

In Book I, Chapter II of *De architectura,* Vitruvius identifies the Fundamental

Principles of Architecture (i.e., arrangement, beauty, symmetry, propriety and economy),

and states the importance of following nature in architecture, including using proportions

based on the human body.[4] It is difficult to know directly how influential the precepts set

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[1] Introduction to *A Companion to Roman Architecture*, 1st ed. (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2013), 2.
[2] Tod A. Marder, "Vitruvius and the Architectural Treatise in Early Modern Europe," in *Companion to the History of Architecture*, ed. Harry Francis Mallgrave (Hoboken, NJ, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2017), 2.
[3] Ingrid D. Rowland, "Vitruvius and his Influence," in *A Companion to Roman Architecture*, eds. Roger B. Ulrich and Caroline K. Quenemoen (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 417-421.
[4] Vitruvius, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Cambridge, 1914; Project Gutenberg, 2006), bk. 1, chap. 2, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/20239/20239-h/20239-h.htm#Page_13.

out by Vitruvius were among his contemporaries, but the indirect evidence shows that

many buildings adhered to the philosophy and practices described in *De architectura*.[5]

However, there is little doubt that the principles Vitruvius identified (summarized as

"strength," "utility," and "beauty" and called the "Vitruvian triad"[6]), and his emphasis on

the primacy of nature and human proportions in architecture were highly influential in the

Renaissance and afterwards.[7]

The Pantheon in Rome demonstrates all the Vitruvian principles and is the starting

point to describe their legacy. The Pantheon, extensively rebuilt under Emperor Hadrian

in the 2nd century AD, is often considered one of the greatest and most influential

buildings of Western architecture (Figure 1). The Pantheon establishes symmetry and

balanced proportions by using a conjoined sphere and cube scheme (Figure 2), resulting

in a sphere-shaped interior which is often described as "the most ideal form that geometry

can produce"[8] (Figure 3). The interior is capped with a dome that is coffered, which

demonstrates utility by requiring less concrete – thereby reducing the weight of the

ceiling – and simultaneously creating a pleasing visual rhythm and highly attractive

ornamentation (Figure 4). In addition to being functional for strength and acoustics, the

dome also has a central aperture (the oculus), which allows fresh air, rain, and sunlight

directly into the building. The oculus also produces one of the most striking features of

the Pantheon: light penetrating the building as the sun journeys across the sky. The

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[5] Rowland, "Vitruvius and his Influence," 421-423.
[6] Marder, "Vitruvius and the Architectural Treatise in Early Modern Europe," 3.
[7] Steven Parissien, *Palladian Style* (London: Phaidon Press, 1994), 44.
[8] Rachel Fletcher, "Geometric Proportions in Measured Plans of the Pantheon of Rome," *Nexus Network Journal* 21, no. 2 (2019): 334, 341.

portico entrance to the Pantheon is also consistent with the Vitruvian principles, being integral to the sphere and cube scheme and supported by a uniform and well-proportioned range of columns.

Fortuitously, *De architectura* was copied and known in the years following the Roman Empire and was available to be re-discovered during the Renaissance.[9] The Renaissance among the city-states in modern-day Italy was characterized by an interest in learning from antiquity, which was a key feature of Humanism. Humanists were political leaders, philosophers, artists, and other educated citizens such as architects and teachers who wished to understand and apply classical knowledge. Based on this philosophical approach it is not surprising that texts from antiquity, including *De architectura*, were widely sought out, read, translated, and put into practice. Humanism would have been the prevalent academic and intellectual milieu in Vicenza when a young Andrea Palladio arrived there to start his career.

Andrea di Pietro dalla Gondola was born in 1508 in Padua. He moved to Vicenza in 1524 to join a workshop of stonemasons as part of his ongoing professional training, and while there met a man named Giorgio Trissino.[10] Trissino was an aristocrat and statesman who founded an academy for Humanist education and mentored promising young scholars, including Andrea Palladio. Trissino facilitated both Palladio's knowledge of Vitruvius and his travels to Rome, where Palladio researched, drew, and observed the

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[9] Wim Verbaal, "The Vitruvian Middle Ages and Beyond," *Arethusa* 49, no. 2 (2016): 215-216.
[10] Robert Tavernor, Introduction to *The Four Books of Architecture*, by Andrea Palladio, trans. Robert Tavernor and Richard Schofield (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), viii.

ancient architecture.[11] After Trissino died, Palladio was greatly influenced by his patron Daniele Barbaro. Barbaro was also a distinguished Humanist, and Palladio provided illustrations for Barbaro's translation of Vitruvius.[12] In these ways, the principles of Roman architecture found in *De architectura* were embedded in Palladio's architectural work.

Andrea Palladio's works reflect the Vitruvian principles with an originality that gives his buildings a unique elegance and clarity.[13] The principles seen in the Pantheon are visible in one of Palladio's most famous buildings, the Villa La Rotonda (built from 1567 to 1570). The Villa La Rotonda applies the same sphere and cube scheme with an exterior portico (Figure 5). Palladio's originality lies in the placement of the spherical centre within a square-shaped building and the enhancement of symmetry by placing a portico on each side (Figure 6). While the Villa La Rotonda interior has not been measured with the same frequency and level of detail as the Pantheon, an analysis provides indirect evidence for continued fidelity to the Pantheon's mathematical proportions. In 2008 Tomás García-Salgado evaluated the dimensions of the Villa La Rotonda and observed that the external loggias "correspond to each other geometrically, and how the proportions were obtained by subdividing the whole into parts, as Palladio probably did in accordance with Vitruvius' definition of symmetry."[14] The interior of the

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[11] Stephen R. Wassel, "Andrea Palladio," *Nexus Network Journal* 10, no. 2 (2008): 214.

[12] Tavernor, Introduction to *The Four Books of Architecture*, by Andrea Palladio, xii.

[13] Nalsy D. Ewing, "Andrea Palladio, 1518-1580: Architect and Humanist," *Mosaic* 7, no. 4 (Summer, 1974): 60.

[14] Tomás García-Salgado, "A Perspective Analysis of the Proportions of Palladio's Villa Rotonda: Making the Invisible Visible," *Nexus Network Journal* 10, no. 2 (2008): 276.

Villa La Rotonda continues the pattern of the Pantheon with a central dome, however the

Villa La Rotonda does not replicate the open oculus. The architect who completed the

Villa La Rotonda after Palladio died, Vincenzo Scamozzi, had designed an open oculus,

but it was covered with a cupola (Figure 7).[15] This adaptation is the case for many of the

buildings influenced by the Pantheon, which refer to the oculus architecturally, but are

not open to the elements. This practical step contributes to the utility of each building –

be it a residence, library, church, or other function – by protecting it from external factors

like weather and wildlife. Unfortunately, it also mitigates the emotional and cosmological

effects of being able to fully experience the arc of the sun moving through the building.

There is no doubt that Palladio was hugely influential, considering an architectural

style was named after him – Palladianism – that was widely applied in Europe and

America and is still relevant today.[16] A crucial action Palladio took which also echoed

Vitruvius was to publish an architectural treatise. Palladio's *I quattro libri*

*dell'architettura* (The Four Books of Architecture) from 1570 was instrumental in

spreading the principles of Roman architecture and helping spark Palladianism. His book

is often described as one of the Western world's most significant architectural

publications with its accessible, clear prose and useful illustrations contributing to its

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[15] Kim Williams, *The Villas of Palladio* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003), 128.
[16] Robert Tavernor, *Palladio and Palladianism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 8;
Parissien, *Palladian Style*, 97, 99; David Hemsoll, "Review: Palladian Design: The Good, the
Bad and the Unexpected," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 75, no. 3 (2016):
377.

popularity.[17] This, combined with the spread of Humanism, and a common appreciation

for *De architectura*, which had been translated into multiple languages by the 16th

century, inspired many Western architects to Palladianism.[18]

Palladianism was influential in Britain, and the works of Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl

of Burlington, are specifically helpful to demonstrating the widespread inspiration

derived from Palladio. Burlington was a prominent architect who had visited the Italian

peninsula and owned several copies of Palladio's architectural treatise.[19] These exposures

influenced Burlington immensely, and as a result his architecture was consistent with the

Palladian tradition. This is particularly evident in the work he did for his London home,

Chiswick House (built from 1727 to 1729).

Comparing Chiswick House and the Villa La Rotonda demonstrates the continued

influence of Vitruvian principles. Chiswick House follows the approach of ideal

geometric forms by constructing the overall building to resemble a cube with a

symmetrically shaped central room (Figures 8 and 9). The centre room is capped with a

dome that has a coffered ceiling and an oculus that is a figurative feature and not open to

the sky (Figure 10). In contrast to the Villa La Rotonda, Burlington applied his stylistic

approach by having the dome rest on a drum that is octagonal rather than circular,

returned to a single portico at the main entrance – like the Pantheon – and used a novel

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[17] William L. MacDonald, *The Pantheon: Design, Meaning, and Progeny* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 114; Tavernor, Introduction to *The Four Books of Architecture*, by Andrea Palladio, xvii.

[18] Paul Oscar Kristeller, "Humanism," *Minerva* 16, no. 4 (Winter 1978): 589-590; Marder, "Vitruvius and the Architectural Treatise in Early Modern Europe," 15.

[19] Pierre De La Ruffiniere Du Prey, "Anatomy of an Ideal Villa," *Queen's Quarterly* 101, no. 3 (1994): 625.

combination of room shapes within the house (Figure 9). Finally, Burlington continued to

express his admiration for antiquity by having a garden folly that highlights the Pantheon

and associated Vitruvian principles. The building is a delightful juxtaposition to the main

house, with its small scale and faithful reflection of the Pantheon's cylindrical body and

single front portico (Figure 11).

Moving from the 18th century to the present, the intertwined influences of

Vitruvius, the Pantheon, and Palladianism have continued in the West. The architecture of

Thomas Jefferson was key for the spread of Palladianism in America.[20] This was

reinforced by President Franklin Roosevelt when he laid the cornerstone for the Jefferson

Memorial in Washington DC, saying in his address, "In the current era of erection of

noble buildings we recognize the enormous influence of Jefferson in the American

application of classic art to homes and public buildings…"[21]. Further, there was a

philosophical consistency between Palladio and Jefferson that facilitated the spread of

these principles. The philosophy of Humanism had been foundational to Palladio's

education and subsequently it evolved with Enlightenment theories, and Thomas

Jefferson was an important proponent of these ideas.[22]

Thomas Jefferson's home in Virginia, the current Monticello (the present structure

was generally completed in 1809), shows the continued influence of the Pantheon

[20] Parissien, *Palladian Style*, 119; Cara Lyons Alfieri, "The Design and Construction of Monticello: Reflections on Thomas Jefferson" (master's thesis, California State University, Dominguez Hills, 1996), chap. 1, https://www.proquest.com/docview/304288932?pq-origsite=primo&accountid=9894.
[21] "President's Jefferson Talk," Associated Press, November 15, 1939
[22] Tony Davies, *Humanism* (London: Routledge, 1997), 117-118; Jon Hersey, "Thomas Jefferson: Word and Deed," *The Objective Standard* (Fall 2017): 30.

through Palladianism.[23] The exterior elevation (Figure 12) continues the legacy of both the Villa La Rotonda and Chiswick House with a square body that is fronted by a portico with columns. Monticello demonstrates further similarity with Chiswick House by having an octagonal room which is capped with a dome. Consistent with the Pantheon, the dome has an oculus, but, as with the Villa La Rotonda and Chiswick House, it is not open (Figure 13).

Continuing with Thomas Jefferson but translating the Vitruvian principles into the 20th century is the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC. The Memorial building is an imaginative and elegant homage to the Pantheon, with a sphere and cube simply fronted by a portico, much like the Roman building (Figure 14). The interior conforms to the functional and aesthetic benefits described by the Vitruvian principles, featuring a coffered dome with the outline of an oculus in the ceiling (Figure 15). Finally, in the tradition of many architects who were inspired by the Pantheon, the designers of the Memorial created a beautiful and satisfying variation on the original. Unlike the Pantheon, the Memorial dome rests on a series of columns that have openings so there is no solid exterior wall. This allows viewers to see the interior from the outside, and some of the cosmological effects have been recovered by allowing natural light to pour into the building (Figure 16).

In conclusion, the Vitruvian principles of Roman architecture as expressed in the Pantheon and brought into the 20th century by Palladianism represent core aspects for

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[23] Parissien, *Palladian Style*, 99-100, 121.

successful building. The simple yet powerful principles of symmetry, proportion and

economy are dynamic and flexible enough to produce buildings that are uniquely

beautiful and highly functional. This is evidenced in their continued application for

different uses in Western architecture for two millennia. These  principles are certain to

remain relevant and to endure in practice for centuries to come.

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Figure 1. Exterior of the Pantheon in Rome. 118-128 AD. Pantheon, Exterior. architecture. https://library-artstor-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/asset/SCALA_ARCHIVES_1039779734.
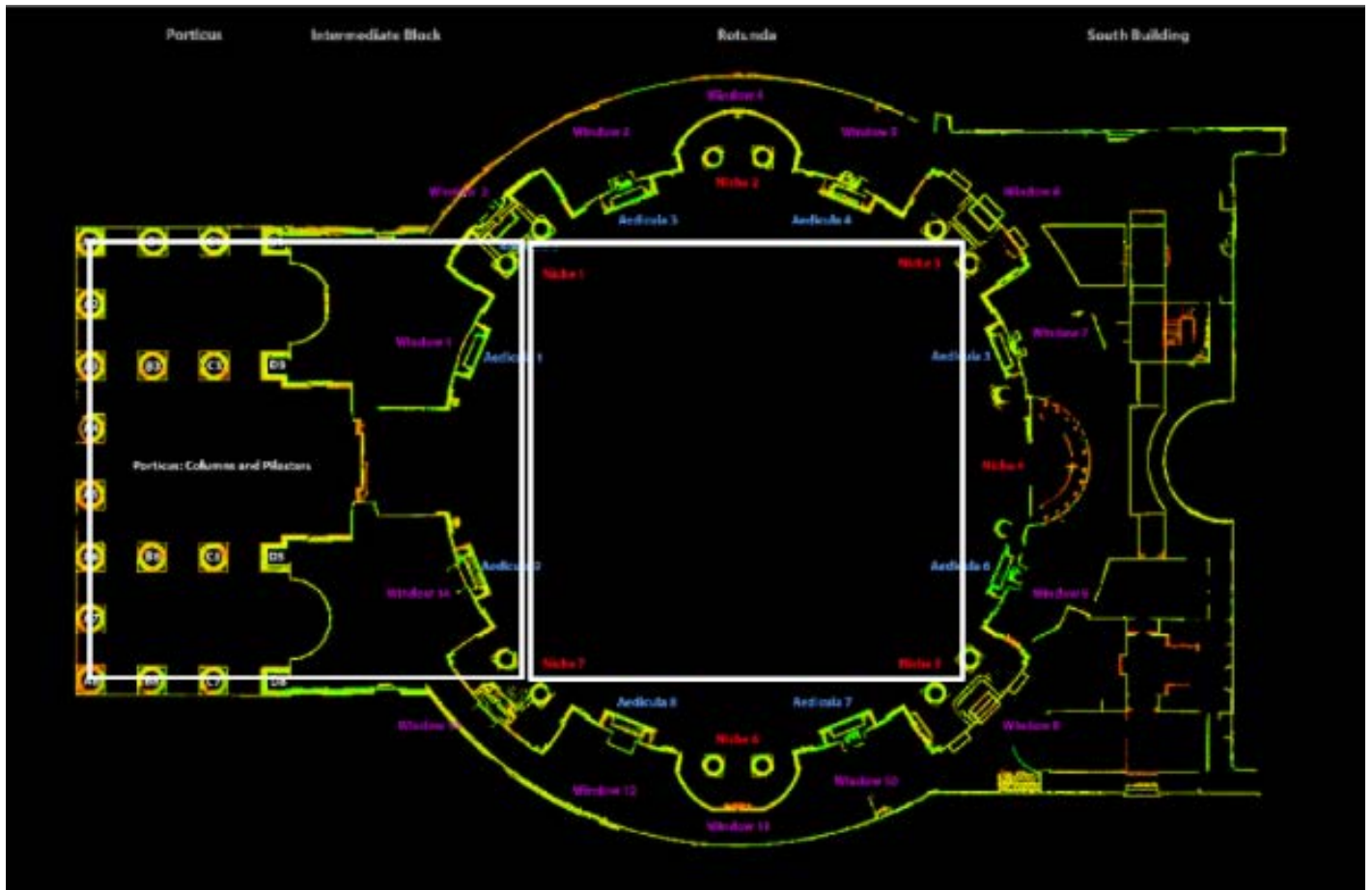
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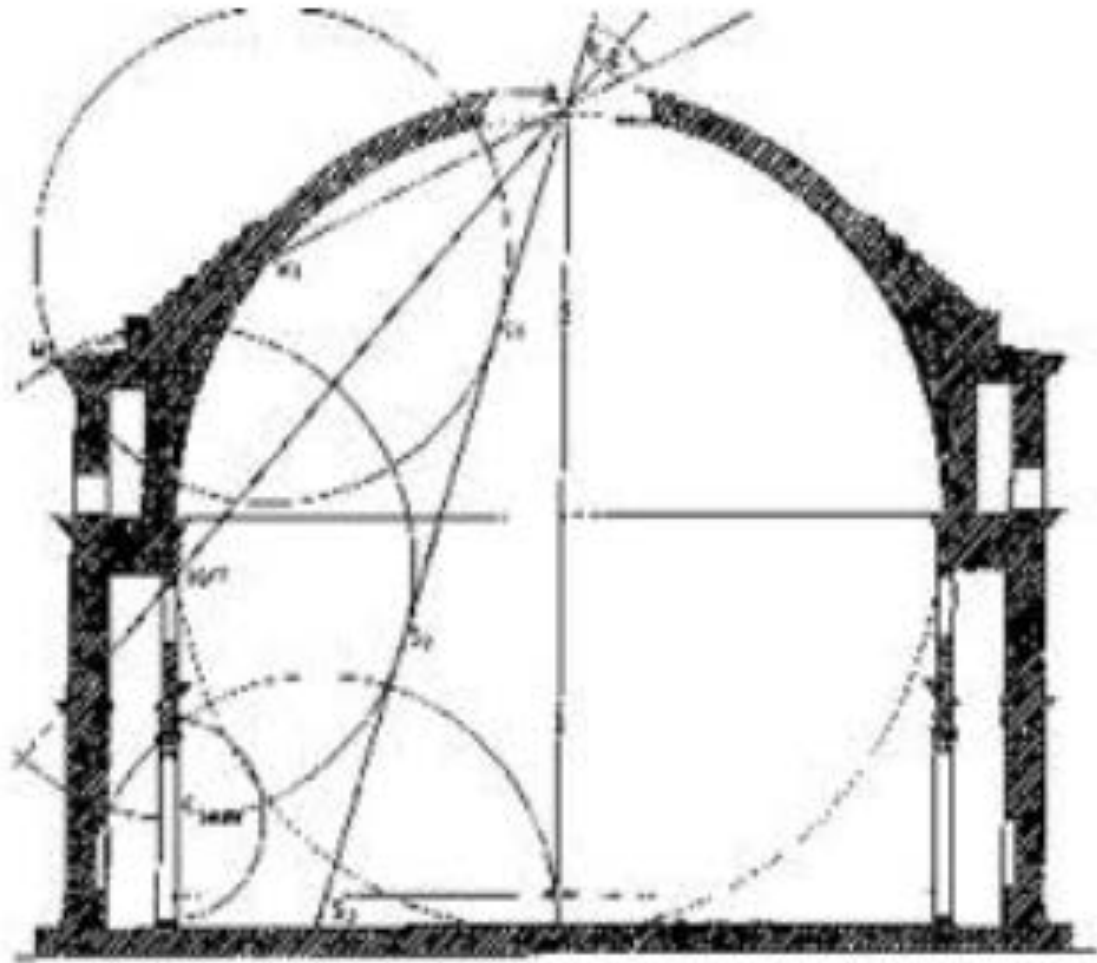
Figure 3. Pantheon cut away view illustrating spherical shape of the interior. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Architecture Research, "The Roman Pantheon: Dome" at http://web.mit.edu/21h.405/www/Pantheon/Pantheon/Dome.html.

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Figure 5. Villa La Rotonda exterior showing square form enclosing round central space capped with a dome. Palladio, Andrea (1508-1580), Italian, architect. Creation date: ca. 1565-1569. Villa Rotonda (Villa Capra), View Description: exterior. Villa.
https://library-artstor-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/asset/ASAHARAIG_111211362690.

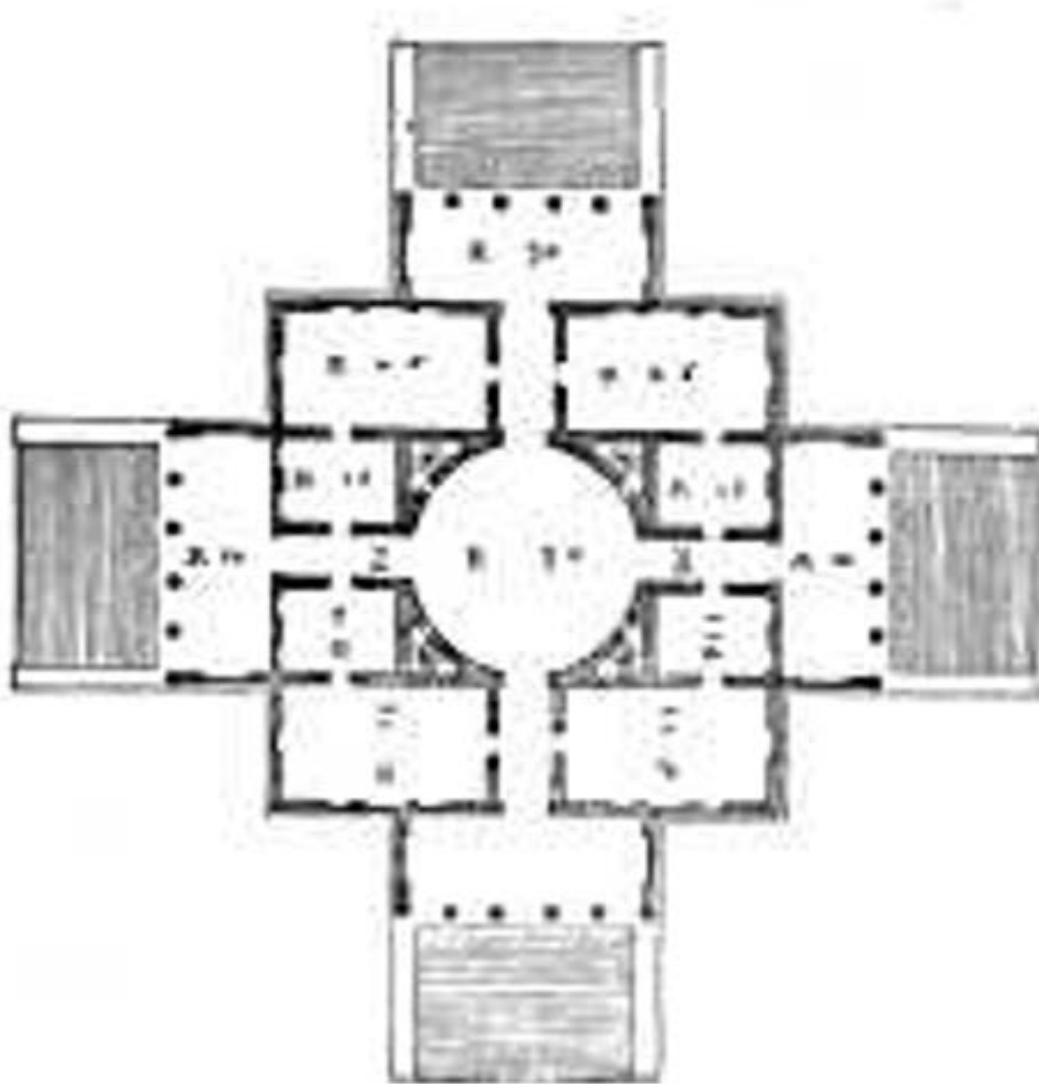Figure 6. Villa La Rotonda schematic drawing illustrating spherical central structure and symmetrical porticos on all four sides of the cube-shaped building. Pianta de La Rotonda, Andrea Palladio, 10 January 2005 file upload, I Quattro libri dell'Architettura (1570); Transferred from it.wikipedia to Commons by Marcok using CommonsHelper, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:PalladioRotondaPlan.jpg.

Figure 7. Villa La Rotonda interior showing dome and oculus covered by a cupola. Interior from La Rotunda, Hans A. Rosbach, 18 July 2007, photograph, own work, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villa_Capra_%22La_Rotonda%22#/media/File:VillaCapra_2007_0 7_18_8.jpg.

Figure 8. Chiswick House exterior east front showing cube form enclosing central space capped with a dome. Boyle, Richard (Earl of Burlington) & Wm. Kent, English, 1695-1753. begun 1725. Chiswick House: exterior, East front.
https://library-artstor-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/asset/AIC_110013.
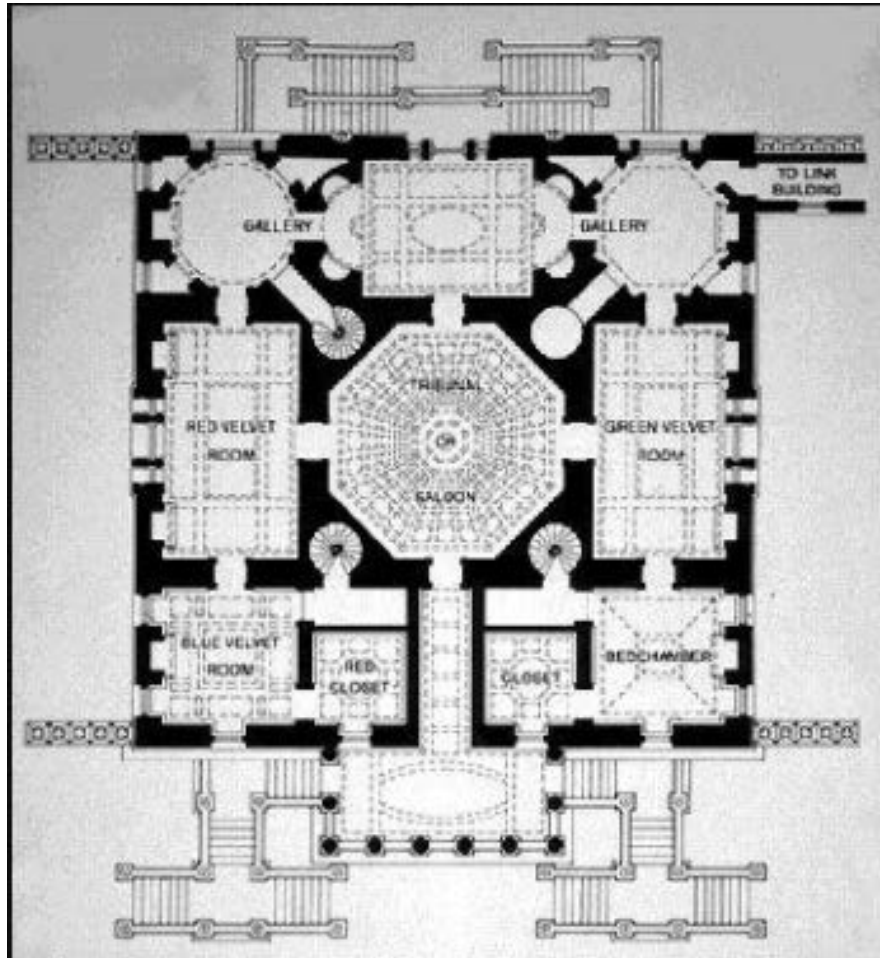
Figure 9. Chiswick House schematic drawing illustrating cube shape of the building, balanced interior design with novel shaped rooms, octagonal centre, and portico on one side. Chiswick House schematic. Planta piano nobile de Chiswick House, Londres, por Richard Boyle, 1726, Antur, 25 July 2006 file upload, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chiswick_House.JPG.

Figure 10. Chiswick House interior showing dome, coffered ceiling, and a figurative oculus that is not open to the sky. Chiswick House and Gardens. Architecture. https://library-artstor-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/asset/HARTILL_12320462.

Figure 11. Chiswick House garden folly exterior showing resemblance to the Pantheon with circular body, dome, and a single portico supported by a uniform order of columns. Lord Burlington. 1728. Chiswick House; the temple.
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Figure 12. Monticello exterior in the Palladian style showing square form, space capped with a dome and front portico. Jefferson, Thomas, American, architect, draftsman, landscape architect. 1768-94 (phase 1); 1796-1809 (phase 2), Image: 1996. Monticello, View Description: Exterior, view from west lawn. Residential Buildings.
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Figure 13. Monticello interior showing central room dome, figurative coffered ceiling, and oculus that is not open to the sky. Dome at Monticello, Steven C. Price, 7 August 2013, photograph, own work, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Montecello-Dome.jpg.

Figure 14. Jefferson Memorial exterior showing spherical central space, dome, ring of external columns, and single front portico with supporting columns. Washington, DC: Jefferson Memorial: Ext.: view: South (entry) by John Russell Pope 1938-43. https://library-artstor-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822000082360.
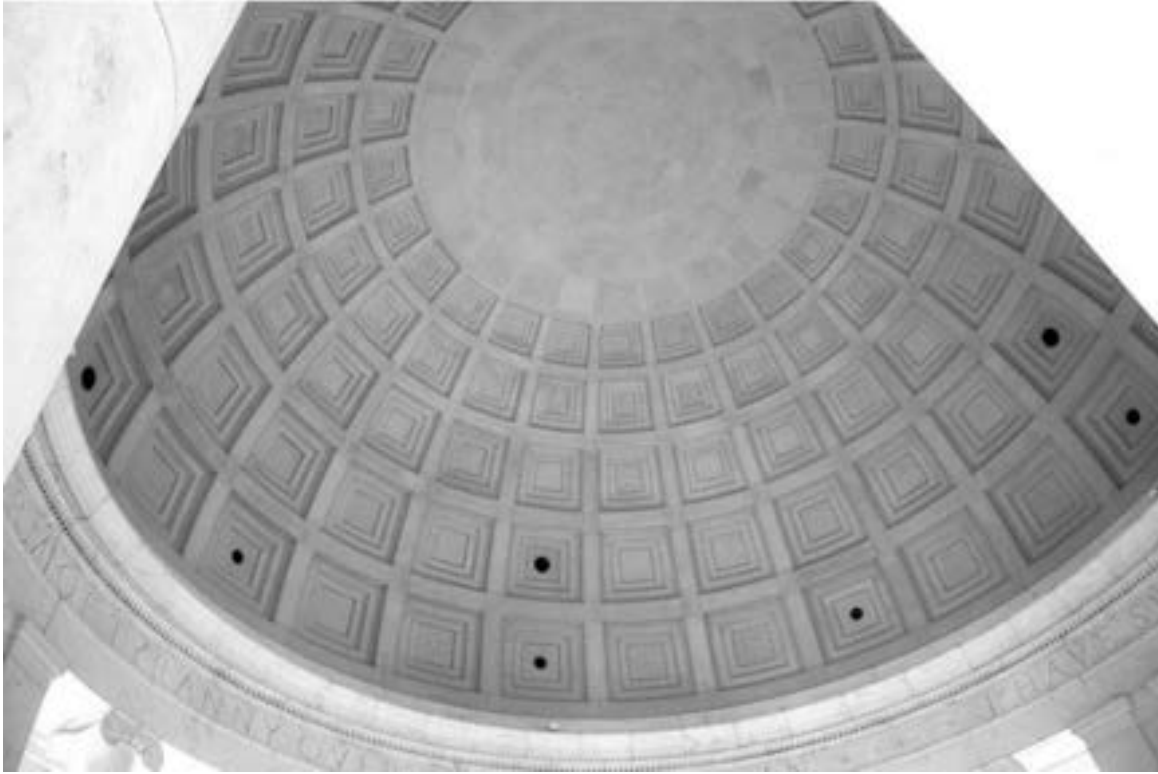
Figure 15. Jefferson Memorial interior showing coffered ceiling of dome and figurative oculus in centre. Thomas Jefferson Memorial – Dome interior, Jamieadams99, 10 November 2011, photograph, own work,
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Figure 16. Jefferson Memorial interior showing columns supporting the base of the coffered dome ceiling, the spaces between columns that open to the exterior to allow light, and the memorial statue. National Historic Place reference number 66000029, Eric Cox, 12 September 2016, photograph, own work, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Inside_the_Jefferson_Memorial_in_DC.jpg.

# BESEECHING CLEOPATRA

Cleopatra Philopator queen of Ptolemaic reign
although knots you forged with mighty men undid with Gordian fame,
two thousand years and still we're drawn fluttering moths unto your flame.

Perhaps that asp did grasp your breath and your swaddled body sleeps
beneath the Alexandrian waves kohl orbs bobbing in the deep.
Or does Taposiris Magna hide the tomb we seekers seek?

In mind's eye we see you life-like bejewelled glitter-gilded dress
the royal crook and flail you hold criss-cross bold upon your breast.
Your body may lie silent but is this true of consciousness?

Gliding arm in arm with Isis through the reedy A'aru field
what purpose does it serve you now keeping mortal coil concealed?
We'll shout "Thea Cleopatra!" should your secret be revealed.

Distinguished diplomatic craft brilliance fused with artful skill,
nudge our scientific hunches our dreams with symbols fill.
Speak with golden tongue and guide us as we listen for you still!

COLLEEN DUNN

# INTERCONNECTIVITY OF TIME IN HOMER'S *ILIAD*

## CHLOE CARROLL

### *Abstract*

*This paper will explore the intricacies of The Iliad of Homer. Through narrative space, memory, and the notion of glory, Homer creates an intricate tangling in the web of time in The Iliad. Reflecting backwards upon the mythological past, creating rich stories of the heroic present, and gazing forwards into an unknown future, Homer creates a dynamic living world that allows for modern-day audiences to absorb themselves in the world of antiquity. The layering of time exemplifies the interconnectivity in Homer's Iliad which will be further explored in this paper. The complexity of time in Homer's Iliad establishes this epic poem as one of the most foundational stories in history.*

The study of Homeric epic is an intricate layering of stories from a rich mythological history that has been integral to the intellectual sphere for centuries. Homer's epic poems have inspired some of the greatest writers in Western history from all over the world, such as Giovanni Boccaccio, Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare. Through the layering of mythological stories and history, Homer is able to mold the timelines of his narratives to create a dynamic and complex world in his poems. In Homer's *Iliad*, time is not a continuity, but an intertwining web of past, present, and future, illustrating the interconnectivity of epic poetry.

Epic poetry as a genre is a reflective gaze upon the mythological past. Homer's *Iliad* serves to re-tell one of the most infamous events of the lost mythological past, the Trojan War. The importance of the past is established from this foundational level. From

the proem of Book I of the *Iliad*, the poet calls upon the Muse of epic poetry, Calliope, to

allow him to share the story of the Trojan War, saying:

> Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
>  and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians,
>  hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls
> of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting
> of dogs, of all birds and the will of Zeus was accomplished
> since that time when first there stood division of conflict
>  Atreus' son the lord of men and brilliant Achilleus [1].

The Muse is the figure who remembers epic poetry and speaks through the poet, retelling

the events of the mythological past. The proem to Book I is not an introduction to the

story of the *Iliad*, but a recollection of what occurs, remembering the countless deaths

and the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon. By opening the *Iliad* with this

proem, it sets the tone of the reflective nature of the poem and the interconnectivity

between the past, present, and future.

Not only does the genre of epic poetry exemplify the importance of the

mythological past in the *Iliad*, but throughout the entirety of Homer's work, there is an

integral reliance on the past. This reliance on the past in relation to the present action of

the *Iliad* is demonstrated through the concept of *xenia*, or guest friendship. Guest

friendship is a significant theme in the poem, and in Book IV, an encounter seen between

Glaukos and Diomedes depicts the notion of inheritable guest friendship. The two

soldiers meet and ask questions of each other's genealogy, realizing their fathers had been

friends in the past. Glaukos says to Diomedes, "See now, you are my guest friend from

far in the time of our fathers."[2] The importance of inheritable guest friendship occurs in

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[1] Homer, et al. *The Iliad of Homer*. University of Chicago Press, 2011.I.1-7
[2] Homer, *Iliad*. VI.215.

the same passage, as Glaukos tells Diomedes, "let us exchange our armor, so that these others may know / how we claim to be guests and friends from the days of our fathers."[3] This interaction is deeply telling in the importance of generational relationships in the poem, connecting the present and the past.

One of the major areas where Homer relies on the past in the *Iliad* is in the relationship with the audience. It is important to note that Homer is a part of an oral poetry tradition and that the *Iliad* would have been shared orally, rather than read on a page as modern-day readers do today. Homer often relies on the audience's knowledge of other stories and a fairly rich understanding of the complexities of the mythological past in his poem. For example, The Judgment of Paris does not occur in the *Iliad*, but the divine alliances in the Trojan War in the world of the *Iliad* are incredibly dependent on this past event. Additionally, the audience is expected to be familiar with the heroes of the poem, specifically those of an older generation such as Nestor, King of Pylos, or the hero Jason, mentioned in Book VII. This illustrates a sense of intertextuality and interconnectivity between narratives of the mythological past.

The major preoccupation of the *Iliad* consists of the Greek hero Achilles and the struggles he faces in the world of the poem. One of Achilles' major struggles is in his misinterpretation of the interconnectivity of time in the poem. Achilles' greatest desire is *kleos*, or glory, to become a legendary hero, and to be remembered for generations to come. His downfall, however, is in Achilles' misinterpretation of *timē* for *kleos*. *Timē* is the present honour, in the immediate time of the poem, whereas *kleos* is in the future and

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[3] Homer, *Iliad*. VI.228-9.

is a nostalgic recollection of a hero. In Book XVIII of the *Iliad*, Achilles contemplates his

present honour with his future glory. His mother Thetis attempts to persuade him to stay

out of battle after the death of Achilles' beloved companion Patroklaos; he replies saying,

"I must win excellent glory."[4] This interaction between Thetis and Achilles exemplifies

Achilles' devotion to glory and his love for Patroklaos.

One of the most notable points of the interconnectivity between the present and the

future in the *Iliad* is the notion of prophecy. Prophecy is a foundational element of the

mythological past with oracles such as Apollo's oracle at Delphi; in the *Iliad*, the

interesting character of Calchas is a prophet. Prophecy enables the characters of the *Iliad*

to know their future or their fate in their present. Achilles' dilemma in Book I illustrates

the importance of prophecy, as Thetis tells him, "your lifetime is to be short, of no

length."[5] The knowledge of his future causes Achilles to act a certain way in the present.

Achilles must contemplate his ultimate desire for *kleos* or the fulfillment of the prophecy

in Book IV as he says:

> If I stay here and fight beside the city of the Trojans,
> my return home is gone, but my glory shall be everlasting;
> but if I return home to the beloved land of my fathers,
> the excellence of my glory is gone, but there will be a long life
> left for me, and my end in death will not come to me quickly.[6]

Achilles' fate is emphasized in Book XVIII as the prophecy is further developed; Thetis

tells him "it is decreed your death must come soon after Hektor's."[7] Not only does

Achilles know that he must decide whether to achieve glory in his limited time on earth,

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[4] Homer, *Iliad*. XVIII.121.
[5] Homer, *Iliad*. I.416.
[6] Homer, *Iliad*. IX.410-16.
[7] Homer, *Iliad*. XVIII.96.

but now he knows the limits to his life are dependent on the life of the man who he must kill, Hektor, ultimately shaping his present actions based on his predetermined future.

The molding and manipulation of time in Homeric epic allow for a unique shaping of narrative that creates the space for an ancient and lost mythological past to remain alive. The poem works in a cyclical form where Achilles's present actions in the poem allow him to achieve future glory, or *kleos*, which is a form of remembering the past, as recounted in the *Iliad*. The complex intertwining and layering illustrate the complicated relationship between past, present, and future in Homer's *Iliad*. The interconnectivity between memory of the mythological past, the audience's prior knowledge, and the character's memories directly affect the character's present actions, which are also impacted by the predetermined future or fate of the character's lives. The intertwining and interconnectivity are what allow Homeric epics to continue and lay the legendary foundational grounds to the literary world.

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# GEMSTONES: WINDOWS TO THE ANCIENT SOUL

## SOPHIE VO

### *Abstract*

*This investigation seeks to assess the amuletic and ritual qualities of culturally Egyptian and Roman gemstones by examining their production, material, and function. Alongside a close reading of ancient texts, I consider gems' physical properties, the use of mythological motifs, the degree of ontological representation, and their frequent amuletic or medicinal function to argue that the ritual efficacy of Roman gemstones may be understood in terms of Egyptian ritual practices (and vice versa). In order to demonstrate this, two Egyptian and two Roman gemstones, each of lapis lazuli and red jasper, were examined. A wedjat eye of lapis lazuli was analyzed alongside a Bes-Pantheos lapis lazuli intaglio, and a tit amulet alongside an intaglio of Omphale with an ithyphallic donkey. These analyses imply the Roman adaptation of Egyptian ritual and representational practices which not only reflects the intellectual exchange between ancient Rome and Egypt but, if approached in reverse, also provides insight into how equivalent objects and images may have functioned in the Egyptian world. The Book of the Dead, Pyramid Texts, and Ebers Papyrus suggest how the wedjat eye and tit amulets communicated and interacted with other funerary and tomb artifacts, viewers, wearers, and heka. Not only do the images on the gemstones and their materiality—corroborated by texts—assert their ritual agency, they also visually communicate on their own accord as well as on the behalf of wearers through ritual and apotropaic connotations inherent in their material and iconographic construction. The current framework may provide an outline with which to carry out further studies on the milieu and ontology of ancient gemstones or jewelry without archaeological contexts.*

## Introduction

As explained by Carolyn Graves-Brown, the interpretation of ritually-activated Egyptian stones, especially their amuletic or aesthetic function, has been limited.[1] I aim to extend her work on flint nodules to Egyptian and Roman gemstones by taking a

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[1] Graves-Brown, Carolyn. "Emergent Flints." Through a Glass Darkly, 2006: 47–62. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvvnbf1.7.

holistic approach that synthesizes aspects of their creation and function. Paying attention to material, imagery, degree of ontological representation, medicinal purposes, and amuletic functions, I argue that the ritual efficacy of Roman gemstones may be understood in terms of Egyptian ritual practices, and vice versa.

Gemstones in ancient Egypt include: "all rocks, minerals, and biogenic materials used for jewelry (beads, pendants, ring stones, and cloisonné inlays), amulets, seals, and other small decorative items (figurines, cosmetic vessels, and inlays in furniture and sculpture)."[2] Commonly used gemstones in Dynastic Egypt were carnelian, amazonite, amethyst, red jasper, lapis lazuli, and turquoise.[3] Imported gemstones like lapis lazuli were coveted due to their scarcity and exotic provenance; others, such as amethyst, were regulated by the pharaoh and distributed only to the upper elite, serving to highlight wealth and socioeconomic prestige.[4] In the Roman world, gems were carved from rocks, minerals, and biogenic materials, and were used for jewelry, amulets, and sealstones. Ancient gem catalogues classify gems based on material, how the material used relates to engraved subjects, typologies of gem and jewelry shape, along with tool work and carving style.[5] Red jasper was used as the preferred stone type for Roman signet rings and amulets in the third century CE, when Egypt was ruled by Rome, and became the

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[2] Harrell, James. In UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology: Gemstones, edited by Willeke Wendrich, Jacco Dieleman, Elizabeth Frood, and John Baines, 1-23. Los Angeles: UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, 2012.

[3] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012).

[4] Justl, Shelby. "Special Delivery to Wah-sut: An Eighteenth Dynasty Ostracon's Inventory of Precious Materials" (Egypt, 2016); Baines, 'Visual and Written Culture in Ancient Egypt' (Oxford, 2007) 279; Justl, "More Than Jewels: An Investigation Into The Administration Of Semiprecious Stones In Egypt's Middle And New Kingdoms" (Philadelphia, 2020) Abstract.

[5] Thoresen, Lisbet. "Archaeogemmology and Ancient Literary Sources on Gems and Their Origins." International Conference on Mines, Trade, Workshops and Symbolism, Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Leibniz-Forschungsinstitut für Archäologie, Mainz (Oct. 2015): 155-218.

most circulated gemstone in the Roman Empire. As in Dynastic Egypt, "the strangest and most unique gems were always the most demanded" [6] with gems imported from India, Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and Africa being the most valuable to Roman elites; wearing such gemstones indicated elite status.

To test the validity of a multifaceted approach and to provide a framework with which to carry out further studies on the milieu and ontology of gemstones, I conducted a case study of four gemstones: two lapis lazuli and two red jasper gemstones—each from an Egyptian or Roman context—wherein the iconographic motifs and materiality of each gem work together to generate a framework of meaning that defines their ritual and ontological function. Interactions between the stone type and imagery form an interpretive nexus that combines material, imagery, and degree of ontological representation to charge the gemstones with ritual potency. This interpretive nexus must be united with an understanding of the stones' divine creation and their medicinal and amuletic functions to reconstruct how ancient Egyptians conceptualized and used ritual objects. This emic perspective attempts to grasp how ancient Egyptians viewed gemstones in ritual contexts. Additionally, I utilized an etic perspective by examining Roman gemstones with Egyptian motifs to identify Egyptian influences on Roman gems. The aforementioned multifaceted approach was applied to both Egyptian and Roman gemstones, then combined to piece together ancient Egyptian beliefs and thought-processes. To this end, two Egyptian gemstones were assessed from the Michael

[6]González, Jordi Pérez. In Scripta Classica Israelica vol. 38: "Gems in Ancient Rome: Pliny's Vision." Burnaby, PKP Publishing  (June 2019): 139-151. https://scriptaclassica.org/index.php/sci/article/view/2053.

C. Carlos Museum of Emory University, Atlanta, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York: (1) Udjat Eye Amulet ca. 722-332 B.C.E and (2) Tit (Isis knot) amulet ca. 1550–1275 B.C.E. Two Roman gemstones were examined from the Carlos Museum and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles: (3) Intaglio with Bes-Pantheos ca. 3rd Century C.E. and (4) Engraved Gem (depicting Omphale and an ithyphallic donkey) ca. 2nd century C.E. The *Udjat* eye and Bes-Pantheos intaglio were selected for their evocation of eyes and divine omniscience, both materially and textually, through the Horus eye in Egyptian mythology and the Roman gemstone's eye-like radiance and form. The red jasper *Tit* and Omphale engraved gem were selected for their blood-like material and feminine hemostatic connotations in conjuring Isis and Omphale, both divine and mythological beings associated with female protection, menstruation, and childbirth.[7] Such imposed ritual associations and images coincided with the divine effects of lapis lazuli and red jasper, warranting further investigation and comparisons across time and space.

**Background and Context**

Lapis lazuli and red jasper gemstones were examined foremost for their sociocultural significance and ubiquity in both Roman and Egyptian contexts. Both were regarded as important semi-precious stones.[8] Lapis lazuli provides an excellent model for investigations into the materiality of gemstones as it was "the most highly prized

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[7] Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 65 and 68. The amulet is called "fair of voice," perhaps by a pun on *ma'at* and hematite; Dioscorides, *De Materia Medica*, 5.160;

[8] Harris, John Richard. Lexicographical Studies in Ancient Egyptian Minerals. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961.

semiprecious stone and often appears towards the beginning of inventories."[9] Dynastic

texts often cited lapis lazuli in both religious and medicinal contexts.[10] This holds true

even under Greek and Roman rule of Egypt; cultural exchange and syncretism allowed

lapis lazuli to persist in importance in both Egypt and Rome. Pliny the Elder describes the

provenance of lapis lazuli (*cyanos* and *sapphiros*) hailing from Scythia, Cyprus, and

Egypt.[11] Theophrastus cites Egypt as the place where *cyanos* was first manufactured and

the place where the purest *cyanos* was processed into the purest blue pigments.[12]

Although lapis lazuli did not originate from Egypt, Romans associated blue stones with

Egypt and the Near East due to the production of blue faience (most likely Pliny's

*cyanos*) and knowledge of lapis lazuli and turquoise mines in the region.[13] Stones from

further East had to pass through Berenike and Alexandria to reach Rome, geographically

bolstering such associations. The pervasive presence of these semiprecious stones is

well-documented in ancient sources and often geologically well-preserved, rendering this

a fruitful inquiry.

Prerequisite terminology is required to standardize and facilitate understanding of

the topic at hand. Roman gemstones are traditionally classified into two categories: (1)

magical gemstones with amuletic properties for purposes such as casting love spells or

protecting the wearer, and (2) purely decorative gemstones with an aesthetic function

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[9] Justl, "Special Delivery to Wah-sut: An Eighteenth Dynasty Ostracon's Inventory of Precious Materials" (Egypt, 2016) 262.
[10] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012) 10. Harrell presumably refers to Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (2015) Unis's Spell 90; Bryan, 'Ancient Egyptian Medicine: The Papyrus Ebers' (Chicago, 1991) 99; Quirke, *Going out in daylight – prt m hrw*, chapter CLXVII.
[11] Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, Book 38-19.
[12] Theophrastus, trans. E. R. Caley, *Theophrastus on Stones* (Columbus, 2016) 57.
[13] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012).

based on color patterns, luster, transparency, or social status. However, such a narrow classification epitomizes the problems with nomenclature and classification of Roman gemstones as most gemstones fall into both categories with "magical" and aesthetic value as well as function; separating the stones into rigid groupings impedes a more comprehensive understanding of the gemstones vis-à-vis the wearer, society, mythology, and other stones. The restrictive classifications of magical and decorative Roman gemstones imply a mutually exclusive relationship between ritual efficacy and materiality which is blurred by recent finds in the archives of Zeugma in which clay seals made from signet rings were found with talismanic images, making it impossible to rule out the dual ritual and practical function of gemstone signet rings.[14]

That being said, the word "magical" was replaced with "ritual efficacy" or "amuletic" as "magical" is often employed in the Western sphere to denote Orientalist qualities or "backwardness," giving Egyptian gemstones and motifs an air of mystery and mysticism. I use "ritual efficacy" or "amuletic" to describe the believed ritual effectiveness of a gemstone to affect its owner through any sacred avenue, which may include representing the images of gods or animals in an attempt to harness and embody their protective powers. For Roman gemstones, the word "amuletic" represents a reconceptualization of the way classical gemmologists assess "magical" gemstones; a reorientation is necessary to signify a divergence from the antiquated classification system. The "amuletic" category also includes gemstones with both a practical and ritual

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[14]Dasen, Véronique, and Árpád M. Nagy. "Gems." Guide to the Study of Ancient Magic, 2016, 406-445.

purpose which the categories of "magical" and "decorative" gemstones within the current field of study fails to holistically describe.

**Assumptions**

The major thesis underlying my current argument is that I assume the images and motifs present on the gemstones interact with its material (color, luster, etc.) to influence its ritual efficacy. Numerous ancient and modern sources have commented on the significance of lapis lazuli and red jasper along with the images inscribed upon such stones, connecting both the images and gem type to its divine nature, apotropaic properties, and medicinal treatments.[15] The ritual efficacy of the form and image of the *Udjat* Eye and *Tit* cannot be understated as both were used for apotropaic purposes such as protection, healing, and safety in the Hereafter.

The *Tit* is a knot or loop of cloth that is associated with the goddess Isis and used to stop menstrual bleeding and bleeding during child-birth.[16] The *Tit* knot protected the deceased with the power of Isis and staunched blood loss for women.[17] To ancient Egyptians, red jasper evoked life-sustaining blood, power, fertility, vitality, and the rebirth of the sun with motifs related to the heart and blood.[18] [19] Spell CLVI from the

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[15] Such ancient texts include: Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (2015) Unis's Spell 90; Bryan, 'Ancient Egyptian Medicine: The Papyrus Ebers' (Chicago, 1991) 99; Quirke, *Going out in daylight – prt m hrw*, chapter CLXVII. Modern texts include: Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012); Elliott, *Beware the Evil Eye* Volume 1: *The Evil Eye in the Bible and the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 2016) 127; Graves-Brown, "Emergent Flints." Through a Glass Darkly, 47–62.

[16] Quirke, Stephen. Going out in Daylight - Prt m HRW: The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead ; Translation, Sources, Meanings. London: Golden House Publ., 2013: 602.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012) 8.

[19] Human-headed heart amulet. Shelby Justl, "Special Delivery to Wah-sut: An Eighteenth Dynasty Ostracon's Inventory of Precious Materials" (Egypt, 2016) 265. Red jasper amulet of the sun on the horizon ca. 664 – 30 BCE. Red Jasper. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession number: 74.51.4449. Jasper amulet in the form of a frog ca. 664–30 BCE. Red Jasper. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession number: 74.51.4448.

*Book of the Dead* emphasizes the stone's importance as the *Tit* was meant to be fashioned "from the blood of Isis," referring to red jasper, dipped in waters from *ankham* flowers, and placed around the deceased's neck to protect them and allow safe passage into the Hereafter.[20] The spell brings together the protection of Isis and ensures rejuvenation in the Hereafter by combining elements of the *Tit* with the life-giving properties of red jasper.

To Romans, the materiality and imagery of gemstones were linked as we see red jasper with intaglios of Eros and Psyche to emphasize its passionate and love-enhancing characteristics, while Herakles fighting the Nemean lion conferred strength and protection, and was used to cure colic.[21] [22] Omphale is depicted as a female analog to Herakles who protected women from diseases associated with female reproductive health, similar to red jasper staunching menstrual bleeding in ancient Egypt.[23] Red jasper carried the same medicinal connotations in Rome as in Egypt: used to staunch blood loss or function as a love charm. In context with the image of Omphale, the gemstone embodies a function parallel to that of the *Tit* through its mythological, feminine associations with childbirth and menstruation. The image of Omphale, therefore, plays an active role in determining the ritual function of red jasper, demonstrating the interaction of different attributes of a worked gemstone.

The *Udjat* eye refers to the legendary struggle between Horus and Set when Horus was enacting revenge against Set for killing his father, Osiris. Set tore out Horus' eyes

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[20] Quirke, *Going out in daylight – prt m hrw*, chapter CLXVII.

[21] See gemstone catalogues: Simone Michel, *Die Magischen Gemmen* (Berlin, 2004); Cornelius Vermeule, "Greek and Roman Gems" (Boston, 1966) Gems 14 and 18; Antonio D'Ambrosio and Ernesto De Carolis, *I Monili Dall'area Vesuviana* (Rome, 1997)

[22] Faraone, "Text, Image and Medium: The Evolution of Graeco-Roman Magical Gemstones" in *Gems of Heaven* (London, 2011) 52.

[23] Dasen, Véronique. « Le secret d'Omphale », Revue archéologique, vol. 46, no. 2, 2008: 265-281.

during the battle, which were returned by Thoth. Horus subsequently offered his eye to

Osiris, symbolizing the eternal nature of an offering and Horus's sacrifice for his

parents.[24] This is demonstrated in chapter CLXVII of the *Book of the Dead* where a

recited spell was believed to petition Thoth to bring the *Udjat* to the deceased while

traveling to Osiris' realm.[25] The dark blue of lapis lazuli represented the protection of the

night sky and the life-giving and healing properties of the Nile.[26] Eyes and the healing

properties of lapis lazuli are brought together in the *Ebers papyrus*; lapis lazuli is singled

out as a treatment to improve eyesight and cure cataracts by combining lapis lazuli,

incense, and milk.[27] The healing properties of lapis lazuli described in the *Ebers Papyrus*

evokes the mythology of the *Udjat* Eye of Horus; as seen in chapter CLXVII of the *Book

of the Dead*. Pliny's evaluation of lapis lazuli's aesthetic value, paired with the ability of

the *Greek Magical Papyri* to heal speakers, demonstrates the ritual and cultural

significance of lapis lazuli in Rome and Egypt.[28]

   Bes-Pantheos is an amalgam of different characteristics of various Egyptian gods

represented with a bird tail, four wings, and a crocodile tail. Bes was a household god

whose images warded off evil and fostered merriment in homes.[29] Bes was favored by

pregnant women as the god's powers provided protection during childbirth and infant

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[24] Blackman, A. M.. In The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 28: "The Myth of Horus at Edfu: II. C. The Triumph of Horus over His Enemies: A Sacred Drama," edited by H. W. Fairman (1942). Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications: 32–38. https://doi.org/10.2307/3855520.
[25] Elliott, *Beware the Evil Eye* Volume 1: *The Evil Eye in the Bible and the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 2016) 127.
[26] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012) 8.
[27] Bryan, Cyril P. Ancient Egyptian Medicine: The Papyrus Ebers. Chicago: Ares, 1991.
[28] Pliny the Elder, "Book 37 The Natural History of Precious Stones" in *The Natural History*; Hans Dieter Betz, *The Greek magical papyri in translation, including the Demotic spells* (Chicago, 1992) PGM 111.494-611.
[29] Kalloniatis, " Amulets" in *The Egyptian Collection at Norwich Castle Museum: Catalogue and Essays* (Norwich 2019) 114–56.

weaning.[30] Bes-Pantheos was used to Orientalize the gemstone and charge it with ritual

efficacy by conjuring a "mysterious" Egyptian god on lapis lazuli, a stone associated with

the Near East and Egypt.[31] The brilliance of the blue stone was associated with Egyptian

blue pigments as the term for blue, *ḥsbḏ*, was also used for lapis lazuli.[32] Romans

seemingly also made this connection when using Egyptian blue pigments for statues'

eyes in Roman frescoes instead of lapis lazuli stones.[33] The interchangeability of

Egyptian blue and lapis lazuli in Roman art reflected how the stone was equated to its

color. The luminosity of eyes was represented with lapis lazuli, perhaps drawing on the

*Udjat* eye and Egyptian divinity. Through this and the use of an Orientalizing

Bes-Pantheos, lapis lazuli garnered the same protective and apotropaic properties as it

had in ancient Egypt, albeit through a Roman lens.

These recurrent motifs on red jasper and lapis lazuli reveal the extensive

interaction between image and stone type in both ancient Egypt and Rome through their

functional actualization in ritual practices and medicine, with their mythological

representations and divine forms both working to enhance the intrinsic power of the

stones. References in the *Book of the Dead*, the *Ebers Papyrus*, and the *Greek Magical*

*Papyri* delineate the ways in which the material, color, divine properties of the stone,

divine imagery, and iconography all interact to charge the gemstones and amulets with

ritual efficacy. These interacting components might have also influenced the way Romans

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[30] *Ibid*.

[31] Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, Book 38-19.

[32] Corcoran, Lorelei H. "The Color Blue as an 'Animator' in Ancient Egyptian Art." Essays in Global Color History, 2016, 41–64. https://doi.org/10.31826/9781463236632-008.

[33] Verri, et al, 'The Treu Head': A case study in Roman sculptural polychromy. The British Museum Technical Bulletin (London, 2010) 39–54; Allen, "'Eye-Like Radiance': The Depiction of Gemstones in Roman Wall Painting" (London, 2019).

view the function and ritual purposes of gemstones, allowing for an extension of the

ontological framework discussed below. Through this understanding, the ritual function

and ontological role of the gemstones may elucidate how ancient Egyptians and Romans

thought about the role of gemstones in social and mythical contexts, the gems'

relationship with the wearer, and their manifold ritual function.

**The Creation and Function of the *Udjat* Eye Amulet**

Lapis lazuli was imported from northeastern Afghanistan and the neighboring

areas of Pakistan.[34] It lent its power to the deceased wearer in the Hereafter and healed

the living in ritual healing ceremonies. In a funerary setting, the *Udjat* would have

interacted with other aspects of the tomb as the *Udjat* represented perpetual offerings to

the dead. In *Pyramid Texts*: Unis's Spell 90, Osiris "accept(s) Horus's eye," exemplifying

the *Udjat*'s role as a symbol of permanent soundness and the eternal nature of offerings.[35]

This is an allusion to the legendary struggle between Horus and Set wherein Set tore out

Horus' eyes, which were returned by Thoth and offered to Osiris, leading to a network of

symbolism when the *Udjat* is found in funerary contexts. The *Udjat* ensured that other

offerings in the tomb would last in perpetuity and protect the deceased along with the

person's mummified form. Lapis lazuli safeguarded the deceased through an opening of

the head ceremony in which a recitation during the second wrapping of the head

proclaims: "turquoise and lapis-lazuli were given for your face; every type of magnificent

precious stone is dedicated to the opening of your head."[36] Taken together, the recitation

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[34] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology* (Los Angeles, 2012).
[35] Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (2015).
[36] Ali Mansour, 'Turquoise in Ancient Egypt: Concept and Role' (Oxford, 2014) 74.

and spell recognizes the relationship of lapis lazuli to other precious stones in a funerary setting; turquoise and lapis lazuli cooperated to prime the deceased for the Hereafter—a symbol doubly present in lapis lazuli and the *Udjat*. According to the recitation, lapis lazuli may be a representation of any precious stone, all of which are used to "open the head" of the deceased. The representation of all precious stones in turquoise and lapis lazuli evokes a concentration of ritual power to protect the deceased in the Hereafter.

Several texts associate lapis lazuli with eyes, which establishes the connection between lapis lazuli and the *Udjat*. The foremost mention of lapis lazuli is found in chapter CLXXV of the *Book of the Dead*, wherein the recitation instructed that the chapter is recited over a figure of Horus made of lapis lazuli to put on the neck of the deceased.[37] Gemstones, when adorning the deceased, act as an extension of the wearer and imbue the owner with the combined power of lapis lazuli and the Eye of Horus. By wearing the *Udjat* eye, the person not only embodies its protective and healing powers, but also absorbs the amulet as part of an inherent bodily characteristic. This ritual and physical enhancement of the wearer is predicated upon the aggregation of the overlapping ritual functions of lapis lazuli, the color blue, and the *Udjat* eye. All facets of the amulet confer protection and security to the wearer by invoking the protection of the deep blue night sky, the life-giving and healing properties of the Nile, the protection and healing of Horus by Thoth, and the protective and therapeutic power of lapis lazuli.

The large overlap in the ritual roles of lapis lazuli and the Eye of Horus suggests mythical symbolism and materiality work to communicate the gemstone's apotropaic

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[37] Quirke, *Going out in daylight prt m hrw* chapter CLXXV.

nature and healing properties. This is corroborated by the *Ebers papyrus* which describes

healing cataracts by laying lapis lazuli on the eyes and reciting a spell with the following

line: "Come [cataracts], Efflux from the Eye of the god Horus."[38] The recitation in

conjunction with placing lapis lazuli on the eyes works on two levels: (1) ritual spells

work to cure ailments by harkening back to the myth of Seth and Horus and (2) lapis

lazuli is inherently imbued with a therapeutic purpose. The independent protective and

healing properties of lapis lazuli and the *Udjat* eye—namely its mythological motifs and

allusions, materiality, and representation—interact to augment its power to protect the

deceased and remedy eye ailments when recited with a spell from the *Book of the Dead*

or the *Pyramid Texts*.

**The Creation and Function of *Tit* Amulet**

While there are no known red jasper mines, the precious stone was obtained in the

Eastern Desert around Elephantine and from districts of Nubia.[39] Red jasper was the most

desired among all other jasper types in ancient Egypt.[40] Red jasper or "the blood stone of

Elephantine" is recommended as a cure for mortal ailments in the *Ebers papyrus*, used to

revitalize someone shrunken with disease.[41] Bryan explains that ancient Egyptians

believed that blood is the essence of life, and the strength of blood depended on the

brilliance of its redness; therefore, the color red and any red material would protect the

body from perils by conferring its life-giving properties.[42] The vitalizing and medicinal

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[38] Bryan, 'Ancient Egyptian Medicine: The Papyrus Ebers' (Chicago, 1991) 99.
[39] Harrell, "Gemstones" in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 6.
[40] Justl, 'Special Delivery to Wah-sut' 264.
[41] Priest and Ferguson, et al, *An Interlinear Transliteration and English Translation of Portions of The Ebers Papyrus, Possibly Having to Do With Diabetes Mellitus*, (Annandale-on-Hudson 1998) Ebers Papyrus Rubric 197, Column 39.
[42] Bryan, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine: The Papyrus Ebers* (Chicago, 1991) 21.

properties of red jasper are directly reflected in the ritual function of the *Tit* knot which

ensured safe passage to the Hereafter under Isis's auspices and staunched blood loss in

the living. This implies a dual purpose for red jasper *Tit* that was both ritual and

commonplace, for the deceased and the living: one for the protection of the deceased and

the other to act as an implement for healing the living. These functions are tied together

through the powers of Isis, believed to reside in red jasper and conjured from the shape of

the *Tit*; the combination of the *Tit* and red jasper would have borne an especially potent

tool for healing. The mutual pathway of ritual efficacy between materiality and image

charges the gemstone with apotropaic power with each building off the other; red jasper

amplifies the protective and hemostatic strength of the *Tit* symbol and vice versa. This is

particularly important when considering the ritual efficacy and role of the *Tit* as there are

multiple avenues that contribute to its ritual and remedial function.

     Red jasper fashioned and decorated in the form of a *Tit* was an intentional choice

used to emphasize the apotropaic properties of the gemstone and augment the curative

and protective power of the *Tit*. The association of the *Tit* with Isis's protective power

over the deceased's body exists within a nexus of images and symbols in any given tomb

as the *Tit* was placed on the chest of the deceased while the goddesses Isis and Nepththys

were often painted at the head and foot of coffins, acting as heavenly guards over their

associated body parts. [43] Moreover, the *Tit* is often paired with the *djed* column, linked to

Osiris.[44] This in turn affects a trifold evocation of the Isis and Osiris myth of regeneration

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[43]Nyord, Rune. "Permeable Containers:" Body, Cosmos and Eternity, edited by Sousa, Rogério, 29-44. Oxford, Archaeopress (2014). https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvqc6k55.6.
[44] Quirke, *Going out in Daylight*, Terminology and Definitions 602.

enacted in the interaction of images and objects, which would be played out transcendentally through such representations. The bright red jasper not only accentuates Isis's protection of the deceased by bolstering the goddess's regenerative and restorative powers, but also serves to signify the very essence of life (blood) to ensure rejuvenation in the next life. In Chapter CLVI of the *Book of the Dead*, an incantation was to be spoken over a *Tit* knot molded from red jasper, resulting in the body's protection from "the light-power of Isis." [45] The intense ruddy hue of red jasper and the mythological importance of the *Tit* thereby summons the power of the Osiris myth to ensure reincarnation through symbolic interactions; it gathers the power of red jasper, the image of the *Tit*, the allusion to the Osiris myth, and its relationship to other images of rebirth within the tomb. The layers of interacting materials and images—with the red jasper *Tit* at the heart of the matter—coalesce to protect the tomb owner and ensure reincarnation.

The *Tit* embodies and channels the power of Isis through the shape of the *Tit* and conjures rebirth through the vivifying imagery of blood. Such a concentration and redirection of divine power into the earthly realm via the amulet acts to protect the deceased and prevent unharmonious elements from threatening to upend the natural order of regeneration. By doing so, *ma'at* is conserved and *isfet* is warded off, conserving the path toward rejuvenation. The preemptive nature of amulets reflects the significance of doubly energizing the gemstone with divine strength through the materiality (red jasper) and imagery (*Tit*) to ensure that an integral worldly process (rebirth) is not infringed upon or weakened. Ancient Egyptians recognized an amulet's function to effect a direct change

[45] Quirke, *Going out in Daylight* chapter CLVI.

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and preserve cosmic order, evident in the word for artists who were called *se-ankh* "one

who causes to live."[46] The very method of incising and carving the *Tit* augments the

stone's divinity and functionality as gems were considered divine by virtue of their

existence in nature and thought to reference creation myths and birth.[47] The production of

the *Tit* is, therefore, not only a ritually efficacious object in itself, but also the product of

ritual production, no doubt enhancing the underlying power inherent in red jasper and the

*Tit*. We must not view ritual efficacy in terms of unimodal causality; rather, a more

accurate conception of the amuletic potential ought to be viewed in a bidirectional

manner with red jasper and the *Tit along with* its ritual production equivalently

combining to affect ritual efficacy in a nonlinear and multidirectional network of

affordances.

**Roman Gemstones**

Extensive trade and cultural contact between Rome and Egypt occurred over

hundreds of years with Rome conquering Egypt and reducing its status to a province.

Egypt was ever-present in the Roman consciousness either as a political threat, as with

Cleopatra and Antony, or a source of inspiration for elegists and mystery cults.[48] These

important touchpoints form the foundation of cultural exchange and absorption of

Egyptian culture and ideas by Romans, including how Romans conceptualized and used

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[46] Angénot, "Remnants of the past: Skeuomorphic traditions in Ancient Egypt" in *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt* (Liège, 2013) 419.
[47] Carolyn Graves-Brown, "Emergent Flints" (2006) 51.
[48] Evident in Augustan propaganda and Orientalizing trends evident by the *Flaminio* obelisk; Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride*; Vergil's *Georgics IV*; Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*; Vergil's *Aeneid*; Apollonius' *Argonautica*; gemstones with Egyptianizing motifs of Isis, Bes, Osiris; celebration of *Navigium Isidis*; Tibullus 1.3, 1.7; Horace *Nunc est Bibendum*; Propertius 3.11

gemstones medicinally and apotropaically.[49]  Pérez González found that gems from the

East were more desirable and valuable to the Roman elite; gems from India, Persia,

Egypt, Arabia, and Africa characterized elite status and represented worldly knowledge.[50]

Gemstones arriving in Rome passed through Berenike, the prime point of contact for the

gemstone trade in ancient Egypt, acting as a crossroad between the East and the Roman

Empire.[51] Edmond Saglio expounds that this continuous contact between Roman, Greek,

Egyptian, and Eastern peoples is imperative to understanding the functional expansion of

gems from jewels to amulets and medicines during antiquity.[52] In other words, the Greeks

and Romans began to use gems in more than a decorative or aesthetic sense as a

consequence of the cultural exchange of beliefs and gems. This is significant vis-à-vis the

case study presented here on lapis lazuli and red jasper, as the majority of gems imported

from the East were lapis lazuli, chalcedonies, red jasper, and cornelian.[53] In Book 37 of

*Natural History*, Pliny the Elder illustrates and documents the considerable presence of

precious gemstones from the East and from Africa, including lapis lazuli (*sappirus*) and

red jasper (*iaspis*).[54] Based on the intellectual transmission of the different ritual functions

of gemstones between Egypt and Rome, I extend this case study featuring lapis lazuli and

red jasper to Roman gemstones to explore the ritual efficacy of Roman gems through an

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[49] Saglio, Edmond. "Gemmae" In Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines, edited by Charles Victor Daremberg, Georges Louis Lafaye, Edmond Saglio, Edmond Pottier, 33-34. Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris (1873).

[50] Pérez González, "Gems in Ancient Rome: Pliny's Vision" (Jerusalem, 2019) 140 – 147.

[51] Pérez González, "Gems in Ancient Rome: Pliny's Vision" (Jerusalem, 2019) **Figure 1**. Visualization of gem traffic and minerals described in Periplus Maris Erytraei.

[52] Saglio, "Dictionaire des antiquités grecques et romaines" (Paris, 1873) 33.

[53] Pérez González "Gems in Ancient Rome: Pliny's Vision" and through a close reading of Pliny's *Natural History* of Precious Stones Book 37 Chapter 38.

[54] Pliny, *Natural History* Book 37 Chapters 37 and 38.

Egyptian framework, considering the material, imagery, degree of ontological representation, social currency, and aesthetic value.

**Intaglio of Bes-Pantheos**

Bes and Bes-Pantheos have different ancient connotations and ritual functions as Bes was absorbed into Rome and mutated into Bes-Pantheos, the result of a diluted allusion to Egyptian religion by amalgamating several Egyptian gods into one being. Romans were not concerned with the accuracy of Egyptian gods; rather they were more focused on creating an Egyptianizing motif to which they assigned apotropaic qualities, such as Bes-Pantheos warding off evil or providing protection. These beliefs draw on a legitimate Egyptian basis that was altered in a Roman context. Bes's role in ancient Egypt was highly personalized and intimate as individuals and households petitioned the god for private concerns and daily protection from evil entities.[55] In Rome, this intaglio likely served as a general talisman against the dangerous animals contained in the oval under the god's feet. Incorporating an Egyptian Bes into the Romanized polymorphic Bes-deity suggests a more personal relationship to wearers by addressing the owner's specific protective requirements. The wearer stacks aspects of numerous gods to ward off evil from all directions: from dangerous birds, snakes, people, or inauspicious events. Intaglios, such as the Bes-Pantheos gemstone, were pliable in ritual purpose, embodying the circumstances and specific concerns of the wearer. Gemstones are in dialogue with viewers and wearers as the intaglio may relate not only its function but also the owner's

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[55] Kalloniatis, " Amulets" in *The Egyptian Collection at Norwich Castle Museum: Catalogue and Essays* (Norwich 2019) 114–56.

worries to viewers, while the wearer imposes their belief system onto the motifs to ward off evil.

Interestingly, the *Udjat* occasionally bears images of the head of Bes [56] while lapis lazuli is frequently used for eye inlays on statuettes. [57] This remarkably echoes the interpretation that gemstones in ancient Rome have an eye-like radiance, best explicated by Allen in her most recent article; she argues that gems imbue frescoes with light and life, thereby animating depicted figures through their "eye-like radiance".[58] Bes-Pantheos not only adorned individuals but also displayed the worldly status of the wearer and evoked the omniscient, all-seeing power of the Horus Eye (*Udjat*) to protect the wearer, allowing the owner to be aware of and shielded from evils. Such a reading is substantiated by Suetonius describing the colonnades of Domitian's *Domus Flavia* previously lined with reflective and transparent stones so that the emperor might be able to view all that occurred within his household.[59] Meticulous surveillance exemplified by Roman gemstones adds a defensive layer to an intaglio already conjuring the protection of Bes-Pantheos, lapis lazuli, and "Egyptian mysticism." Greece and Rome were influenced by Eastern conceptions of gemstones which is why interpreting Roman absorptions of Egyptian influences may help us better understand how ancient Egyptians layered representations of Bes, *Udjat,* and lapis lazuli by parsing through Egyptianizing motifs and the social roles of Roman gemstones.

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[56] Darnell, "The Apotropaic Goddess in the Eye," *Studien Zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 24 (1997) 35–48.
[57] Lapis lazuli eye inlays are frequently found in the British Museum: 1881,1103.1917; EA18500; 1881,1103.1918; 121991; EA15866 among many other similar inlays. Eye inlays were made of both lapis lazuli and blue cobalt glass to imitate lapis lazuli with blue eye inlays in the J. Paul Getty Museum discussed in Panzenelli and Potts, *The Color of Life: Polychromy in Sculpture from Antiquity to the Present* (Malibu, 2008) 108-109.
[58] Allen, "'Eye-Like Radiance': The Depiction of Gemstones in Roman Wall Painting" (London, 2019).
[59] Suetonius, "Domitian" in *The Lives of the Caesars* 14.2.

**Engraved Gem Depicting Omphale and an Ithyphallic Donkey**

Omphale is depicted defending herself from a donkey on the obverse possibly alluding to (1) Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* when Lucius is transformed into an ass and is aided by Isis and (2) Egyptian mythology in which a donkey personifies the malevolent forces associated with miscarriage and illness.[60] It is no accident that red jasper depicting Omphale carries the same connotations as the *Tit*, both used to protect women during childbirth and act as a hemostatic during menstruation. As a result of the divinity and ruddy blood-like appearance of red jasper, the stones acquired parallel ritual efficacy in Rome and Egypt, only differentiated by their images; the divine powers of red jasper are enhanced with culturally feminine images.

Wearing the Omphale gemstone is equated to wearing the *Tit*, as Plutarch writes that Isis would have likely worn such an amulet when pregnant with Horus to protect herself.[61] This allows for a better understanding of the role of amulets in Egyptian rituals as they were absorbed into and documented in Roman ritual practice, carrying similar connotations that highlight how gems and symbols personify the malady they wish to cure and how these stones drawout those exact harmful elements in Egyptian rituals. For instance, the *Tit* was said to provide protection during childbirth and menstruation by emulating blood.[62] Plutarch's claim that Isis wore a red jasper amulet similar to Roman amulets to protect herself during pregnancy provides a foundation for cultural transmission and absorption. To conjure the same effect, Isis is substituted with Omphale

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[60] Dasen, "Le secret d'Omphale," *Revue archéologique*, vol. 46 (2008) 265-281.
[61] Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride*, 65 and 68. The amulet is called "fair of voice," perhaps by a pun on *ma'at* and hematite.
[62] Dioscorides, *De Materia Medica*, 5.160

defending herself from a donkey who begets miscarriage. The femininity of the figures associated with red jasper suggests a shared ritual and iconographic basis that might have arisen from continued contact. This is corroborated by Edmond Saglio as he suggests that constant contact with Greece and Egypt altered the way Romans view gemstones: evolving from gems with a solely aesthetic purpose to amulets.[63] To visualize the power of red jasper it must be understood as a drop of glistening lifeblood, embodying the malaise it is meant to remedy, alongside an image of Omphale fending off miscarriage. Layers of Egyptian and Roman ritual efficacy provide protection during childbirth and acts as a hemostatic by presentifying Isis in the Omphale intaglio.

**Conclusion**

While it is impossible to draw up an exhaustive list of ritual and textual connections for Egyptian and Roman gemstones, the case studies discussed here explore an ontological phenomenon using gemstones in the context of cross-cultural exchange. The motif-material correlations were expected in the examination of red jasper as the ruddy stone had the hue and sheen of blood. The divine associations with Isis and Omphale worked the stones into a distinctly feminine context wherein the representativity of the amulets were used to treat blood loss during childbirth and menstruation. However, the motif-material correlations of lapis lazuli and the *Udjat* along with Bes-Pantheos were surprising in that the relationship of lapis lazuli to eyes were not previously discussed in Roman or Egyptian gemology. The interplay between the motifs and lapis lazuli link the stone and the *Udjat* to eyes as is evident in the *Ebers Papyrus* and

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[63]Saglio, Edmond. "Gemmae" In Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines, edited by Charles Victor Daremberg, Georges Louis Lafaye, Edmond Saglio, Edmond Pottier, 33-34. Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris (1873).

*Pyramid Texts*. Further exploration into this phenomenon is necessary to fully understand such a connection. Bes-Pantheos on lapis lazuli likely alluded to Dynastic Egypt and drew on popular Egyptian motifs associated with Egyptian blue, possibly blue *Udjat* eyes. Not only do the images *on* the gemstones *and* their materiality assert ritual agency, they also visually communicate for themselves and on the behalf of wearers through ritual and apotropaic connotations inherent in their material and iconography. These analyses, especially the comparison of Omphale and the *Tit*, imply Roman adaptations of Egyptian ritual practices and not only reflect the intellectual exchange between ancient Rome and Egypt but, if approached in reverse, also provide insight into how equivalent objects and images may have functioned in the Egyptian world.

Examining Roman gemstones allowed for a more holistic understanding of the role of gems in ancient Egypt and how ancient Egyptians conceptualized the ritual purpose of gemstones through an evaluation of Roman absorption. The interpretive framework delineated here combines an ontological and functional interpretation of Egyptian gemstones with an extension to image affordances found on Roman intaglios. By understanding Roman gemstones in light of Egyptian ritual practices and image representations, we are able to elucidate the cultural exchange between Rome and Egypt as well as provide insight into how ancient Egyptians conceived of images and ritually-charged objects through palimpsests of initial Egyptian influences in Rome. The current framework may provide an outline to carry out further studies on the ontology of ancient gemstones or jewelry without archaeological contexts.

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(3) Intaglio with Bes-Pantheos ca. 3rd Century AD. Lapis lazuli. Object Number: Atlanta, Michael C. Carlos Museum, inv. 2008.031.111

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# THE 410 SACK OF ROME'S EXTENSIVE LEGACY

## ISABEL VITKIN

*Abstract*

*This essay examines the 410 CE Visigothic sack of Rome and its reputation as a catalyst for the eventual downfall of the Western Roman empire. As detailed by several ancient sources, the sack was actually rather genteel, with limited damage and most lives being spared. I begin by highlighting how, 'objectively,' the 410 sack was just one of the many events that illustrated the mounting failures of the empire (and compared to others, a rather tame one at that!).*
*I also highlight the factors that heightened its significance and cemented its legacy despite the relatively modest scale of the Visigoth's attack – the fact that the sack occurred at Rome itself (considered by many to be the pinnacle city of the empire), its role in triggering the loss of Roman provinces, and its 'Christian' legacy. It was these factors that ensured that the sack was viewed by ancient and modern historians alike as the beginning of the end of the empire. I conclude by analyzing how the sack's legacy was not directly proportional to the attack itself, as much of its outsized significance lay in the post-event reactions that drove the dominant narrative of its interpretation.*

The Visigothic sack of Rome in 410 CE is considered a great turning point in Roman history, with many historians marking the event as a catalyst for the eventual downfall of the Western Roman empire. However, as detailed by several ancient sources, the sack was actually rather genteel, with "damage limited and most lives spared."[1] Regardless of its 'true' magnitude, the impact of the sack should not be measured with objective analytical data, but rather assessed on a symbolic scale. I will begin this essay by highlighting how, 'objectively,' the 410 sack was just one of the many events that illustrated the mounting failures of the empire (and, compared to others, a rather tame one

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[1] Mary Boatwright and others. *The Romans: From Village to Empire.* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012), pg. 495.

at that!). I will also examine the factors that heightened its significance and cemented its legacy despite the relatively modest scale of the Visigoths' attack: the fact that the sack occurred at Rome itself (considered by many the pinnacle city of the empire), its role in triggering the loss of Roman provinces, and its 'Christian' legacy. These factors ensured that the sack was viewed by ancient and modern historians alike as the inciting incident in the empire's downfall. I will also highlight how the sack's legacy was not proportional to the attack itself, as much of its outsized significance lay in the post-event reactions that drove the dominant narrative of its interpretation.

As noted by Ralph Mathisen, the 410 sack was a notable event because of how it differed from other attacks. Compared to the other raids that occurred prior to it, in the Visigothic invasion there were "all sorts of niceties being observed by the sackers *vis-à-vis* their victims," and it remains "difficult to access accounts of large-scale violence and destruction and there is no other evidence that any of the senators were executed."[2] Additionally, according to some sources, the Visigoths were let into the city by the starving citizens themselves.[3] If the accounts are even partially true, they suggest less brutality than the typical 'rape and pillage' reality of other sacks in the ancient world.

Despite the restrained nature of the sack, its location made it an incredibly symbolic event. Even though Rome was no longer the capital of the Western Roman empire, the city continued to hold its eminent status. At the time of the sack, Rome was

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[2] Mathisen, Ralph W. "Roma a Gothis Alerico Duce Capta Est. Ancient Accounts of the Sack of Rome in 410 Ce." In *The Sack of Rome in 410 Ad: The Event, Its Context and Its Impact : Proceedings of the Conference Held at the German Archaeological Institute at Rome, 04-06 November 2010.* Edited by Johannes Lipps, *et al.* Vol. 28. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2013, pg. 88.

[3] Boatwright, Mary *et al. The Romans: From Village to Empire.* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2012), pg. 495.

still seen by members of the empire as the spiritual center of the empire and church as well as the "eternal city," a city that would never fall victim to foreign invasions.[4] Thus, when the city was sacked, it shocked citizens across the empire, as it was the first time in almost 800 years that Rome had fallen to a foreign adversary. However, despite the portrayal of the Visigothic leader Alaric as a foreign enemy, he was in fact a former Roman military officer, and much less of a barbarian than often assumed (both in citizenship and behavior!).[5] Therefore, many of the sack's devastating consequences were emotional rather than physical and had a "deep psychological impact on the Roman mentality," emblematic of many citizens' loss of confidence in the empire at this time.[6]

The 410 sack is viewed by many as a catalyst for the decline of the empire, as it spurred the loss of Roman possessions, especially at the periphery. As noted by Mary Boatwright, in the fifth century the Roman empire was in a state of turmoil: Britain was in the midst of being abandoned, Roman generals in Spain were fighting fierce insurrection attempts, and Gaul was beginning to fall under the dominion of local tribes.[7] The most devastating loss of all was that of North Africa. In 439, the Vandals took over both North and West Africa, and celebrated their victories by their own sacking of Rome in 455.[8] The sack of Rome at the beginning of the century seemed to foreshadow the failures that would subsequently befall the empire.

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[4] Heather, Peter. *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians* (Oxford University Press, New York, 2006), p. 224.
[5] Mathisen, "The Sack of Rome in 410 CE.," pg. 93.
[6] Mathisen, "The Sack of Rome in 410 Ce.," pg. 88.
[7] Boatwright, "The Romans," pg. 497.
[8] *Ibid,* pg. 498.

The sack's significance in history is emphasized by the 'Christian legacy' it left behind. The accounts of the sack by two contemporary authors, the 'Christian fathers' St. Jerome and St. Augustine, are celebrated today as prominent theological writings. Both of these works became the leading recollections of the sack. St. Jerome described his apocalyptic interpretation of the sack in his letters, remarking, "The brightest light of all the lands has been extinguished, or rather, the head of Roman power has been cut off … in one city, the whole world has perished."[9] The sack was also detailed in St. Augustine's *City of God*, considered a "cornerstone of Western theological thought."[10] Certainly defining characteristics of late antiquity were the religious and power struggles between paganism and Christianity that engulfed the empire. It should then come as no surprise that both of these contemporary Christians used the sack "for anti-pagan propaganda."[11]

It has since come to be that many historians emphasize the 410 sack—rather than any other equally great event—as the turning point for the eventual failure of the Roman Empire. Yet, upon closer examination, it is evident that the sack is one of the many occurrences that illustrate the shortcomings of the empire during late antiquity. One could just as easily point to the Battle of Adrianople, the much more destructive Vandal sack of Rome, or even the Crisis of the Third Century in 235 as arguably more justifiable events for the decline of the empire. However, the previously examined factors have ensured that the 410 sack is identified today as the beginning of the end of the Western Roman

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[9] St Jerome, *Letter CXXVII*. To Principia, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Series II/Volume VI/The Letters of St. Jerome/Letter 127 paragraph 12.

[10] Comstock, Patrick. "Historical Context for City of God by Augustine." *Columbia College,* N.D. https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/content/city-god/context.

[11] Mathisen, "The Sack of Rome in 410 CE," pg. 92.

empire. The sack's disproportionate historical legacy is driven by the emphatic writings of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, highlighting the power of ancient sources. Encapsulated by the words of poet Christopher Marlowe: "there were many great warriors in history besides Agamemnon, but none who had Homer."[12]

[12] Marlowe, Christopher. "50 Great Quotes By Christopher Marlowe, One Of The Greatest Playwrights." *The Famous People*, N.D. https://quotes.thefamouspeople.com/christopher-marlowe-1061.php.

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II/Volume VI/The Letters of St. Jerome/Letter 127 paragraph 12.

# RHAPSODY

*Tell me about a complicated man.*
*Muse, tell me how he wandered and was lost…*
*…tell the old story for our modern times.*
*Find the beginning.*

—*The Odyssey of Homer, tr. Emily Wilson*

Sing in me, Muse, and through me
Tell the wrong story. Speak soundly
Of the man who sailed 'round
For ten years, neglecting his wife
And losing every one, every stop.
His conquests of goddesses,
And the bodies he left in his wake;
This confident man, grown cocky,
Conniving like Raven. A father like mine.
Tell me about a complicated man.

Muse, tell me how he wandered and was
lost…
A jaunt around southern Europe in middle-age
With a failed marriage hot on his heels;
The man whose name is the way one says
"A great journey," when it should really mean
That he is running away from his troubles.
Tell me, O Muse, if ten years was necessary
For Odysseus to forget the horrors of war,
Or he simply chose to run away from Penelope
And her staunch devotion? So would I.

Rage — Goddess, sing the rage,
Or simply the exasperation of the girls
Who stood to hear the rhapsodists
Sing epics from centuries past that teach
The single story of the distant father,
And land ransacked by Gods and men alike.
Did the girls curse Homer under their breaths,
When they heard their fathers in Odysseus,
How my friends and I will, when our own
…tell the old story for our modern times.

Find the beginning. The rhapsodist stirs
And sings, in media res, of an older man
Whose journey of life has been unkind,
Told to us through his endless excuses
For why he was gone so long. Temptation
Exists, to define my father by his mistakes
And excuses as the only stories that make him.
There is good clay among the misguided;
Prometheus made us in pieces, handfuls
Of clay stories, as deep as the wine-dark sea.

PASCALE LARIVIERE

# THE *GOSPEL OF JUDAS:* DID ANCIENT GNOSTICS REDEEM

# HISTORY'S MOST INFAMOUS TRAITOR?

## ALENA WILSON

*Abstract*

*In 2006, the National Geographic Society unveiled the non-canonical Gospel of Judas, a salvaged Coptic manuscript containing a story originating in as early as the third century. The partially restored narrative follows the tragic backstory of Judas Iscariot before his betrayal of Jesus, handing him over to the authorities. In stark contrast to the narrative described in the canonical Gospels, The Gospel of Judas sets Judas apart from—if not above—his fellow disciples. As a historical documentation of Gnostic theology and a criticism of Apostolic Christianity, this ancient manuscript was never intended to be read as an accurate retelling of Judas' experience, but rather as a commentary on the problems associated with early Christian animosity towards the 'Christ-killer.' The 'Good News' of Judas is saturated with ancient Gnostic dogma and lore, revealing the diversity of opinions within the early church. This analysis of the recovered Gospel of Judas discusses the significance of this manuscript in contrast with Biblical canon as well as the historicism of this document as evidence of religious diversity within early Christian communities.*

Discovered in the late 1970s and published in English by the National Geographic Society in 2006, the *Gospel of Judas* follows the events leading up to the most infamous betrayal in history: Judas Isacriot's betrayal of Jesus. Judas is notoriously known as "the ultimate traitor who insidiously delivers Jesus into the hands of the authorities,"[1] according to the canonical Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The surfacing of (what is left of) the non-canonical *Gospel of Judas* portrays the historical traitor in a very

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[1] Gesine Schenke Robinson, "The *Gospel of Judas* in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," *Zeitschrift für antikes Christentum* 13, no. 1 (2009): 98, 10.1515/ZAC.2009.10.

different light. Judas' interactions with Jesus throughout the *Gospel of Judas* frames his

character as a divinely prescribed agent of necessary action, as opposed to a villain. His

actions are not drastically different from the Biblical accounts of the story, but what does

change is his place among the disciples and his agency in what would later happen. The

*Gospel of Judas* is a glimpse into the days leading up to Jesus' arrest—not days of

trickery, disloyalty, and selfishness, but rather of reflection and revelation.[2] Although

scholars are torn as to whether Judas is seen as a hero or a villain as a result of this

gospel, it is apparent that the author's perception of Judas is intentionally against the

grain of second-century Christianity's interpretation of the betrayal.[3] This controversial

portrayal of Judas accompanies the lore and deities of Sethian Gnosticism, a religious

movement born from Jewish Pessimism. This gospel is not an answer nor an example of

the historical Judas, but should rather be analyzed as a documentation of early Sethian

Christian Gnostic attitudes towards the Apostolic opinions of Judas.

### Judas' 'Good News': An Explanation of the Betrayal

The *Gospel of Judas* is believed to have been written in the second century,

however, the version that was published by the National Geographic Society in 2006 is

thought to be the surviving Coptic copy of an originally Greek manuscript.[4] This copy

was radiocarbon dated back to sometime in the third or fourth century as one of a

four-part codex known as the Tchaco Codex.[5] It is believed to have been found in a

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[2] Marvin Meyer, "Interpreting Judas: Ten Passages in the *Gospel of Judas*," in *Gospel of Judas in Context : Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris, Sorbonne, October 27th-28th, 2006*, ed. Madeleine Scopello (Boston: BRILL, 2008), 42

[3] Frank F. Judd-Jr., "Judas in the New Testament, the Restoration, and the *Gospel of Judas*," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (2006): 41

[4] Simon Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 7

[5] Craig A. Evans, "Understanding the *Gospel of Judas*," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20, no. 4 (2010): 562

Coptic burial cave during the late 1970s, and was repeatedly sold until it ended up in the United States, sustaining damage due to negligence. One owner placed the codex in a deep freezer as an attempt to prevent humidity damage, resulting in the already deteriorating pages becoming increasingly discoloured and more brittle.[6] After years of relocation and improper preservation, the Maecenas Foundation in Switzerland was able to recover the codex and restore what remained, despite the approximately forty pages missing.[7] Upon seeing the unrestored text for the first time, Coptologist Rodolphe Kasser noted that throughout the entirety of his career, he had never "seen [a document on papyrus] as degraded as this one."[8] While only about eighty-five percent of the manuscript has been reconstructed, the *Gospel of Judas* was translated and analyzed by scholars and the National Geographic Society, and published in 2006.

The *Gospel of Judas* begins with an introduction that this account is "the secret revelatory discourse that Jesus spoke with Judas" in the days leading up to the death of Jesus.[9] It depicts Jesus scolding the disciples for half-hearted worship. When challenging them to stand up and face him, none are able to, except for Judas. Judas then declares, "I know who you are and from where you have come. You are from the immortal realm of Barbelo. And I am not worthy to utter the name of the one who has sent you."[10] Jesus then leaves and returns the next morning after visiting the holier generation. The disciples tell Jesus about their visions of immoral sacrifices being committed in a great house

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[6] Evans, "Understanding the *Gospel of Judas*," 562
[7] Evans, "Understanding the *Gospel of Judas*," 562-563
[8] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity*, 16
[9] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* in *The* Gospel of Judas*: Critical Edition,* trans. Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin Meyer, Gregor Wurst, and Francois Gaudard (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2006), 33.1-3
[10] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 35.15-21

containing an altar, before being destroyed by God. Jesus then takes Judas aside and tells

him the unfoldings of the future and the universe. He says that Judas is being shown the

kingdom, not because he will go there, but so that he will grieve. Jesus says his star has

been led astray, and that, although he will rule over the other twelve generations, he will

never go up to the holy generation. He explains that while the other disciples are still

sacrificing animals to God, Judas "will exceed them all. For [he] will sacrifice the man

who clothes [Jesus],"[11] thus being set apart from the rest. Judas enters into a cloud and is

transformed, then goes to the high priests and hands Jesus over to them in exchange for

money.

## The Judas of the New Testament

Judas Iscariot was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, as well as one of Jesus'

closest friends. There is very little that scholars know about Judas first-hand, as there are

few independent sources about him, marking the importance of the interpretations of

Judas made throughout the New Testament Gospels. Judas is one of the original Twelve

Disciples according to both independent and dependent accounts of the narrative,[12] which

implies that he was dedicated enough to the message and mission of Jesus to be chosen as

part of Jesus' closest inner circle.[13] There are various interpretations of Judas' character

throughout the Gospels. The Gospel of Mark only mentions Judas three times, and

portrays him similarly to the other disciples;[14] that said, the motivations behind the

betrayal and what happens to Judas afterward are not recorded. The Gospel of Matthew

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[11] *Ibid,* 56.18-20

[12] Bart D. Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot* (New York:Oxford University Press, 2006), 147

[13] *Ibid,* 152

[14] *Ibid,* 20

follows a very similar narrative to Mark, but "places a greater emphasis on following the

Jewish law than in Mark."[15] Matthew puts a greater emphasis on Judas' being motivated

by his greed in Matthew 26:14-16, when Judas asks what he will gain if he hands Jesus

over to the Roman authorities.[16] Matthew also records the death of Judas, saying that he

was overwhelmed by guilt and attempted to give back the money before hanging

himself.[17] The Gospel of Luke follows a similar storytelling to Mark, but puts a heavier

emphasis on supernatural involvement and temptation.[18] While Luke does not mention

the death of Judas, the author of Luke mentions his suicide in the Acts of the Apostles:

"With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell

headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out."[19] Out of all four

canonical gospels, the account of Jesus' death in the Gospel of John is the most

spiritually-based;[20] John details that Jesus "knows he is to be betrayed, and he knows full

well the character of his betrayer, who 'is a devil,'"[21] resulting in an uncompromising

view of the story of Jesus, in which Judas is the clear antagonist. Overall, it is evident that

Judas' sole purpose throughout the New Testament is to enact the part of the "villain to

enable the passion of Jesus to deliver the world from its sin."[22] There is no redemption for

his actions, even though the result of his actions is arguably the pinnacle of Christian

Gnosticism. The four Gospels portray both Jesus and Judas in very different lights in

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[15] *Ibid,* 24
[16] *Ibid*, 26
[17] Matthew 27:1-6 NIV
[18] *Ibid*, 30
[19] *Ibid,* 38; Acts 1:18 NIV
[20] *Ibid,* 39
[21] *Ibid*, 42
[22] Robinson, "The *Gospel of Judas* in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," 98

comparison to one another, as well as in comparison to the *Gospel of Judas.* These differences could be a result of how contemporary each account was to Jesus' supposed time of death.

## Historicizing the *Gospel of Judas*

The *Gospel of Judas* is one of many gospels written about Jesus after his death. Its status as a non-canonical gospel can be attributed to debates over the proper interpretation of religion as a result of a lack of unity within the early Christian church; and those who shared the dominant interpretations became known as 'orthodox.'[23] Fitzwilliam College professor Simon Gathercole describes this political struggle of early Christianity as being capable of rewriting the accounts or "distorting historical reality."[24] The real difference between the canonical gospels and the *Gospel of Judas* is the time in which it was written. The canonical Gospels are all believed to have been written during the first century CE, approximately sixty or more years after the death of Jesus, while Judas' narrative was written a century later.[25] Gathercole notes that while the distinction between the first and second century CE is mostly arbitrary, the canonical Gospels were written by contemporaneous authors while second century authors were able to write egregious fictions without the disputes of eye witnesses.[26]

Many scholars believe both the canonical gospels and the *Gospel of Judas* to be representations of the anti-Jewish nature of the early Christian Church. New Testament scholar Bart Ehrman goes as far as to say that the New Testament Gospels portray Judas

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[23] Gathercole, *The Gospel of Judas: Rewriting Early Christianity*, 144-145
[24] *Ibid*, 145
[25] *Ibid*, 142
[26] *Ibid*, 143

"in a consistently negative light."[27] Christianity's legacy of antisemitism is rooted in the association of the name 'Judas' (Ἰούδας) with Judean/Jew (Ἰουδαῖος), both derived from the Hebrew name 'Judah,' characterizing him as "the evil Jew who turned Jesus in to be arrested and killed."[28] In both early Christian anti-Jewish rhetoric and late Christian antisemitism, Judas is the prototype for Jewish hatred, since Judas is portrayed as "a greedy, money grubbing, God-denying Christ-killer."[29] The multiple narratives about Judas' death show that there was a general consensus from the early church that he deserved condemnation, but there was no agreement on the extent of this condemnation.[30] Unlike the canonical gospels, B. J. Oropeza, a Biblical and Religious Studies professor at Azusa Pacific University, believes that the *Gospel of Judas* portrays Judas in an overall ambiguous way, almost hypocritically, since Judas "receives special revelation from Jesus and yet is called a 'demon' who will be excluded from the holy generation."[31] In addition to the direct correlation between Judas' name and the Judeans, the separation of Judas from the other disciples as a demon creates problematic interpretations of ancient Jews, feeding into ancient anti-Jewish ideology.

## Better or Worse: Judas and the Twelve

In both the Gospel of John and the *Gospel of Judas*, there is reference to demonic involvement in the betrayal of Jesus. John states that a demon entered into Judas, while the *Gospel of Judas* claims that Judas himself was a demon.[32] Judas is introduced in the

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[27] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 138

[28] B. J. Oropeza, "Judas' Death and Final Destiny in the Gospels and Earliest Christian Writings," *Neotestamentica* 44, No. 2, (2010): 343

[29] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 138

[30] Oropeza, "Judas' Death and Final Destiny in the Gospels and Earliest Christian Writings," 357-358

[31] *Ibid,* 358

[32] John 13:27 NIV; *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 44:20-21

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synoptic gospels as "one of the Twelve,"[33] but in the Gospel of John he is introduced as

he "who betrayed [Jesus]."[34] This change from being associated with the disciples to

being separated from them accords to how Judas is perceived in the *Gospel of Judas*.

Judas, as one of the Twelve, is also set apart from the rest of the disciples. He is set apart

as the only one who is capable of carrying the burden of handing Jesus over to be killed

or as the only one not able to join the disciples in the holier generation. The *Gospel of*

*Judas* puts Judas on the same moral ground as the other disciples, as well as separates

him from them as the one to deliver Jesus to his death.

While Judas is an accomplice or a villain in the passion narrative of the Gospels,

the *Gospel of Judas* isolates him from the other disciples as the protagonist. After the

introduction, Judas is said to be the only of the Twelve that is able to stand up to Jesus,

although he is not able to look him in the eye.[35] It is at this point that Jesus knows it is

time to privately reveal to Judas all the events to occur as a result of Jesus' betrayal. It is

only after this divine teaching that Judas goes to hand Jesus over to the high priests.

Gathercole calls this act anti-climactic in comparison to the betrayal story of the New

Testament Gospels, but says that it only highlights the fact that this gospel's focus "is not

historical events, but 'the secret message of the revelation.'"[36] However, Gathercole

struggles with fully defining Judas as a positive hero, debating whether Judas enacting

what Jesus foretold makes him an ideal servant, or if his being selected to perform the

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[33] Matt. 26:47 NIV; Mark 14:43 NIV; Luke 22:47 NIV
[34] John 18:2 NIV
[35] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 35.10-14
[36] Simon Gathercole, "The *Gospel of Judas*: An Unlikely Hero," in *The Non-Canonical Gospels*, ed. Paul Foster (London; New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2008), 91

ultimate sacrifice makes him morally inferior to the other disciples.[37] There is certainly

evidence of Judas being the hero of the story, as much as there is evidence that the *Gospel*

*of Judas* reinforces Judas' evil nature.

In *The Mystery of Betrayal: What does the Gospel of Judas Really Say?* April

DeConick believes that the *Gospel of Judas* "aligns perfectly with the synoptic narrative,

particularly as it is framed by Mark"[38] since it reinforces ideas of demonic possession. It

also fits within the narrative of ignorance that the apostles display throughout the

Gospels, claiming that only a demon (as Jesus calls Judas) could identify Jesus as who he

truly is and where he comes from. Later in Judas' narrative, Jesus says that he will tell

Judas about the holy generation, to which he responds, "what good has it done me that

[you have] separated me from that generation?"[39] Jesus responds that "[Judas] will

become the thirteenth, and will be cursed by the other generations and will rule over

them"[40] because of the act he must commit. Judas' characterization as a demon makes

him "not a hero or a Gnostic, but [...] evil as ever,"[41] and separates him from the apostles.

### Betrayal or Fulfillment: Judas' Agency

The New Testament Gospels all point to Jesus knowing that he would be betrayed

by one of the disciples; in John, Jesus even tells all of the disciples that his betrayer

would be Judas at the Last Supper, but "because of the shock and commotion resulting

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[37] *Ibid,* 91

[38] April DeConick, "The Mystery of Betrayal. What Does the *Gospel of Judas* Really Say?," in *Gospel of Judas in Context : Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris, Sorbonne, October 27th-28th, 2006*, ed. Madeleine Scopello (Boston: BRILL, 2008), 250

[39] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 46.16-18

[40] *Ibid,* 46.19-24

[41] April DeConick, "The *Gospel of Judas*: A Parody of Apostolic Christianity," in *The Non-Canonical Gospels*, ed. Paul Foster (London; New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2008), 97

from Jesus' announcement, [...] the Apostles did not yet understand that Judas would be the betrayer."[42] Jesus condemns his betrayer in each of the synoptic Gospels,[43] feeding into the reputation of the New Testament Judas: a traitor and the backstabber of Jesus. What changes between the New Testament Gospels and the *Gospel of Judas* is the motivation behind the deliverance of Jesus to the high priests. New Testament accounts that give a reasoning for his betrayal record that it was either due to greed (Matthew), or supernatural involvement (Luke & John). The *Gospel of Judas* reveals that Jesus knew all of what was to occur and Judas' motivation to betray Jesus was solely due to Jesus instructing him to do so.

Majella Franzmann compares Judas' character in the *Gospel of Judas* to the Jewish patriarch Abraham, believing that there is an undeniable "Jewishness" to his character throughout the narrative.[44] Similarities in symbolism, such as the emphasis on stars in reference to a new race or generation, make Judas what she calls an Abrahamic figure. She also shows the similarities in both Abraham and Judas being instructed to sacrifice who they love. Abraham is instructed to sacrifice his only son, and Judas is told to sacrifice his good friend and teacher. In Judas doing as Jesus instructed, he is "keeping with the tradition of Abraham who was willing to sacrifice his own son in obedience to God," whether the parallel is morally good or bad.[45] Jonathan Cahana agrees with Franzmann, believing that while Judas himself is not a positive character (in both the

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[42] Judd-Jr., "Judas in the New Testament, the Restoration, and the *Gospel of Judas*," 37
[43] Matt. 26:24; Mark 14:21; Luke 22:22
[44] Majella Franzmann, "Judas as an Abraham Figure in the *Gospel of Judas*," in *Gospel of Judas in Context : Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Gospel of Judas, Paris, Sorbonne, October 27th-28th, 2006*, ed. Madeleine Scopello (Boston: BRILL, 2008), 113
[45] *Ibid,*115

*Gospel of Judas* and in the New Testament), his act of betraying Jesus is inherently good.[46] Judas receives knowledge or *gnosis* (γνῶσις) from Jesus, but is not gnostic, referring to the *Gospel of Judas* 46.19-47.1 in which Jesus declares that Judas will never belong to the holy generation; Cahana says that although the authors thinking is paradoxical, it is supposed to explain the paradox, not present it, even if the explanation is fragmentary (which could be in part due to the missing fifteen percent of the *Gospel of Judas*). Ehrman argues that the light cast on Judas within the *Gospel of Judas* shows that he is given revelation and is the sole disciple that is aware of what will need to happen in order to achieve salvation.[47]

## The *Gospel of Judas*: A Glimpse of Sethian Gnosticism

The *Gospel of Judas* is an example of early Christian Sethian Gnosticism, a belief rooted in Jewish Pessimism caused in part by the devastation of the Roman-Jewish wars in 66-70 CE and 115-117 CE.[48] This gospel is not—and was never intended to be—read through a New Testament Gospel lens, but rather through a Gnostic lens, changing or reversing the characters' interpretations from that of an orthodox tradition.[49] It is meant to be an irony, filled with wordplay and hidden meanings, including Jesus' laughing four separate times throughout the narrative.[50] Cahana cites DeConick regarding this parody of Apostilism, putting it simply as:

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[46] Jonathan Cahana, "Salvific Dissolution: The Mystery of the Betrayal between the New Testament and the *Gospel of Judas*," *New Testament Studies* 63, no. 1 (2017): 120, doi:10.1017/S0028688516000278.
[47] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 138
[48] Evans, "Understanding the *Gospel of Judas*," 566
[49] Robinson, "The *Gospel of Judas* in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," 100
[50] *Ibid*

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> …if indeed the death and sacrifice of Jesus are the salvific events in your belief, you proto-orthodox Christians should admire – rather than curse – Judas, for without him it would never have happened; thus, here is your gospel and here is your hero.[51]

Gesine Schenke Robinson claims that the *Gospel of Judas* has no intention of redeeming Judas at all, due to the nature of early Christian Gnosticism, but rather seeks to show that Judas' intentions were not to cause Jesus any harm.[52] The style of writing in the *Gospel of Judas* is used as a thought-provoking satire on the proto-orthodox Apostolism of early Christians. It is because of its satirical nature that scholars cannot count the *Gospel of Judas* as a document with any historical substance. As much as Gathercole states that "it will open up new vistas for understanding Jesus,"[53] the goal of this gospel was to parody the intense hatred towards Judas. The Gnostics not only turn the demon of the passion narrative into an oblivious disciple that has been made aware of the future and his role in it, but also a disciple who has been granted the knowledge of the Kingdom, according to DeConick.[54]

The narrative is filled with Sethian *gnosis* from the beginning. Barbelo is a Sethian deity known as the "divine Mother of all."[55] Barbelo is one of many Sethian divine beings to appear in this narrative, alongside others like Autogenes (the Self-Begotten), Yaldabaoth, Saklas, and Nebruel. When Judas declares that "the one who sent [Jesus] is he whose name I am not worthy to speak,"[56] he directly references the Sethian revelation

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[51] Cahana, "Salvific Dissolution: The Mystery of the Betrayal between the New Testament and the *Gospel of Judas*," 113

[52] Robinson, "The *Gospel of Judas* in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," 106-107

[53] Gathercole, "The *Gospel of Judas*: An Unlikely Hero," 94

[54] DeConick, "The Mystery of Betrayal. What Does the *Gospel of Judas* Really Say?," 264

[55] Evans, "Understanding the *Gospel of Judas*," 564

[56] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 35.19-21

of the indescribability of the great Barbelo Aeon.[57] Through this declaration, he confesses

that Jesus cannot be the son of the God of the Hebrew Scriptures, but the son of the

supreme God.[58] DeConick says that the *Gospel of Judas* is a perfect example of how early

Apostolic and Sethian Christians were so similar, yet so different. The belief that Judas

was a demon—as stated in the *Gospel of Judas* 44.18-21—reinforced their belief that

demons sometimes tricked humans into worshipping them instead of the transcendent

God.[59] They believed the God of the Hebrew Bible would not desire adherents to perform

a blood ritual (the Eucharist), rather this demand was from a demon.[60] Ehrman argues that

the Jewish god is "portrayed either as a fool or as a bloodthirsty maniac, and the goal of

the religion is to escape his domination."[61] This Gnostic pessimistic perspective on the

purpose of religion is reminiscent of ancient Jewish apocalypticism.

Sethian Gnostics and Jewish Apocalypticists were both born out of ancient Jewish

Pessimism. Jewish Pessimism bred the idea that, while there was immense suffering

within the Jewish communities, it was not a divine punishment for disobeying the

Hebrew God's commandments; this suffering was rather a direct result of the root of all

evil and God's nemesis, the Devil.[62] The dualism of good and evil created a reason for

these struggles: God was coming to destroy all evil in the world and effectively end the

world the ancient Jews knew.[63] Although their beliefs were born from Jewish Pessimism,

the Sethian Gnostics were typically opposed to Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism,

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[57] DeConick, "The Mystery of Betrayal. What Does the *Gospel of Judas* Really Say?," 249-250
[58] Robinson, "The *Gospel of Judas* in Light of the New Testament and Early Christianity," 100
[59] DeConick, "The *Gospel of Judas*: A Parody of Apostolic  Christianity,"108
[60] DeConick, "The *Gospel of Judas*: A Parody of Apostolic  Christianity,"108
[61] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 119-120
[62] *Ibid,* 116
[63] *Ibid,* 117

both in theology and overall attitudes towards the divine and the mundane, despite the fact that Judas' narrative is rooted in apocalyptic ideologies.[64] The account begins with the declaration that Jesus reveals to Judas "what would take place at the end,"[65] and throughout the narrative there are parallels to the themes of the Gospel of Mark, various Pauline letters, and the book of Revelation.[66] Jewish Apocalypticism is prevalent within the Gnostic *Gospel of Judas*, especially given that both movements evolved from anxieties and struggles of first- and second-century Jews.

### Conclusion

The use of the word "gospel" in the title of the *Gospel of Judas* is not synonymous with the Gospels of the New Testament. It is not meant to be read as Judas' actual account of the passion narrative, nor is it supposed to redeem him in the eyes of Christians. The *Gospel of Judas* takes the overly demonized and cursed depiction of Judas and flips the narrative on its head, portraying his actions as involuntary and part of a divine plan revealed to him by Jesus in a secret conversation. Scholars debate his portrayal  as either morally superior or inferior to his apostle brethren, but ultimately the *Gospel of Judas* allows for Christians to contemplate whether Judas has any agency in the first place.

The intention of this lost story of the secrets revealed to Judas was entirely commentarial, challenging how the early church responded to Judas as a character. The use of this secret knowledge today gives us a greater understanding of Sethian

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[64] *Ibid,* 118
[65] *"The Gospel of Judas,"* 33.17-18
[66] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 117-118

Gnosticism, Apostolic Christianity, ancient Jewish Apocalypticism, and how all of these

movements challenge, inspire, and borrow from one another. In manuscripts like the

*Gospel of Judas*, Gnostics take motifs and themes from Apostolic and Apocalyptic

documents and theology (such as typically Abrahamic themes and speculations regarding

the end of life) and applied their own theology (such as their deities) both as a critique

dialogue surrounding a heavily detested character and as a result of being influenced by

both movements.

Ehrman emphasizes the harmony of these two functionalities of the *Gospel of

Judas* in the concluding chapter of his book, stating that scholars "should recognize the

Gospel of Judas as the spectacular find it is, without sensationalizing it into something

that it is not."[67] The *Gospel of Judas* is not intended to be read as a redemption of Judas

as character, nor as an answer to all the unresolved questions historians have about the

early Gnostics. The spectacularity of the secret knowledge of Judas is that this

document—although fragile, damaged, and missing several pages—is a surviving

non-orthodox stance on the betrayal of Jesus and the expectations of the early Christian

church. It also leads scholars to believe that there were theological discourses happening

between the Greek Christians and the Coptic Christians of early Christianity,[68] and that

diversity occurred in between. This completely oppositional stance on Judas as a devoted

follower of Jesus, foreordained to betray his friend, stands out from the other accounts of

the infamous traitor. While ancient Christians and modern readers alike are undecided on

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[67] Ehrman, *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot,* 172
[68] *Ibid,* 3

the heroic or villainous nature of Judas throughout his gospel, his tragic obedience sets him apart from his fellow disciples.

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